

Denying the wind permit

Editor's note: The following resolution, one of two prepared before the vote on Highland New Wind Development's permit request, was written to outline reasons to deny the project's conditional use permit. Though the permit was approved, this resolution would have been adopted had the board voted against the request. The initial statements describing the application are identical to the other resolution, but the following section is where they differ:

... Whereas the board intends to deny the application for the reasons hereinafter stated;

Therefore, be it resolved by the board of supervisors of Highland County, Virginia, as follows:

1. The board makes the following findings, which constitute the board's reasons for disapproval, in connection with the application:

a. The comprehensive plan encourages the preservation and protection of the county's unique natural resources (p. 141) and the proposed industrial use is inconsistent with this provision of the comprehensive plan.

b. The proposed use is contrary to the goal of the comprehensive plan to maintain the county's predominantly rural character and to centralize industrial development in industrial parks (p. 187).

c. The proposed use in the proposed location is incompatible with the policy of the county to encourage tourism and preserve the pristine natural environment of the county.

d. The proposed industrial type use will be isolated and is incompatible with surrounding agricultural uses and will degrade the environment of the area.

e. The sheer size of the wind generators (turbines) which are proposed to be located along a prominent ridgeline of the county, will change the character of the area in which they are proposed to be located and may adversely affect property values.

f. The tax revenues paid to the county from the proposed use are uncertain because of changing technology and potential changes to the applicable federal and state regulations.

g. The application is lacking a detailed site plan necessary to allow the board to adequately evaluate the proposed use and its potential effect on neighboring property owners.

h. The applicant has not conducted and provided to the board any environmental impact statement or environmental assessment, and information with respect to the potential im-

part of the proposed use on the environment is necessary for this board to adequately evaluate the proposed use and its potential effect on the environment.

i. The applicant has not provided the board with a visual impact study to allow the evaluation of the effect of the proposed use on neighboring property owners and on the broader area.

j. The proposed use is incompatible with surrounding uses and is inconsistent with the intent of the zoning ordinance and the land use element of the comprehensive plan.

2. The board hereby denies the application for a conditional use permit.

3. This resolution shall be in full force and effect upon its adoption.