

# Selectmen: Spill isn't threat to water

February 18, 2013 | North Adams Transcript (MA) Section: News | 401 Words

Page: A03 OpenURL Link

By Edward Damon

North Adams Transcript

CLARKSBURG - A small heating oil spill near the Red Mills Spring poses no threat to the drinking water's quality, selectmen said at last week's meeting.

"Apparently, an abutting home had a small fuel oil leak, and due to some heavy rain that took place at the same time, some of the fuel made its way into the catch basin area below the overflow pipe," Selectmen Chair Carl Mc-Kinney said.

Town officials contacted the state's Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), and the site was inspected on Feb. 1, McKinney said.

"After review by the DEP representative, he determined that the amount lost was not a hazard to the community using the spring nor to the river," he said.

The spring, which is part of the independent Briggsville Water District, serves approximately 180 people along River Road in Clarksburg. The general public also uses the spring as a water source by taking water from the system's overflow pipe.

McKinney warned against drawing water from the catch basin.

"Debris and some road salt and sand, anything that washes off the roadway, will also end up in that basin," he said Wednesday night. "Water from that area would never be safe to drink."

And in response to residents' concerns, Town Administrator Thomas Webb said he will reach out to the DEP to obtain the test results from what the DEP termed a groundwater seep found near the Florida portion of the Hoosac Wind Project.

The resident who first found the seepage, Larry Lorusso, was present at Wednesday's meeting.

Lorusso, who has already had his own tests performed on the liquid, expressed concern the local water supply could be contaminated.

"It's smells awful," Lorusso told selectmen. "I don't want that stuff in my water."

McKinney said the DEP stated the levels of volatile organic compounds in the pool did not exceed the state's reportable concentrations for release to groundwater.

The low level detected are likely due to the degradation of organic materials present in compost used during construction, he said.

But residents who were in attendance encouraged officials to request the official results and that the seepage continue to be monitored. Resident Katie Swabey said she was concerned over Lorusso's test results showing traces

of "other petroleum."

"We want to know what that oil is, and if it's not at a hazardous level, that's great," she said.

# To reach Edward Damon, email edamon@thetranscript.com.

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## • Citation (aglc Style)

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# County board reviews 'sustainable' plan - County board reviews sustainable plan

February 18, 2013 | Recorder, The [30 Day Embargo] (Greenfield, MA) Author: RICHIE DAVIS Recorder Staff | Section: Nation / World | 857 Words OpenURL Link

It sounded like a frighteningly ambitious goal five years ago: siting 2.87 megawatts of renewable electricity production in Franklin County by the end of 2009.

But the region hit the target and went further, siting an estimated 3.18 megawatts of green electricity generators.

What's more, the county, which also had the goal of siting another 5.9 megawatts by 2020, has already sited 18.8 megawatts worth of renewable power production since the beginning of 2010, say planners for the Franklin Regional Council of Governments.

Those latter achievements, largely due to four major projects — the 0.9 megawatt Berkshire East windmill, the 2 megawatt solar farms at Northfield Mountain and the Greenfield landfill, and Monroe's 13.5 megawatt portion of the Hoosac Wind project — were among achievements highlighted as meeting the objectives of the county's Sustainable Master Plan recently.

The draft plan addresses how the region can prepare for its projected growth of 3,500 additional households, an aging population and rising energy costs, with an eye to maintaining its rural character and protecting its natural resources. It will be presented next month in three "open house" gatherings in Greenfield, Orange and Shelburne Falls.

Planners are going over the individual chapters, on housing, transportation, economic development, energy, natural and cultural resources, with an eye toward how towns can best centralize future development close to existing services like public transportation and vacant or under-used industrial sites, thus preserving the county's rural character while growing.

# Flood risks

Among the observations planners made at a recent meeting of the Franklin Regional Planning Board was that a key concern in light of predicted climate change is the possibility of more frequent flooding events and the risks that poses from rivers and waterways where village centers have grown up.

"We're seeing more of a possibility of flooding that could eventually damage our cultural resources," said land-use planner Mary Praus, pointing to not only historic structures like the Eunice Williams Covered Bridge, which was damaged by Hurricane Irene flooding in Greenfield, but also to town halls, churches, mill buildings and riverfront areas that also are in historic districts around the county.

"It's a balancing act," Planning Director Margaret Sloan told the Planning Board as she described how a priority for sustainable housing development and economic development both is to "in-fill" places where there are vacant structures, under-used mill buildings and by adding accessory apartments in existing single-family homes as a way of easing pressure on agricultural land and avoiding sprawl that would add to traffic, increased energy use and greenhouse-gas emissions. "If we want to in-fill, how do we balance that with potential risk because it might be in a flood prone area?"

If a major constraint to protecting against the added hazards is cost, another obstacle is simply making an inventory of those mostly older structures and sites that are most vulnerable.

"It's very clear from our public outreach that people want to see new growth around employment centers, in places

served by transit," Sloan said. And yet, she added, "This is a broad overview at the regional level. Each community is going to have its own discussion. This is the framework of things we can do to become more sustainable, encouraging new development in such a way that you can get to work, go shopping or to the doctor without having to get in the car for long distances. We're looking at opportunities to develop that way. We're still going to have farms, we're going to have homes in rural areas. But how are we going to develop the new growth that's coming?"

Frustrated by plans alone

Board member Tom Miner of Shelburne voiced frustration, though, after years of trying to encourage so-called "smart growth" that protects open space, "so that development is channeled, and not just allowed to spread across the landscape."

"I'm tired of these plans," he said. "We talk about all the good things we should do, and it never happens, because the towns won't enact the zoning that's needed to make it happen."

Miner said towns lack the "political will to put in zoning regulations that protect the values that are important to them and to residents."

Sloan added that the state has to enact meaningful zoning reform legislation, which has been filed repeatedly year after year by Rep. Stephen Kulik, D-Worthington, to enable towns to get away from the state's zoning statute that encourages "cookie-cutter" development.

Miner's frustration with the planning exercise wasn't the only criticism from board members.

Conway representative Joseph Strzegowski also questioned the value of developing renewable-energy projects if they don't result in shutting down fossil-fuel-burning generators that contribute to climate change.

"If we haven't said we have to close down a coal plant, we're sort of in a dream world, because we haven't made things better. We've just produced more power. How do we create a disincentive for the polluting stuff. That's the tension the energy chapter inevitably has to dance around."

When the March presentations are scheduled to seek public comments, Sloan said, the draft plan will be made available at local libraries and summary sheets on each of the chapters will be circulated through a variety of outlets.

For now, the chapters are available at:

www.frcog.org/services/landuse/landuse HUD.php

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RICHIE DAVIS Recorder Staff, 'County board reviews 'sustainable' plan - County board reviews sustainable plan', *Recorder, The* (online), 18 Feb 2013 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?</a>
p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/144C2FB8320A97B8>



# Clarification

February 14, 2013 | North Adams Transcript (MA) Section: News | 46 Words Page: A08 OpenURL Link

A photo caption in Wednesday's Transcript did not properly attribute concerns that turbines of the Hoosac Wind Project are causing headaches to members of The Friends of Florida and Monroe, a group that held a press conference Tuesday to discuss noise and health concerns regarding the wind farm.

