

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

June 22, 2017 | Berkshire Eagle, The (Pittsfield, MA) Section: Opinion | 1279 Words Page: A04 OpenURL Link

Good journalism on energy hearing

To the editor: As someone who attends Western Massachusetts legislative hearings, I appreciate the report of the June 19 hearing in Pittsfield. It was not an easy event to cover, and many reporters (and their editors) would have been dismissive of the concerns citizens expressed. The Berkshire Eagle did three things right: 1. You covered the event and gave it an accurate headline.

2. Your reporter (Scott Stafford) gave a fair presentation of the, at times, contentious testimony and exchanges with Senator Pacheco (and evoked some of the drama).

He did not "put down" the people whose testimony might be considered out of the mainstream.

3. Although it was at the end of the article, Stafford noted Eleanor Tillinghast's comments on rail and bus service as places of energy conservation and support for local commerce, which, in my opinion, is probably the best near-term option to reduce CO2 emissions and grow local economies in Western Massachusetts.

Thanks for the kind of journalism that is so rare these days - accurate, unbiased, and informative.

Dale LaBonte, Northampton

A last gasp challenge on city cigarette regs

To the editor: I recently brought forth a petition to the city to change what I thought was an unnecessary cost to a sector of the business community. It was not an earth-shattering amount, and only applied to people that have been following all the regulations without any violations for a long period of time.

The first meeting with the Board of Health gave me a chance to give my reasons for bringing forth my petition on the proposal that every clerk who sells tobacco products must take a course online every three years to be "educated" on the regulations. I was told I made some good points and that Jim Wilusz, the Tri-Town Health director who manages the tobacco program for Pittsfield would be giving his update next month and would I be willing to come to their next meeting? In my remarks regarding my petition I mentioned that with so many new members on the Board of Health, maybe they would consider taking over the program since all the money (\$25 for every clerk certified) currently goes to Tri-Town Health and not Pittsfield.

I mentioned that the last time I brought this up Mr. Wilusz responded by saying this program is not a money maker. I requested he ask the Board of Health to please ask for some numbers to back it up. He didn't disappoint, but unfortunately the Board of Health did not ask any questions on specific numbers regarding cost or revenue. I would have brought this to their attention, but I was told that attacks on Mr.

Wilusz would not be tolerated. I guess in Pittsfield nowadays, a private citizen asking questions about the finances of any government program is not allowed.

A board member questioned Mr.

Wilusz's claim that cigarettes were a gateway drug to harder drugs.

He said he had never heard that and asked Mr. Wilusz where he got that information. Mr. Wilusz said that there are studies out there and he would send him those studies.

Kudos for someone actually asking a question, and let me know when you get those studies.

I will put forth a challenge as a last gasp to the Board of Health.

If it is about education and not all about the money, ask Mr. Wilusz if he would agree to clerks still having to be "educated" every three years, but after 15 years (five payments) having it be at no cost.

Dave Bertolozzi, Pittsfield

Grateful to be honored by local boxing hall

To the editor: As a lifelong resident of the Berkshires and an inductee into the Berkshire Boxing Hall of Fame, I have to say that I was skeptical of the whole endeavor. I figured it would just die on the vine like many attempts at anything to do with boxing. However, I was pleasantly proved wrong. I never expected to be feted for doing what I loved, but Todd Poulton, A.J. Vittone and Paul Procopio pulled it off and did it well.

When I grew up here in the 1950s and '60s, boxing was a big part of Berkshire County. We had some really good boxers here throughout the 20th century. My dad was around back in the '20s and '30s - the golden days of boxing. He taught me the history of our area and also the technical aspects of boxing, which served my fighters and me well.

I loved every day that I was involved in this wonderful sport, and it gave me a life that people dream of as well as a satisfaction that only a competitor could understand.

Even today, almost 20 years since I regrettably closed the Pittsfield Boxing Club, I run into adults who were kids then, who thank me and tell me how much it meant to them.

You cannot put a price on that.

I want to thank and congratulate all the inductees, especially boxers Al Romano, Eddie Spence, the late Hap Horan and the late Terry Rondeau. The latter two were friends whom I thank for their inspiration to keep boxing alive here in the Berkshires. May it flourish!

William A. Major, Pittsfield

Support free press against Trump assaults

To the editor: Freedom of the press and trust in the press are essential to any democracy. When Vladimir Putin began his move to take over Russia and crush its early attempt at democracy he moved to eliminate the free media. By intimidation and false prosecution of media owners he took control and eliminated any criticism of the government's actions. He and his underlings then took control of the organs of power and instituted a kleptocratic authoritarian state.

In the U.S. we have a Constitution and judicial system which makes it difficult to stifle the press, so other means are used to undermine trust. President Trump and his associates decided quite clearly that they mean to destroy that trust by repeating and repeating over and over that the legitimate press is lying to us, giving us "fake news."

If we take this bait the result will be a government with no responsible oversight. At that point anything could result, even a turn towards authoritarian rule with a rubber stamp Congress.

Support the free press. It is not perfect, but we can't survive without one.

Benjamin Glick, M.D., Williamstown

Innovation center needs funding for key role

To the editor: The Clean Energy Future Tour talk led by Senate President Pro Tempore Marc R. Pacheco, Lou Loura and the note-taker Kyle at Berkshire Community College was outstanding. I acquired a notebook of information about expanding renewable energy and the renewable energy economy in Massachusetts.

As I listened, I re flected about how important and useful it would be to have the Berkshire Innovation Center startup. There is \$9 million in the till with a need for \$3 million more. People in Western Massachusetts know the issues and could collaborate throughout the commonwealth and the country to address the Hoosac Wind Project, medical issues, clean energy, air and noise pollution, renewable energy, bus and rail service, high speed internet and more.

We need youth, technical workers and professionals to stay in Berkshire County. The Berkshire Innovation Center could tap into the local resources such as Taconic and Pittsfield high dchools, Berkshire Community College, Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts and Williams College to mention only some of the intellectual capital in the Berkshire, Hampshire, Franklin and Hampden districts.

The Innovation Center would enhance the creative economy, education and human services, health care, nutrition and wellness, energy and environmental technology, advanced manufacturing and engineering, government and legal services, tourism, hospitality, media, non-pro fit and community service, among other segments of the economy.

I hope state Senator Adam G.

Hinds will continue his valiant efforts by locating \$3 million to jumpstart the Berkshire Innovation Center for the economic and social development of Berkshire County.

Marietta Rapetti Cawse, Pittsfield

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Wind concerns cloud the air at sustainable energy event - At forum touting renewables economy, anti-turbine sentiment a frequent topic

June 20, 2017 | Berkshire Eagle, The (Pittsfield, MA)
Author: SCOTT STAFFORDsstafford@berkshireeagle.com | Section: Main | 725 Words
Page: A01
OpenURL Link

PITTSFIELD - The state senate's Clean Energy Future Tour made a stop at Berkshire Community College Monday to receive testimony from local residents about climate change and renewable energy.

But the first 70 minutes of the two-hour hearing was dominated by local neighbors of wind turbines and other antiwind activists. Their testimony centered on noise levels near the turbines, the carbon footprint of erecting wind turbine projects, the output and the impact on nearby property owners.

The Massachusetts Clean Energy Future Tour is a statewide committee initiative on clean energy, climate change and constituent engagement, led by Senate President Pro Tempore Marc R. Pacheco, D-Taunton, who is the founding chairman of the Senate Committee on Global Warming & Climate Change. State Sen. Adam G. Hinds, D-Pittsfield, hosted the forum at BCC, which drew about 100 people.

The tour consists of nine public hearings in various communities across the state to hear the thoughts and suggestions of constituents on clean energy and climate change issues.

The testimony received, written and oral, will be reviewed and incorporated into a report from the committee.

Before hearing comments, Pacheco explained the Massachusetts has been one of the leaders in expanding the sources of renewable energy, and expanding the renewable energy economy in the state.

He noted that statewide, there are now 105,000 jobs in the state's clean energy sector, including more than 12,000 in Western Massachusetts, which showed 6 percent growth from 2015 to 2016, and more

ENERGY, Page 2

Solar: Before appearing at Clean Energy Future Tour talk, state Sen. Adam Hinds visits facility in Pittsfield where local businesses run on sustainable energy, B3

FROM PAGE 1

than 1,000 new businesses in the clean energy sector.

Massachusetts is tied with California as the most energy- efficient state in the union, Pacheco said.

Despite the Trump Administration's abandonment of the Paris Climate Accord, Massachusetts joined 37 other states in keeping with the accord, and together, he said, will exceed the goals set forth in the international agreement.

