

RWE

Baron Winds II Community Engagement Plan





1. Authorities Having Jurisdiction and Taxing School District

[Baron Winds II Stakeholders List.xlsx](#)

2. Outreach Strategies and Activities To Date

- Baron Winds continues to maintain a project website, created in 2019: <https://americas.rwe.com/our-energy/onshore-wind/onshore-wind-projects-and-locations/baron-winds-onshore-wind-farm/>
- Sponsored and participated in a locally well-attended fall festival, the “Cohocton Fall Foliage Festival” in 2022. Baron Winds staffed a booth on the festival grounds manned by the Development Manager and RWE Clean Energy staff. Attendees were provided with project and company materials, and were able to discuss project details with RWE representatives. [Home \(fallfoliagefestival.com\)](#)
- Engaged with a local snowmobile club, the Quad County Snowmobile Club ([Home Quad County Snowmobile Club \(quadcountysnoclub.com\)](#)), and negotiated an easement, for a section of the snowmobile trail, approximately 1000 feet long, that runs along a collection route between Turbines 83 and 61 on Holmes Rd.
- On June 22, 2022, held an Open House at Avoca High School, attended by several members from the community, allowing the opportunity for the public to learn more about the project and provide valuable feedback. Along with directly mailing invites to landowners and stakeholders, the open house was advertised in The Corning Leader for the week of June 19, 2022.
- Held a landowner dinner in October, 2022 at the Cohocton Fire Station to provide project updates, receive feedback, and answer questions from participating landowners.
- Worked with participating landowners and stakeholders to produce the Baron Winds Testimonial Video in October 2023: [SC VD 103 \(youtube.com\)](#)
- Hosted the Baron Winds I Ribbon Cutting held on November 2, 2023, inviting Phase I and Phase II landowners and community stakeholders, as well as RWE Clean Energy employees. [Ribbon Cutting - INVITE LIST FINAL - Copy.xlsx](#)
- *Attended most monthly Freemont Town Board meetings either inperson or virtual. Engaged a local community liaison that attended monthly board meetings 1/22- 9/23*
- *Meet with and hosted Steuben County IDA on 4 different occasions.*

3. Outreach Strategies RWE Will Use

- The applicant intends to continuously meet with the affected agencies identified in the former Public Involvement Plan, as needed, as has been its practice throughout its development process beginning in 2019. ([Public Involvement Plan \(rwe.com\)](#), [YOUNG, SOMMER \(rwe.com\)](#))
- Regularly update and share transparent project, development, construction, and ongoing operations updates via the project website ([Baron Winds Project, New York | RWE in the Americas](#)), including contact information to submit questions, feedback, and comments from residents and community stakeholders. Updates will be made as needed for the duration development and construction, anticipated to be through 12/31/2025, and as needed throughout the operational life of the project, anticipated to be 30 years.
- Pertinent updates will be directly emailed to participating landowners, local elected officials from the identified AHJs and taxing School Districts, local stakeholders and organizations, as well as residents, who have expressed interest in receiving updates via the contact form on the

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project website. Notifications of these pertinent updates will additionally be posted to the project website. This will occur as needed throughout development and construction, anticipated to be through 12/31/2025, and annually for the operational life of the project, anticipated to be 30 years.

- Continuously work with local organizations, non-profits, schools, and community events to identify opportunities to share project information and updates, and engage with residents and the community, through methods potentially including, but not limited to: tabling at events and sharing printed materials; providing educational presentations to students, conducting site tours for stakeholders; and participating in local events that will allow for broad engagement and interaction with the local Steuben County community to further awareness and education of the Baron Winds project and allow for the opportunity for feedback and questions. Baron Winds will participate in events as described as they arise and are determined to be impactful for the duration of development and construction, anticipated to be through 12/31/2025, and a for the operational life of the project, anticipated to be 30 years.
- Through RWE's partnership with KidWind, RWE will reach out to schedule introductory meetings with superintendents of the identified taxing school districts, to discuss the potential of sponsoring and hosting a KidWind Teacher Training and Workshop, and potential participation in the KidWind Challenge ([KidWind — Teaching the World about Renewables](#)). The initial introduction of KidWind to the school district will occur within 6 months of bid award.
- Baron Winds II will continue to conduct outreach to affected agencies and local organizations, to ensure continuous dialogue.
- Continue to attend local County Legislature, Town Board, and School Board meetings at request or as needed to provide project updates throughout the life of the project.
- Once operational, Baron Winds will organize and host a Ribbon Cutting and site tour, to which all Phase I and Phase II participating landowners, elected officials, and stakeholders will be invited.

4. Applicability of the CLCPA goals regarding benefits to Disadvantaged Communities

- According to the New York State Climate Act criteria for Disadvantaged Communities, three census tracts within Steuben County that neighbor the project location are identified as Disadvantaged Communities: census tract 36101961100, Southern Tier, Steuben County, Bath Village; census tract 36101961200, Southern Tier, Steuben County, Bath Village; and census tract 36101961300, Southern Tier, Steuben County, Savona village. ([List-of-Disadvantaged-Communities.pdf](#)).
- Additionally, according to the U.S Census Bureau, Steuben County has a 12.8% rate of persons living in poverty. (<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/steubencountynewyork>)
- As a part of the PILOT agreement with the Steuben County IDA, Baron Winds II will contribute \$620,000 annually plus administration fees directly to the IDA, revenue which can then be used by the agency to further economic development and job creation for the County, benefitting members of Disadvantaged Communities.
- In addition to the fiscal revenue of the PILOT agreement and the economic benefits realized throughout the construction and operational life of the project, Baron Winds will initiate discussions with the Steuben County IDA to explore creation and funding of a workforce development scholarship open to youth and members of Disadvantaged Communities in the County.

