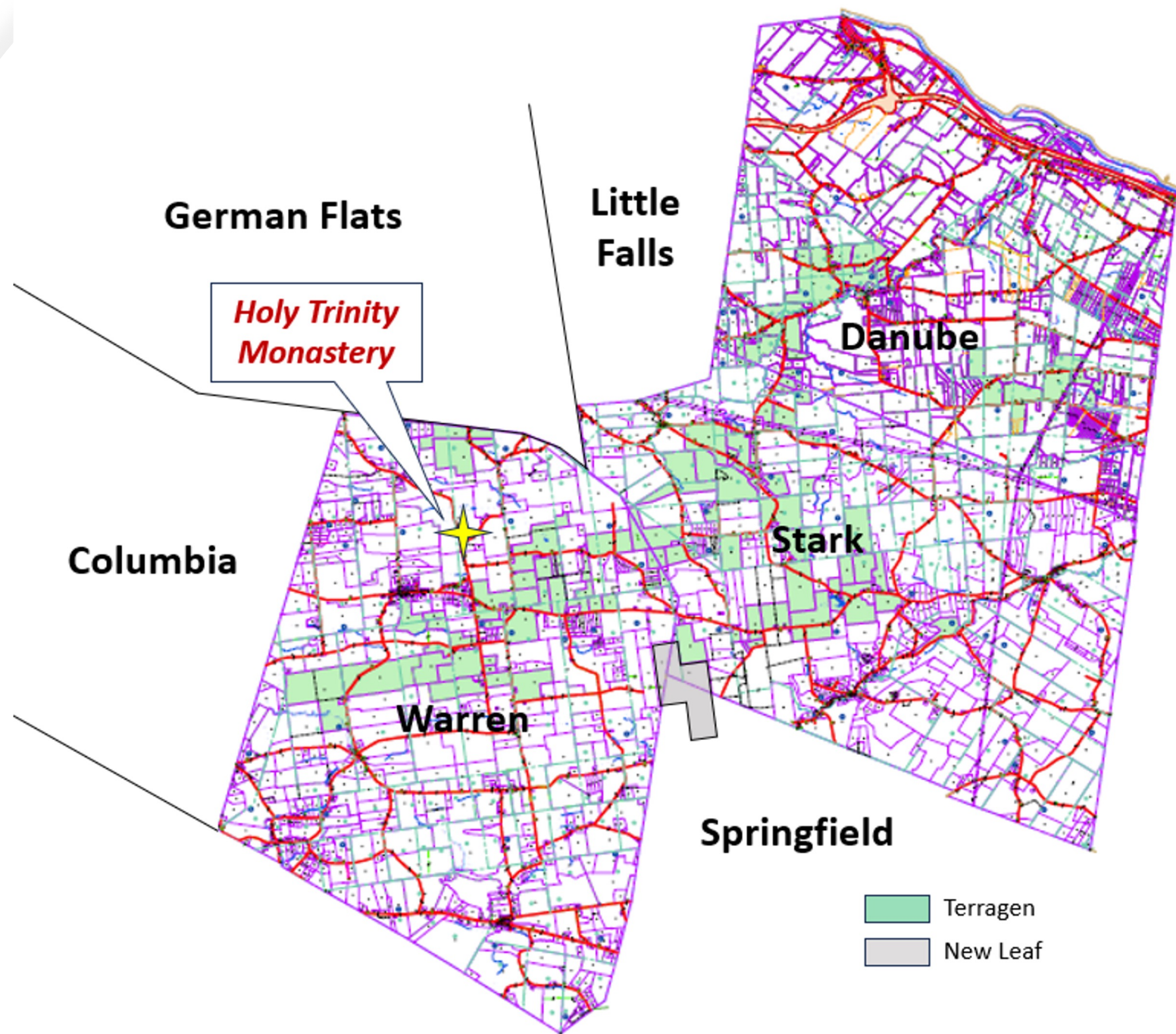
