

# Concerns raised at Townshend wind forum

November 26, 2013 | Brattleboro Reformer (VT) Section: Towns | 938 Words Page: 07 OpenURL Link

By BRANDON CANEVARI

Manchester Journal

TOWNSHEND - Tears welled up in Larry Lorusso's eyes and his voice began to crack as he spoke about the environmental impacts the Hoosac wind project has had since it first went online last year.

"My mountain was out back," he said taking a moment to try to collect himself. "It was the enchanted forest. I loved going up there and [it was] a very beautiful place and I watched them wreck it little bit by little bit. So, I understand something was taken from us. Part of it is the noise, our peace and quiet."

Lorusso was part of a four person panel that met at the United Church of Christ on Friday for a forum that attracted about 60 people for a discussion that focused largely on the noise and health impacts of industrial wind power.

Iberdrola Renewables - which is headquartered in Spain - recently built two test towers (MET towers) in Windham and one in Grafton on land owned by the New Hampshire based Meadowsend Timberlands Limited. It is believed by some that the towers are precursors to an application for a large scale wind development project in Windham County - a view that Jeremy Turner the managing forester of Meadowsend Timberlands Limited is puzzled by.

"MTL does not understand how this organization can be telling people where turbines will be built when we haven't even collected enough data to determine if wind is a viable resource to help us meet our long-term conservation goals," Turner stated in an e-mail. "It is our reasonability to future generations as stewards of this land to investigate all possible options to create a sustainable future for Stiles Brook."

If representatives of Iberdrola Renewables were present at the meeting, they did not identify themselves or ask questions.

However, if a project were ultimately to come to fruition - even though the town of Windham prohibits the construction of wind turbines under the bylaws of its town plan - the most affected areas would vary from 2 to 3.5 miles. "They would be basically parallel to the Windham Hill Road and therefore parallel to much of the settlement in Windham and certainly two of the villages close to that," said state Sen. Peter Galbraith, D-Windham District. "It would then veer to the east to Townshend Road in Grafton and it would come into Townshend with sort of a direct impact on the Acton Hill area. Now this project, if it is built, would be the wind project that is in the most densely populated area of any

wind project so far built in Vermont."

Galbraith continued to say that within two miles there were 500 residences in the towns of Windham, Grafton, Townshend, Andover, Chester and Londonderry. Within three miles there would be 1,000 residences affected in the aforementioned towns as well as in Jamaica, he said.

Michael Fairneny, who lives about a half mile from the Hoosac site, said he did not have an idea about the impacts in terms of the noise of the project. He figured at three miles away on a ridgeline in the town of Florida - which is where 10 of the 19 wind turbines were placed - would be a safe distance away, but now realizes he was wrong.

"Now it's like living near the airport. The sound does change," said Fairneny. "My wife's ears ring whenever she's at home. She has tinnitus, never had ear problems and we've been traveling up and down this mountain for 29 years. Never any issues with going up and down the mountain and we don't know what we're going to do yet."

Fairneny said he and his wife are now considering leaving their home at least for part of the season.

When the project was first announced, Lorusso said he was in favor of it, believing it to be clean, renewable and sustainable energy - a view that changed once construction got under way.

"It is not clean," he said. "They blasted. There were swamps there. There were the beautiful trees, the wildlife. It's a hard thing because I have not been able to get to terms with what was taken from me."

Since the turbines have been put up, Lorusso said a significant amount of the wildlife has left the area.

Lorusso, who lives a mile away from the project, said he is now experiencing sleep disruption as a result of the project. Prior to the project going online, Lorusso said it was difficult to wake him up. During the summer, Lorusso said he had to sleep with the windows closed to reduce the noise from the turbines.

