



North County Preservation, Inc
P.O. Box 537 • Monkton, MD 21111

April 19, 2010

Baltimore County Council
400 Washington Ave
Towson, MD 21204

Re: Wind Turbines

Dear County Council Member,

North County Preservation is an organization that strives to support rural life in northern Baltimore County by promoting responsible development and preservation, with a careful balance between potentially competing ideals.

We have examined the proposed legislation to allow small, residential Wind Turbines in Baltimore County and believe that they are an appropriate a way to increase the use of renewable energy to offset the need for additional power plants and transmission lines.

While NCP believes that there are places within Baltimore County where wind turbines could be appropriate and could be installed with minimal and acceptable impacts on nearby residents, we do not believe that the current proposal is complete or desirable.

- It restricts the use of wind turbines to residential use, but does not provide for sufficient protection for neighboring properties. It must also allow agricultural use.
- The use permit process as defined could allow inappropriate systems to be approved, since it does not specify maximum sizes.
- It does not adequately address removal of abandoned systems, building-mounted systems, wind easements, and protection of viewsheds and scenic vistas.
- There needs to be a requirement to demonstrate that a proposed system will be effective before construction is allowed.

We believe that the County Council should take steps for a significant rewrite of this legislation through a process that directly involves industry experts, citizens, community representatives, and county staff, so that all points of view can be considered and incorporated into the rewrite.

We also recognize that it is important for Wind Turbine specific legislation to be enacted since, without it, the Zoning Commissioner could resume issuing height variances for each individual request with no legislative guidance, thus initiating a long legal battle with an unknown and inconsistent outcome in each case. This would not be to anyone's benefit. Further, failure to enact legislation which specifically allows wind turbines would send the wrong message about Baltimore County's commitment to sustainability.

It is also extremely important for Baltimore County to develop an overall energy policy with emphasis on renewable sources, wind being only one of the components. This legislation would then become a part of the bigger picture. We encourage the County Council to take whatever steps it can to bring about the development of such a renewable energy policy for the county.

Thank you for consideration of our comments.

Regards,

Michael A Pierce
President, North County Preservation