5. Direct Benefits to the Community

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During construction the project will utilize local labour as well as local available goods and services. Past construction with Baron 1 showed that the local community was supportive and supplied local indirect benefits to both the community and the project.

6. PILOT Engagement and Negotiation Status

- The applicant has engaged with the Steuben County Industrial Development Agency (IDA), negotiated, and in April 2023, finalized a 20-year payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT). [Copy of Baron Wind Fremont Phase II 2022 Update V2.xlsx](#)

7. Local Interests and Concerns Including plans to thoughtfully build support and respectfully respond to any opposition

- It is the intent of the applicant to continue to receive and respond to concerns in compliance with the Baron Winds Complaint Resolution Plan, to ensure timely and thorough responses to members of the community. The most frequent complaints received since Baron Winds Phase I has been operational have been regarding initial Sound and Shadow Flicker. As the project completed onsite testing the complaints became minimal. Since July of 2023 the project only has received 1 sound complaint do to an individual icing event.
- Once operational, Baron Winds II and RWECE staff will identify and participate in local events and activities to ensure continuous dialogue with community stakeholders and residents, as well as host a Ribbon Cutting where they will have a chance to see the site and engage with local staff.

8. Identify Strategies to mitigate concerns by the public (viewshed, local agricultural activities,)

- The project is located adjacent to 4 other operational wind projects in the direct viewshed of the community. Wind has become a source of additional revenue for local farmers and landowners and that additional revenue is spent locally and drive economic impact. Wind works very complementary to the traditional hay and cropping patterns of the host communities. The Baron winds 1 and 2 projects are ,or will be the largest single tax payer in the Town of Fremont. The goal of the applicant is to hire local. An example is our local site manager grew up in the community and provides constant feedback on opportunities to further engage with the host communities. Attending Town meetings and hosting locals to the operation site make it easier to explain the impacts and benefits of Baron Winds 2.

9. Method for soliciting feedback and input from public and affected agencies and sharing feedback and responses publicly

- The applicant, Baron Winds II will continue to comply to the processes outlined in the Baron Winds Complaint Resolution Plan updated October 14, 2020 and any subsequent versions of the plan ([updated-complaint-resolution-plan-october-2020.pdf \(rwe.com\)](#)).
- Additionally, residents who would like to speak to operations staff directly in person, may visit the Baron Winds O&M facility during open office hours (8 AM – 4 PM, Monday thru Friday) and request to speak to a representative. The facility is located at 3058 Emo Road, Wayland, NY 14572.

10. Strategy for ensuring public engagement events are widely attended by the public

- For any events directly hosted by RWE or Baron Winds, the follow methods will be employed to ensure broad engagement from a cross-section of community residents and members:
 - o Directly mailed invites to a continuously updated and expanded list of local elected officials, stakeholders, residents, and organizations.
 - o Event information posted on the project website.

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- Sign-ups to the contact database will be emailed invites/event information.
- Printed flyers with event details to be shared with local business, county offices, and town halls for posting and distribution.
- Electronic versions of flyers with event details for posting on social media or websites of local elected officials, business, organizations, and groups.
- Ad placed in local paper(s) of record
- Distribution of event details to any additional relevant local media sources including, but not limited to, the following:
 - Livingston News
 - RochesterFirst.com
 - Democrat & Chronicle
 - News10
 - Finger Lake Times
 - WHAM
 - Star-Gazette
 - Spectrum Local News (Rochester)
 - Hornell Sun
 - WSKG (NPR)

11. Other Community Engagement

- RWE actively encourages our EPC contractors to source workers, services and supplies from the surrounding area of a project, providing a boost to the local economy. RWE encourages, and many times contractually obligates, their contractors to hold job fairs to encourage local workers to join our projects. We track on a monthly basis how well our contractors have succeeded in sourcing local vendors and workers. The majority of construction jobs have been sourced locally and local spending has been in the \$12-18 million per project.
- In addition to these direct economic benefits, RWE takes a pro-active approach to engaging the community and creating long term partnerships in the areas surrounding our projects. We believe in becoming an integral part of the communities where we operate and encourage our employees to volunteer their time and resources for meaningful local causes.
- Rather than taking a “one-size fits all” approach to engagement, RWE makes a point to get to know a community before actively initiating community support efforts. RWE makes a point to listen to community leaders, elected, and appointed officials and interested stakeholders during the development process in order to inform a strategic community outreach plan suited to the specific area. These area-specific plans are generally implemented in late-stage development or the early construction phase of the project.
- Once RWE understands the needs of an area, we begin by supporting and participating in local organizations near the proposed project. As an example, when RWE began the Timberland Solar project in Georgia, it became clear that economic development and education were key issues in the community. With that knowledge, RWE has partnered with organizations like the local Rotary, joined the Oglethorpe Chamber of Commerce and is an active sponsor of the “Art Makes \$ense” fundraisers for Oglethorpe county schools.



