Dear Editor,

It seems that a Zoning Commission made up of only three people have proposed a new zoning ordinance that would impact economic development in the Town of Richfield for decades to come.

What is unclear is whether or not this plan benefits the whole town or is just a cats paw for a small group of residents who oppose a specific clean energy renewable wind project on the west end of town.

Residents should realize that wind power which has been successfully deployed elsewhere in New York State, the country and the world, will be a vital energy resource in the future. But most important to an agricultural region like Richfield, is the compatibility of wind turbines and farming. Farmers can lease land to host a wind turbine, and still continue to operate their farm.

Many farmers, including those in the dairy industry, are barely holding on. Allowing compatible wind turbines or solar panels can provide the type of long-lasting revenue that has allowed farming to thrive elsewhere.

Before approving a new zoning ordinance that stymies this type of clean energy development, Richfield residents should consider not just whether they want to see turbines or solar panels, but how they feel about abandoned farms or their neighbors struggling to make a decent living.

That is the real choice in many areas. Not to mention polls indicating that a majority of residents in the town of Richfield support renewable energy development.

It might be a good time to hit the pause button, abandon this flawed proposed zoning plan, and have a more representative group come up with zoning that is best for all residents of Richfield.

Signed,

Anne Reynolds

Executive Director, Alliance for Clean Energy New York