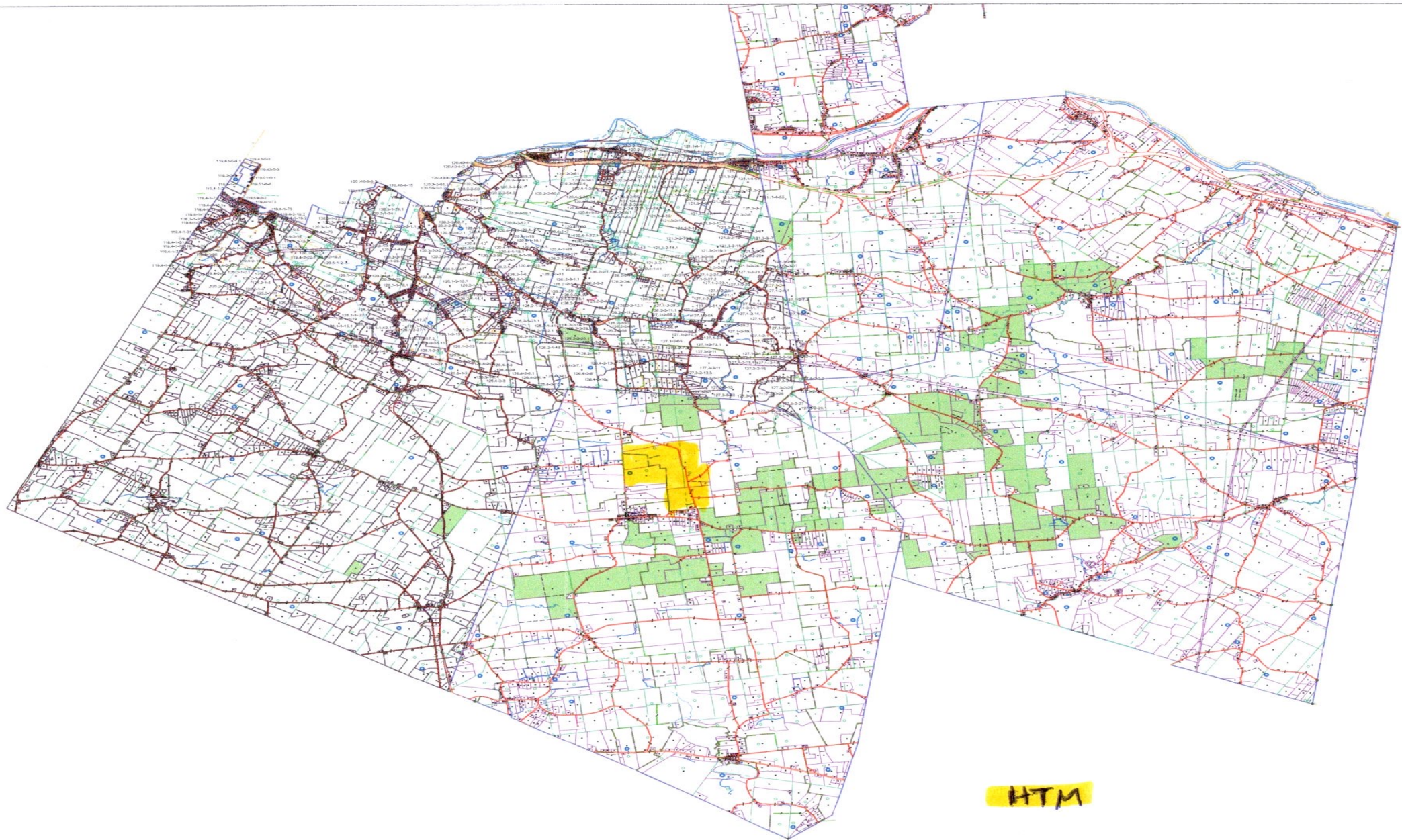