The wind project that Iberdola constructed in Groton, N.H., has 24 turbines. Another panelist, Laurie Lerner from Bridgewater, N.H., said there are now three other projects looking to site themselves in the area of Newfound Lake, which would increase the number of turbines from 24 to over 100. To give an idea of what the sound is like, Nancy Watson took a marble and slowly rolled it around the inside of a bowl. While that is the sound she says that some hear, she hears a sound that she says is more like the cycling of a refrigerator that never shuts off.

Stephen Ambrose, the principal consultant for SE Ambrose & Associates, a civil engineer and a member of the Institute of Noise Control Engineering, said that by placing wind turbines on ridgelines the sound is channeled and he likened it to a sound going down a very long hallway.

At the beginning of the meeting, Galbraith also touched on the potential of the projects to impact the value of not only various towns' grand lists, but the value of individual homes - something that will be the subject of the next meeting, which is scheduled for Jan. 17.

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# Wind Forum explores concerns

November 25, 2013 | Manchester Journal (VT) Author: Brandon Canevari - Staff Writer | Section: News | 936 Words OpenURL Link

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"MTL does not understand how this organization can be telling people where turbines will be built when we haven't even collected enough data to determine if wind is a viable resource to help us meet our long-term conservation goals," Turner said via email. "It is our reasonability to future generations as stewards of this land to investigate all possible options to create a sustainable future for Stiles Brook."

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However, if a project were ultimately come to fruition - even though the Town of Windham prohibits the construction of wind turbines under the bylaws of their town plan - the most affected areas would vary from 2 to 3.5 miles.

"They would be basically parallel to the Windham Hill Road and therefore parallel to much of the settlement in Windham and certainly two of the villages close to that," said state senator Peter Galbraith (D-Windham District). "It would then veer to the east to Townshend Road in Grafton and it would come into Townshend with sort of a direct impact on the Acton Hill area. Now this project, if it is built, would be the wind project that is in the most densely populated area of any wind project so far built in Vermont."

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As for him, Lorusso, who lives a mile away from the project, said that he is now experiencing sleep disruption as a result of the project. Prior to the project going online, Lorusso said it was difficult to wake him up. During the summer, Lorusso said he had to sleep with the windows closed to reduce the noise from the turbines.

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# Florida - 6 facing copper theft charges - • - Five county residents and one from Northampton are accused of stealing wire worth \$38,000 from a wind farm.

November 23, 2013 | Berkshire Eagle, The (Pittsfield, MA) Section: Main | 397 Words Page: A01 OpenURL Link

Wire and Staff reports

FLORIDA - State police say six people are facing charges in connection with the theft of about \$38,000 worth of copper wire from a wind farm.

The wire stolen from the Hoosac Wind Project atop Bakke Mountain in Florida is described as being one-inch in diameter with a 100- watt capacity specifically designed for a wind turbine. Three of the suspects are from Pittsfield, two are from Adams and one is from Northampton.

Investigators say the suspects dug under a security fence surrounding the facility and cut sections off two large spools of wire.

They then allegedly tried to sell the copper wire to local scrap metal yards.

Trooper Ryan Mauer from the Massachusetts State Police Barracks in Cheshire led the investigation. State Police and Pittsfield Police then coordinated to

detain the men for questioning.

A subsequent search of a hotel room yielded evidence of the theft, including the stripped wire outer cover, tools used to cut the wire, and narcotics paraphernalia.

As a result, the arrested parties and charges are as follows: Eli Waters, 33, of Pittsfield, seven counts of receiving stolen property over \$ 250; three counts of malicious destruction of property; knowingly being present where heroin is kept; and trespassing.

Gina Arnold, 32, of Pittsfield, two counts of receiving stolen property; three counts of malicious destruction of property; knowingly being present where heroin is kept; and trespassing.

Dylan Greiter, 24, of Northampton, two counts of receiving stolen property over \$250; three counts of malicious destruction of property; knowingly being present where heroin is kept; and trespassing. Jamene Hinckley- Morrison, 32, of Pittsfield, three counts of receiving stolen property over \$250; three counts of malicious destruction of property; knowingly being present where heroin is kept; and trespassing.