"Your senator (Hinds) and I do not need to be convinced that we need to do everything we need to do to move forward on climate change as quickly as possible," Pacheco said.

The first few speakers at the forum included a resident of Florida and close neighbor to the Hoosac Wind project.

He attributed medical issues like chronic anxiety, sleep deprivation and a heart condition to the unending "industrial noise" and vibrations he said comes from the turbine installation.

Other speakers echoed his concerns, taking more than an hour of the remaining time.

Pacheco explained that they had been heard, their testimony is on the record and would be considered. He hoped others could bring up their input on topics other than wind energy.

At one point, the audience joined his appeals when a woman declined to wrap up her comments.

He went on to say that more people are employed by the clean energy sector than in fossil fuel companies "times five."

And if federal subsidies for fossil fuels were to be eliminated, renewable energy would be much cheaper than gas or oil.

One gentleman wondered about the legitimacy of climate change, noting that there have been incorrect theories put forth by scientists in the past.

Pacheco said that when 97 percent of scientists agree on the problem, the cause and the solution, then action needs to be taken.

Others rose to decry the effects of air pollution on the health of people all around the country and the world, including children suffering from asthma, and called for a reduction in the use of fossil fuels.

"We have to keep trying, and this state is clearly a leader," said one speaker from Dalton. "We can't lose site of the medical impacts resulting from air pollution we don't see."

Another speaker asked the legislators "to pursue renewable energy despite the atmosphere in Washington, D.C."

She also pointed out that higher energy costs in Western Massachusetts need to be addressed.

Local resident Eleanor Tillinghast stressed that energy conservation is an important aspect of reducing the use of fossil fuels, and how much of an impact passenger rail service to the Berkshires connecting New York and Boston would have. She also called for more bus transportation to local communities.

High-speed internet and promoting the sale of locally grown food would also be important efforts to reduce carbon emissions, she added.

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60 hear man issue warning about wind farms

February 15, 2017 | North Country This Week (Potsdam, NY) Author: MATT LINDSEY | Section: News | 617 Words Page: 7 OpenURL Link

PARISHVILLE --A Massachusetts photographer warned about 60 St. Lawrence County residents Sunday night about the potential dangers and disadvantages of the North Ridge Wind Farm, which has divided the community.

Presenter Larry Lorusso, who lives about one mile from Hoosac Wind Farm, located in Massachusetts, said he was "pleasantly surprised" by the turnout last night, even though a storm dropped about a foot of snow over much of the North Country. The meeting was held at the town hall.

Avangrid, the developer of the proposed North Ridge Wind Farm between State Rts. 11B and 72 in Parishville and Hopkinton, is looking to install around 40 wind towers --as high as 500 feet tall from the bases to the blade tips. Dozens of people have signed leases to allow the windmills on their land.

The controversial wind towers have created rifts between family and friends in Hopkinton, Parishville and the surrounding areas. When he heard about the proposed product he reached out to locals and wanted to educate people, he said.

Lorusso was to present a slideshow at the county Legislature's Services Committee meeting Monday night at the county courthouse.

"I have nothing to gain," he said, about what he is travelled to the North Country to speak about wind towers. "Who better to know what is going on than someone who has them in their backyard?" Lorusso said he supported the wind towers based on what Iberdrola, an energy company based in Spain, had told him. Avangrid, a subsidiary of Iberdrola, is heading the project in Hopkinton and Parishville.

"They told us it was going to help the environment - it doesn't," Lorusso said. "Wind towers are not the answer to green energy."

Based on his experience living one mile from wind turbines, Lorusso became a community activist and documented through photography and stories and is sharing that with other communities considering installing wind towers.

"These are being sold to us that they are saving the environment," he said. "I am not anti-wind, I am proenvironment."

Lorusso documented the land prior to the installation, the installation process and what has come of it since wind towers were installed.

He describes his land as an "enchanted forest" with "little impacts from humans."

"There were mountain alterations of beautiful land - they wrecked it," Lorusso said. "There used to be wildlife sign and wildlife - all gone."

Lorusso said the noises range from ringing in ears, to the sound of a helicopter hovering or a jet engine that never takes off. But, he says the vibrations are the worst part.

"The worse is not what you see or hear, it's what you feel," he said. "I can feel my head pulsing --I can put my hand on my windows and feel them vibrating."

Lorusso said he, his wife and neighbors developed several medical issues since the towers were installed near his home about four years ago. He says the issues include heart problems, high blood pressure, and sinus issues.

"They have not been able to determine the source of my wife's sinus issues," he said, noting that it was not a sinus infection.

He says he has sleepless nights at home, but slept well during his stay in St. Lawrence County.

"I wake up in a state of anxiety - on the edge of fear," he said. "Yesterday and today were the first days in months that I haven't woken up anxious."

And then there is the ringing in the ears.

"It's never quiet, even when it's quiet," he said.

Lorusso said the issues have driven some people away from their homes. "People abandoned their homes, they just left."

Lorusso is determined to stay and fight against the wind tower company.

"We are prisoners in our own house - it's sad," he said.

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MATT LINDSEY, '60 hear man issue warning about wind farms', *North Country This Week* (online), 15 Feb 2017 7 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/16291C4436A34248



Wind farm foe speaks - issues warning: Tells legislators of - health woes, lower property values

February 14, 2017 | Daily Courier-Observer (Massena, NY) Author: SUSAN MENDE smende@ogd.com | Section: DCO_News | 628 Words Page: A1 OpenURL Link

A Massachusetts resident warned St. Lawrence County legislators Monday night they'll be sorry if an industrial wind farm comes to fruition in the towns of Hopkinton and Parishville.

Larry P. Lorusso, a professional nature photographer from Clarksburg, Mass., gave a 30-minute slide presentation during the Legislature's Services Committee meeting. On Sunday night about 60 people braved winter weather to hear Mr. Lorusso speak at the Parishville Town Hall.

Noting that he lives about a mile from Hoosac Wind Farm, Mr. Lorusso said the arrival of industrial-sized wind turbines installed by Iberdrola Renewables has brought far more harm than good to his rural, mountainous community.

He displayed photographs of homes that have dropped in value, claiming that owners can't find buyers. He listed health problems he said have plagued residents including sleep disturbances, headaches, palpitations, hypertension and sinus issues.

"I go for nights when I can't sleep," Mr. Lorusso told lawmakers. "It's horrible, I can feel my body vibrate."

Avangrid Renewables, a subsidiary of Iberdrola, plans to build North Ridge Wind Farm in the towns of Hopkinton and Parishville. The project involves construction of 40 wind turbines up to 500 feet tall. The company has reportedly signed lease agreements with 54 landowners who are supposed to receive money in exchange for allowing wind turbines on their property.

The controversial proposal has divided residents in the two rural communities. Opponents formed a group called Concerned Citizens of Rural Preservation.

Mr. Lorusso also claimed the water near Hoosic Wind Farm became polluted and said the aesthetics of peaceful, rural living has been ruined.

"We were originally in favor of this project. That was based on what Iberdrola told the neighbors," Mr. Lorusso said. "Basically, I have learned otherwise. I want to talk about some of the environmental impacts, some of the health impacts and economic impacts."

During construction of the wind farm, he was disturbed to see that century-old trees were knocked down and sawed up into little pieces rather than reused for lumber.

"One of the things we were told was that this was really good for the environment. Then I saw a place that I love being ripped apart and becoming something much different," he said. "I cried, I tell you, the first time I went up there. But I tried to keep an open mind because we need energy, we need electricity."

He said he continued to watch construction and document the process with his photographs, hoping for a "silver lining" that never came.

Rather than providing local jobs, he said the 365-foot-tall turbines were constructed in China and most of the people who worked on the project came to the region from Texas and other states. He said the \$90 million project has only provided three permanent jobs.

"So there's the jobs. They were telling us all these jobs we were going to have," Mr. Lorusso said.

Citing other concerns, he said there are times when large ice chunks fly off of the wind turbines, traveling great distances.

"We now have problem with our wells not providing sufficient water," he said, noting that the wind farm area is polluted with lead, zinc and other hazardous materials.

Mr. Lorusso told legislators he volunteered to speak to them and is not receiving anything in exchange for his presentation.

"I feel compelled to try to educate you," he said.

Kathy Mackay, a Hopkinton resident who accompanied Mr. Lorusso to the meeting, said she felt legislators needed to hear the information that was presented.

"I think it's important that the truth comes out about what's really happening," she said.

