

I'm Gregg Hubner, I live 2 ½ miles north of Avon. I have been studying industrial wind energy systems and wind energy developers for the last 9 years. In about 2010 my neighbor called on me to try and buy an easement on my land for wind turbines. I wasn't interested. Then in the spring of 2012 I called that same neighbor and told him I was going to build a new home but would not build it if any wind turbines were coming. He told me to go ahead and build it because all was quiet with the wind industry. We moved into our new house in the fall of 2012. At the end of December of 2012, the production tax credit was revived, and in a few short months in 2013-14, the 43 wind towers called the Beethoven Wind project was built. It was not built because somebody needed more electricity; as a matter of fact Northwestern Energy was forced to buy the electricity. It was not built because the farmers or the school board were asking for more money. It was built because the production tax credit was extended and investors and developers could use that money to develop this project and make money for themselves. Wind energy systems are built for one reason and one reason only. The Production Tax Credit, which has been around on and off since 1992, costing US taxpayer over 12 billion dollars, with an additional 10.5 billion dollars for the years 2015-2016. Proof of this is that whenever the production tax credit is gone, construction of wind energy drops, as it did between 2012 and 2013, it dropped 92%. Those figures are from the American Wind Energy Association. And you've all heard the Warren Buffet quote, who owns wind farms: "For example, on wind energy, we get a tax credit if we build a lot of wind farms. That's the **only** reason to build them. They don't make sense without the tax credit." Warren Buffet did not say the tax credit was a good reason, was one of several reasons, he said it was the **ONLY** reason to build wind farms. But you already know this.

If you drive up to the Beethoven project about 10 miles north of here you will see a big sign near the road telling you how many homes potentially get their electricity from this project and how many metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions it saves. What they don't tell you is that the taxpayer puts in \$149,000 per tower per year to keep them going (those are South Dakota PUC numbers) and that those turbines could spin till the end of time before they reduced the amount of carbon dioxide that it took to build them.

In late August last year the Bon Homme County Zoning Board had a public hearing on Article 17, Wind Tower Setbacks. At this meeting, according to the Avon Clarion, over 50 concerned citizens attended and the majority was against the setbacks.

Of the 50 people, 12 spoke against the setbacks, two spoke for. Those 2 included one retired farmer and Roland Jurgens, the project manager. The Zoning Board ignored the public and voted for the ordinance promoted by the developer. On October 20, 2015 the County Commission held a public hearing on the setbacks.

Over 100 people were in attendance. Out of the 25 people that spoke for the ordinance, at least 18 (or 72%) of them had a financial vested interest. That meeting was so disappointing as I saw the commissioners, some of whom I knew most of my adult life, ignore the residents of the county and side with the developer. And then to top it all off, the written letters that were sent to the commissioners for their consideration before the meeting were miscounted by the County Auditor in favor of the developer. I documented this fraud and had the South Dakota Dept of Criminal Investigation do an investigation of the facts. Their answer was: "Thank you for consulting the Attorney General's Office in this matter. We encourage people to come forth with evidence of corruption. However, there is nothing further we can do because there was no proof of criminal intent." Sound familiar?

9 out of 10 (90%) that spoke against were people that were going to have to live under the turbines. Immediately after everyone spoke, one of the commissioners gave us the tally, 25 for the ordinance, 10 against. He should have said Investors 25, residents 10. The commission passed the ordinance unanimously. They stacked the deck with the investors, the investor's wives, their kids, their parents, the developers, the redi mix people, all of the people with a financial vested interest will be for this project. And then you will hear from the people that will have to live here. They will be against the project.

So as you can see I am pretty tired of County Government. They sided with the big money. And after the packing plant in Aberdeen, the Gear Up program in Platte, the Meckling Hay Plant, and the 2.9 million dollars to B&H Wind, I'm pretty leery of so called "economic development". There are County Officials that do listen to the people like in Davison and Sanborn Counties. But not here. Here they listen to the developers. So here is where we are tonight. We have the investors and developers versus the residents within and close to the project.

When the residents tried to get longer setbacks from the Zoning Commission, they ignored us, although in Article 17, the ordinance they passed, it says they are to “protect the health, safety and welfare of the County’s citizens”. They never did this; they ignored every study we brought to their attention. From there it went to the County Commissioners, same story, totally sold out to the developer. The developer had done his work well, according to the AWEA handbook.

Their main selling points are Economic development, lower electricity rates and money to the school. I am amazed at what the Beethoven Wind Farm has accomplished 10 miles north of here in just one year. The turbines weren’t even turning yet last summer when Northwestern Energy applied for a \$26.5 million dollar rate hike and the PUC gave them 15.5%. They will spin this to their advantage, but the fact remains Northwestern had not had a rate increase for 35 years and as soon as they were forced to buy the electricity from Beethoven, they asked for a rate hike. Economic development, **please**, show me some. Show me a new business in Tripp or Delmont. Show me more jobs. Show me more kids in school. There are none. And lastly money for the school. The Mitchell Daily Republic’s headline 2 weeks ago was “Tripp Delmont School to consolidate or dissolve.” They are broke. I imagined the Tripp Community was promised the same pie in the sky that they are promising us. But that’s all it is a pie in the sky.

One last subject I have is what you have named NIMBY. An acronym for “NOT IN MY BACK YARD”. Early last year there was a newspaper article where the PUC was quoted as “not considering NIMBY”. Not in my back yard doesn’t count. I submit to you it does. In the last year I have had 2 people call me with intentions of building a new home in the area, but would cancel those plans if the project went forward. I have had 3 families tell me they are moving out of the area if the project is built. I would have never built my house had I known an industrial wind project was coming.

If the county loses real estate taxes on houses left vacant or not built because of NIMBY, they will lose hundreds of thousands of dollars over the next 25 years, which is the time frame for all of these so called benefits. Although Prevailing Winds in their brochure calls our area “sparsely populated”, there are over 80 homes in the footprint of the project. But it will soon become sparsely populated. Schools are funded on a teacher/student basis. Less students, less money.

You can have all the wind turbines you want, if the people leave, you have no students. Case in point, Tripp-Delmont School District. People don't want these in their back yard because they have to hear them, look at them, see their property devalued, they may be forced to leave because of wind turbine syndrome, constant low frequency sound waves that disturb sleep.

NIMBY people have issues, and although you say you won't address NIMBY, it's because of these issues people don't want this project.

**NIMBY IS NOT AN OPINION, NIMBY HAS REAL CONSEQUENCES.**

Those consequences are: People leave, homes aren't built, tax bases, students in school and local spending all decreases. There is no proof of economic development - just promises. What you will get is economic decline. According to your requirements for Prevailing Winds to be permitted, These issues I just mentioned **will** pose a threat to the social and economic condition of inhabitants or expected inhabitants. These issues **will** interfere with orderly development of the region. And where is my proof? 10 miles north of here.

All I ask of you tonight is to consider who is for this project and who is against. The residents who have to live and work in this area that is going to be converted from agricultural/recreational to industrial have not been heard, we have not been protected and we ask you to consider the people, not the promise of money.

Thank you

Gregg Hubner



Avon SD 57315