Marc Bednarz, 46, of Adams, four counts of receiving stolen property over \$250 Brian McAdoo, 35, of Adams, three counts of receiving stolen property over \$250, operating under the influence, and driving with a revoked registration/uninsured motor vehicle. All six were to be arraigned in Northern and Central Berkshire district courts.

Iberdrola Renewables built the turbine farm at a cost of about \$50 million, but spent nearly that much in legal expenses. Last December, Gov. Deval Patrick was on hand to unveil the opening of the wind farm and heralded it as part of his renewable energy initiative in Massachusetts. The wind farm puts out enough power to sustain 10,000 homes.

# • Citation (aglc Style)

'Florida6 facing copper theft charges•Five county residents and one from Northampton are accused of stealing wire worth \$ 38,000 from a wind farm.', *Berkshire Eagle, The* (online), 23 Nov 2013 A01 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/14A41F1624A43BD8">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/14A41F1624A43BD8>



# Six nabbed in wind farm theft

November 23, 2013 | North Adams Transcript (MA) Section: Main | 400 Words Page: A01 OpenURL Link

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Please see THEFT, Page A5

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# • Citation (aglc Style)

'Six nabbed in wind farm theft', *North Adams Transcript* (online), 23 Nov 2013 A01 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/14A429A10AE17DF0">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/14A429A10AE17DF0</a>



# Wind forum set for Friday in Townshend

November 20, 2013 | Brattleboro Reformer (VT) Section: Towns | 479 Words Page: 07 OpenURL Link

By MIKE FAHER

Reformer Staff

TOWNSHEND - Though Windham County does not yet host any commercial-size turbines, windpower continues to be a hot topic.

That's why Vermonters for a Clean Environment chose Townshend to host the first of three public forums on the possible impacts of large-scale windmills.

The session is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. Friday at Townshend United Church of Christ on the Townshend Common.

"We're providing education about some of the issues that are of concern to people who live in areas where there are wind projects proposed," said Annette Smith, executive director of the Danby-based organization.

"This is going to focus on noise, which is one of the big issues," said Smith, who has been a vocal opponent of turbine development. "I spend most of my time dealing with noise issues."

Wind giant Iberdrola Renewables last year received state permission to erect three meteorological- testing towers on privately- owned land in the towns of Windham and Grafton.

Those towers, depending on the weather data they generate, could lay the groundwork for Iberdrola to seek permission to build turbines in that area. A company spokesman has said no decision is expected until next year.

But even the test towers have spurred controversy, particularly in Windham, which prohibits commercial-scale wind turbines in its town plan.

Iberdrola has participated in some local windpower forums; one meeting last year in Windham featured company representatives alongside opponents including Smith.

But the Iberdrola won't be present at Friday's session, and that's by design.

"I found it to be a pretty useless format," Smith said of the pro-and-con setup of some previous meetings. "You couldn't really zero in on anything."

Instead, she says, "we're going to bring some focus to this."

By that, Smith means an emphasis on what turbine opponents believe are the "noise and health effects of industrial wind."

The session will feature Stephen Ambrose, a Mainebased civil engineer who has testified before Vermont legislative committees regarding noise generated by turbines.

"He speaks in layperson terms, and he does it in a way that you can understand," Smith said. "He can speak specifically to what the health effects are, because he has experienced them himself."

Also expected to attend are residents who live near Groton Wind Farm in New Hampshire and Hoosac Wind Project in Massachusetts. Both were developed by Iberdrola.

"We've got a lot of cross-pollination with the various states going on," Smith said.

The meeting will be hosted by state Sen. Peter Galbraith, a Townshend-based Democrat who has voiced opposition to largescale turbine development.

Organizers said the meeting will include discussion of the Windham-Grafton test towers. Maps showing where those towers have been erected - along with potential turbine sites - will be distributed.

Vermonters for a Clean Environment plans two more windpower forums, though a location has not been finalized. The January session will focus on property values.