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# Florida - Complaints filed over turbine noise

February 13, 2013 | Berkshire Eagle, The (Pittsfield, MA) Author: New England Newspapers | Section: Berkshire | 492 Words Page: B04 OpenURL Link

#### **Edward Damon**

FLORIDA - Residents living in close proximity to the Hoosac Wind Project said they have filed formal complaints against the company operating the installation, alleging that the noise from the turbines is above the legal limit and that they are causing negative health effects.

At a press conference Tuesday afternoon, members of The Friends of Florida and Monroe called for a sound study to determine whether noise from the turbines is above the state's legal limit, 10 decibels above the ambient sound. The group formed in response to residents' concerns over Iberdrola Renewables' wind project, which consists of 19 wind turbines, each 340 feet tall, on Crum Hill in Monroe and Bakke Mountain in Florida.

Florida resident Michael Fairneny said he and his family's quality of life changed drastically since the turbines went online in late December, which led him to file a formal complaint with the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

"My quiet, peaceful, serene world and home has been turned into a reality of grief, unending noise, annoyance and constant dealing with those in charge to help us," he said.

Fairneny, who has lived in his house on Moores Road for 29 years and is about 3,000 feet away from the nearest turbines, said he and his wife have suffered from constant headaches since the end of December, which they believe have been caused by low-frequency sound from the turbines. The only relief he gets from headaches, he said, comes when he leaves his house.

When reached Tuesday afternoon, DEP spokesperson Edmund Coletta would not comment on the number of complaints that have been made, only that complaints are being tracked and the department has been in contact with Iberdrola.

"MassDEP requested, and the company recently submitted, a plan for performing noise monitoring," Coletta said. "We are working with the company to ensure the plan will evaluate conditions around the turbines. We expect to finalize that plan shortly and then the company will begin monitoring."

But some residents feel a sound study may not be good enough. George Berne, also of Moores Road in Florida, said he believes it was wrong to put the turbines so close to people's homes. He added that he believes animals are also affected by the turbines - since the project went online, he said, he hasn't seen wildlife he would normally see.

"Something needs to happen," Berne said. Residents living near turbines in other communities are reporting similar symptoms. In January, the Select Board in Falmouth voted to have town meeting members decide whether to shut down two municipally owned turbines after complaints of headaches and other symptoms. In October 2012, a lawsuit was filed asking for \$200 million in damages against those involved with a wind project in upstate New York.

Fairneny said making an official complaint to DEP is the most important thing concerned residents can do right now.

" If something isn't done now, I'm afraid it'll be swept under the rug," he said.

# • Citation (aglc Style)

New England Newspapers, 'FloridaComplaints filed over turbine noise', *Berkshire Eagle, The* (online), 13 Feb 2013 B04 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/1446DC0606764C00">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/1446DC0606764C00</a>



# Wind turbines causing a stir with residents - Something in the air

February 13, 2013 | North Adams Transcript (MA) Section: Main | 661 Words Page: A01 OpenURL Link

**Edward Damon** 

North Adams Transcript

FLORIDA - Residents living near the Hoosac Wind Project held a press conference Tuesday, where they discussed formal complaints they have filed with the state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), alleging the turbines create noise above the state's legal limit and negative health effects.

At the Tuesday afternoon gathering, members of The Friends of Florida and Monroe called for a sound study to determine whether noise from the turbines is above the state's legal limit of 10 decibels above ambient sound.

The group formed in response to residents' concerns over Iberdrola Renewables' Hoosac Wind Project, which consists of 19 wind turbines, each 340 feet tall, on Bakke Mountain in Florida and Crum Hill in Monroe.

Florida resident Michael Fairneny said he and his family's quality of life has changed drastically since the turbines went online in late December, which led him to file a formal complaint with the state DEP.

"My quiet, peaceful, serene world and home has been turned into a reality of grief, unending noise, annoyance and constant dealing with those in charge to help us," he said.

Fairneny, who has lived in his house on Moores Road for 29 years and is about 3,000 feet away from the nearest turbines, said he and his wife have suffered from constant headaches since the end of December, which they believe are caused by low-frequency sound from the turbines. The only relief he gets from headaches, he said, comes when he leaves his house.

Paul Copleman, Communications Manager with Iberdrola Renewables, said the company would work closely with DEP to address any possible issue.

"For any project we build in any community we enter ... we want to be a good neighbor," Copleman said. "We take that relationship very seriously. If people have concerns and are raising questions, then we want to look into it."

When reached Tuesday afternoon, DEP spokesperson Edmund Coletta would not comment on the number of complaints that have been made, saying only that complaints are being tracked and the department has been in contact

with Iberdrola.

"MassDEP requested, and the company recently submitted, a plan for performing noise monitoring," Coletta said. "We are working with the company to ensure the plan will evaluate conditions around the turbines. We expect to finalize that plan shortly and then the company will begin monitoring."

Copleman said Iberdrola is obligated by state law to stay within DEP's given sound levels. But some residents feel a sound study may not be good enough. George Berne, also of Moores Road in Florida, said he believes it was wrong to put the turbines so close to people's homes. He added that he believes animals are also affected by the turbines - since the project went online, he said, he hasn't seen wildlife they would normally see.

"Something needs to happen," Berne said. Residents living near turbines in other communities are reporting similar symptoms, according to the group. In January, Falmouth selectmen voted to have Town Meeting members decide in the spring whether to shut down two municipally owned turbines after residents complained of headaches and other symptoms. In October 2012, a lawsuit was filed asking for \$200 million in damages against those involved with Iberdrola's Hardscrabble Wind Power Project in upstate New York.

Fairneny said making an official complaint to DEP is the most important thing concerned residents can do right now.

"If something isn't done now, I'm afraid it'll be swept under the rug," he said.

To reach Edward Damon, email edamon@thetranscript.com.

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'Wind turbines causing a stir with residentsSomething in the air', *North Adams Transcript* (online), 13 Feb 2013 A01 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/1446E05BEAB59800">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/1446E05BEAB59800</a>



# Turbines: Unhappy

February 13, 2013 | Recorder, The [30 Day Embargo] (Greenfield, MA) Author: DIANE BRONCACCIO Recorder Staff| Section: Monroe | 966 Words OpenURL Link

MONROE — When Michael Fairneny of Moores Road, Florida, first heard of plans for the Hoosac Wind Project, he was relieved to learn that the 10 turbines sited in Florida wouldn't be close to his home. But at least four of the nine 340-foot-tall turbines on Crum Hill in Monroe — which he said are about 3,000 feet from his home — can be seen right outside his kitchen windows.

"My quiet, peaceful, serene world and home has been turned into a reeling of unending noise, annoyance and constant dealing with those in charge to help us," said Fairneny. "My wife's ears are ringing constantly. When I'm home, I have headaches around the clock."

Fairneny said he went to the Florida selectmen with his complaints but was told there was nothing they could do. "Those turbines are in Monroe," he said.

