

Cohocton group tries to block windmill projects

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COHOCTON – Cohocton Wind Watch, a group that opposes three windmill projects in Cohocton and Prattsburgh, has filed three separate legal actions in an effort to block the developments.

David P. Miller, a Naples lawyer, said in a press release the lawsuits were filed Aug. 31 in State Supreme Court in Steuben County against the Cohocton Planning Board.

One of the suits requests an immediate order blocking all construction on the Cohocton Wind and Dutch Hill projects, which would include 51 wind turbines on about 7,000 acres of leased lands.

Miller said the lawsuits also challenge the issuance of special use permits for the windmill projects by the planning board. He said additional legal action is being prepared to challenge the UPC Wind Prattsburgh project.

“Improper siting of 51 industrial wind turbines in violation of town and New York state law and regulations is the basis of the litigation,” Miller said.

Construction was scheduled to begin last week, but was delayed when Steuben County demanded a survey of the condition of the roads heavy trucks and equipment will use to get to the wind project sites.

Canandaigua Power Partners II and its subsidiary, UPC Wind, the sponsor of the windmill projects, has signed a cost-sharing agreement to bring the roads back to their original condition after the work is complete, county officials said.

Jack Zigenfus, Cohocton town supervisor, and representatives of UPC Wind could not be reached for comment Tuesday.

“These lawsuits were brought by 33 residents and property owners in Cohocton,” said James Hall, a spokesman for Cohocton Wind Watch. “Also named are UPC Wind and their various (associated companies) and 50 leaseholders who have agreements with the industrial turbine developer.”

Cohocton Wind Watch said on its Web site (www.cohoctonwindwatch.org) that Acting Supreme Court Justice Marianne Furfure will hear arguments on the lawsuits at 10 a.m. Oct. 2 in Bath.

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