



TOWN OF EAST HAMPTON

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EAST HAMPTON TOWN BOARD APPROVES AGREEMENTS WITH SOUTH FORK WIND FARM

With a majority vote today, the East Hampton Town Board approved two agreements with South Fork Wind, LLC, advancing a proposal to build a 15-turbine wind farm in federal waters 30 miles east of Montauk Point, which will deliver renewable energy to meet growing South Fork energy demands.

The project will be the first offshore wind farm in New York State, a flagship for the state's focused sustainable energy efforts, which include several other upcoming wind farms. It represents a significant step for East Hampton Town toward its goal of meeting 100 percent of community-wide electricity consumption with renewable energy sources.

An easement agreement between East Hampton Town and South Fork Wind, formerly known as Deepwater Wind, will allow the underground installation in town rights-of-way of the onshore portion of a 132-megawatt electrical transmission cable, from the proposed cable landing site at Beach Lane in Wainscott to a PSEG-LI/ Long Island Power Authority (LIPA) substation at Cove Hollow Road in East Hampton.

A host community agreement will yield almost \$29 million in payments over 25 years to the Town and the East Hampton Town Trustees to benefit our community and residents. Both agreements will take effect only upon approval of the project by the New York State Public Service Commission and federal reviewing agencies.

"Today, by approving these agreements, I vote yes to advancing our commitment to renewable energy and continuing East Hampton's long tradition of leadership in protecting the environment," said East Hampton Town Supervisor Peter Van Scoyoc.

He noted that the project has undergone an “extremely robust review” and discussion by more than 70 parties – organizations, community groups, and individuals – to the Public Service Commission review and settlement proceedings. The project has also been the subject of two dozen public Town Board and East Hampton Town Trustees meetings over more than four years, he noted, and the agreements signed today have been exhaustively negotiated. The negotiations resulted in a significant increase in the originally proposed \$8.4 million value of the community benefits package.

The proposed agreements were finalized and released to the public for comment on December 14, 2020, and a January 12 board work session was set aside to allow public comments on the agreements to be made directly to the board. “We have taken the necessary time to carefully review and consider all comments received,” Supervisor Van Scoyoc said.

“We don’t have to look far to see the results of the climate crisis right here in our community. Storms are becoming more likely, more dangerous and more costly – claiming our shoreline, flooding our roadways and challenging our infrastructure,” said Councilwoman Kathee Burke-Gonzalez. “We need urgent action to cut greenhouse gas emissions and speed the shift to renewable energies like solar and wind. I see no reason to delay. I am more than satisfied with the exhaustive review that has taken place.”

“I am proud to approve this,” said Councilwoman Sylvia Overby. The agreements regarding the wind farm have “a special meaning to this town and its citizens,” she said, “as we are leaders in reducing climate impact. We are leaders as we write the process for other communities to follow.” Residents of Wainscott, she said, especially those who may be inconvenienced during the cable installation, “asked the hard questions” that resulted in improvements to the terms of the agreements. “We are leaders,” Councilwoman Overby said, “as we all understand the short-term inconvenience for the long-term health of our oceans, our own properties, and our entire waterfront community.”

“I believe that offshore wind, commercial fisheries, and other ocean users are capable of coexisting,” said Councilman David Lys. “We need to come together as a whole to protect East Hampton’s future, and the environment of the planet.”

The Town will remain involved in the ongoing reviews of the project, including by the federal Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, and will represent the concerns of East Hampton’s fisheries industry.

A number of agencies and environmental organizations, including the NYS Department of State, Department of Environmental Conservation, and the state Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation, along with groups such as the Sierra Club, Surfrider Foundation, National Wildlife Federation, Group for the East End, Concerned Citizens of Montauk, and Citizens Campaign for the Environment, have voiced support for the wind farm, a joint project of the Danish company Orsted, and Eversource Energy, based in Boston.

The easement agreement, which is subject to a permissive referendum, includes specific conditions regarding how the transmission cable is installed, maintained, repaired, and ultimately decommissioned in accordance with numerous requirements to protect and preserve natural and historical resources, and to ensure the public's safety and quality of life during the placement and operation of the cable.

Councilman Jeff Bragman voted against the easement agreement and abstained from the vote on the host community benefits agreement.