Fairneny moved here 25 years ago from Boston, to have the peace and quiet of country living. He said the neighbors "are not too well connected here," but that he is so concerned about the impact the turbines have had on their lives that he has gone door-to-door, to urge other residents to report their concerns to the Department of Environmental Protection.

"I'm very concerned that DEP will brush this stuff under the rug," he said. "The noise is pretty much unending, unless the wind is dead and (the turbines) aren't running."

Irving and Rosalyn Mullette, both 75, of Tilda Hill Road, Florida, say they wonder if they'll be able to enjoy their home and yard when summer comes, because the noise "is always there."

"We've had folks come to the house who thought 'the wind is really blowing,' then realized that it wasn't that windy; it was just the sound of the turbines," Irving Mullette said. "Others have said it sounds like you have an airplane hovering overhead."

The Mullettes moved back to their family homestead after living for four years in New York City, craving the quiet country life.

Irving Mullette remarked that the family cat "went crazy" when the turbines first started up. "She went racing around, couldn't find a place to sit and calm down."

"I never had headaches, but since they've started this up, I've had headaches every day," he said. "We've been to our doctor and we're concerned about whether we will be able to stay in this house."

The 19 1.5-megawatt wind turbines went on line for the first time at the end of December, and the residents with complaints have started a website:

www.hoosacwindproject.com

that describes the project and their concerns.

About six residents organized a press conference Tuesday afternoon, to voice their concerns and to give reporters a chance to experience the working turbines from their homes. But they say at least 20 residents they've spoken to have had difficulty adjusting to the new turbines atop Crum Hill.

The group has filed complaints with the Department of Environmental Protection, and is hoping other residents will come forward with their complaints — while the DEP still has time to address them with Iberdrola Renewables Inc.

"MassDEP has been tracking complaints from residents in the area and we have been in contact with the company about those complaints," said a news statement from spokesman Edmund Coletta. "Mass DEP requested — and the company recently submitted — a plan for performing noise monitoring. We are working with the company to ensure the plan will evaluate conditions around the turbines. We expect to finalize that plan shortly and then the company will begin monitoring."

To this reporter, the wind turbines located near the Moores Road home of George Berne, created a sound resembling wind gusts from an approaching storm. The sound of rushing wind exceeded any visible wind that could be seen in the nearby trees.

Berne says he is deaf, but still is affected by the sound. "It reverberates from Spruce Hill (behind the house) to the front of the house." He said the windmill is about 2.000 feet from his home.

He said his grandchildren, ages 11 and 12, have had trouble sleeping and have been bothered by the "pulsating" red aviation warning lights — an effect caused by the wind turbine blades passing in front of the red lights, intended to alert aircraft to the turbines' presence. He said the strobing effect isn't seen from the first floor, but it affects those in the third-floor bedrooms. He said his grandchildren have had to change bedrooms

"Nobody told us we were in for this kind of situation," said Berne. "Something has to be done — for our emotional and physical health."

Berne pointed out that he "hasn't seen a deer or moose" around his property since the turbines were turned on. "It's just wrong to put (the turbines) this close to people," he said.

His neighbor, Mark Lavariere of Moores Road said the noise is worse between 7 p.m. and 3 a.m. He described it as "two helicopters hovering."

"I've experienced headaches, as Mr. Mullette has, and sinus-pressure headaches," said Lavariere. "When I leave my house and go to my workplace, that's when the headaches go away. When I go home, I really don't want to go to my house anymore."

The Hoosac Wind Project is the largest wind farm in both Massachusetts and Southern New England.

In December, during a ceremony before the turbines were started up, Gov. Deval Patrick said the windfarm would reduce reliance on "volatile, foreign fossil fuels," and would generate enough power to run at least 10,000 homes a year.

The project has been in the works since 2001.

Paul Copleman, a spokesman for Iberdrola Renewables LLC, owner and operator of the project, has said the project will generate roughly \$6.9 million in payment-in-lieu-of taxes for the towns, with land-lease payments to local owners totalling about \$3 million.

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## • Citation (aglc Style)



# State tests find ground water and organic sediment, not oil - DEP tests seep near Hoosac turbine

February 12, 2013 | North Adams Transcript (MA) Section: Main | 492 Words Page: A01 OpenURL Link

By Phil Demers

North Adams Transcript

FLORIDA - The concerns of a nearby resident led to four sampling tests being taken recently from a seepage near one of the HoosacWind Farm's turbines.

The consensus says a four-foot long, one-inch deep pool of a suspicious-looking liquid is benign- made up of groundwater, sediment and organic materials.

But, according to Clarksburg resident Larry Lorusso, the second of two tests he had performed on a sampling from the pool came back with a 281 parts per million "other petroleum" result, meaning roughly .03 percent of the half-gallon sample tested.

Lorusso described the pool as "uglysmelling stuff" located a mile behind his house on East Road in Clarksburg, some 200 feet away from the nearest Florida turbine on Bakke Mountain.

He found it while walking his dog on Christmas day.

"It stressed me out, because it's a hundred yards off from where a stream starts," Lorusso said.

Lorusso contacted the state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), who's since performed their own study, along with Iberdrola Renewables, owners and operators of the wind development.

"It's not a pool of oil. It's a groundwater seep," Katherine Skiba, regional DEP spokesperson said Monday. " ... There were no compounds detected exceeding Massachusetts DEP's reportable concentrations for release to groundwater."

Skiba said these concentrations are regu-

lated by the Massachusetts Contingency Plan, which establishes environmental regulations. She added that Iberdrola was aware of and documented the seep during construction, which a company representative confirmed Monday.

Looking ahead, Skiba said DEP is "waiting for results from [Iberdrola's] analysis to make a determination with regard to further follow-up."

Iberdrola's preliminary results came in Monday evening.

"What we found is that nothing in this seep can be traced to anything we are using in the wind turbine," Paul Copleman, the company's Communications Manager said. "It's naturally occurring."

The turbines, Copleman said, contain a lubricant but "nothing powers [the turbines] other than themselves." Lorusso's first sampling also tested negative to any noxious content. The second encompassed a finer threshold.

Both were performed by Spectrum Analytical Inc., in Agawam.

Lorusso thought DEP's response, taking several weeks, should have been more prompt. "If neighbors had complained that I'd dumped a barrel of oil in my yard, DEP would have been all over it," Lorusso said.

Copleman said the company plans to follow up with DEP today, but both he and DEP expressed the belief that their concerns over the substance had been investigated and likely resolved.

Neighbors of the wind farm, on the other hand, have other complaints to air. Florida resident Michael Fairneny has scheduled a press conference today in town to address residents' complaints of noise from the development.

The state's largest, the Hoosac Wind Farm comprises 19 turbines, each standing 340 feet tall.

To reach Phil Demers, email pdemers@thetranscript.com.

