

11/17/13

Friends of Newport:

[Please see note at end...]

I apologize for the delay in getting this to you, but I have been out of town for the last three days.

Due to that I was unable to attend the Newport Town Council meeting on Thursday night — but I did sent the town representatives a written summary of what were advisable measures to approve in their proposed *Tall Structures Ordinance*.

I've spoken to several people who were there, and this writeup is a compilation of their comments (which has somewhat of a different slant than the paper's [story](#) did).

These people all praised the Newport Town Council for allowing citizens to speak freely at this well-attended meeting, and not having time constraints.

There appeared to be at least two representatives of the developer at the meeting. Rocky Ray (the developer's vice president) made a very typical sales pitch as to why he thought this project would benefit the community — e.g. that there would be some jobs.

A lot of the meeting revolved around citizen responses to his marketing claims. For example, he was asked how many permanent jobs would there be? [*he said 4*]; were they guaranteed? [*no*]; was this the **net** number of jobs? [*no*], etc.

Some people spoke about the potential impact on Cherry Point jobs, and the likely reduction of tourist-related employment to the Crystal Coast [*he did not factor these into his job projections*].

Others supported a Property Value Guarantee (which was in the proposed ordinance) [*he made no comment — maybe because he hadn't seen the details*].

Still more attendees asked for specifics about the environmental tests that would be done [*no specifics were provided*].

One person asked who would be doing such environmental tests, and Mr. Ray said they would hire someone. The citizen replied that the community wouldn't expect to get comprehensive and objective environmental testing done by an employee of the developer.

Some civilian employees of Cherry Point noted that these 500± foot tall structures (almost directly in a flight path) could have serious impact on airplane navigation — *particularly under adverse weather conditions, or when an aircraft has mechanical problems.*

Mr. Ray told the Council that the Ordinance's half-mile setbacks were unreasonable, and that this would likely force the developer to locate almost all of their turbines in the County's part of the property. Naturally, he wanted them to be less.

{**Note:** this is very standard fare, as in **every** community in the world that wind developers are trying to access, they **always** object to **every** worthwhile protective measure proposed, claiming that it is unreasonable. Of course this exaggerated "unreasonableness" is only from the developer's perspective, never from citizens'. The standard tactic is that wind developers then use these fabricated "harms" as a ploy to get other concessions in subsequent negotiations.}

After the public had their say, the Town Council voted unanimously to pass their Tall Structure Ordinance. They acknowledged that since this was a very technical matter, that all the advisable protections did not get incorporated into this version. A meeting on December 12th was set up for a public hearing about further improvements to this bill.

My personal conclusions:

- 1 - It was very good that this Ordinance was passed unanimously.
Hopefully the new Council members will have this citizen perspective.
- 2 - It was disappointing that the Ordinance did not include all of the protections that had been well-documented as being advisable.
- 3 - It was good that the Council setup a public hearing on December 12th to discuss the upgrades needed.
- 4 - It was excellent that quite a few citizens objected to sales puffery, and presented well-founded concerns.
- 5 - One Carteret Commissioner was in attendance, and I'm hoping that he will see that the County learns from this experience.

The last time I looked this Ordinance was not posted on the Town's [website](#). When it is I will go through it and send out a specific commentary on what improvements are suggested.

THANK YOU to the citizens who are taking time out of their busy lives to keep up and this matter, and are speaking up about it.

Let me know any questions.

regards,

john droz, jr.

PS — Please read this [article](#) about the Carteret County Commissioners meeting on Monday night (6:00 PM, 11/18/13).

This is a Public Hearing on their wind energy law (Tall Structure Ordinance). Citizens should take this opportunity to express their views — just as was done so well at the newport Town meeting. For a point of reference here are [my suggestions](#) where the County ordinance could use attention.