Mike Faher can be reached at mfaher@reformer.com or 802254-2311, ext. 275.

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### • Citation (aglc Style)

'Wind forum set for Friday in Townshend', *Brattleboro Reformer* (online), 20 Nov 2013 07 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/14A31D0121330218">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/14A31D0121330218</a>



# TRANSCRIPT 'DISQUS'

September 9, 2013 | North Adams Transcript (MA) Section: News | 441 Words

Page: A04
OpenURL Link

The following is a sampling of recent comments from the Transcript's online 'Disqus' forum. Readers may comment on any Transcript article through this forum on www.thetranscript.com. Letters to the editor are always welcome and can be emailed to news@thetranscript.com.

On State: Adams funding of St. Stan's school nurse position unconstitutional: "This is ridiculous! The parents of these children also pay taxes that go to support the town's PUBLIC school system. The town meeting members approved the funding for the nurse. I would not want to be one of the '10 tax payers' who oppose funding a part time nurse for these children."

On Mass. court hears Pledge of Allegiance challenge: "This is just one more example of the moral decay that has infected this country."

On State: Adams funding of St. Stan's school nurse position unconstitutional:

"The separation of church and state decision by the U.S. Supreme Court is a warped interpretation of the intent of the First Amendment. It always has been. How can any court believe that men from diverse religions, meeting in secret, often in churches, had this intent. The First Amendment's position on religion was that the government would never force a religion upon the people (Church of England was the issue at that point in time) and that the people would have the freedom to practice whenever and wherever they chose ...If taking away the funding of a nurse at St. Stanislaus impedes in any way my or my minor child's ability to worship freely, that is a violation of my First Amendment rights. I can then sue the town as a government entity for hindering my rights. I have the right to argue this right up to the US Supreme Court, and force the town to incur legal costs far in defending itself far beyond the cost of one nurse..."

On Letter: A modest letter of 'thanks' to Iberdrola: "I hope that the residents of Peru vote in favor of the wind turbine moratorium, so that they can think about what is right for their town ... I am sure that those in Florida and Monroe are having lots of second thoughts about their support of the wind project, and wish they had given it more careful consideration before going ahead and destroying their neighborhoods and the wildlife habitats.

On Letter: A modest letter of 'thanks' to Iberdrola: "It's not just Iberdrola we have to thank for the invasion known as Hoosac Wind, but also our elected officials, judicial system and let's not forget MassDEP for not only letting this happen, but allowing our suffering to continue. It's not only residents of Florida and Monroe who are impacted but also Clarksburg, Stamford and Reasdsboro, Vt.

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## Citation (aglc Style)

'TRANSCRIPT 'DISQUS'', *North Adams Transcript* (online), 9 Sep 2013 A04 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/148B690DF4FA6C78">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/148B690DF4FA6C78</a>



# LETTER TO THE EDITOR - A modest letter of 'thanks' to Iberdrola

September 2, 2013 | North Adams Transcript (MA) Section: News | 310 Words

Page: A04
OpenURL Link

To the Editor:

To Iberdrola: This past week I have enjoyed watching as your company has kept its promise to rebuild our road (Tilda Hill Road), since they really destroyed it with all their heavy equipment and many, many truckloads of all kinds of materials in building the Hoosac Wind Project. I was thinking how easy it is for a big company to repair the damage they may do to a road, but what about the damage they have done to us who live on Tilda Hill Road and Moore's Road?

We hear today about "home invasion," which is a serious breach of somebody's personal safety and the law steps in to protect the people in that home. Our homes have been invaded by sound and strobe lights and huge towering windmills and, for the most part, the officials who have the authority seem to shrug their shoulders and say, "So what?" and walk away.

We can't walk away. It's there with us 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The noise gives us headaches and wakes us up at night causing sleep deprivation and the sound is there whenever you're in the north end of our house or out in the yard. There are mornings when the strobe effect wakes you or causes you to have to go into another room as it causes dizziness and nausea.

