

Agenda
Regular Meeting 7:00 p.m.
Spring Lake Township Planning Commission
May 19, 2010



- A. Roll call
- B. Adoption of minutes: February 17, 2009
- C. Approval of agenda
- D. General public comment
- E. Dood- **PUBLIC HEARING**: Special Use Permit to expand an existing nonconforming use.
 - 1. Open Public Hearing
 - 2. Close Public Hearing
 - 3. Discussion
 - 4. Motion to approve, approve with conditions, or deny.
- F. Medical Marijuana Dispensaries - Discussion
- G. Zoning Ordinance Training – Planned Unit Developments
- H. Off-shore Wind Turbines
- I. Commissioner comments and Liaison Reports
 - 1. Township Board
 - 2. Zoning Board of Appeals
 - 3. CDD
- J. Adjourn

Spring Lake Township offices and meeting hall are located at 106 South Buchanan Street, Spring Lake, Michigan. Regular Office hours are Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

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Majority of people attending Michigan Great Lakes Wind Council conference voice support for offshore wind farms

By [Dave Alexander | Muskegon Chronicle](#)

May 04, 2010, 10:18PM

The overflow crowd that jammed the Muskegon Community College's Collegiate Hall Tuesday night to hear about the state's work in regulating offshore wind farms was supportive of the idea.

But it wasn't a slam dunk.

Wireless audience voting equipment showed 62 percent of those participating in the Michigan Great Lakes Wind Council's Muskegon meeting Tuesday favored the concept of offshore wind farms, with 32 percent opposing.

When it came to the critical issue of the visual impact of wind farms on waterfront residents and communities, 51 percent favored a wind farm shown in a mock photo that depicted a turbine distance six miles from shore. The audience only had the photo, not the distance at the time they voted.

A 13-mile photo depiction received a 57 percent level of support, while a photo of an offshore wind farm 20 miles away received 67 percent support. It is the first time that an offshore wind gathering generated specific opinions.

The Offshore Wind Council event drew more than 300 people to MCC where similar events drew about 100 people in Bay City and less than 50 in Escanaba, state officials said. The West Michigan interest has been driven by a specific wind farm proposal of Scandia Wind Offshore for developments off the Lake Michigan shores of Grand Haven and Pentwater.

However, the state information meeting at MCC was not specifically about the Scandia proposal nor the county board votes the wind farm developers have asked of Muskegon, Ottawa, Oceana and Mason commissioners by Sept. 1. The company wants to know if the county boards could accept the visual look of the proposed wind farms before a three-year, \$7 million economic and environmental study is conducted.

The state meeting was about broader public policies and specific legislation regulating the offshore wind farms on the Michigan's Great Lakes bottomlands. Wind council coordinator Michael Klepinger asked the Muskegon audience to take a "long-term view" of the offshore wind farm issue.

"We are starting a conversation and are working through these issues for our Great Lakes," Klepinger said.

There was little time for public comment at the information meeting but most showed up with some strongly-held opinions. Grand Haven's Karen Murvin said she was curious about the suggestion of having a wind farm six miles off the Grand Haven pierheads.

"I'm not happy with the prospects," Murvin said. "I guess I'm concerned about the birds and marine life and the aesthetics."

Muskegon's Robert Jennings, who lives close to Pere Marquette Beach, said he is interested in repeating Denmark's development of wind energy in Michigan.

"We have to be promoting employment," Jennings said prior to the event. "If we can do it this way, I'm all for (offshore wind). I am not all that distressed with generators offshore."

Council Chairman Stanley "Skip" Pruss presented the Gov. Jennifer Granholm administration's position on the economic development potential of alternative energy and wind development. The state's top policy energy official told the Muskegon meeting that four issues are driving the offshore wind farm issue:

- Clean energy technology will diversify Michigan's economy creating jobs and investment.
- Home-generated energy provides security for the state and the nation.
- Wind is a fuel-less, emission-free energy source that does not harm the environment.
- Wind will add to a balanced source of energy as the state expects greater electrical needs in the future.

The Offshore Wind Council is working with the Michigan Legislature to propose new laws concerning the leasing of state Great Lakes bottomlands and the regulation of offshore wind farms. State Sen. Pattie Birkholz, R-Saugatuck, is a key lawmaker as the law-making process begins.

Attending the Muskegon meeting, Birkholz told The Chronicle that she has begun the process of introducing legislation but the specifics are not yet ready.

"The discussions are beginning," Birkholz. "I hope to have the bills introduced this year. That's my plan, but I am not making any commitments."