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#### • Citation (aglc Style)

'State tests find ground water and organic sediment, not oilDEP tests seep near Hoosac turbine', *North Adams Transcript* (online), 12 Feb 2013 A01 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?</a> p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/14468B36E99C4860>



#### Letters

January 23, 2013 | Amherst Bulletin [30 Day Embargo] (MA) Section: Commentary | 1231 Words OpenURL Link

Tissue donation

process questioned

To the Bulletin:

On Dec. 2, my mother, Marie, died en route to Cooley Dickinson Hospital in Northampton. She was 81 years old. Hours after her death she was donating tissue from her body — even though she had never signed up as an organ or tissue donor. I was surprised this was possible and others I have told about it have reacted as I did: with shock and indignation.

A few hours after she died, New England Organ Bank called my stepfather, Vince — my mother's husband of 38 years — on his home phone to ask his permission to take the tissue from her body. Vince, who had only hours earlier lost his beloved wife, was taken by surprise by New England Organ Bank's telephone inquiry. After a few hours, he answered yes to the request — a decision that he has since said he regrets. He made it only because he was in an emotional and grief-stricken state when New England Organ Bank sprang the guestion on him.

To make matters worse, on Jan. 8, just over a month after Marie's death, Vince received a letter from New England Organ Bank informing him that because Marie's tissue received an initial negative assessment after testing, they couldn't use it after all. It should not be legal practice to ask people out of the blue if they will give permission to an organ bank to take tissue — that very day — from the body of a newly dead loved one.

It is not ethical or fair practice to ask such a momentous decision of someone who has just been bereaved. Regulations and laws in New England ought to be amended so that such practices are not allowed to add to the grief of those who have lost a loved one.

Andrew Frisardi

**Amherst** 

Support needed for

renewable energy

To the Bulletin:

The proposed solar plant in Hatfield is under considerable criticism, reminding me of countless other solar and wind projects stalled by angry residents.

The effect on property values and views is understandable, but there is more at stake. The year 2012 was the warmest year on record in the lower 48 by a full degree. The extraction and burning of coal and fossil fuels causes pollution, health problems and irreversible changes to landscapes. Nuclear plants such as the Vermont Yankee are under fire as well, as they have the potential to be very dangerous.

The consequences are no longer years away. Droughts and storms exacerbated by climate extremes are causing suffering all around the world. Vermont Yankee's permit has already expired. The National Resources Defense

Council links air pollutants to 30 percent of cases of childhood asthma.

This doesn't just affect people in smoggy cities. Air quality is poor right here in the Pioneer Valley. The consequences of fossil fuels and nuclear dead zones last for hundreds or thousands of years.

The solution to these problems is renewable energy. It is not perfect, but we can't afford to wait for a perfect option. I hope that communities will be more accepting of renewables in the short term, while continuing to look for even better, more efficient answers in the long term.

The Hoosac wind farm in Florida and Monroe, the proposed solar farm in South Amherst and Cape Wind are fantastic examples of projects that are necessary steps toward a renewable future. As the third most densely populated state, we cannot hope to find vast uninhabited swaths of land where no one would see a wind or solar farm. But with more people comes the need for more electricity. We need to make small dents wherever we can.
Jonathan Simonds
Amherst
Amherst should lead
in climate change efforts
To the Bulletin:
The year 2012 was the warmest year on record, breaking the 1998 record by an entire degree, rising from roughly 55.3 degrees to 56.3 degrees Fahrenheit. If temperature and climate change trends in the past decade have not been convincing enough, this will hopefully catch the world's attention.
This shocking news about the world and environment we live in should not only be recognized on a global and national level, but a local level as well. Advocacy for climate change awareness must become a more significant part of our local community. We live in a town that is not afraid of vocalizing opinions on global and national issues. Now, as we face an issue concerning the future of the very environment we live in, is no time to be silent.
Promoting environmentally friendly life choices like recycling, composting, public transportation efficiency and locally grown foods will all help the issue.
Even though many Amherst residents already make these choices in their lives, this recent news about the shocking rise in temperature in 2012 and the consequences it yields should increase efforts where they have already been made in the community, and enforce them where they have not. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, scientists project a potential increase in global temperature by 2 degrees Fahrenheit to 11.5 degrees Fahrenheit come 2100, assuming we continue on the current path we are on.
With the temperature racing far ahead of us and our ability to stop it, we must, above all, make efforts to educate

With the temperature racing far ahead of us and our ability to stop it, we must, above all, make efforts to educate our local community about this environmental crisis. We must encourage the town of Amherst to contribute less to global greenhouse gas emissions, and set an example for other towns to follow. Global change starts with local change.

criarige.			
Rosie Hakim			
Amherst			

Gun control needn't

abridge rights

#### To the Bulletin:

How many more times will communities across the nation be thrown into gut-wrenching grief, how many more times will parents have to bury their children, how many more massacres do there have to be until action is taken and until assault weapons can no longer be bought at Wal-Mart as part of a Black Friday special without a thorough background check, how many more Sandy Hooks, Auroras and Tucsons will there have to be until actual action on gun control is taken?

Civilian-model assault weapons such as the AR-15 which was used in both the Aurora theater and Sandy Hook shootings feed high-velocity 5.56 mm NATO cartridges into the firing chamber from their high-capacity 30-round assault magazines quickly and allow for fast and accurate semiautomatic firing, firing that can either be done to put on an impressive show at the firing range or cut down an entire classroom of first-graders in their morning meeting. Assault rifles in the hands of civilians are completely unnecessary. They are not necessary for either hunting or home defense. To all those who claim otherwise, notice that you live in the United States of America, not the tribal territories of Afghanistan. A hunting rifle, shotgun or handgun is more than sufficient.

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#### Matthew McCudden

#### **Amherst**

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# Renewable energy needs closer look

January 23, 2013 | Daily Hampshire Gazette [30 Day Embargo] (Northampton, MA)

Section: Opinion | 300 Words

OpenURL Link

#### To the editor:

The proposed Hatfield solar plant is under considerable criticism, reminding me of countless other solar and wind projects stalled by angry residents. The effect on property values and views is understandable, but there is more at stake.

The year 2012 was the warmest year on record in the lower 48 states by a full degree. The extraction and burning of coal and fossil fuels causes pollution, health problems and irreversible changes to landscapes. Nuclear plants such as the Vermont Yankee are under fire as well, as they have the potential to be very dangerous.

The consequences are no longer years away. Droughts and storms exacerbated by climate extremes are causing suffering all around the world. Vermont Yankee's permit has already expired. The National Resource Defense Council links air pollutants to 30 percent of cases of childhood asthma.

This doesn't just affect people in smoggy cities. Air quality is poor right here in the Pioneer Valley. The consequences of fossil fuels and nuclear dead zones last for hundreds or thousands of years.

The solution to these problems is renewable energy. It is not perfect, but we can't afford to wait for a perfect option. I hope that communities will be more accepting of renewables in the short term, while continuing to look for even better, more efficient answers in long term.

The Hoosac wind farm in Florida and Monroe, the proposed solar farm in South Amherst and Cape Wind are fantastic examples of projects that are necessary steps toward a renewable future. As the third most densely populated state, we cannot hope to find vast uninhabited swaths of land where no one would see a wind or solar farm.

But with more people comes the need for more electricity. We need to make small dents wherever we can.