I know if I played music outside and turned the volume up, some of my neighbors wouldn't like it and might even call some authorities to tell me to turn it off or turn it down, and I would comply. How do we get our problem and our neighbor's problems fixed so that we aren't invaded with these sights and sounds that have such a negative impact on us?

Thanks for the road, Iberdrola, but I wish you had never come into Florida or Monroe!

Irving Mullette

Florida Aug. 30

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### • Citation (aglc Style)

'LETTER TO THE EDITORA modest letter of 'thanks' to Iberdrola', *North Adams Transcript* (online), 2 Sep 2013 A04 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/14891C6680260A48">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/14891C6680260A48</a>



#### Letters

August 23, 2013 | Bennington Banner (VT) Section: Editorial | 478 Words Page: A06 OpenURL Link

They belong in a good zoo

Normally I am happy when lost pets and their owners are reunited, but not so much with the snake found at Elm Street and Washington Avenue. We had known for three weeks that the boa constrictor was missing on Washington Avenue. (The snake owner) mentioned it to a co-worker at Mack Moulding. She called my neighbor on Putnam Street, who called (the snake owner), who said "it was a family pet and won't hurt anyone. Besides, it had a small mouth." Word spread quickly on Putnam, Weeks and Washington Avenue. It was scary and nerve-wracking. If my cat didn't come when I called, I was sure he was lunch for the boa.

Snakes don't belong in private homes. They belong in a good zoo with space and trained people to contain and feed them: South America sounds good.

I had called Fish and Wildlife in Montpelier. They got right back to me via the game warden. He said as soon as there was a sighting, call the state police at 442-5421 and the warden's home office at 442-4383.

Perhaps we need to keep these numbers handy for further lost snakes I don't want these creatures killed but I don't want to find one in my cellar or hanging from a tree.

**BEVERLY McCOY Bennington** 

Wind may be 'free,' but there are costs

An important letter was published by the Banner on Aug. 15, from several families in northern Vermont who live near the mammoth wind turbines at Lowell and Sheffield. Although I strongly support efforts to convert to energy sources other than fossil, I have been following the serious problems that families are enduring from the noise and powerful vibrations set off by these huge wind towers, far taller than the Bennington Battle Monument.

Wind energy may be "free" but it is clear now that this freedom involves some profound costs. People who live within a few miles of the wind turbines report suffering several maladies, from sleeplessness and heart palpitations to persistent noise that they say resembles a jet plane taking off but it never takes off.

State agencies and Gov. Peter Shumlin in particular have appeared to be insensitive to these concerns. Not only are these families suffering physically but they are also impacted financially because their homes are unsalable. Most of those who signed the recent letter pointed out how long they have resided in their homes.

Similar situations have become evident at locations of other huge wind turbine "farms." Nearby, families - including some in Readsboro - living within a few miles of the fifteen massive towers of the Hoosac Wind project just south of the Vermont border, north of North Adams, are also suffering the same physical and financial woes.

In the rush to convert to energy sources other than fossil, families cannot just be considered expendable. More understanding and more open dialogue are needed to focus on these serious concerns.

#### TYLER RESCH Shaftsbury

# • Citation (aglc Style)

'Letters', *Bennington Banner* (online), 23 Aug 2013 A06 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?</a> p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/1485FEA9A4E23AF0>



# Editorial: A short term

June 30, 2013 | Recorder, The [30 Day Embargo] (Greenfield, MA) Section: Home | 408 Words OpenURL Link

Brief thoughts on some of the events making news from around Franklin County and the North Quabbin area:

Dateline the state: Sen. William "Mo" Cowan, D-Mass., delivered his farewell speech on the floor of the U.S. Senate last week. Appointed to the seat by Gov. Deval Patrick after John Kerry resigned, Cowan's senatorial term comes to an end with the election of Edward Markey. Given Cowan's remarks, we'd say residents of the state probably would have liked to have known him better. The speech was thoughtful, sincere and at times funny. A sense of humor is definitely something that's needed more in Congress, along with some humility.

