

MEMORANDUM

TO: Barre Town Board

FROM: Kathy Spencer, Principal Environmental Analyst, LaBella Associates, DPC
Lucia Woo, Environmental Planner, LaBella Associates, DPC

DATE: September 10, 2018

SUBJECT: Barre Community Survey Results – Heritage Wind Project

The attached information provides a survey of the results of the Barre Community Survey undertaken by LaBella Associates during June and July 2018. As you are aware, the primary purpose of the survey was to inform the Town’s consultant team as to which issues were most important to Town and other affected residents. The survey responses will supplement the information gathered at the Public Information and Comment Session held on July 18, 2018.

Information about community concerns is a critical element of the Article 10 review process and needs to be clearly identified to the PSC, the administrative law judges, and the Siting Board.

The online survey link was posted on the Town website, and hard copies were available for pick-up at the Barre Town Hall, Hoag Library, and Barre Deli as well as the Public Information and Comment Session. They were also inserted in the mid-July *PennySaver* circulation.

By the survey deadline of July 27, 2018, a total of 325 survey submissions (online and hard copies) were received, and 290 (89%) submissions were accepted. Removed from analysis were 35 (11%) duplicate and invalid submissions. Duplicate submissions were either combined with or replaced the previous submissions. Responses were considered invalid if submitted from respondents who do not reside in Barre or in any of its bordering municipalities. If the respondents indicated they work or own land in Barre, their submissions were accepted regardless of their residence status.

In addition to the results summary graphics, excerpts from written comments sent by community members are provided in the attached. A summary version of the survey results is also provided for public dissemination on the Town website.

Although requested by two community members, we did not conduct a further analysis to determine the percentage of survey respondents in favor of the project who will potentially



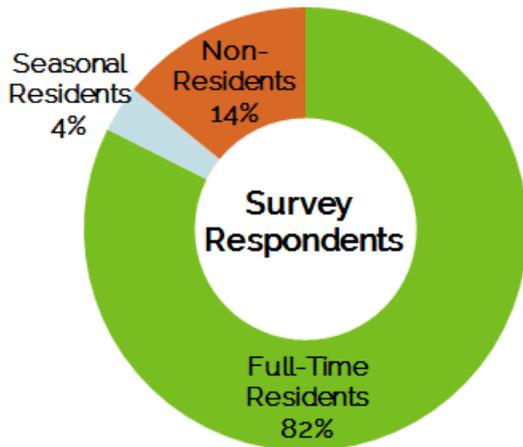
lease land to the developer. From our prior experience working on wind projects, the preliminary turbine locations and thus the list of potential leaseholders can change over the course of the project approval process. Secondly, potential leaseholders are still members of the Barre community. Their expressed concerns, knowledge, and opinions need to be accounted for as part of a whole picture for the Town of Barre. The information, as it now stands, fulfills LaBella's primary purpose in undertaking the survey, which was to inform LaBella, Town officials, and the Town's attorneys about the significant issues of concern to the overall community.

For questions, please reach out to Kathy Spencer (kspencer@labellapc.com; 585.295.6638) or Lucia Woo (lwoo@labellapc.com; 585-402-7073).

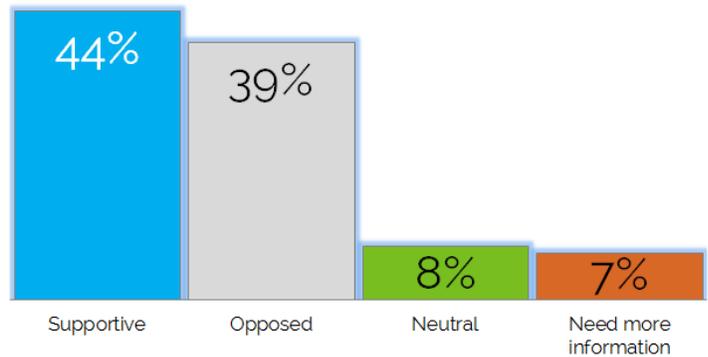
BARRE COMMUNITY SURVEY - HERITAGE WIND - RESULTS

The Town of Barre accepted both online and mailed input from its residents, landowners, workers, and bordering municipality neighbors regarding a proposed utility-scaled wind energy project called Heritage Wind. The Town received comments from 290 of the aforementioned community members from June 18 to July 27, 2018. The knowledge and opinions shared will help inform the Town's representatives during the project evaluation process governed by Public Service Law Article 10.

Most respondents were full-time Barre Town residents.



Currently, support and opposition for the project are evenly split overall.