Legislators did not ask Mr. Lorusso any questions following his presentation.

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• Citation (aglc Style)

SUSAN MENDE; ; smende@ogd.com, 'Wind farm foe speaks issues warning: Tells legislators of health woes, lower property values', *Daily Courier-Observer* (online), 14 Feb 2017 A1 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view? p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/1628C117400474A0>



County Legislators Hear Industrial Wind Farm Warning

February 14, 2017 | Journal, The (Ogdensburg, NY) Author: SUSAN MENDE smende@ogd.com | Section: OGD_News | 630 Words Page: A2 OpenURL Link

A Massachusetts resident warned St. Lawrence County legislators Monday night they'll be sorry if an industrial wind farm comes to fruition in the towns of Hopkinton and Parishville.

Larry P. Lorusso, a professional nature photographer from Clarksburg, Mass., gave a 30-minute slide presentation during the Legislature's Services Committee meeting. On Sunday night about 60 people braved winter weather to hear Mr. Lorusso speak at the Parishville Town Hall.

Noting that he lives about a mile from Hoosac Wind Farm, Mr. Lorusso said the arrival of industrial-sized wind turbines installed by Iberdrola Renewables has brought far more harm than good to his rural, mountainous community.

He displayed photographs of homes that have dropped in value, claiming that owners that can't find buyers. He listed health problems he said have plagued residents including sleep disturbances, headaches, palpitations, hypertension and sinus issues.

"I go for nights when I can't sleep," Mr. Lorusso told lawmakers. "It's horrible, I can feel my body vibrate."

Avangrid Renewables, a subsidiary of Iberdrola, plans to build North Ridge Wind Farm in the towns of Hopkinton and Parishville. The project involves construction of 40 wind turbines up to 500 feet tall. The company has reportedly signed lease agreements with 54 landowners who are supposed to receive money in exchange for allowing wind turbines on their property.

The controversial proposal has divided residents in the two rural communities. Opponents formed a group called Concerned Citizens of Rural Preservation.

Mr. Lorusso also claimed the water near Hoosic Wind Farm became polluted and said the aesthetics of peaceful, rural living has been ruined.

"We were originally in favor of this project. That was based on what Iberdrola told the neighbors," Mr. Lorusso said. "Basically, I have learned otherwise. I want to talk about some of the environmental impacts, some of the health impacts and economic impacts."

During construction of the wind farm, he was disturbed to see that century-old trees were knocked down and sawed up into little pieces rather than reused for lumber.

"One of the things we were told was that this was really good for the environment. Then I saw a place that I love being ripped apart and becoming something much different," he said. "I cried, I tell you, the first time I went up there. But I tried to keep an open mind because we need energy, we need electricity."

He said he continued to watch construction and document the process with his photographs, hoping for a "silver lining" that never came.

Rather than providing local jobs, he said the 365-foot-tall turbines were constructed in China and most of the people who worked on the project came to the north country from Texas and other states. He said the \$90 million project has only provided three permanent jobs.

"So there's the jobs. They were telling us all these jobs we were going to have," Mr. Lorusso said.

Citing other concerns, he said there are times when large ice chunks fly off of the wind turbines, traveling far distances.

"We now have problem with our wells not providing sufficient water," he said, noting that the wind farm area is polluted with lead, zinc and other hazardous materials.

Mr. Lorusso told legislators he volunteered to speak to them and is not receiving anything in exchange for his presentation.

"I feel compelled to try to educate you," he said.

Kathy Mackay, a Hopkinton resident who accompanied Mr. Lorusso to the meeting, said she felt legislators needed to hear the information that was presented.

"I think it's important that the truth comes out about what's really happening," she said.

Legislators did not ask Mr. Lorusso any questions following his presentation.

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SUSAN MENDE; ; smende@ogd.com, 'County Legislators Hear Industrial Wind Farm Warning', *Journal, The* (online), 14 Feb 2017 A2 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/1628C5CBE0555800



County warned of wind farm ills - health problems: - Massachusetts photographer claims property values suffer

February 14, 2017 | Watertown Daily Times (NY)
Author: SUSAN MENDE smende@ogd.com | Section: WDT_SLAW | 629 Words
Page: A1
OpenURL Link

A Massachusetts resident warned St. Lawrence County legislators Monday night they'll be sorry if an industrial wind farm comes to fruition in the towns of Hopkinton and Parishville.

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Noting that he lives about a mile from Hoosac Wind Farm, Mr. Lorusso said the arrival of industrial-sized wind turbines installed by Iberdrola Renewables has brought far more harm than good to his rural, mountainous community.

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SUSAN MENDE; ; smende@ogd.com, 'County warned of wind farm ills health problems: Massachusetts photographer claims property values suffer', *Watertown Daily Times* (online), 14 Feb 2017 A1 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/1628D52390EFB180



Wind power panel at work - St. LAWRENCE COUNTY: Protests in - two towns lead to push for further research

February 13, 2017 | Watertown Daily Times (NY)
Author: SUSAN MENDE smende@ogd.com | Section: WDT_SLAW | 447 Words
Page: A1
OpenURL Link

Opposition to a proposed wind farm in the towns of Hopkinton and Parishville has prompted the St. Lawrence County Legislature to create an ad-hoc wind committee.

Headed by Legislator Rick Perkins, D-Parishville, the committee met for the first time Thursday and has started to gather feedback from neighboring counties that have dealt with similar projects.

"Our role is to collect the information and present it to the full board. There's a lot of information going out both ways," Mr. Perkins said. "Right now, I'm very neutral. I'm for green power, but I can't do it at the expense of citizens' health and welfare."

Larry Lorusso, a professional photographer, is scheduled to present a slide show about Hoosac Wind Farm, Massachusetts, at the county Legislature's Services Committee meeting scheduled for 5:30 p.m. today at the county courthouse.

The proposed North Ridge Wind Farm has created a rift among citizens in Parishville and Hopkinton.

"It is contentious and it seems to be causing negative feelings in the community," Mr. Perkins said. The developer, Avangrid Renewables, has reached agreements with numerous landowners who are supposed to receive payments in exchange for allowing wind turbines on their property. Avangrid is a subsidiary of Iberdrola, an energy company based in Spain.

Citizens opposed to the proposed North Ridge farm have relayed their concerns at county meetings including the potential for decreased property values, negative impact on farming and possible reduction of property taxes for the municipalities and school district. Vocal opponents include Gary Snell, chairman of Concerned Citizens of Rural Preservation and Lucia D. Dailey, Parishville.

They also voiced concerns about health and safety including noise associated with wind farms.

The project involves construction of 40 wind turbines up to 500 feet tall. The company has reportedly signed lease agreements with about 54 property owners.

County Legislature Vice Chairman Joseph R. Lightfoot, R-Ogdensburg, said he has contacted officials from Jefferson and Lewis counties to learn how they handled proposed wind projects, including payment-in-lieu-of-tax agreements.

"I wanted to get a better feel for how they've handled problems and situations that could arise from wind farms," Mr. Lightfoot said. "As this goes forward, we won't be blind sided down the road."

Mr. Lightfoot said the committee may also contact officials from Franklin and Clinton counties about their experiences. Other committee members include legislators Donald J. Hooper, R-Ogdensburg and Chad E. Colbert, R-Potsdam.

"We want to get as much information about these things and be prepared for what's coming forward," he said.

At some point, a representative from the company is expected to make a presentation to the legislature, he said.

• Citation (aglc Style)

SUSAN MENDE; ; smende@ogd.com, 'Wind power panel at work St. LAWRENCE COUNTY: Protests in two towns lead to push for further research', *Watertown Daily Times* (online), 13 Feb 2017 A1 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view? p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/16287E90AB81E0E0>



Wind farm panel formed - STATIC OVER PLAN: County group to - look at towns' concerns

February 11, 2017 | Daily Courier-Observer (Massena, NY)
Author: SUSAN MENDE smende@ogd.com | Section: DCO_News | 470 Words
Page: A1
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"Our role is to collect the information and present it to the full board. There's a lot of information going out both ways," Mr. Perkins said. "Right now, I'm very neutral. I'm for green power, but I can't do it at the expense of citizens' health and welfare."

A public meeting regarding the wind project is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. Sunday at the Parishville Town Hall. Larry Lorusso, a professional photographer, will present a slide show about Hoosac Wind Farm, Mass.

Mr. Lorusso is also scheduled to give a presentation at the county Legislature's Services Committee meeting scheduled for 5:30 p.m. Monday at the county courthouse.