Dateline Monroe: We recognize that wind farms are a sensitive subject for some people, made even more so by where they are erected. But we do think many Monroe residents are happy that the town is receiving \$108,000 per year for the next 20 years from the Hoosac Wind Power Project. The money actually is "payment in lieu of taxes" as part of the agreement for the nine windmills on top of Crum Hill. The payments "will give us extra money when we do need things that we don't have to raise through taxation," said Marcella Stafford-Gore, who is the tax collector. We would also think that it is money that could go to an emergency "rainy day" fund.

Dateline Orange: Fiscal matters are never easy for a community. But we would like to think that there is an understanding that whether you raise taxes or cut the budget, the moves all have consequences. Therefore, care should be especially taken when reducing funding for services such as ambulance service. In an emergency, people don't want to hear about cost effectiveness or cutbacks, they simply want timely and reliable service, especially where minutes can literally make the difference between life and death.

Dateline Northfield: We think it would be a plus if the C.S. Lewis Foundation is able to take ownership of Green Pastures, the 14-room Victorian on Main Street that is still owned by Northfield Mount Hermon School. If the foundation is able to buy the building, it plans to use it as a place to house resident writers and scholars as well as events like meetings and conferences. It's obvious that even though the foundation failed in its effort to establish a college on the former NMH campus, it was charmed by the community and wants to be part of it. That says a lot.

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'Editorial: A short term', *Recorder, The* (online), 30 Jun 2013 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?</a> p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/147460CEF8DF99D0>



### **Editorials**

June 6, 2013  $\mid$  Berkshire Eagle, The (Pittsfield, MA)

Section: Main | 384 Words

Page: A06
OpenURL Link

#### Green in Massachusetts

Massachusetts' second-in-the-nation ranking in clean technology is a tribute to the green energy policies the state has implemented and encouraged over the last several years. As environmental concerns grow along with the perils of global warming, those policies will pay greater dividends - as long as the state doesn't stray from that path.

This is the highest ranking ever for Massachusetts in the annual survey made by the industry research firm Clean Edge. California is the perennial leader, with Massachusetts moving ahead of Oregon for the first time. Neighboring New York state was fourth. The Clean Edge rankings are based largely on state policies and incentives promoting green technology, the siting of alternative energy generating sources like wind turbines, and per-capital investment in the clean-energy industry.

Alternative energy has been a priority for Governor Deval Patrick since he was first elected, and along with the Legislature, the state has passed laws to encourage green- energy use and make pioneering environmental companies welcome. The best example may be the Green Communities Act, which provides incentives for improving energy efficiency and installing wind and solar energy-generating facilities. The governor also has advocated for tougher environmental restrictions, which in the effort to meet them also encourages greater use of green energy.

The report ranked Massachusetts 9th in the nation in solar capacity, an accomplishment reflected in the Berkshires. WMECO has 6,500 solar panels on the former GE site in Pittsfield, Berkshire Community College has installed 1,800 rooftop solar panels, and the state's Solarize Massachusetts program, designed to encourage residents to use solar power with unused power sold to the grid, is building this year on the successes of 2012.

Massachusetts ranked 33rd in installed wind capacity, which is a reflection on the limited wind options for the state compared to those in the wide open Midwestern and Western states. The fears of wind energy foes to the contrary, the Berkshires will never be overrun with wind turbines, but a handful of projects like Hoosac Wind and Brodie Mountain will contribute to the production of clean energy and the reduction of air pollution.

The state, according to the Clean Edge report, "should remain an integral clean tech innovation hub for years to come." It's up the residents and elected officials of Massachusetts to see that it does.

