

WHS Windmill Project Nears Approval

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Boone Town Council's Planning Commission met Monday evening in Chamber's quarters for their quarterly hearings. Of much interest was the proposed installation of a wind turbine on the campus of Watauga High School. ASU professor David French presented information about the project, and the request for an exemption from the planning code which will allow the installation of the windmill. Watauga High School's receiving the windmill is the result of a grant presented to ASU that awards monies for the installation of wind turbines on school campuses located in areas where wind is adequate for their operation. The turbines are not only to be used for energy generation but also for study of alternative energies by the students and as models of alternative energies for communities. Professor French indicated that Watauga High School was one of the top sites in the state for placement of the wind turbine awarded by the grant. He further explained the school's involvement and proposed location of the windmill on campus. The request was met with enthusiasm by the mayor and several members of the Council and Planning Commission. However, questions were asked about security, safety, cost of maintenance, and environmental impact. Professor French indicated all these issues had been taken into consideration and indicated would not be problems. Before final approval can be given by the Town Council the project has to go through one more public hearing which will occur next week.