Jonathan Simonds

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## • Citation (aglc Style)

'Renewable energy needs closer look', *Daily Hampshire Gazette* (online), 23 Jan 2013 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/14405236BA4EE528">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/14405236BA4EE528</a>



# Renewable energy needs closer look

January 23, 2013 | Daily Hampshire Gazette [30 Day Embargo] (Northampton, MA)

Section: Opinion | 299 Words

OpenURL Link

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#### Letters

January 23, 2013 | Daily Hampshire Gazette [30 Day Embargo] (Northampton, MA)

Section: Amherst | 1229 Words

OpenURL Link

Tissue donationprocess questioned

To the Bulletin:

On Dec. 2, my mother, Marie, died en route to Cooley Dickinson Hospital in Northampton. She was 81 years old. Hours after her death she was donating tissue from her body — even though she had never signed up as an organ or tissue donor. I was surprised this was possible and others I have told about it have reacted as I did: with shock and indignation.

A few hours after she died, New England Organ Bank called my stepfather, Vince — my mother's husband of 38 years — on his home phone to ask his permission to take the tissue from her body. Vince, who had only hours earlier lost his beloved wife, was taken by surprise by New England Organ Bank's telephone inquiry. After a few hours, he answered yes to the request — a decision that he has since said he regrets. He made it only because he was in an emotional and grief-stricken state when New England Organ Bank sprang the question on him.

To make matters worse, on Jan. 8, just over a month after Marie's death, Vince received a letter from New England Organ Bank informing him that because Marie's tissue received an initial negative assessment after testing, they couldn't use it after all. It should not be legal practice to ask people out of the blue if they will give permission to an organ bank to take tissue — that very day — from the body of a newly dead loved one.

It is not ethical or fair practice to ask such a momentous decision of someone who has just been bereaved. Regulations and laws in New England ought to be amended so that such practices are not allowed to add to the grief of those who have lost a loved one.

Andrew Frisardi

Amherst

Support needed for renewable energy

To the Bulletin:

The proposed solar plant in Hatfield is under considerable criticism, reminding me of countless other solar and wind projects stalled by angry residents.

The effect on property values and views is understandable, but there is more at stake. The year 2012 was the warmest year on record in the lower 48 by a full degree. The extraction and burning of coal and fossil fuels causes pollution, health problems and irreversible changes to landscapes. Nuclear plants such as the Vermont Yankee are under fire as well, as they have the potential to be very dangerous.

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Jonathan Simonds

**Amherst** 

Amherst should lead in climate change efforts

To the Bulletin:

The year 2012 was the warmest year on record, breaking the 1998 record by an entire degree, rising from roughly 55.3 degrees to 56.3 degrees Fahrenheit. If temperature and climate change trends in the past decade have not been convincing enough, this will hopefully catch the world's attention.

This shocking news about the world and environment we live in should not only be recognized on a global and national level, but a local level as well. Advocacy for climate change awareness must become a more significant part of our local community. We live in a town that is not afraid of vocalizing opinions on global and national issues. Now, as we face an issue concerning the future of the very environment we live in, is no time to be silent.

Promoting environmentally friendly life choices like recycling, composting, public transportation efficiency and locally grown foods will all help the issue.

Even though many Amherst residents already make these choices in their lives, this recent news about the shocking rise in temperature in 2012 and the consequences it yields should increase efforts where they have already been made in the community, and enforce them where they have not. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, scientists project a potential increase in global temperature by 2 degrees Fahrenheit to 11.5 degrees Fahrenheit come 2100, assuming we continue on the current path we are on.

With the temperature racing far ahead of us and our ability to stop it, we must, above all, make efforts to educate our local community about this environmental crisis. We must encourage the town of Amherst to contribute less to global greenhouse gas emissions, and set an example for other towns to follow. Global change starts with local change.

Rosie Hakim

**Amherst** 

Gun control needn'tabridge rights

To the Bulletin:

How many more times will communities across the nation be thrown into gut-wrenching grief, how many more times will parents have to bury their children, how many more massacres do there have to be until action is taken and until assault weapons can no longer be bought at Wal-Mart as part of a Black Friday special without a thorough background check, how many more Sandy Hooks, Auroras and Tucsons will there have to be until actual action on gun control is taken?

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# Hancock - EOS Ventures shifts focus to solar projects

January 4, 2013 | Berkshire Eagle, The (Pittsfield, MA) Author: Clarence FantoSpecial to The Eagle | Section: Berkshire | 864 Words

Page: B01 OpenURL Link

HANCOCK - Despite a last-minute, oneyear renewal by Congress of substantial federal subsidies for wind-energy developers that had been set to expire on New Year's Day, the region's leading alternative-energy firm is taking no chances and is focusing instead on large-scale solar projects.

At EOS Ventures, based at Jiminy Peak Resort, "the landscape changes very quickly," said CEO and Partner Tyler Fairbank in an interview this week. "It's been a challenge all along, an annual issue with the extension of tax subsidies by Congress, but we're seasoned veterans at this point."

EOS in its fifth year of operations.

The renewal of the tax breaks that have helped finance wind farms across the nation, including sev-

eral in Berkshire County, was up in the air until the fiscal cliff compromise reached by the Senate at 2 a.m. Tuesday and approved by the House late Tuesday evening.

Given the year- to- year uncertainty of continued federal support, "the wind business has been a much smaller part of the projects we've been involved in," Fairbank said.

Developers across the nation had sprinted to get new wind farms up and running by Jan. 1 in case Congress failed to extend federal wind production tax credits. They had feared a cutoff of future windturbine projects.

The compromise bill approved by Congress includes a one-year extension of the tax credit, allowing wind- farm developers to claim the credit for projects that begin construction by Jan. 1, 2014.

Just opened is the state's largest wind facility so far - the 19-turbine Hoosac Wind complex atop Bakke Mountain in the town of Florida and Crum Hill in the adjacent Franklin County town of Monroe. The Iberdrola Renewables project, expected to generate 28 megawatts of electricity, was dedicated by Gov. Deval Patrick on Dec. 3. At full throttle, the wind farm would generate enough power for an estimated 10,000 homes.

Noting that the up- andrunning 10- turbine, 15megawatt Berkshire Wind installation atop Brodie Mountain in New Ashford was 13 years in the making, Fairbank emphasized that with government subsidies not assured, " no developer would risk putting capital in without the financing." EOS became the developer of Berkshire Wind as one of its earliest and, to date, most elaborate renewable energy ventures.

"Because of the doomsday scenario" involving the uncertainty of future federal tax breaks, said Fairbank, " there have been no new wind projects for over a year that would fit our mission."

Instead, he said, "we developed a big portfolio of utilitysized solar projects. We had to be very nimble, and we altered our strategy over the past two years."

As a "great success story," Fairbank cited the development of a major, 2.2-megawatt solar installation at the former Pownal, Vt., racetrack, which had been lying fallow for over 20 years and had seen a succession of failed development proposals.

"That's where we've been spending our time, getting away from projects requiring federal and state wind-energy

incentives," he noted The big difference: Solar projects are eligible for a 30 percent federal investment tax credit, and the legislation funding such projects is securely in place until 2016.

