

Dear Planning and County Commissioners,

6 July 2015

My family and I currently live 1.5 miles west of Cortland on Apple Road in Northern Gage County. We are a young family, both my wife Melissa and I are in our thirties with two children ages 5 and 4. Our 5 year old daughter Sophia just graduated kindergarten this year at Norris and is excited to begin 1st Grade in the fall. Our son Jaxson will start pre-school at Norris this fall as well. We have lived in our home since 2008 and thoroughly enjoy the quiet countryside and the fantastic views that living on an acreage has allowed us to have. We moved to this area because we wanted to raise our family in the quiet and calm of the countryside. After raising our family we plan on enjoying it for many years as we approach retirement and beyond. We had every intention of this being our final residence and now that is threatened.

My wife and I are very concerned and opposed to the plans to locate a large wind farm in our area by Volkswind USA. We have several concerns that include the following:

1. Size of the Project: The proposed wind turbines for our area are approx. 400ft tall and have blades that are 90-100 feet in length. The sheer size of these wind turbines is alarming. Now factor in that there will be over 50 of them in my community. 20-25 of them are proposed to be within 2-3 miles of my residence. The quiet and calm countryside and great views that I mentioned above will be gone. There is no arguing this point. The NE State Capitol is 400ft tall and I can see this driving into Lincoln on HWY 77 several miles South of Saltillo Rd. This is a distance of 10-12 miles. How will these wind turbines look, not to mention sound, from a distance of 2 miles. My family, my neighbors, and my community do not live in this area to be forced to look at giant mechanical eyesores. If we wanted that we would live in an urban environment.
2. Health Concerns: Both audible and inaudible noise is a concern with this Turbines. It does not take much research to discover that others throughout the country and across the world have had serious issues with the noise produced by these Turbines. Audible noise, caused by the Mechanical noises of the Turbine itself and the noise caused by the blades, and Low Frequency Noise (LFN) is of great concern to me and to the health of my family. A proposed setback of 1000ft that is being proposed to the Lancaster County Zoning Commission is completely unacceptable. Reports have shown that you can "hear" these wind turbines up to 1.5 miles away, sometimes further, dependent of wind direction and wind speed. The flicker effect is also very concerning and can cause residents to not be able to go outside or have their shades open during certain times of the day. In essence, you become a prisoner in your own home.
3. Environmental Concerns: Concerns over wildlife and especially migratory birds is also very concerning. We have an NRD Lake less than a quarter mile from our house and the number of geese, ducks and other waterfowl that fly in close proximity to our home is hard to estimate as it is so large. Wind Turbines are claimed as being "Green" energy, but at what cost.
4. Safety Concerns: Is it safe to live in close proximity to large wind turbines. Studies show that proximity to noise, both audible and LFN, has detrimental effects to one's health. There is no denying that these wind turbines will produce noise. Severe weather is also a significant concern regarding these wind turbines. Tornadoes and Severe Thunderstorms in Northern Lancaster and Southern Gage Counties are unforgiving (Example: Hallam Tornado). Living in close proximity to a 400ft wind turbine is cause for concern as the blades or the entire structure pose a serious threat to the safety of my family and to my property.

5. Property Value Concerns: How will my property value be affected by these wind farms and will my property value decrease because of these. Volkswind USA and other wind farm companies will argue that it won't affect property/land value. They say it won't affect land value but land value and the value of the hundreds of acreages in this area are two entirely different topics. Will farm land values be affected, even those that have wind turbines located on them? Perhaps not, because you can still farm this land and the farm land that does have wind turbines on them are being paid a substantial yearly lease for the use of their land. The property owners who own acreages in this area will most certainly see a decrease in their property value. I base this on many of the reasons I stated above. The bottom line is that families such as myself that currently live on an acreage or future family's that will be in the market for acreage's in the future will be negatively affected by these wind farms. We simply do not want to look at them, listen to them, or have health effects associated with them.

In conducting my research I have come across the following many times and I believe it is very pertinent. Supporters of Wind Energy and those that support wind farms tout all the benefits, but when pressed they state that they would not want these wind turbines in their "backyard". This wind farm and these giant wind turbines will be in my backyard and my neighbor's backyards. The extreme height, the noise and vibration caused by the blades and turbine (both audible and inaudible LFN), the flicker effect during the day and the strobe lights at night will create an environment for myself and my neighbors that will affect our lives in a negative way each and every day.

Is there a place for wind energy in Nebraska? I believe that there is, but I firmly believe that it is not viable, considering all the negative impacts, to place a large wind farm in the Cortland / Hallam community. Volkswind USA and other wind companies will be seeking approvals for permits and possible zoning changes and I ask that these requests be denied. My family and I love our community and Wind Energy is not right for our community.

I appreciate you time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

////Signed////

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