

**COMMISSIONERS MINUTES
KITTITAS COUNTY, WASHINGTON
SPECIAL MEETING
KITTITAS COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS/EVENT CENTER
TEANAWAY HALL (HOME ARTS BUILDING)**

TUESDAY

6:00 P.M.

JUNE 1, 2010

Board members present: Chairman Mark McClain; Vice-Chairman Paul Jewell and Commissioner Alan Crankovich.

Others: Julie Kjorsvik, Clerk of the Board; Dan Valoff, Staff Planner; Jan Ollivier, Transportation Manager and approximately 20 members of the public.

PUBLIC HEARING COMMUNITY WIND ENERGY SYSTEMS CDS

At 6:00 p.m. Chairman McClain opened a public hearing to consider proposed text amendments to Kittitas County Code Chapter 17.61C, Community Wind Energy Systems. He made introductions and reviewed the hearing procedures and time limits for public testimony. He noted that if the public felt there was not adequate enough time to express their thoughts in three minutes, he encouraged them to put the remainder of their comments in written form and submit them to the Board before the deadline which may be established at the end of the hearing.

DAN VALOFF, STAFF PLANNER reviewed the proposed Text Amendment to the County Code for Community Wind Energy Systems. He reviewed the history and explained how staff had worked with the applicants, held Open Houses for the public to review the proposed Ordinance, and held a public hearing in front of the Planning Commission. He said at the conclusions of the public hearing they directed staff to prepare Findings of Fact approving the proposed Ordinance with conditions.

THOSE PRESENT & TESTIFYING: JIMMY APPELEGATE read a letter into the record and urged the Board to review the section entitled "Property Rights and the Constitution" in the CATO Institute's Handbook for Policy Makers, 7th Edition, to ensure property rights are protected. **SHIRLEY STULL** spoke of the beautiful Kittitas Valley and the negative impacts the proposed ordinance would cause to the area. She reminded the Board of the majority of the public's opposition of the previous wind farms. Although she appreciated creative ways of property owners trying to take advantage of their land, by approving the proposed ordinance, it would impact their neighboring properties. She encouraged the Board to hold another public meeting to allow for more input because she felt there were many people who could not attend this meeting. **CHARLI SORENSON** felt the proposed ordinance was incomplete and vague. She felt the biggest drawback did not address the chemical de-icers and its impacts to water, as well as possible health effects to community centers. **WILLIAM ERICKSON** was concerned with the size of wind turbines that would be allowed and felt they should not be located in the residential areas. He felt there should be some type of liability along with them, as well as making sure there are maintenance records inspected. He thought the Board should wait to approve the ordinance until the big wind farms are all up and running, before they go into

residential areas. **MARY MORGAN** spoke in opposition of the proposed ordinance and suggested waiting. She felt the County should wait to observe the larger wind farms and thought there was no rush to approve it. She thought it could be considered a "taking" if a project is placed next to someone's property, causing their land value to decrease. She said there would be a significant impact on real estate if it's approved, and felt there needed to be more hearings on it. **JIM PENDLEY** submitted two photos into the record. He felt if the proposed ordinance is approved, there are those who will get money in their pocket, while their neighbors will suffer from the impacts of their land value going down. He said he will end up moving from the area, and was concerned the Kittitas Valley will turn into Beaumont California. He expressed concerns of the bright red lights from the towers shining into people's homes coming from all directions. **MARY CUSHING** expressed concerns regarding the potential of the unsightly look of wind farms scattered around the Kittitas Valley. She felt the pristine views of the valley would be forever impacted and there is no tax or benefit to offset the windmills that will reduce the quality of life for the community, as a whole. **ED CUSHING** spoke in opposition of the draft ordinance and echoed others testimony relative to the negative impacts and quality of life. He said once it is taken, it can never be given back and the entire community will suffer. **JAN SHARAR** presented information and expressed confusion with the IPZ application and its reference by Commissioner Paul Jewell, relating to how our regional economy can transform from a heavy agricultural base to something that is sustainable. She claimed she had been involved with drafting of a county code proposal, but thought they were working in good faith under some basic understandings, including opportunities for the public, eligible landowners, such as farmers and ranchers. **CATHERINE CLERF** felt that had technology been available years ago, the windmills would already exist. She did not believe people who produce on their land should have to bow to new comers. **MIKE GEBHAROTT** said that although he is in favor of wind energy and wind farms, they need to be located in the right area. He said the valley could end up being scattered with mini wind farms and the Board should take time to review the information before making a final decision. **TERRY MEYER** thanked the Board for putting their time and effort into the proposal. He said he had watched the work and process over the last year and it's good to hear voices directly from the public. He felt the proposal has a lot of compromises within the document. **ROGER WEAVER** said he owns Re-Max Realty and was surprised the proposal had gotten to this point. He explained how over the years, he has fought for water and property rights, and it's the first time he has struggled with it, because the proposal will affect the quality of life and property values. He said not only will the neighbors be impacted, but the overall real estate values in the County. He stated if someone were to put in a wind farm on their property, either he or another real estate representative would be able to present information on a verifiable reduction in property values. **TOM MASKAL** explained how everyone went through the same thing with the proposed wind farm application near Bettas Road, and the County fought against it. He thought the EFSEC Chairman had already made his decision before testimony was even taken and then the Governor has told Kittitas County what to do. He said the wind farms will destroy property values due to the ascetics and suggested maybe having a solar array instead of wind farms. **JED BALDY** opposed the proposal. **MIKE ALBERG** said he has lived and ranched for over 40 years in the Kittitas Valley and explained how the farming and ranching industry use to be good and is now struggling. He said he had participated in the Planning Commission process through the time increase in residential areas came into the valley, but didn't oppose that happening, because it was the property owners right. He proposed higher density zone areas. **GLORIA BALDY** felt the windmills could be detrimental to people due to

the shadow flicker and they would be intrusive on the landscape and diminish property values. She said if the Board approves the proposed ordinance, it would change the character of the Kittitas Valley. **SHAN ROWBOTHAM** reminded the Board of the ramifications to air traffic if the proposed ordinance was approved. He said they suggested the FAA a feasibility study conducted implementing an Approach Procedure with Vertical Guidance approach into Ellensburg. **BONNIE REAY** spoke of the economy and how we need ranchers and farmers. She asked the Board to look at broad perspective and said wind is a temporary help. She said ranchers and farmers should be sustained so they aren't forced to selling their property. **HELEN WISE** felt Ellensburg is the most beautiful place, but questioned the proposal for industrial sized wind turbines. She felt the Board should look at the business design of wind turbines and there are residential sized ones by the City's solar farm. **MEL DYKE** felt most of the objections are due to residential land values and the effect on smaller acreage. **THERE BEING NO FURTHER TESTIMONY, THE ORAL PUBLIC PORTION OF THE HEARING WAS CLOSED.**

COMMISSIONER JEWELL moved to continue the Public Hearing to June 9, 2010 at 2:00 p.m. in the Commissioners Auditorium, Room 109, Kittitas County Courthouse, and to allow for written testimony to be accepted until June 8, 2010 at 12:00 p.m. **COMMISSIONER CRANKOVICH** seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

Meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

CLERK OF THE BOARD

**KITTITAS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
KITTITAS COUNTY, WASHINGTON**



Julie Kjorsvik



Chairman Mark McClain