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# • Citation (aglc Style)

'Editorials', *Berkshire Eagle, The* (online), 6 Jun 2013 A06 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?</a> p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/146C1095CF7B1E98>



# LETTER TO THE EDITOR - Waiting on wind project sound testing

June 3, 2013 | North Adams Transcript (MA)

Section: News 289 Words

Page: A04 OpenURL Link

#### To the Editor:

This letter is in regard to the Hoosac Wind Project and industrial wind turbines, statewide: We are waiting anxiously for Iberdrola's socalled "Compliance Sound Testing," but this testing was paid for and the sound testing company hired by the developer, Iberdrola. How can this be an unbiased study?

What the heck is compliance testing for? If we or our neighbors created a noise or nuisance in a town wouldn't we be held accountable? Wouldn't we be stopped, prosecuted, fined and made to pay the price for our wrong doing? What is going on here? Your guidelines are being overstepped; our communities, our citizens are being hurt and ignored. For what?

Turbines are being tested, and I think they are over state limits for noise. Please, do something. A bandaid and a slap on the wrist won't help.

The five instances of the Fairhaven turbines being out of compliance are just the tip of the iceberg. This is just when they are being tested. What about the other 99.9 percent of the time? What do you think? Because they are not being tested they are in compliance?

We, the people, are being chastised, called NIMBYs, and as I see it, "cast to the wind." And it doesn't feel good.

My wife doesn't want to live in our home anymore. She doesn't want to be in our gardens, and we don't know where to go. We need help, now, and we need to be protected.

These industrial wind turbines are way too close to our homes. I think they emit way too much noise, and what about the low frequency noise we don't hear? This exists, and is not even part of the sound being tested for.

Michael Fairneny

## Florida May 23

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#### • Citation (aglc Style)

'LETTER TO THE EDITORWaiting on wind project sound testing', *North Adams Transcript* (online), 3 Jun 2013 A04 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/146B194F9CAB3008">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/146B194F9CAB3008</a>>



# GROUP SURVEYS FOR WIND HEALTH IMPACTS - History Of Sickness Tied To Turbine Syndrome, Says VCE

May 4, 2013 | Caledonian-Record, The (VT) Author: ROBIN SMITH Staff Writer| Section: News| 746 Words Page: A1 OpenURL Link

NORTHEAST KINGDOM - A small advertisement has appeared regularly in local newspapers.

The ad is simple. Anyone who has been experiencing problems with their health since the wind turbines went up in Georgia, Lowell and Sheffield in Vermont are asked to contact Vermonters for a Clean Environment. VCE is collecting that information and sharing it with the Vermont Department of Public Service, the state's electricity ratepayers' watchdog.

"The complaints are trickling from all three project areas," said VCE executive director Annette Smith.

"I'm mapping the complaints to develop an understanding of the area, type and extent of them. So, for instance, it's been interesting to receive practically no noise complaints from people living north of all three big wind project areas," Smith said.

"In all three project areas we have noise complaints from people living to the west, east, and also about two and a half miles to the southeast." Smith said.

Residents to the north have complained mostly about lighting.

"The stories are the same. I've now met with or talked to individuals around all the big wind project areas in Vermont, and a Vermonter who is a neighbor of Iberdrola's Hoosac wind project in northwestern Massachusetts, and the stories are the same everywhere," Smith said.

"Ringing in the ears, headaches, nausea, dizziness, being startled awake at night, heart racing, unable to get back to sleep."

Some say they lose concentration, something they never used to do, Smith said.

She pointed to Luann Therrien, a neighbor of the Sheffield wind project, who lost her concentration during her testimony before the Legislature.

"When you watch the video of her testifying, note about halfway through that she commented that she was having trouble reading it because of loss of concentration. Though it appears in the video to be a minor thing, she was really upset with herself afterwards, and said "that's not me."

Others she has met say the same thing. "A man I spoke to who lives in Albany said he finds himself standing outside and realizes he is just standing there, not doing anything."