An Existential Threat to Holy Trinity Monastery and Seminary

Threat

Two renewable energy developers, New Leaf Energy and Terra-Gen Energy are surrounding the properties of Holy Trinity Monastery and Seminary, a National Historic Site registered on the NHS registry.





HTM



New Leaf is proposing two turbines on the grey shaded area in Stark. The turbines are 650 feet high and will be built 1625 feet and 1645 feet above sea level, bringing the overall elevation to 2275 feet above sea level and 2295 feet above sea level respectively.

When first proposed in 2008, that project called for turbines the height of the Statue of Liberty (305ft). The new project calls for turbines 650ft high, over twice the height of the Statue, making them the highest structures in Upstate New York. The project also includes flashing red lights for aviation hazards.



Note: Wind Turbines are 400' tall, which is taller than the Statue of Liberty

Holy Trinity Monastery and proposed wind turbines

The visual simulation generated by New Leaf as seen from Golgotha.

- New Leaf asserted in their revised visual simulation:
- “A visual simulation was prepared from the Hilltop Cross viewpoint in January of 2024. This simulation was done in consultation with the Monastery staff to ensure the correct vantage point was represented. Based on this simulation, the turbines will be visible from this location. There are existing transmission lines that are also visible from this viewpoint. In addition, while the turbines are visible, they do not obstruct the view of the rolling hills, cathedral domes, or the monastery. Therefore, they will not have an effect on the monastery’s listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The turbine will be visible off site from certain other viewpoints. The visibility will depend on the surrounding elevations, tree cover, and existing building obstructions.”



Photo 20 - Overlook near Holy Trinity Monastery
EXISTING CONDITION

SARATOGA
ASSOCIATES

Photograph Information

Date: January 12, 2024
Time: 2:00 PM
Focal Length: 50 mm
Camera: NIKON D3400

Photo Location: 42° 55' 43.2127" N
74° 56' 52.8476" W
Distance to Nearest Turbine: 4.18 miles



Figure 21B
PHOTO SIMULATIONS
Sickler Road Wind Energy Project
Town of Stark, Herkimer County, NY

Problem

- The visual simulation, as seen from Golgotha, has a sharpie highlighting the view. As noted by both Otsego 2000, and the Preservation League of New York state: “To state, as the January 2024 visual impact analysis does, that because the turbines are behind the monastery buildings when looking east from Hilltop Cross and therefore don’t ‘obstruct’ the view of the historic properties, is to completely ignore the importance of the Monastery’s very intentional siting within its landscape,” and, “For the Holy Trinity Monastery, the impacts are particularly deleterious. Its nomination to the State and National Registers calls out the Monastery’s 750 acres, and its larger context which is characterized by rolling hills, open lands, agricultural fields, and ridgelines. For its purposes as a monastery and teaching seminary, these landscape features, along with the landmark buildings, are intentional and have been sustained since the Monastery’s founding in 1928. They have been renewed with additional land acquisitions and monastic building construction, the latest being the 1988 bell tower. Much of the Monastery’s activity is focused on the sacred east, which is reinforced by the positioning of the three cemeteries, prayerful contemplation at the outdoor crosses, and the services indoors.”
- Golgotha is at an elevation of 1689 feet above sea level and is the highest point between the Stark Project and the Monastery. Therefore, 586 feet of tower 1 and 606 feet of tower 2 will be visible on the horizon



Photo 20 - Overlook near Holy Trinity Monastery
EXISTING CONDITION

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Recommendation of the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historical Preservation

