



Hoffman joins wind power alliance

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Add Hoffman Estates to the list of municipalities supporting the construction of power-generating wind turbines.

The village board gave preliminary approval Monday night to join the Wind Turbine Alliance, a group of school districts, villages and other taxing bodies that back the construction of wind turbines. The group formed earlier this year after Hanover Park officials were approached about building the turbines near Greenbrook Elementary School.

That plan snerled due to zoning and noise concerns. The new proposal is to build 100 turbines on a farm site in McLean County, north of Normal. The towers would be around 300 feet tall.

Officials in Keeneyville Elementary School District 20, based in Hanover Park, first floated the idea for the turbines in 2006, saying wind power would reduce their costs and need for electricity. Officials say connecting to the turbines would cost \$1 million for its three schools. They estimate that from 2010 to 2039, District 20 would spend \$20 million on electricity. If District 20 built the turbine, it would save \$10.9 million during the same span.

On Monday, Gary Ofisher, District 20's director of operations, said he's gotten support from 25 groups. He also hopes six community colleges, including Harper College in Palatine, will back the plan.

Ofisher referenced legislation which requires ComEd to give schools an electricity credit, an incentive to use power from a wind turbine. Hanover Park Village President Rodney Craig has been a staunch supporter of the bill and recently sponsored rallies supporting its passage. State Rep. Fred Crespo of the 44th District sponsored the bill, which is in Springfield in the House's Rules Committee.

Hoffman Estates Trustee Cary Collins said anything to lessen the dependence on foreign energy sources would be a positive.

"This is the direction we should be moving on," he said.