The proposed North Ridge Wind Farm has created a rift among citizens in Parishville and Hopkinton.

"It is contentious and it seems to be causing negative feelings in the community," Mr. Perkins said. The developer, Avangrid Renewables, has reached agreements with numerous landowners who are supposed to receive payments in exchange for allowing wind turbines on their property. Avangrid is a subsidiary of Iberdrola, an energy company based in Spain.

Citizens opposed to the proposed North Ridge farm have relayed their concerns at county meetings including the potential for decreased property values, negative impact on farming and possible reduction of property taxes for the municipalities and school district. Vocal opponents include Gary Snell, chairman of Concerned Citizens of Rural Preservation and Lucia D. Dailey, Parishville.

They also voiced concerns about health and safety including noise associated with wind farms.

The project involves construction of 40 wind turbines up to 500 feet tall. The company has reportedly signed lease agreements with about 54 property owners.

County Vice Chairman Joseph R. Lightfoot, R-Ogdensburg, said he has contacted officials from Jefferson and Lewis counties to learn how they handled proposed wind projects, including payment-in-lieu of tax agreements.

"I wanted to get a better feel for how they've handled problems and situations that could arise from wind farms,"
Mr. Lightfoot said. "As this goes forward, we won't be blind sided down the road."

Mr. Lightfoot said the committee may also contact officials from Franklin and Clinton counties about their experiences. Other committee members include legislators Donald J. Hooper, R-Ogdensburg and Chad E. Colbert, R-Potsdam.

"We want to get as much information about these things and be prepared for what's coming forward," he said.

At some point, a representative from the company is expected to make a presentation to the Legislature, he said.

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• Citation (aglc Style)

SUSAN MENDE; ; smende@ogd.com, 'Wind farm panel formed STATIC OVER PLAN: County group to look at towns' concerns', *Daily Courier-Observer* (online), 11 Feb 2017 A1 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view? p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/1627C73C39025470>



Wind Energy Meeting Schedule Announced

February 5, 2017 | Daily Courier-Observer (Massena, NY) Section: DCO_News | 159 Words Page: A5 OpenURL Link

Concerned Citizens for Rural Preservation, Parishville, have announced the following upcoming meetings:

- * Sunday, Feb. 12 Public Slide Show Presentation on the Hoosac Wind Farm located in Clarksburg, Massachusetts by professional photographer Larry Lorusso at 6:30 p.m. at the Parishville Town Hall.
- * Monday, Feb. 13 Hopkinton Town Board Meeting at 7 p.m. at Town Office Building
- *Thursday, Feb. 16, Hopkinton Wind Advisory Board Meeting at 7 p.m at Hopkinton Town Hall. Discussion Of Expansion Of Wind Turbine Zone (South Of Route 72 To Possibly Include Santamont And Beebe Roads).
- *Monday, March 6, Hopkinton Wind Advisory Board Public Comment Mtg. at 7 p.m. at Hopkinton Town Hall. The entire meeting will be for comments from the public regarding the proposed Industrial North Ridge Wind Project.
- *Tuesday, March 7, -lberdrola (Avangrid) Public Informational Meeting at the Town Hall in Hopkinton from 2 4 p.m. and 6 8 p.m.

For information, Call Concerned Citizens for Rural Preservation, Parishville. 315-265-2404 www.facebook.com/Citizens-for-Rural-Preservation or you can send an email to nyconcernedcitizens@gmail.com Copyright, 2017, Johnson Newspaper Corporation

• Citation (aglc Style)

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DEERFIELD WIND - Tension in the air at groundbreaking - Divergent views: - Protesters greet governor at wind project ceremony

September 20, 2016 | Bennington Banner (VT) Section: Main| 1469 Words Page: A01 OpenURL Link

By Jim Therrien

Bennington Banner Vt.Digger.org

READSBORO >> Inconsolable views of the wind power industry in Vermont were offered Monday morning by groups starkly separated by a perimeter line manned by Vermont State Police.

That checkpoint was located just off Route 8, atop a small hill on Putnam Road, where Gov. Peter Shumlin, local officials and representatives of Avangrid Renewables, which will soon begin construction of 15 wind turbine towers on Green Mountain National Forrest land, held a formal groundbreaking.

The event took place under a slight drizzle and amid intermittent fog over the ridgeline, after more than a dozen years of complex planning and permitting processes --- and the developers had fended off vociferous protests and legal challenges to their Deerfield Wind project.

The protests continued in force and in earnest Monday, with about three dozen people from around Vermont and from nearby Massachusetts holding signs, shouting, at times chanting or singing - especially as Shumlin's SUV drove past toward the site.

In his remarks, the governor thanked the developer, the U.S. Forest Service, which is permitting the first wind power facility in the nation on its lands, and those officials and residents of the area who have "stuck it out" despite intense opposition over the long haul of the permitting process.

"I want to tell you why this matters," Shumlin said, adding that cli-

WIND»PAGE3

FROMPAGE 1

mate changes over his lifetime, and particularly over his six years as governor, point to a critical need to replace fossil fuel generated power with renewable resources like solar and wind.

He said residents can observe the changes in Vermont's milder winters, which threaten the ski industry, and in the increase in invasive species that now thrive in the warmer climate. He said he understands there are "divergent views" on wind power, but added that "anyone who doesn't think we have to move quickly to get off coal and oil" power generation "is living in denial."

Shumlin, who early in his tenure announced a goal of getting almost all of Vermont's energy needs from renewable sources, said that since he took office, Vermont has 11 times the number of solar panels and 22 times the wind-generated power it had. And that activity, he said, has directly impacted the state's economy through employment in those industries and through lower electricity rates than any state bordering Vermont. Many of the jobs created have been good-paying ones, he said, and they have "brought young people to Vermont," sometimes to settle and raise families.

The Deerfield Wind project will consist of two rows of turbines on ridgelines on opposite sides of Route 8, located in Searsburg and Readsboro, both on a total of about 80 acres of Green Mountain National Forest land. The developers - formerly known as Iberdrola Renewables - said they intend to invest about \$80 million in the 30-megawatt wind project, which they estimate will produce enough power to supply the equivalent of 14,000 homes. Green Mountain Power has signed a 25-year agreement to purchase the power generated at the facility. The two towns are expected to receive about \$6.8 million in taxes over the life of the project.

The tips of the turbine blades would range from 400 to 430 feet from the ground at the highest point in their turning radius, officials said. The new turbine towers will stand in the neighborhood of a smaller wind project in Searsburg that opened in 1998.

While enthusiasm and relief at the project start was evident atop the hill, just below the police checkpoint, and stretched along the driveway down to Route 8, protesters decried what they said was a victory for corporate interests over those of the average citizen.

"Bears yes, Shumlin, no," stated one sign, referring to a long permitting appeal battle over the project's potential impacts on bear habitat. "Shame," proclaimed another of the 20 or more signs officials passed to reach the ceremony site under a tent canopy. Annette Smith, of Danby, executive director of the nonprofit Vermonters for a Clean Environment, has been a leader in the protests against industrial wind projects here and at other locations in Vermont.

On Monday, she was dressed in a Batwoman costume - representing she said one of the species that could be affected by the project - walking up and down the driveway. She roamed the protest site, sometimes talking into a walkie-talkie, sometimes shouting encouragement, often engaging in a shouted dialogue with other protesters that included a running commentary on the project and about the officials driving past.

"Let's sing 'This Land is Your Land' when he gets here," Smith said, and that anthem was briefly heard when Shumlin arrived, along with jeers and shouts of "No more wind!" and comments like, "That's our governor, who doesn't care about the people." Contacted later Monday, Smith was asked if she saw any other options to halt the wind project. "It should be stopped," she said. "Will it be stopped? That is not likely, but at least we should not make the same mistakes that were made in Lowell."

Referring to the existing 21-turbine Lowell Mountain wind project near Craftsbury, Smith said she has submitted to the general counsel of the state Agency of Natural Resources a request for a stay of the Deerfield Wind project, based on what she said are problems with the operational stormwater runoff system at the Lowell Mountain site - one Smith said is similar to the Deerfield Wind design.

She said the letter to General Counsel Jen Duggan stated in part, "Vermonters for a Clean Environment seeks a stay of the Deerfield Wind construction and operational stormwater permits until the Agency responds to the following questions regarding the functioning of the Lowell Wind stormwater system to assure water quality is protected and maintained."

The letter then cites several failure issues with the Lowell system VCE had previously asserted in July.