It is clear from the simulations presented in the Visual Impact Analysis that the proposed wind turbines are visible from the National Register of Historic Places listed Holy Trinity Russian Orthodox Monastery (Monastery). The Monastery is a unique cultural and religious site that includes highly significant landscapes, buildings, and artwork of National significance that continues to be used by the descendant community. One of the landscape features is the three-bar Cross (Hilltop Cross). The Hilltop Cross is used regularly for prayer with worshipers traditionally facing east, which is the direction of the proposed wind turbines. The National Register nomination notes that the location of the Monastery was chosen because the rolling high plain landscape of Jordanville is reminiscent of the sub-Carpathian Russia, the original home of this monastic community. Within this open, rural setting, the Holy Trinity monks actively preserve cultural traditions and practices of the ancient Russian Orthodox Church by living a traditional monastic life of seclusion, prayer, and study. The naturalistic setting was deliberately chosen and is inextricably linked to the history, cultural practices, and religious views of this Russian Orthodox community. Given this background, it is the finding of the OPRHP that the project will have an Adverse Impact on the National Register of Historic Places listed Holy Trinity Monastery. Please note that vegetative screening is not considered by the OPRHP to be an effective minimization measure because of the height of the towers. Therefore, the OPRHP strongly recommends that the two proposed wind turbines are relocated so they are not visible from any portion of the Holy Trinity Monastery.

Our Fight Continues

- We are awaiting Stark Winds response.
- Town of Stark Board may be making a decision on the project tonight, asking for your prayers.
- Once the Stark battle is won, then the Terra-Gen Battle begins.
- Due to the magnitude of the Terra-Gen project, local rule is overridden by ORES, the Office of Renewable Energy Siting, which can overrule any local laws to grant a project (over 25 MW)
- RAPID Act must be opposed and not ratified. If passed, it will give ORES the power to use Eminent Domain to expropriate land needed to support projects.

State Senator Helming said, "The RAPID Act is flying under the radar in Albany but you should know about it. It stands for Renewable Action through Project Interconnection and Deployment and seeks to streamline the permitting process for major renewable energy projects. Know what else it does? It allows for private property, and conserved lands, to be forcefully taken by eminent domain for these energy facilities. This is beyond egregious and I'll keep fighting to stop it."



— EPISCOPUS SYRACUSANUS — BISHOP LUKE OF SYRACUSE —
1407 ROBINSON RD., P.O. BOX 36, JORDANVILLE, NY 13361 USA TEL.: (315) 858-0910

As head of both Holy Trinity Monastery and the Holy Trinity Orthodox Seminary, Bishop Luke has asked that the following statement be made regarding the proposed Wind Turbine Project in Stark.

"We are very concerned and disappointed in the lack of foresight and planning that has gone into this project's planning process.

New Leaf Energy has failed to respect and address the concerns of both the local communities and the monastery regarding the impact this project will have on the Historical and Cultural Heritage of this area of upstate New York and the negative impact of mega turbines' visual effect on the majestic views from our Monastery.

New Leaf Energy has failed to respect and address the concerns of the landowners in Stark, Warren, and Springfield about the potential damage to the underground caverns and water supply.

New Leaf Energy has failed to respect and address the concerns of residents of Herkimer County concerning migratory and non-migratory birds and the effects of these turbine monstrosities on their habitats.

New Leaf Energy has failed to respect and address the community's concerns about flicker effects, sound problems, and potential health issues caused by these turbines.

New Leaf has failed to respect and address the concerns of homeowners and farm owners about the impact on property values and resale potential.

While the Monastery and Seminary are supportive of sound alternative energy sources that have a direct cost benefit to both the communities that host them and to the environment in general, this project offers no benefit for the community at large and limited benefit to the landowner and Town of Stark.

We demand that the Town of Stark veto this project's approval and allow the community to retain its historic, scenic, and agricultural strengths."

Bishop Luke of Syracuse,
Abbot of Holy Trinity Monastery

What can you do to help?

- First and foremost, prayer. We ask all of you to add a prayer for our success in this battle.
- Akathists to St. John of Kronstadt, St. Job of Pochaev or St. Nektarios of Aegina daily.
- Sign and send the letters to Our local Assemblyman and State Senator expressing your opposition to the RAPID Act.
- If from elsewhere in New York, send a letter to your local representatives.
- Write to your Congressman and Senators for their support.
- Keep informed of local developments and projects, or you could find a development in your back yard.
- Propose and endorse a resolution on behalf of the EAD to oppose these projects, and if possible have endorsed as well by the Synod of Bishops of ROCOR

Thank you all for your continued prayers and support of our “American Lavra.” May God bless you.