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# Tonawanda looks to tighten wind energy and cell tower regulations



*Workers put the final touches on Falken tires in the finishing area of the PCR line at the Sumitomo Rubber USA tire manufacturing plant in Tonawanda, Thursday, Nov. 10, 2016. (Derek Gee/Buffalo News)*

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Could your neighbor put in a wind turbine to generate power?

Not likely is the answer, as the Town of Tonawanda Planning Board discussed how to revise and toughen up its alternative energy codes.

The board brought in Andrew C. Reilly, a consultant from Wendel Engineering, who praised the board for its current code, which restricts wind turbines to industrial zones.

But Reilly said the town code needs to add regulations on vertical turbines, which could be placed on residential roofs, as well as clarify the maximum height of commercial grade turbines.

"Right now, you have smaller non-commercial grade turbines which goes up to 165 feet and that is only allowed in an industrial area. We won't change that," Reilly said.

But he said the code needs to address how high a commercial-grade wind turbine can be. He said the current code allows for turbines up to 450 feet, which board members agreed would be larger than they would like to see in the town.

Reilly said he would revise the code for turbines and telecommunications and present it to the Planning Board on March 1. The Planning Board, as an advisory board, will recommend changes in the code for the Town Board to vote on.

In an ironic, but unrelated presentation, Triad Recycling applied for a special use permit to put up a second 159-foot wind turbine at its site at 3755 River Road. The project will need a special use permit from the Town Board.

The turbine would be used to power a building on the property where the company intends to turn recycled plastics into glue, he said. Triad, which has been in the

town for the past six years, recycles 26 different building materials and mattresses for reuse, such as turning drywall into bedding for farm animals, he said.

Padma Kasthurirangan of Buffalo Renewables said the towers would be 630 feet apart and the new turbine would be 960 feet from a dwelling.

The first turbine was put in on Dec. 9, and this new wind tower would supplement the increasing energy needs of the new building, said Kasthurirangan. All the power would be used onsite. Hannon noted that the first turbine has been very successful.

In other matters, the Planning Board:

- Approved the final site plan for Sumitomo Rubber Industries, which plans to invest \$87 million over the next three years, increasing its tire making capacity at its Town of Tonawanda plant. Construction is expected to start within a month, according to a company official.

Sumitomo Rubber USA, the former Goodyear Dunlop Plant at 10 Sheridan Drive/3333 River Road, employs 1,300 in the town. The expansion will increase its tire-making capacity (<https://buffalonews.com/2016/12/13/ready-roll-sumitomo-ramping-tire-production-tonawanda-plant/>) from 10,000 to 17,000 tires per day by the end of 2019.

"This addition is a big deal for employees there," James Hartz, director of planning and development told the Buffalo News. "It's a small addition relative to the overall square footage of the plant. It's over a million-square-feet

and this addition is in the neighborhood to 30,000 to 40,000-square-feet, but it's going to help them increase their capacity."

Sumitomo Rubber USA wants to import fewer tires from its factory in Thailand and rely more heavily on the Tonawanda tire plant to make car and truck tires for the American market.

Sumitomo will ramp up production of its Falken car and truck tires over the next three years as it continues to make Dunlop-brand motorcycle tires, which are popular on the racing circuit, as well as Dunlop tires sold to Japanese automakers. Its production of Goodyear tires will steadily wind down over the next two years as part of the companies' separation agreement.

- Approved a final site plan for Pine Pharmaceuticals, which will build a \$5.6 million drug compounding facility. The planning board gave the company a conditional approval last month, while it worked out an access agreement with TM Montante, owner of the Riverview Solar Technology Park at 355 Riverwalk Parkway.

"That's another fantastic project," Hartz told The News. "They are hiring many more people in the expansion and these are good paying jobs too - upwards of a \$150,000 per

year in high-tech, chem-lab positions. We are very happy they decided to locate in Tonawanda."

Pine Pharmaceutical, owned by Alfonse J. Muto, wants to construct the 25,000-square-foot building (<https://buffalonews.com/2017/01/19/pine-pharmacy-subsidiary-seeks-ecida-tax-breaks-grow/>) to house its offices, laboratory, manufacturing, warehousing and distribution operations. The business is a subsidiary of Pine Pharmacy, which is located Niagara Falls.

Muto, who founded Pine Pharmacy in 1985, started Pine Pharmaceuticals in 2013 with his son to make customized drugs that could be shipped directly to doctors, according to Erie County IDA documents. The company has outgrown its current space at 100 Colvin Woods Parkway in Tonawanda where it employs 19 people. It expects to add another 15 if the project is completed.

According to their ECIDA application officials hope to begin work by March 14 and finish by Sept. 28 with manufacturing expected to begin by Nov. 3.