Smith said she believes it's important that opponents of industrial wind projects continue to closely scrutinize the projects even after they become operational. If there are no delays, the Deerfield Wind project is expected to go online by late 2017.

Also among the protesters was state Rep. Marianna Gamache, R-Swanton, who is a member of the House Committee on Natural Resources and Energy and has introduced legislation that would increase public notification requirements for proposed renewable energy projects and give communities the right to veto larger projects. Gamache said she was denied entrance to the groundbreaking area.

"All I wanted to do was attend and listen to what was being said," she told reporters. "I am not obstructing anything

or anyone" and was trying to "find out all about this," as a private citizen as well as a legislator, she said. Members of the media also were asked to RSVP to confirm in advance that they would attend, and their names were checked as they entered. Some protesters said they live near another project proposed by Iberdrola Renewables, proposing a total of 28 wind turbines in Grafton and Windham, and attended in support of the Deerfield Wind opponents.

Michael Fairneny, of Florida, Mass., said he and his family have suffered medical and quality of life effects of living near a 10-turbine Iberdrola Renewables project called Hoosac Wind and located in the town of Florida and in Monroe, Mass.

He said has suffered from headaches and his wife has experienced tinnitus since the Massachusetts project went online three years ago.

Smith said later that she thought "it kind of bizarre and surreal that it was the first [wind project] on public resource land and the public was not allowed to attend."

She said the situation "is a perfect picture of how Governor Shumlin has cozied up to the wind industry."

Almost every appeal by citizens or groups of wind projects has fallen before what Smith asserted was intense political pressure on both the state and federal levels to issue approvals and permit for wind developers. The project contractor is J.A. McDonald Inc. Firm President Eric Boyden said at the groundbreaking that the intent is to hire local subcontractors for the work, saying, "We do our best to keep it local." The project developers also agreed to a bear habitat mitigation plan as part of a settlement of appeal issues and will help fund ongoing bear research efforts.

John Sinclair, Forest Supervisor for the Green Mountain and Finger Lakes National Forests, said the Forest Service will have a permit administrator on site during the project to monitor the mediation efforts.

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GROUNDBREAKING - Tension in the air over wind - Governor praises start of new wind project while objectors protest

September 20, 2016 | Brattleboro Reformer (VT) Section: A: Main | 1469 Words Page: A01 OpenURL Link

By Jim Therrien

Bennington Banner Vt.Digger.org

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PROJECT »PAGE 3

FROMPAGE 1

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"I want to tell you why this matters," Shumlin said, adding that climate changes over his lifetime, and particularly over his six years as governor, point to a critical need to replace fossil fuel generated power with renewable resources like solar and wind.

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Letters to the Editor

September 17, 2016 | Berkshire Eagle, The (Pittsfield, MA) Section: Opinion | 587 Words Page: A06 OpenURL Link

Grateful for selfless Elder Services workers

To the editor: I feel compelled to give kudos to Elder Services of Berkshire County here in Pittsfield.

I am 69 with multiple chronic medical problems. I do not drive and can barely walk. For the last two months, Elder Services has bent over backwards to get me to every doctor's appointment and medical procedure.

Thank you to the selfless and dedicated volunteers and their commitment to serve the elders of Berkshire County and thank you to all at this great organization. I will forever be grateful.

David W. Shade, Pittsfield

Four years of misery caused by Hoosac Wind

To the editor: For the third night in a row, I can hear Hoosac Wind from inside our home. Saturday evening, after spending a day on the river, we decided to cook dinner on a fire in the backyard. The noise from the turbines was hard to ignore and the experience wasn't enjoyable as it used to be.

Sunday evening was just as loud. Tonight, Monday going into Tuesday, I can hear the noise from the turbines inside our bedroom. I can tell the wind is coming out of an easterly direction because of the type of sound that is difficult to ignore. Sounds like a roar with "whoop whoop," on and on endlessly!

I decided to call the complaint line and see if Iberdrola responds. I've called the number two other times with no response and I don't have much faith in the system. Now I wait to see what happens.

I've spoken with neighbors and they are also reluctant to call the complaint line. One of the reasons is that it appears to be "three strikes and you're out" and you are no longer able to get a response. This is my third time calling.

What will happen to Iberdrola if it doesn't show up to measure the sound levels? Even if it is fined that doesn't help the neighbors get sleep. Another reason for not having faith in the complaint line is that the testing procedure is biased to increase the ambient noise levels to stack the deck against the neighbors. Why go through the hassle and not have a fair assessment?

It's now after 3 a.m., no word from Iberdrola, and Hoosac Wind is still noisy! The woman who answered my call said I should call back in a half hour if I didn't get a call back. A half hour passed and no call. When I talked with her again, she said she did talk with the person responsible and he was taking care of the situation. I wonder what that means as they should be here by now? As I recall, protocol stipulates a response to the place of complaint must happen in two hours. Apparently I've been stood up!

I've been told that not many are complaining about the noise. No kidding, what's the use? My head is throbbing, I am stressed out, and while I'm very tired I can't sleep because of the noise from Hoosac Wind. In December, it will be four years that we have been impacted and nothing has really changed for the neighbors. We still have the noise, lowered property values and reduced quality of life in various ways, including health and well being. Apparently, no end in sight. Don't you people care what happens to us?

Larry Lorusso, Clarksburg

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Writers are asked to limit letters to 400 words or less. Email letters should be sent to letters@berkshireeagle.com The Eagle reserves the right to edit letters for length, style and content. Writers are limited to one letter per 30 days.

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Your opinions

December 14, 2015 | Bennington Banner (VT) Section: News | 760 Words Page: A04 OpenURL Link

Appreciated Sow's letter

I appreciate very much Mahamadou Sow's expression of love for this country and his Muslim religion while denying the legitimacy of extremists who murder and torture. His letter was printed in the Bennington Banner on Dec. 9. While I question the wisdom of some of the measures he suggests that would likely curtail our civil liberties, thereby giving terrorists a victory over our way of life, I thank him for speaking against jihadist violence from within the Muslim community and urging his co-religionists throughout the world to do the same. Mr. Sow's words clearly express gratitude and a strong sense of good fortune that he lives in the United States. Our Muslim neighbors who are making good lives in our free society may be the best argument that we have against ISIS and other extreme groups wanting to drive a wedge between Islam and the West. I fear the talk of some politicians and media personalities toward our Muslim communities. Let us not turn on good citizens making them fear their neighbors as well as those who wreak violence. We must not use our Muslim neighbors as scapegoats for the violence of our society. Atrocious acts are committed in the name of all religions, including Christianity, and in the name of no religion at all. Those of us who dream, in Mr. Sow's words "...of peace, love and a well-organized world free of violence and extremism," must stand together and make our voices heard.

- Ann Kremers Bennington

My noisy neighbor, Hoosac Wind

Last night (12/7/15) I went upstairs around midnight and could hear Hoosac Wind from our bedroom. I tried to ignore the noise for over 2 hours but sleep eluded me. Finally around 2:25 am I called the complaint line for Hoosac Wind and voiced my objection to the noise. The woman who answered asked if I wanted the technician to come here and monitor conditions and I said yes. She informed me she would notify the technician. No one called or came here, then or since. As you can imagine I'm tired with no sleep!

Another incident on (9/20/15) Hoosac Wind was loud enough to hear inside our bedroom despite the windows being closed. I was tired and tried to ignore the noise, but it was invasive and couldn't sleep. I got up and went outside and took some sound measurements around the house. Near our front door the dBa sound levels were in the low 40 dBa's which faces the turbines. On the opposite side of the house the levels were around 30 dBa with the house blocking the sound. I realize the measurements are not scientific or can be used as evidence but are relative to different areas in our yard with the same conditions. The measurements imply loud levels 10 dBa above ambient sound and the project may have been out of compliance.

There have been other times when Hoosac Wind has been audible in our home and for various reasons I didn't make any complaints. To be honest I don't have much faith in the complaint line and process. This is the second time I've used the complaint line with no response. Granted there was a storm warning in effect last time, still I'd would hope there would have been some follow up from Iberdrola. Also when other neighbors have called the complaint line and sound measurements made, all the turbines were not shut down during ambient measurements! Experts inform me that during ambient sound measurements ALL turbines should be shut down to be accurate. What's the use of using a process that isn't fair and doesn't reflect the reality of what is going on? We are told there is no issue with noise from Hoosac Wind in our neighborhood. How can facts be determined if no sound testing is being conducted in our community?

