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New windmill for the hook - Turbine to help power Fairway mkt.

By Gary Buiso

In Red Hook, developer Greg O’Connell isn’t tilting at wind turbines — he’s building one.

O’Connell, Fairway’s developer, is now planning the construction of the 80-foot-tall structure at Pier 41 on Van Dyke Street, this paper has learned.

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Two existing water towers last used by the White Rock Beverage Company will be refashioned into the wind turbine.

Energy it produces will be used to illuminate the public access area near Fairway, 480-500 Van Brunt Street.

“It’s all about sustainable energy,” O’Connell said. “It’s a symbol of what the city can do.”

Energy Concepts Engineering, a Rochester-based firm, will be designing the wind turbine, and supervising its construction.

William Cristofaro, the president and co-founder of the company, said the Red Hook wind turbine will produce 2.5 kilowatts of instantaneous power. In addition, the company will install a 1.6 kilowatt photovoltaic — a silicon device that converts sunlight into energy — on the former water tower.

“We expect some good production out of the wind turbine,” Cristofaro said.

The turbine will generate about 525 kilowatt hours a month, roughly equivalent to the amount of power two condominiums use per month. Combined with the photovoltaic, some 675 kilowatt hours a month are expected to be generated.

“The economics of wind turbines are very good. We are sort of mystified that there aren’t more wind turbines down here,” Cristofaro said.

Monte Hurd, a mechanical engineer With Energy Concepts, said an application will soon be filed with the city’s Department of Buildings. If the work is approved, construction will begin soon.

“In the next 30 days, we will be beginning to mobilize,” Hurd said.

The total installation will cost about \$30,000, paid for in part with a New York State Energy Research and Development Authority grant.

If the city approves the plan, a large propeller will be mounted on the steel tower. The propeller is connected to a shaft, connected to a generator. As the propeller rotates, the generator does as well, creating electricity. The solar panels will soak up energy which will be used to power the structure’s battery backup system.

“I think it’s important because the generating capacity that we have is having difficulty keeping up with the exponential growth in energy consumption,” Hurd said.

In 2005, Energy Concepts installed a cogeneration plant now in use at the Fairway.

Cristofaro said the wind turbine could “turn into a great example of what the future of Brooklyn can be and what people with a vision and imagination can do.”

“O’Connell’s taken an abandoned water tower — a symbol of old industrial Brooklyn — and turned it into a base for an alternative energy plant,” he added.

Up in Medina, New York O’Connell is an investor in a project that will bring the first ethanol plant to the state. Western New York Energy will build the \$90-million plant, planned on 144 acres of farmland.

With the city now involved with a plan to rezone the Gowanus, O’Connell said opportunities abound for bringing more innovative energy-generating solutions to Brooklyn.

He suggested the city give developers incentive to build green, using solar and wind power in any new project. “Let them use renewable resources to power the lighting around the Gowanus,” he suggested.

He offered fellow developers this advice: “You have to take a little less, and give a little more to the community.”

A promotional banner for Verizon's Triple Freedom service. The banner features a red and white background with a stylized figure in the center. The text reads: "Verizon Triple Freedom Internet, Phone and TV or low or \$99⁹⁹/mo. for one year Bundle up!". The Verizon logo is in the bottom right corner.

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