Acknowledging that EOS has morphed from wind to solar, with an emphasis on utility- scale projects - the largest category, towering over residential and municipal installations - Fairbank said the company is also developing commercial-scale co- generation renewable energy projects, which combine hot water and electricity. Such projects are far less affected by federal tax credits, he added.

All told, EOS has taken part in wind and solar projects providing 25 megawatts of alternative energy in six Northeastern states: Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Connecticut, Vermont, Maine, and Massachusetts.

By early 2012, the company had completed a \$ 4.5 million package of seven solar installations statewide - five in Berkshire County, one at Brandeis University in Waltham and another at a high school athletic building in Seekonk, adding up to more than 1.3 megawatts of renewables.

In Berkshire County, solar panel units have been installed at the Bedard Brothers auto dealership in Cheshire, Berkshire South Regional Community Center in Great Barrington, Hancock Shaker Village, Quality Printing in Pittsfield, and the West Stockbridge Town Hall. EOS, which received major funding from Berkshire Bank, owns and maintains the systems, which have an expected 20-year life span and are tied to power-utility grids.

In addition to Berkshire Wind, EOS developed turbines at Jiminy Peak to supply more than one-third of the resort's energy needs, at Fox Islands Wind at Vinalhaven, Maine, and several other sites.

"We continue to be relevant and successful," Fairbank said. "We've had to do it in a variety of different ways, looking at everything under the sun, so to speak, changing strategy on the fly. I can't think of another private developer in the region that has done as much in the past five years."

In future years, he predicted, "we'll need to stay focused and nimble to develop our portfolio. We do one to three projects per year because they're so big."

Coming up in the new year is an anticipated multimegawatt, utility- scale solar project in Berkshire County, said Fairbank, adding that he could not yet get into specifics.

"We have a handful of big projects in Western Massachusetts in our pipeline," he noted.

To reach Clarence Fanto: cfanto@yahoo.com or (413) 637-2551. On Twitter:@BEcfanto.

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## HANCOCK ENERGY FIRM TURNS TO SOLAR POWER

January 4, 2013 | North Adams Transcript (MA) Section: News | 881 Words Page: A03 OpenURL Link

By Clarence Fanto

Special to the Transcript

HANCOCK - Despite a last-minute, one-year renewal by Congress of substantial federal subsidies for wind-energy developers that had been set to expire on New Year's Day, the region's leading alternative-energy firm is taking no chances and is focusing instead on large-scale solar projects.

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#### • Citation (aglc Style)

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# Impact of wind energy will remain limited

December 22, 2012 | Daily Hampshire Gazette [30 Day Embargo] (Northampton, MA)

Section: Opinion 113 Words

OpenURL Link

#### To the editor:

With regards to a recent article about the ribbon-cutting ceremonies for the Hoosac Wind project in Florida, it is important to grasp how insignificant this project really is.

This is the state's largest wind farm. It occupies the highest, windiest land (aside from Greylock) in all of western Massachusetts. Yet, when you apply realistic projected generation rates, you will discover that it will only produce one-thousandth of the electricity we consume in this state.

We would have to build 100 of these facilities over the next decade just to offset projected growth in electricity demand ... without ever addressing our current fossil fuels and climate problems.

## Lloyd Crawford

#### Hawley

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## • Citation (aglc Style)

'Impact of wind energy will remain limited', *Daily Hampshire Gazette* (online), 22 Dec 2012 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/1435C63E61084898">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/1435C63E61084898</a>



# TAKE OUR POLL: Falmouth resident confronts Gov. Patrick on wind turbines

December 19, 2012 | Cape Codder, The (Orleans, MA) Author: Scott A. Giordano; THE BULLETIN Section: features | 452 Words OpenURL Link

After an unexpected, in-person plea from an opponent of Falmouth's wind turbines to Gov. Deval Patrick, it's clear state officials are open to various solutions to solving the perceived problems the turbines cause for some.

The face-to-face encounter between Patrick and West Falmouth resident Malcolm Donald occurred Dec. 3 in the western Massachusetts town of Florida. Patrick was there to celebrate the near completion of the Hoosac Wind Power Project, the largest wind energy facility in Southern New England. Donald and West Falmouth resident David Moriarty were there to protest the same project and to confront the governor about turbines in Falmouth.

Donald approached Patrick to express his concerns that the Falmouth wind turbines are causing adverse health effects that include sleep deprivation, elevated blood pressure, ear pressure and Tinnitus. He and a Florida, Mass. resident were then invited to sit down for a 30-minute discussion with Patrick and Richard Sullivan, secretary of energy and environmental affairs.

"I told [Gov. Patrick] that Falmouth bought two wind turbines from the state and the state had a responsibility for the project, and that the turbines were too big and too close to residences," said Donald, who lives within 1,250 feet of the turbines. "We recommended the state remove the turbines and replace them with solar installation on the town's capped landfill."

Donald said Patrick listened intently but did not commit to any of the proposed suggestions. "I think he felt like it was more money, and he needed more convincing," Donald said.

Chelsie Oullette, deputy press secretary for Patrick, said in a written statement that Patrick was happy to engage in an open discussion about the turbines.

"Wind turbines are an important part of our clean energy strategy, but we also recognize they are not right for every community. That's why the governor has pushed for a wind siting bill to create agreed upon standards for responsible siting," Oullette said. "Our teams at the Clean Energy Center and the Department of Environmental Protection are working with the Falmouth community to find a solution that both advances our clean energy agenda while protecting local interests."

Sullivan agreed, telling The Bulletin the state can learn a lot from the ongoing issues in Falmouth.

"We've been very clear there needs to be a responsible siting of wind turbines and standards in place for communities, residents, and developers. We want to get it right and have standards that are both reasonable and responsible," he said.

"There are multiple solutions on the table for Falmouth. We discussed everything from removing the turbines, moderating the turbines, relocating them, and amending their hours of operation. All is on the table. We're looking to see how it all plays itself it at these community meetings in Falmouth," Sullivan said.

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## • Citation (aglc Style)

Scott A. Giordano, THE BULLETIN, 'TAKE OUR POLL: Falmouth resident confronts Gov. Patrick on wind turbines', *Cape Codder, The* (online), 19 Dec 2012 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?</a>
p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/1434AEF04EF9C550>



# Wind project protested

December 15, 2012 | Bennington Banner (VT) Section: Local | 87 Words Page: A02 OpenURL Link

FLORIDA, Mass. - While a crowd gathered Monday to hear Gov. Deval Patrick and other officials celebrate the Hoosac Wind Project, about half a dozen people were just steps away protesting the 19 wind turbines scheduled to be turned on by year's end.

Among them was town resident Michael Fairneny, who has lived with his wife on Moores Road for 29 years. Fairneny is concerned about how the turbines have changed his life, and whether he will have more to worry about once they begin to spin.