It's been three years since Hoosac Wind has been online and we are still living with noise and other issues from

Hoosac Wind and our quality of life continues to deteriorate with no solution in sight. I've been tired of late as I was diagnosed with diffuse large B cell lymphoma and undergoing treatment. Prognosis is favorable but I'm not out of the woods and being stressed and tired doesn't help my battle back to health. Studies show there is a correlation between sound waves produced by industrial wind turbines and health of those living too close to these projects. I'm not saying Hoosac Wind caused my health issues directly, but there is no doubt that sleep deprivation and other effects is negatively affecting our health and well being.

We would appreciate a response...

- Larry Lorusso Clarksburg, Mass.

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Critics slam Windham County wind plan

November 14, 2015 | St. Albans Messenger (VT) Author: MIKE FAHER VTDigger.org Staff | Section: News | 1146 Words Page: A3 OpenURL Link

GRAFTON - Two weeks after a

developer came to town to disclose details of what would be Vermont's largest wind-turbine site, the project's opponents presented an impassioned case against building any wind farms in Stiles Brook Forest.

The tone of the two gatherings could not have been more different: While developer Iberdrola Renewables on Oct. 26 touted a relatively low-impact, renewable energy facility that could pour \$1 million annually into the combined coffers of Windham and Grafton, those who are concerned about the proposal painted a picture of depressed property values, health concerns and meager financial returns at a meeting Monday evening.

Joining those opponents was a prominent opponent of large-scale wind power, state Sen. Joe Benning. The Lyndonville Republican urged Grafton and Windham residents to unite against the project, and he was sharply critical of a state permitting process that, he claims, is weighted too heavily toward meeting Vermont's renewable energy goals.

"Anything that stands in the way of that is going to get swept aside," Benning said.

Since 2012, Iberdrola and Stiles Brook owner Meadowsend Timberlands have been collaborating to study the wind resources on a 5,000-acre tract situated mostly in Windham and Grafton. Last month, Iberdrola announced the specifics of its plans.

A preliminary layout shows 20 turbines in Windham and another eight in Grafton, with the site generating 96.6 megawatts of electricity. Based on that design, Iberdrola estimated that the project would generate yearly tax revenues of \$715,000 in Windham and \$285,000 in Grafton along with \$700,000 for the state's education fund.

In addition to holding community meetings and opening an office in Grafton, the project's backers have set up a website, www.stilesbrookforest.com. But there has been organized opposition: Windham officials have argued that their town plan prohibits such development, and the nonprofit Grafton Woodlands Group has established its own storefront from which to protest the project.

Monday, residents packed into the Phelps Barn for a Grafton Woodlands Group meeting that opened with Benning – a frequent critic of large-scale wind power – declaring he is not against renewable-energy generation. "But it should be appropriately placed, and it should only be used at an industrial level if, in fact, it is necessary," he said.

"This is not a free-for-all, wild-West opportunity for any person or entity to come into the state and take over our natural resources for their personal gain," Benning told the crowd. "If it is going to be done legitimately, I would argue it should be done small-scale, it should be concentrated in those places that absolutely need it, and it should be done in locations which are close to the load, meaning it is close to those who are actually going to use it."

Benning and another speaker, former state Agriculture Secretary Roger Allbee, said they favored use of Act 250 land-use permitting for wind installations rather than the more fast-tracked Section 248 process.

"The Act 250 process, which is time-tested, is not being used anymore for energy siting," said Allbee, a resident of neighboring Townshend. "We don't have a process for reasonable consideration of the impact on our communities or our countryside." Benning said Vermont's current energy-siting process belittles local concerns.

"As much as you fight as a town, the Public Service Board is going to listen," Benning said. "But if this is renewable energy, and the state's overall objective is to have 90 percent renewable energy (by 2050) ... the Public Service Board is going to say, 'It's going toward our state's objectives, so, town, nice to hear from you, goodbye.'"

'LOSE-LOSE PROPOSITION'

The crowd heard similar sentiments in prepared statements from Montpelier resident Tom Slayton, former editor of Vermont Life; and Peter Galbraith, a former Windham County senator and Townshend resident. Galbraith reiterated that he is exploring a gubernatorial run "in large part because of my concern about what is happening to communities like ours" in regards to energy siting.

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"I wake up regularly from the noise," Hoosac-area resident Larry Lorusso said. "It's the vibration. You can feel these things."

Lorusso said he was diagnosed with lymphoma in May. While not making a direct connection between the turbines'

"infrasound" and that illness, Lorusso said he knows that his body has been weakened by Iberdrola's wind turbines, which he dubbed "the neighbors from hell."

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Your opinions

November 13, 2015 | Brattleboro Reformer (VT) Section: Opinion | 855 Words Page: A04 OpenURL Link

Choose not to wear fur

Editor of the Reformer: Every year up to 100 million animals are violently killed in the name of fashion. Trappers are responsible for much of this slaughter. Fur-bearing wildlife, such as beavers, otters, raccoons, bobcats, coyotes and other species are captured in brutal leg hold traps and left to suffer until the trapper returns, sometimes days later, to bludgeon them to death. Others are trapped and killed in body and bone crushing Conibear traps. Many nontarget animals, domestic as well as wild, are caught every year and simply disposed of. Nearly 4,000 furbearing animals were trapped during the 2013-2014 season, right here in Vermont.

This senseless killing resulted in the needless suffering and deaths of many species including beavers, important wetland ecosystem engineers and a keystone species.

Furs are also supplied to the industry by fur farms, where animals are kept in cramped cages until they are executed by means of electrocution, gassing, or neck-breaking - barbaric methods used to maintain the integrity of the pelt. Chinchillas, adorable small rodents native to South America but now almost extinct in the wild, are farmed in Vermont for their incredibly dense and ultra soft fur. These animals are used to make luxury fur coats and accessories - all unnecessary items that can be easily replaced with faux fur or other materials equally warm and soft. In many cases, real animals are dying horrific deaths to simply supply a decorative fur trim for the hood of a jacket. Consumers can easily choose to be compassionate and make humane and ethical choices when they purchase goods. By doing so, these egregiously cruel practices will over time become a thing of the past.

Winter is rapidly approaching and with it the need to dress warmly. When you buy winter attire, please think twice before supporting businesses that incorporate fur into their garments and accessories. Read labels carefully and err on the side of caution/compassion if you cannot verify that an item is furfree. The animals who violently lost their lives for these articles suffered greatly and unnecessarily for an industry that should be obsolete. Only by refusing to purchase fur will their misery end forever. Please save animal lives and choose not to wear or purchase fur.

Jennifer Lovett, Stamford, Nov.10

Exacerbating a problem

Editor of the Reformer: Your editorial regarding Act 46 (Nov. 9) exacerbates a problem in our educational discussions by focusing on the narrow and incomplete perception that the costs of keeping particular school buildings open equate to how we can most effectively serve children and families.

In limiting the conversation in this way, you ignore two important, but often overlooked cost drivers: The high costs of special programming for a student for whom their designated school is not a good fit, and the cost to the school and the community for a student who struggles in school. It is for these children that choice is so essential. In providing an option and hope for children regardless of family income, choice offers a practical and cost effective path to quality education for students of all types (it is worth noting that the lowest spending districts in the state are those who run their own elementary school but tuition their high school students to a variety of choice options). Rather than eliminating choice and opportunity by forcing the creation of reformed school districts, therefore, would it not make more sense educationally and financially to make choice, especially for high school, available to all? When I stop to consider Act 46 through the lens of the children and their families, I am quick to conclude that it is not in their best interest. I wonder how many others would do the same were they not blinded by the wrong dialog.

Brian Whitehouse, Marlboro, Nov. 11

Wind power education

Editor of the Reformer: One hundred people filled Phelps Barn to the rafters at the Nov. 10 community meeting in Grafton. This shows that people want to know more about the implications of a massive industrial wind project proposed for our area.

Sen. Joe Benning drove home the key question: Do we need the power? Or can we do renewables in a better way, smaller scale, and closer to where the power is needed? Roger Allbee urged people to call on their legislators to move energy siting back to Act 250 to protect the landscape that is core to Vermont's economic wellbeing. Anna Vesely presented calculations from a CPA based on Iberdrola's plan, showing that the property tax savings of residents would be modest or in some cases non-existent. Larry Lorusso and Michael Fairneny, who live near Iberdrola's Hoosac Wind, in Massachu-setts, wind plant, gave a heartbreaking account of how this "neighbor from hell" is affecting their physical and mental wellbeing and driving people from their homes.

The audience asked questions about audible sound and infrasound, health studies, number of jobs created (hardly any), risk to clean water, and Vermont's renewable energy goals.