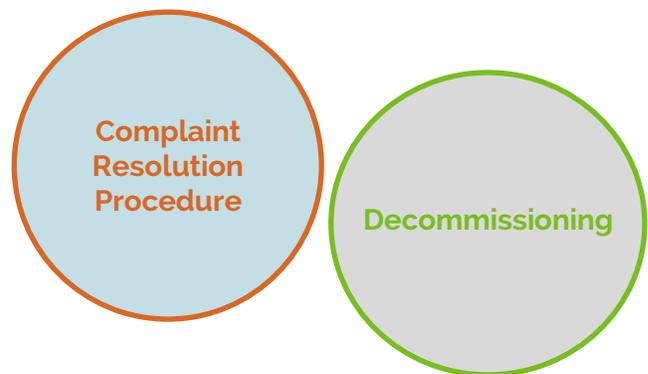


Notably, there is a slightly higher level of support (46%) than opposition (36%) among only Barre Town resident respondents.

Wildlife, property values, and roads emerged as the most cited resources of value to the community.



Most pressing concerns involve complaint resolution procedure and decommissioning plans.



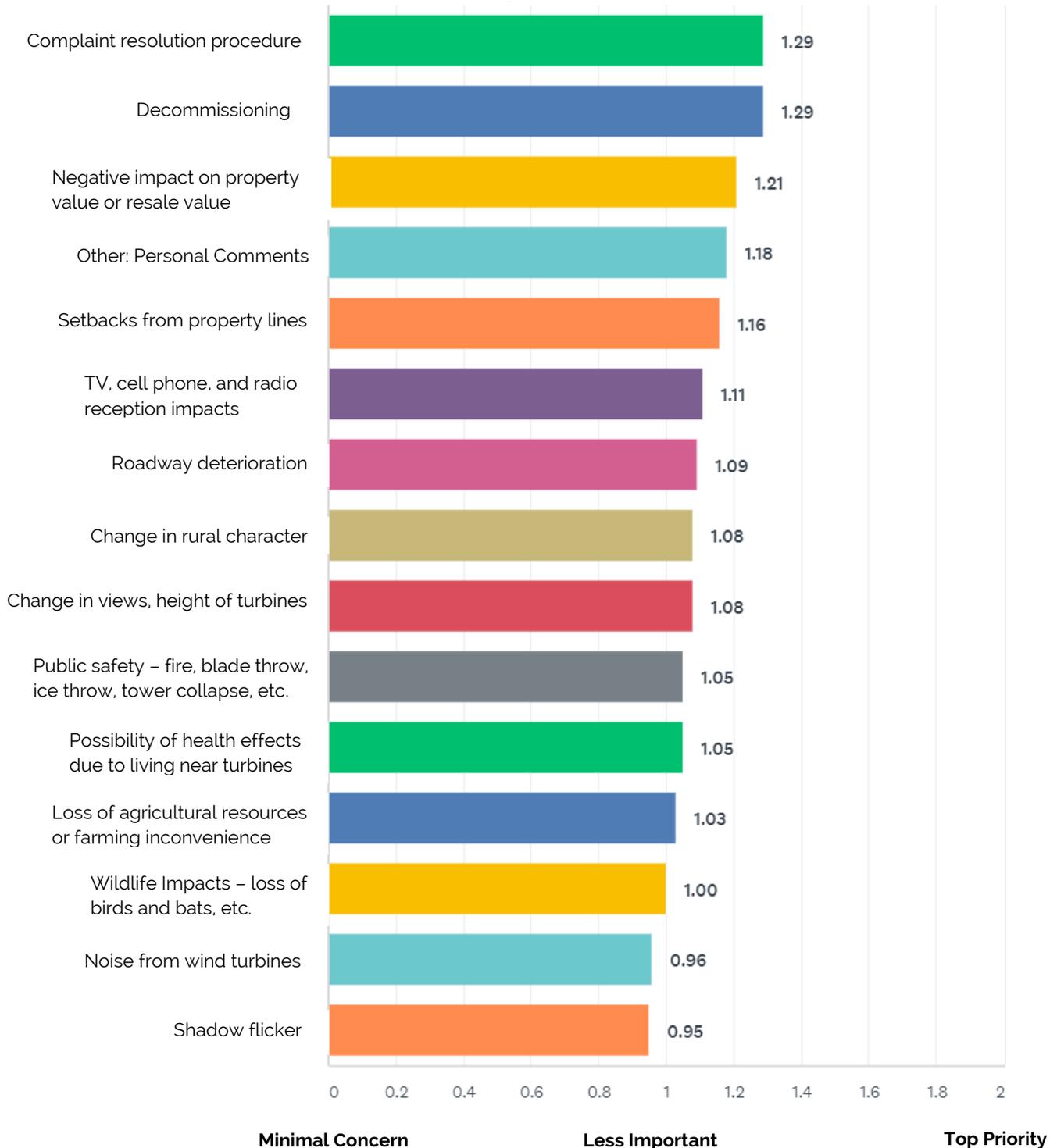
The comments touched on a wide range of topics – some of which provided detailed descriptions of environmental resources considered to be unique to Barre. However, questions about potential impacts to tax rates and property values were most prevalent.





Which of the following concerns could be significant in the Town of Barre and require a careful evaluation of potential local impacts?

278 out of 290 (96%) total survey respondents answered this question.
Two out of every five survey respondents identified complaint resolution procedure and decommissioning plans as top priorities.