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#### • Citation (aglc Style)

'Wind project protested', *Bennington Banner* (online), 15 Dec 2012 A02 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/143323634EA55038">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/143323634EA55038</a>>



## Inconvenient truth on wind

December 13, 2012 | Recorder, The [30 Day Embargo] (Greenfield, MA) Author: My Turn: Raymond S. Hartman| Section: Shelburne | 687 Words OpenURL Link

It is unfortunate for the citizens of Massachusetts generally, and likely devastating to many residents of Franklin and Monroe specifically, to witness the ill-conceived commitment of Gov. Patrick and his administration to Industrial Wind Turbines.

Perhaps he and his administration have not done their homework. Perhaps they are naive enough to believe the PR materials of Big Wind — the little girl chasing the butterfly with the large wind turbines in the background and the promise of large amounts of money flowing into the town. Perhaps the lobbyists are just that convincing and generous with their donations to the Patrick administration.

What the science and the more extensive experience of other countries have demonstrated is the following:

Industrial Wind Turbines (IWTs) make no engineering or economic sense in inland New England. Based upon available prevailing winds, as estimated by the U.S. Department of Energy, IWTs will produce little sustainable energy. Moreover, the energy they produce will be intermittent and available when the grid does not need it. The U.S. DOE National Renewable Energy Laboratory classifies wind assets in inland New England as "not good."

As a result, for every MW of capacity of IWT put in place, an equal amount of traditional fossil-fuel-based back-up generation capacity will need to be constructed and operated, so that that backup capacity can be quickly brought on line when the wind suddenly stops blowing.

Therefore, in inland New England, IWTs will not reduce our carbon footprint. They will not contribute in any way toward limiting global warming. They will however significantly increase the cost of every person's and business's electricity, precisely at a time when we cannot afford it. The reason is that the subsidies paid to keep this economically unsustainable technology operating will be spread over everyone's monthly electric bill, in addition to the cost of the normal fossil-fuel-based capacity required to back-up those IWTs.

Based upon many epidemiological studies, IWTs will have serious adverse health impacts upon residents within at least a 2-mile radius of the IWTs. Based upon reliable statistical and property appraisal studies, the values of properties of these residents will decrease by 25-40 percent.

It is precisely these impacts that have led European countries (e.g., Holland, Germany, the UK among others) to halt construction of IWTs. It is precisely these impacts that have led Massachusetts towns to want to sell their IWTs (e.g., Princeton) or shut down the IWTs that are operating (e.g., Falmouth). The experience of Princeton is instructive. Any payments estimated as flowing to the towns of Monroe and Franklin from the operation of the IWTs which have not taken account of the poor wind resources and their poor operational performance will have been vastly overstated. If you do not believe this, ask the town government of Princeton about the profitability of local IWTs. The town has publicly stated that their IWTs were falsely promoted and are losing money.

Wake up, Massachusetts. The Patrick administration is telling the Big Lie to promote a pipe dream energy technology (Big Wind) that will be revealed as the Big Boondoggle a decade from now. I wish Big Wind were the answer; it would be such a wonderful way to power our region. The inconvenient truth is that it fails upon almost all criteria.

I am very grateful that the citizens of Shelburne voted to ban projects like the one in Florida and Monroe. I am certain we will start hearing about health issues related to noise, given how close some of those turbines are to people's houses. I am certain we will start hearing about people who want to sell their homes but cannot, because

of the noise. I think it's unfortunate for Florida and Monroe that the Hoosac Wind Project will be proof that people in Shelburne did the right thing by voting in a ban.

Raymond S. Hartman, a Shelburne Falls resident, is president and director of Greylock McKinnon Associates, an economic consulting firm specializing in analysis in support of litigation. He has a doctorate from MIT in mathematical economics and have served on the faculties of MIT, Boston University and the University of California, Berkeley. Two of his areas of specialty are energy and environmental economics.

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# Letter: Losing on wind

December 11, 2012 | Recorder, The [30 Day Embargo] (Greenfield, MA)

Section: Letters 271 Words

OpenURL Link

At the ribbon cutting ceremony for Hoosac Wind on Dec. 3, Gov. Patrick and others frequently mentioned that this project will provide power for 10,000 homes. These projects are always promoted this way. In truth, residential electricity only accounts for about a third of total electricity consumption. Massachusetts has 2.5 million households. To put this in perspective, this largest wind farm in Massachusetts will produce, on an annual basis, only enough power for one out of every 250 households in the state ... or 1/750 of electrical power consumed in Massachusetts.

As electric power consumption, total, only accounts for about a third of anthropocentric greenhouse gas emissions. The best you could say is that Hoosac Wind will offset 1/2250th of Massachusetts GHGs. However, this large figure needs to be tempered by the fact that a considerable amount of GHGs were emitted in the process of eliminating 75 acres of forest, manufacturing, transporting and installing massive amounts of concrete and steel. And ... of course, assumes that wind energy can be incorporated into the grid without affecting the efficiency of fossil fuel generators needed to offset the erratic nature of wind energy.

Disturbingly, demand for new electricity is growing faster than in-state wind/solar generating capacity. So, contrary to what the governor said to the media, we are actually losing ground.

These facts eclipse all other facets of the debate about wind power in that they challenge the very core of widely held assumptions about what we can really accomplish with wind energy. When so little is gained, why is it worth the massive public subsidies, impact on neighbors, wildlife, etc?

# LLOYD CRAWFORD

# Hawley

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## Patrick touts new Mass. wind farm

December 10, 2012 | Sun, The (Lowell, MA) Author: The Lowell Sun| Section: Green | 110 Words OpenURL Link

FLORIDA (AP) -- Gov. Deval Patrick and state Energy and state energy officials last week visited the 19-turbine Hoosac Wind Power project in the western Massachusetts towns of Florida and Monroe.

Officials say the wind farm is on track to be completed by year's end will produce enough power for more than 10,000 homes a year and offset about 64 million pounds of carbon dioxide released by traditional electrical generation.

The project is also expected to generate about \$6.8 million in tax revenue for the towns.

But opponents say they worry the turbines will bring noise and possible adverse health effects, and lower the property values of nearby residents.

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## Time to make a stand

December 6, 2012 | Woburn Advocate (MA) Author: Matt Murphy; State House News Service | Section: News | 1536 Words Page: 9A OpenURL Link

As the post-election glow for Beacon Hill Democrats faded, Gov. Deval Patrick is finding that a beleaguered opposition party can cause headaches even after a mid-term that left them weaker than before.

Budget woes and tax policy preparations - the gas tax all but a forgotten notion at this point in Patrick's mind - took a back-seat last week to the shaping of the governor's inner circle and the fortitude of House Republicans afforded a modicum of control over the Beacon Hill agenda once every two years.

And former Treasurer Tim Cahill took the stand in his own defense, the final witness called in a month-long trial about the blurring of campaign and official duties. Jurors were treated to stories of campaign aides fearful of falling into a (Janet) Wu-trap and heard from a treasurer facing jail time and adamant that in those final campaign days of 2010 his only concern was protecting the Lottery.

The GOP stood ready to delay emergency funding requested by the governor to begin dealing with the legal costs of processing thousands of compromised drug cases, almost certainly pushing the issue off until January when the Legislature formally re-convenes and the Democratic leadership can once again exert its will.