Grafton Woodlands Group is continuing its speaker series, with Bruce Post on the past and future of Vermont's landscape on Nov. 18, 6:30 p.m. at the Homestead Room of the Grafton Inn. Liisa Kissel, Grafton Woodlands Group, Inc.. Nov. 11

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• Citation (aglc Style)

'Your opinions', *Brattleboro Reformer* (online), 13 Nov 2015 A04 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view? p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/159175A054FBBFF8>



Critics slam Windham County wind plan

November 13, 2015 | Manchester Journal (VT) Author: Mike Faher VTDigger.org | Section: News | 1234 Words OpenURL Link

GRAFTON - Two weeks after a developer came to town to disclose details of what would be Vermont's largest windturbine site, the project's opponents presented an impassioned case against building any wind farms in Stiles Brook Forest.

The tone of the two gatherings could not have been more different: While developer Iberdrola Renewables on Oct. 26 touted a relatively low-impact, renewable energy facility that could pour \$1 million annually into the combined coffers of Windham and Grafton, those who are concerned about the proposal painted a picture of depressed property values, health concerns and meager financial returns at a meeting Monday evening.

Joining those opponents was a prominent opponent of large-scale wind power, state Sen. Joe Benning. The Lyndonville Republican urged Grafton and Windham residents to unite against the project, and he was sharply critical of a state permitting process that, he claims, is weighted too heavily toward meeting Vermont's renewable energy goals.

"Anything that stands in the way of that is going to get swept aside," Benning said.

Since 2012, Iberdrola and Stiles Brook owner Meadowsend Timberlands have been collaborating to study the wind resources on a 5,000-acre tract situated mostly in Windham and Grafton. Last month, Iberdrola announced the specifics of its plans.

A preliminary layout shows 20 turbines in Windham and another eight in Grafton, with the site generating 96.6 megawatts of electricity. Based on that design, Iberdrola estimated that the project would generate yearly tax revenues of \$715,000 in Windham and \$285,000 in Grafton along with \$700,000 for the state's education fund.

In addition to holding community meetings and opening an office in Grafton, the project's backers have set up a website, www.stilesbrookforest.com. But there has been organized opposition: Windham officials have argued that their town plan prohibits such development, and the nonprofit Grafton Woodlands Group has established its own storefront from which to protest the project.

Monday, residents packed into the Phelps Barn for a Grafton Woodlands Group meeting that opened with Benning – a frequent critic of large-scale wind power – declaring he is not against renewable-energy generation. "But it should be appropriately placed, and it should only be used at an industrial level if, in fact, it is necessary," he said.

"This is not a free-for-all, wild-West opportunity for any person or entity to come into the state and take over our natural resources for their personal gain," Benning told the crowd. "If it is going to be done legitimately, I would argue it should be done small-scale, it should be concentrated in those places that absolutely need it, and it should be done in locations which are close to the load, meaning it is close to those who are actually going to use it."

Benning and another speaker, former state Agriculture Secretary Roger Allbee, said they favored use of Act 250 land-use permitting for wind installations rather than the more fast-tracked Section 248 process.

"The Act 250 process, which is time-tested, is not being used anymore for energy siting," said Allbee, a resident of neighboring Townshend. "We don't have a process for reasonable consideration of the impact on our communities or our countryside."

Benning said Vermont's current energy-siting process belittles local concerns.

"As much as you fight as a town, the Public Service Board is going to listen," Benning said. "But if this is renewable energy, and the state's overall objective is to have 90 percent renewable energy (by 2050) c the Public Service Board is going to say, 'It's going toward our state's objectives, so, town, nice to hear from you, goodbye."

'Lose-lose proposition'

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The connection between infrasound and illness is controversial. Last year, a Massachusetts Institute of Technology review of research on wind turbines' health effects concluded that "neither low-frequency sound nor infrasound in the context of wind turbines or in experimental studies has been associated with adverse health effects."

Iberdrola's written statement asserts that "all of the credible peer-reviewed scientific data and various government reports c have refuted the claim that wind farms cause negative health impacts. Currently, hundreds of thousands of people live and work near operating wind farms without any health effects."

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Letters to the editor

September 3, 2015 | Berkshire Eagle, The (Pittsfield, MA) Section: Opinion | 562 Words Page: A04 OpenURL Link

Otis must be wary of wind's drawbacks

To the Editor: I recently read that voters in the town of Otis overwhelmingly endorsed a \$6.4 million wind power project (Eagle, August 10.) We are Clarksburg residents that live about one mile from the Hoosac Wind Turbine project. Our experience is that's too close for rural residential neighborhoods to be invaded by an industrial wind turbine of this huge scale. Noise can be more than annoying and on numerous nights we have been awakened and left sleepless, making the next day difficult to say the least.

Another problem of being too close to such installations is the phenomenon of strobing/ flicker, where light modified by the wind turbine blades creates a disturbing flashing of light and shadow that can be very disorienting and also result in adversely affecting people's health. Not limited to just us, many communities in Massachusetts and the world are having the same problems along with other issues in regard to industrial turbines.

Otis, make sure that no harm is done to the town's residents. Money is not worth a person's health!

Larry Lorusso Clarksburg

Gender violence cause involves everyone

To the Editor: On Sept. 17, at Pittsfield's Third Thursday, I'll once again be donning women's shoes and joining hundreds of other men (and women and children), as we walk a mile up and down North Street as participants in the Elizabeth Freeman Center's fifth annual "Walk a Mile in Her Shoes - the International Men's March to Stop Rape, Sexual Abuse and Gender Violence."

We will be walking to raise much-needed funds in support of the vital work that the Elizabeth Freeman Center does in providing services for the survivors of sexual abuse and domestic violence; and we will be walking to raise awareness that these issues are not just "women's" issues, but issues that affect all of us.

Sexualized violence does not just affect women. It affects the men who care about them, their families, their coworkers and their communities. Statistics show that more than one-third of American women are physically abused, sexually assaulted or stalked sometime in their lifetime; that domestic violence is the leading cause of injury to girls and women between the ages of 15 and 44, and is the second leading cause of death for pregnant women.

Lest you think that Berkshire County is immune and the problem is only a "big city" problem, don't be fooled. Berkshire County's rate of restraining orders is 37 percent higher than the state average. That means that someone you know, someone you care about, has been or may become the victim of domestic violence or sexual abuse.

Please join us on Sept. 17 by walking with us or cheering us on, and by donating to the Elizabeth Freeman Center. Registration and donations can be done on line. When you register on line, you can set up your own web page so that others can sponsor you. I've done it, and found it to be easy and user-friendly. Visit the website at elizabethfreemancenter.org, and click on the tab for Walk a Mile.

Lanny M. Zuckerman Pittsfield The writer is a member of the Board of Directors of the Elizabeth Freeman Center.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters on the Sept. 22 mayoral primaries in North Adams and Pittsfield must be received at The Eagle by noon, Sept. 17. All letters must have a name, address and telephone number.

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BOND - Local is promoted

August 20, 2015 | Roslindale Transcript (MA)

Section: News | 165 Words

Page: 4 OpenURL Link

BOND, a leading 108-year-old construction management and general contracting firm, announced that Kane Cuddy of West Roxbury has been promoted to vice president, civil infrastructure and operations. The promotion was given in support of the company's long-term strategy of growing and expanding its footprint throughout the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic.

In his new role, Cuddy will continue to direct BOND operations as well as lead the company's Civil Infrastructure Business Unit. Cuddy will also be responsible for client and staff development.

A Wentworth Institute of Technology graduate, Cuddy has been with BOND since he was a co-op. He was an instrumental part of BOND's Middletown-Norwalk 345kV Underground Transmission team in Connecticut where he worked for three years. He went on to manage the Hoosac Wind and NSTAR Newton-West Roxbury Cooling Line projects. Most recently, as director of operations, Cuddy streamlined BOND's cost control systems, improved project management protocols, developed a better equipment maintenance and tracking system, managed BOND's training agenda and implemented several other corporate and divisional objectives.

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Pipeline opponents raise questions about planned purchase of Berkshire Gas by Spanish energy giant Iberdrola

June 29, 2015 \mid Daily Hampshire Gazette [30 Day Embargo] (Northampton, MA) Author: RICHIE DAVIS Recorder Staff \mid Section: Home \mid 996 Words OpenURL Link

Among the "red flags" being raised about a 20-year agreement for the Berkshire Gas Co. to buy natural gas from the proposed Northeast Energy Direct pipeline is the planned purchase by Spanish energy giant Iberdrola of Berkshire Gas.

