

Corpus Christi Passes Residential Wind Turbine Ordinance

Contributed by Tom McGregor
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The city council of Corpus Christi, Tx. unanimously passed a wind energy ordinance on Tuesday that would make wind turbine installation a possibility for residential property owners desiring to go green.

The Corpus Christi Caller-Times reports that, "the ordinance was a third rewrite since the council decided to examine the previous two versions so more homeowners could install turbines. The city enlisted local industry officials on a subcommittee to help write the final version approved today."

Industry people's efforts were lauded by all council members.

Councilman Kevin Kieschnick, who helped lead the rewrite efforts, said, "we've already got calls from other cities looking for copies of this ordinance. I think that speaks well of this proposal. We wanted a leader instead of a follower. My hat is off to you for that. You got planning individuals involved in doing this so it won't detract from the quality of life in Corpus Christi."

According to the Caller-Times, "the ordinance, which also includes installation of commercial wind turbines within city limits, allows turbines on residential lots larger than an acre and on smaller lots if residents comply with a set of rules. Earlier versions required at least 1.5 acres."

Sound limitations have been eliminated from previous drafts, which was earlier posted at 60 decibels during the day and 40 decibels at night. Industry officials contend that the decibel limit was too stringent, when one recognizes that air conditioning units emit approximately 65 decibels and turbines emit about 54 decibels.

One industry official on the committee pointed out that the noise can be compared to the sound of a neighbor pulling his vehicle into his driveway. The new regulations only say that turbines must comply with the city noise ordinance.

Still, the ordinance mandates that the turbines must have a clear distance around them equal to their height.

As reported by the Caller-Times, "a 35-foot wind turbine on a 1-acre residential property costs an average of \$14,000. At that size it would provide 40 percent of energy for a family home, according to Tracy Long owner of Alternative Renewable Energy, a turbine dealer and installer."

To read the entire article from the Corpus Christi Caller-Times, link here:

Tmcgregordallas@yahoo.com