And while reports of Tom Finneran's immunity deal with prosecutors stoked probation indictment unease, the unexpected death of Rep. Joyce Spiliotis from a cancer diagnosis she kept secret from even her carpool-mate, Rep. Brad Hill, added to the souring holiday mood around the capitol.

With two years to go, Patrick turned last week to Brendan Ryan, his communications director, to take over as chief of staff when Mo Cowan leaves in January to return to the private sector. Loyalty gets rewarded: After starting with Patrick when he was about 24, Ryan takes control of ship headed for choppy waters with midyear budget cuts, public health and safety crises, a looming fight over taxes and a legacy to protect piling up on his new desk.

With leadership in flux, Republican leaders asked why the Legislature should silently sign over a \$30 million check to an administration at least partially responsible for the drug lab debacle they now need to pay for? "Difficult, if not impossible," Senate Minority Leader Bruce Tarr said, handicapping the odds of mid-year budget bill advancing in December when one lawmaker can block any legislation.

Rep. Brad Jones said he was waiting for the same olive branch Patrick had spent months on the campaign trail urging Congress and the president to accept: "The governor met with the Democratic leadership. He's never reached out to me in any substantive way to talk about this issue and I'm quite confident as presented the Republican caucus would have issues with it."

Patrick had his own problems, admitting on the radio that the hiring of former highway safety director Sheila Burgess made his administration look "ridiculous" in light of her shoddy history of speeding and avoiding police. But his explanation that Burgess's hiring records had been "destroyed" in the normal course of business had critics questioning what sounded like a convenient attempt to try to turn the page.

Cahill lists \$60K in defense fund contributions.

Former state Treasurer Tim Cahill on Monday filed a report with the Office of Campaign and Political Finance on behalf of the Tim Cahill Defense Fund, reporting donations of \$60, 350. According to the filing, all of the donations were dated Nov. 15 and the donations include \$25, 000 each from Alicia Cahill-Watts of Boston and Sandra Pashley.

Both the Cahill-Watts and Pashley donations are identified as loans, with Cahill-Watts listing Fidelity as her employer and Pashley listing herself as a homemaker with an Australian address. The other donors listed are Laurie Graf of Quincy (\$5, 000), Paul Graf of Quincy (\$5, 000), Doug Gutro of Quincy (\$100), and Ralph Yohe of Arizona (\$250). Cahill and co-defendant Scott Campbell are on trial for allegedly using state Lottery ads to bolster his 2010 campaign for governor. Both have pleaded not guilty and closing arguments are scheduled for Tuesday. Cahill attorney Brad Bailey declined to comment on the campaign finance filing. - M. Norton/SHNS.

DCR says new parking lot lease will deliver more value.

The Patrick administration on Monday touted the winning bid on a parking lot operation as helping the state to increase its revenue and representative of ongoing efforts to review state leases. According to the Department of Conservation and Recreation, LAZ Parking submitted the winning bid of \$5.2 million to operate the Charles River Reservation Storrow Drive parking lot. It's a five-year permit. According to DCR, the parking lot lease was "out of date and significantly undervalued: the minimum bid request was four times the amount previously received." The LAZ bid exceeded competing bids by nearly \$1 million and DCR announced it was also pleased with the company's vision for increasing access and accommodations for local residents and Esplanade visitors. The bid from LAZ, which has its headquarters in Hartford, Connecticut, included plans to increase overnight parking and monthly parking programs. - M. Norton/SHNS.

Hoosac Wind moves state closer to 2020 goal.

A 19-turbine wind project in western Massachusetts is near completion after 11 years and could eventually produce enough energy to power 10, 000 homes, according to the Patrick administration. Gov. Deval Patrick was in the town of Florida on Monday to celebrate the coming completion of the project that will help the state meet its goal of producing 2, 000 megawatts of wind power by 2020. The energy produced by the on-shore wind farm located in Florida and Monroe is expected to produce enough energy to off set 64 million pounds of carbon dioxide a year, or the equivalent of 20, 000 cars. "Wind energy has so much potential, and when this project is complete, it will be a big step forward in reducing our reliance on volatile, foreign fossil fuels," Patrick said in a statement. "We share a common vision with the project developers to make the Commonwealth a healthier and environmentally cleaner place for generations to come." The project will sell renewable energy certificates to NSTAR as part of a long-term contract with the utility authorized by the 2008 Green Communities Act. Since work started on the project in 2001, the Hoosac Wind project has generated more than 130 temporary construction jobs and will net \$6.8 million in taxes for the towns. - M. Murphy/SHNS.

Interior designers find traction in Senate.

With the 2011-12 legislative session winding to a close, interior designers are just beginning to see progress on legislation filed way back at the start of the session. With a skeleton crew on hand, the Senate on Monday approved and sent to the House legislation allowing interior designers to bid on state contracts that primarily involve construction or other work relating to non-structural interior elements of a building. Sen. James Timilty of Walpole is the bill's chief sponsor. The State Administration Committee in March endorsed the bill, which was redrafted by the Senate Ways and Means Committee and released to the floor on Monday. According to a summary of the bill, it makes changes to the state's designer services law, including requiring interior designers who bid on state contracts to complete a nationally recognized certification. Supporters of the original bill in the House include Reps. Louis Kafka, Antonio Cabral, Paul McMurtry and Elizabeth Poirier. The bill allows interior designers to provide services that do not require a registered architect, landscape architect or engineer. - M. Norton/SHNS.

Warren names top campaign advisors to staff.

Senator-elect Elizabeth Warren on Monday named Mindy Myers, her campaign manager, as chief of staff in her Senate office. Warren also announced the appointment of Dan Geldon, her campaign's senior advisor, as deputy chief of staff and Roger Lau as her state director. Lau was political director on Warren's campaign. Myers managed Connecticut Sen. Richard Blumenthal's successful Senate campaign in 2010 and previously worked as chief of staff to U.S. Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse of Rhode Island. In 2008, she was New Hampshire state director on President

Obama's campaign. Myers worked in the legislative affairs office under President Clinton, as a senior advisor and political director to former Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle, and as deputy director for constituency outreach for Al Gore's presidential campaign in 2000. An Amherst College and Harvard Law School graduate, Geldon was an advisor to Warren in Washington when she was helping to form the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. A UMass Amherst graduate, Lau has deep ties with Massachusetts Democrats. He's worked in various positions for Sen. John Kerry, including press secretary and deputy state director, and has also worked for Congressman Richard Neal and former Congressman Martin Meehan. - M. Norton/SHNS.

Foreclosure deeds down for fifth straight month.

Completed home foreclosures fell in October for the fifth straight month, hitting their lowest monthly level since February 2007, the Warren Group reported Monday morning. While fore-closure deeds were down to 371 last month, lenders initiated 1, 458 fore-closure petitions in October, a 22 percent increase over October 2011 and up slightly over September 2012. It marked the highest number of petitions recorded in any month since October 2009. The Warren Group reported that foreclosure deeds filed over the first ten months of 2012 are down 2.5 percent compared to the same period in 2011, but foreclosure petitions - the first step in a potential foreclosure are up more than 44 percent compared to 2011. - M. Norton/SHNS.

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