



Board on Electric Generation Siting and the Environment

John B. Rhodes
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Basil Seggos
Richard L. Kauffman
Howard A. Zucker, M.D., J.D.
Members

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Contact:

James Denn | James.Denn@dps.ny.gov | (518) 474-7080

www.dps.ny.gov/SitingBoard

<https://twitter.com/#!/NYSSitingBoard>

Robert Rosenthal
General Counsel

Michelle L. Phillips
Secretary

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Siting Board Reaffirms Steuben County Wind Farm Approval

Siting Board Denies Petition for Rehearing, Approves Three Compliance Filings

242 MW Clean Energy Facility Forecasted to Bring Over \$44.2 Million to Local Economy

Project Creates Over 135 Direct Construction Jobs

Local Governments Receive PILOT Payments, Host Towns Receive Community Benefits

ALBANY — The New York State Board on Electric Generation Siting and the Environment (Siting Board) today reaffirmed its approval to Baron Winds LLC (Baron Winds) to build and operate a wind facility in Steuben County. The Siting Board's decision to deny a petition for rehearing follows a determination that the Southern Tier wind farm meets or exceeds all siting requirements.

"The petition for rehearing failed to make an adequate showing that the Siting Board committed an error of law or fact, or that new circumstances warrant a different determination," **said Siting Board Chair John B. Rhodes.** "Appropriately sited wind farms, such as Baron Winds, provide clean and renewable energy and are essential as we continue on the road toward a zero-carbon emission electric sector by 2040."

The petition for rehearing, submitted by three residents, challenged the Siting Board's May 6, 2020 decision approving amendments to Baron Winds' Article 10 Certificate on the grounds that the Siting Board failed to consider the potential enactment of a local law regarding heights of turbines. In its denial of the rehearing petition, the Siting Board said it's not required to reevaluate projects for compliance with new local laws passed after issuance of a final determination, nor is there a requirement that the Siting Board reverse its decision or delay rendering a decision because a town is considering a new local law.

In addition to its rehearing decision, the Siting Board approved three compliance filings submitted by the developer related to conditions for construction and operational impact mitigation, including providing details on communication protocols with community members regarding construction plans, a plan to address complaints for construction and operational phases of the project (including specific procedures for responding to noise complaints), and providing \$20,000 for recreational or aesthetic mitigation for the benefit of Loon Lake in Steuben County.

The 242-megawatt (MW) Baron Winds project will be built in two phases. The first phase will be 166.6 MW and includes 33 turbines, with up to 26 turbines having a maximum height up to 650 feet, with associated electrical collection lines, access roads, meteorological towers, an operation and maintenance building, and a collection substation. The first phase will be located in the Towns of Cohocton, Dansville and Wayland in Steuben County. The facility will be located on privately leased rural land that could continue to be used for farming, forestry and other comparable uses.

As described by the developer, the project would have a major positive economic impact on the host communities, including creating 117 direct jobs in construction and construction-related services in the State, with workers earning a total of approximately \$5.8 million. The developer estimates that the facility would generate 10 onsite jobs during the annual operation of the facility, with earnings of approximately \$300,000 to \$400,000, along with 22 construction jobs created specifically in Steuben County, with estimated earnings of \$1 million.

The Siting Board examiners determined that the wind farm will be a beneficial addition to the electric generation capacity of the State and is consistent with the State's energy policy and planning objectives. The facility will also serve the goals of improving fuel diversity, grid reliability, and modernization of grid infrastructure. Fuel diversity will be improved through generation of electricity with wind power rather than with fossil fuels; grid reliability will be improved through additional generation of power from a separate site through a different energy source; and modernization of the grid will result from construction of a new electric generating facility. The Siting Board's decision to grant the certificate is subject to lengthy and detailed conditions that will address the concerns of the parties and ensure that, as built and operated, the project will be consistent with the findings and conclusions of the Siting Board.

Additionally, local governments will receive PILOT payments of approximately \$25.7 million over 20 years. Host towns will also receive payments estimated to be up to approximately \$12 million over 20 years under community agreements. Participating landowners will also receive payments under agreements with the applicant. In making its initial determination, the Siting Board determined that, with appropriate certificate conditions in place, any impacts to the environment have been avoided or, if unavoidable, mitigated to the maximum extent practicable.

Baron Winds filed its formal application with the Siting Board on Nov. 29, 2017. Stakeholders in the proceeding included local elected officials, area residents and environmental advocates, several state agencies, including the Department of Environmental Conservation, the Department of Health and the Department of Agriculture and Markets.

New York State's Nation-Leading Climate Plan

Governor Cuomo's nation-leading climate plan is the most aggressive climate and clean energy initiative in the nation, calling for an orderly and just transition to clean energy that creates jobs and continues fostering a green economy as New York State Builds Back Better as it recovers from the Covid pandemic. Enshrined into law through the CLCPA, New York is on a path to reach its mandated goals of economy wide carbon neutrality and achieving a zero-carbon emissions electricity sector by 2040, faster than any other state. It builds on New York's unprecedented ramp-up of clean energy including a \$3.9 billion investment in 67 large-scale renewable projects across the state, the creation of more than 150,000 jobs in New York's clean energy sector, a commitment to develop over 1,800 megawatts of offshore wind by 2024, and 1,800 percent growth in the distributed solar sector

since 2011. New York's Climate Action Council is working on a scoping plan to build on this progress and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 85 percent from 1990 levels by 2050, while ensuring that at least 40 percent of the benefits of clean energy investments benefit disadvantaged communities, and advancing progress towards the state's 2025 energy efficiency target of reducing on-site energy consumption by 185 TBtus.

Today's decision may be obtained by going to the Documents section of the Department of Public Service Web site at www.dps.ny.gov and entering Case Number 15-F-0122 in the input box labeled "Search for Case/Matter Number". Many libraries offer free Internet access. Siting Board documents may also be obtained from the Commission's Files Office, 14th floor, Three Empire State Plaza, Albany, NY 12223 (518-474-2500). If you have difficulty understanding English, please call 1-800-342-3377 for free language assistance services regarding this press release.