Iberdrola, which won federal approval last month for its bid to acquire Berkshire owners UIL Holding Co., is already, through subsidiaries, the second-largest wind-turbine operator in the United States, with 5,645 megawatts of installed capacity in 18 states, including Hoosac Wind in Monroe and Florida, along with gas storage and managed capacity in North America, and serves 32 million electric and gas customers in Europe and the Americas.

The Spanish corporation, which already owns Rochester Gas and Electric Co., New York State Electric and Gas and Central Maine Power, bought UIL's Berkshire Gas, Connecticut Natural Gas and Southern Connecticut Gas in 2008 for \$4.5 billion and then in 2010 sold the companies back to UIL, which earlier this year announced the \$3 billion deal to buy back New Haven-based UIL Holdings and merge it with its New York and Maine utilities.

The Department of Public Utilities this week is holding three days of hearing on the Berkshire Gas contract to buy gas from the proposed Northeast Energy Direct pipeline.

Pipeline opponents contend that the proposed Northeast Energy Direct pipeline is not needed for New England customers. The pipeline would cross Plainfield in Hampshire County and eight Franklin County towns on its way from Pennsylvania to Dracut, connecting with the Maritimes and Northeast pipeline there to feed planned export terminals to ship liquefied natural gas to foreign markets. Instead of lowering energy prices in the region, they argue, the pipeline would deliver the gas to demand much higher prices on the world market.

At a recent Greenfield public hearing, Rosemary Wessel of No Fracked Gas in Mass. told the state Department of Public Utilities — which is looking into a long-term contract for Berkshire to buy natural gas from Kinder Morgan's Northeast Energy Direct project and also must approve Iberdrola's proposed deal — that the Spanish corporation already has international customers lined up for gas that would flow from the new pipeline.

"Iberdrola is an international gas company that has been actively preparing sources of U.S. natural gas for European markets, currently from Texas exporters, but they are looking for more to export," said Wessel, who charged that more than 75 percent of the gas flowing through the Northeast Energy Direct pipeline could be destined for export through liquefied natural gas terminals like the Pieridae project in Nova Scotia, recently approved by U.S. Department of Energy.

"Making U.S. gas customers compete with global markets in which gas bills are three to five times as much is an injustice to domestic consumers," she added, calling on the DPU to investigate the implications of Iberdrola's planned purchase of Berkshire Gas.

UIL spokesman Michael West declined to comment on the purchase of his holding company.

But Kinder Morgan spokesman Richard Wheatley said, "The ultimate destination of the gas is within the sole control of NED's customers. At this time, (Tennessee Gas Pipeline) has not executed any contracts with developers of proposed LNG export facilities. NED's shippers have committed to capacity to transport over 550,000 (dekatherms a day) of incremental natural gas supplies to meet New England's growing consumer and industrial gas needs, as well as to help bolster electric generation reliability. Our anchor shippers include seven New England local

distribution Companies, and TGP continues to negotiate with various customers ..."

Yet Wheatley explained his company "cannot discriminate among customers based on the ultimate destination or use of the gas, such as the Northeast vs. Canada or another foreign country."

Jim Cutler of Hilltown Community Rights in Ashfield called the Iberdrola deal "the most disturbing thing" in the proposed agreement between Northeast Energy Direct and Berkshire Gas.

"I look at this set of events and the outcome, who benefits, and see that Iberdrola has worked to ensure that this pipeline is going to be installed so that they can fulfill their contracts, which already exist."

The Pieridae project would feed LNG import terminals in Spain, said Cutler, adding that Pipeline Awareness Network of the Northeast, of which he is a member, has sought full intervention status in DPU proceedings to investigate the connection, but has been rejected by the state agency.

"We all know the intervention process allows for discovery," he said. "That means that organization gets to look at the books, at the information that nobody else is privy to. It is my opinion that that discovery process is going to show conspiracy to defraud the American people, in this region, out of money that would be extracted for the construction of this pipeline. I think that's a big problem for you ... a problem that you want to stay away from as much as possible. And so you deny us ... We're not done with this. And we're going to look very deeply into this issue."

Mina Hamilton of Richmond also testified before the DPU, "Iberdrola, a multi-national corporation, has at its core totally different priorities than those of residents ... Witness Iberdrola's recent decision to spend \$5.6 billion for a 20-year contract to buy natural gas from the CorpusChristi LNG terminal in Texas — said gas to be exported to the UK and to Spain."

Hamilton said that for the DPU to approve Berkshire's contract for gas from the Northeast Energy Direct pipeline and then "rubber stamp" the company's acquisition by Iberdrola "would be a shocking and outrageous betrayal of the public trust. Clearly, the true interests and priorities of Iberdrola should be the subject of full public disclosure before either the precedent agreement is signed or the buy-out of Berkshire Natural Gas is completed."

The Massachusetts attorney general's office, which is intervening in the Iberdrola purchase case (Docket 15-26) before the DPU, testified that the deal "likely delivers substantial tangible benefits to the merging parties" shareholders, directors and senior officers but little, if any, quantifiable benefits to ratepayers."

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Holyoke-based union representing laborers cites impact of job creation by proposed Tennessee Gas Pipeline

June 23, 2015 | Daily Hampshire Gazette [30 Day Embargo] (Northampton, MA) Author: RICHIE DAVIS Recorder Staff| Section: Going Green| 626 Words OpenURL Link

The Northeast Energy Direct project proposed by the Tennessee Gas Pipeline Co. could represent pay dirt for unionized construction workers around western Massachusetts, say two representatives for the Holyoke-based union local representing laborers.

Even though the estimated 3,000 jobs on the project would only be for about 18 months, the pipeline could lead to other gas-based industrial development that in turn would create other jobs, according to a local labor leader.

Hundreds of trade workers from around western Massachusetts build their working lives going from one project to another, say spokesmen for Holyoke-based Local 596 of the Laborers International Union of North America.

"This job, if it goes through, would be one of biggest jobs in western Mass.," said Tom Andrews, business manager for LIUNAmass, who estimated that upwards of 100 of the 500 unionized construction laborers represented by Local 596, along with pipe fitters, carpenters, operating engineers and workers from other trades, would be used for construction of the 430-mile pipeline as it is built through western Massachusetts. "This is a huge project."

But beyond the pipeline itself, Andrews and his son, LIUNA Field Organizer Colton Andrews, pointed to development activity around the region that could result from the pipeline project, which must first be reviewed by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

"You can't just look at that one small picture, you have to look at the grand scheme," said Andrews. "It's going to be 20 to 25 years of expansion," beginning with additional gas lines for Berkshire Gas Co., which plans to buy gas from the Northeast Energy Direct pipeline. "Personally, I think this pipeline will lead to many, many years of economic growth and development through the expansion of the local distribution company's infrastructure and development."

Tom Andrews said providing an additional route for gas to enter the region will allow for new gas-fired electric generation plants, spurring growth by manufacturers for whom utility prices will be lowered.

The pipeline is a controversial project that drew hundreds to a public hearing in Greenfield last week, including Andrews and other union members. Andrews said they are "definitely understanding of the environmental impacts of the pipeline" and "totally sensitive" to the hardship for any residents living close to the compressor stations planned for Northfield and the Berkshire County town of Windsor.

But Andrews added, "You've got to find a balance in there. ... We're construction workers just trying to make a living."

A memorandum of understanding between Tennessee Gas Pipeline's parent, Kinder Morgan, and the Massachusetts Building Trade Council states that Kinder Morgan and its construction contractors will use union labor at all pipeline construction sites in the state and negotiate a project labor agreement for work on the project, which would pass through Plainfield in Hampshire County and Ashfield, Conway, Shelburne, Deerfield, Montague, Erving, Northfield and Warwick in Franklin County on its way from Pennsylvania to Dracut.

Only welders, with special certification to work on interstate natural-gas pipelines, would have to be brought in from outside of New England, Andrews said.

Calling himself "a true believer in windmills," the North Adams resident said 15 to 20 workers from his union local — covering all of western Massachusetts northward from Holyoke to the Vermont line — were on the job at Hoosac Wind in Monroe and Florida. They are also working on the Franklin County courthouse and Baystate Franklin Medical Center expansions and Greenfield High School and on Interstate 91 bridge construction in Deerfield.

"Things are extremely busy for us right now," he said, adding that the pipeline is "going to be a great opportunity for young men and women who would love to get into the trades. ... It's not a temporary job for us. It's one job out of hopefully 20 or so in your career, and then you get to retire."

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