Identify locally valuable resources that may be impacted while constructing and operating wind turbines

Below are excerpts of selected comments

Historic and Archaeological Resources

Both roads [that run in front of my corner property] will be used to deliver the enormous components for the wind turbines proposed to be built, and turning from one road to the other will damage the historic buildings and the archaeological resources located at this intersection.

My [19th century] home is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Its original cobblestone and lime mortar foundation is particularly vulnerable to ground vibrations from heavy vehicles on the state highway, just 25 feet from my front door. And it's important to note that a large percentage of the town's housing stock dates to the 19th century. All these homes were constructed using soft lime-sand mortar. It's a wonderful, centuries-old and time-tested material, but will crumble if subjected to constant and/or repeated substantial vibrations.

Cemeteries: Barre Center Cemetery on Route 98 just south of Barre Center; East Barre Cemetery aka Love Cemetery Mathes Rd & Thorpe Rd; West Barre Cemetery on West Barre Rd; Snyder Cemetery on Maple St; Myrtle Hill Cemetery on Eagle Harbor Rd & Rte 31A; Green Farm Cemetery on Rte 31A; Pine Hill Cemetery on Pine Hill Rd & Pask Rd

Infrastructure

Increases of heavy truck traffic on 98, 31A, East Barre Rds

Roads, electric lines, water lines

Land & Farms

Access roads cut up fields

The right to farm community would be impacted negatively as future generations would be restricted in using potential farmland that was diminished by access roadways and potential farmland not available on land the turbines would be constructed on.

Composition of our bedrock primarily sandstone, limestone and shale- live along a fault line

The bedrock along Culver Rd and other places is 2 ft - 4 ft down (I know because our home is built on solid rock 4' down!) - need to blast or build even taller once on a thick pad.

Erosion of the muck land due to the increase and change in wind patterns in the 5800 acres of organic soil

Water Resources

Wetlands on Culver Rd and throughout the Oak Orchard watershed

Wells may be compromised if blasting occurs (open up [sulfur]/salt or disrupt the flow)

Wildlife

Blue Heron, Geese Hawk, Great Horned Owls

Oak Orchard Wildlife Preserve and Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge. Some turbines will be located very close to it in west barre off eagle harbor rd. in that area there are bald eagles that are frequently flying

Videotaping whitetail deer south of the Gillette Rd and Old 98 is a great pastime. A video (natural moments: The whitetail is valuable for viewing in all local libraries). Increased people activity in prime natural habitat will inhibit and alter [their] activity

Fish stocked by the DEC in our local creeks and rivers connecting into Lake Ontario compromised due to the unnatural chemicals and toxicity levels from the runoff.

If the turbines drive the bats, that help control the insect population, it will result in a higher number of insects which could affect crops which could result in more insecticides being used on our food/food for livestock (which we will then ingest).

Socioeconomic Impacts

The closing off of future development in the Town of Barre. Ex. senior living center, tourism, filming location, etc.

The loss of property values is a huge concern for older town residents like me who have no retirement pensions and minimal savings. Our homes are our primary and essentially only investment. If our homes and properties lose value, we lose everything.

People who live and invest in our community should be recognized as a valuable resource that may be impacted.

Lack of access to internet and digital TV. A large portion of the town relies on satellite TV and internet service or free digital TV which will no longer be available without interruption due to the turbines. Spectrum is not scheduled to supply high speed internet or cable to my area until 2020. This severely limits my right to entertainment, access to employment opportunities, and economical procurement of goods via the internet.

Public Safety & Human Health

Our area is known for crazy weather including ice storms. I am terribly concerned about the damage or even loss of life an ice release off of a blade of that length could cause.

Pine Hill Airport-airplane safety

Lack of emergency medical access - there is no hospital within 15 to 20 miles in any direction. Mercy flight will need to avoid the town of Barre so they do not interfere with/crash into the wind turbines. More than likely they will not service this area because they have to follow FAA regulations for safe operation. HUGE PUBLIC SAFETY and access to medical care issue.

Shadow flicker and flashing lights can cause serious reactions for those suffering from epilepsy and other seizure disorders (I personally know one town resident in this category).

Additional Comments Received

- Emphasis placed on transparent and fair decision-making that benefits all residents
- Requests literature review of various impacts, including case studies
- Benefits such as tax relief (especially by farmers) and "green" energy were often cited.
- Questions about PILOT, long-term tax rates, and property value impact uncertainty
- Concerns about community division, setbacks, turbine lights, compromised views, and air traffic/skydiving
- Misunderstanding of wind energy distribution: wind energy will feed into the state grid to serve residents throughout the state; cannot direct electricity to only NYC or Barre; and will not interfere with hydroelectric contribution to Barre's energy consumption.
- Suggests collaboration with Clear Skies above Barre including issuing regular updates to keep the Town informed
- Complaints about renewable energy projects' subsidies and perceived conflict of interest among Barre Town Board members.