Several people now have heart ailments that developed after the turbines began operating, she said. "Several have been sent by their doctors to the emergency room because of heart racing or other heart problems they never had before," Smith said. "I worry very much about the toll this is taking on them."

Some people are annoyed by the presence of the turbines, but don't develop illnesses, Smith said, citing acoustic specialists.

Paul Brouha is an active opponent of the Sheffield project but has not felt ill. A fighter pilot, he never gets seasick. A trend to seasickness and turbine reaction is developing, Smith said.

When asked if she thinks her survey is tainted because Vermonters for a Clean Environment is opposed to industrial wind projects, Smith said no.

"It's very clear based on the reports I'm getting that people's position about the project has nothing to do with whether or not they get sick. There are many people like the Therriens (of Sheffield) who were not opposed, didn't get involved, or were even for it who I have talked to who are now really, really sick," Smith said.

"Some who were opposed and are annoyed but not sick are relieved that for whatever reason they aren't getting sick.

"That's just a bunch of hooey claiming it's only people who were opposed are the ones pre-disposed to getting sick. It's obviously more about whether or not their location is such that they are getting hit with the sound pressure waves and whether they are predisposed to being seasick," Smith said.

The Vermont Department of Public Service "is very interested in what we are doing, and I don't think they are discounting our findings," she said.

Some people are not calling in from Albany because they don't think the department will listen, she said.

Smith said her organization will continue to be a conduit between the state and those who say they are experiencing health problems because of wind turbines.

She said the Department of Public Service wants the results and VCE is sending the information also to the state utility regulators with the Vermont Public Service Board.

The state agencies, including Departments of Public Service and Health, will be asked to conduct studies of the impacts on human health from turbines under language in the Senate budget bill, which Senate leaders hope will become law.

The governor's Energy Generation Siting Policy Commission also recommends that the departments do their own research into the latest on impacts.

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### • Citation (aglc Style)

ROBIN SMITH Staff Writer, 'GROUP SURVEYS FOR WIND HEALTH IMPACTS - History Of Sickness Tied To Turbine Syndrome, Says VCE', *Caledonian-Record, The* (online), 4 May 2013 A1 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?</a> p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/1461B2B4CACCA600>



# Proposal would kill wind turbines in Windham, Vt.

April 13, 2013 | North Adams Transcript (MA)

Section: News 724 Words

Page: A06 OpenURL Link

By Mike Faher

**New England Newspapers** 

WINDHAM, Vt. - Last year, town officials failed in their bid to stop construction of meteorological-testing towers that may pave the way for a major wind turbine project. But two state senators have introduced a bill that, if approved, could ensure that wind turbines will not rise above Windham.

The bill requires that the state Public Service Board approve such a project only if it complies with Windham's town plan. And Windham's town plan bans commercial turbines.

Windham County Sen. Peter Galbraith says it's a simple matter of prioritizing local control on a project that could have widespread impacts in Windham.

"I believe strongly that, as a matter of public policy, we ought to respect the wishes of a town where a major industrial project may take place," Galbraith said.

The Townshend Democrat was joined by fellow Windham County Sen. Jeanette White, a Putney Democrat, in introducing the bill, dubbed S.166. It was referred Tuesday to the Senate Finance Committee, on which Galbraith sits.

The bill comes more than three months after Atlantic Wind LLC, a subsidiary of international wind-power developer Iberdrola Renewables, received Public Service Board permission to erect three meteorologicaltesting towers - two in Windham and one in Grafton.

Depending on the wind information from those towers, Iberdrola, which also operates the Hoosac Wind Project in the Massachusetts towns of Florida and Monroe, could decide to pursue construction of Windham County's first commercial turbine site.

Grafton town officials have not taken a position on the project. But Windham's Selectboard and Planning Commission had fought hard against it. Officials argued that, because Windham's plan specifically prohibits industrial- scale turbines, the state also should bar any wind-testing towers there.

That sparked a debate about the role that town plans play in the state's energy permitting process.

The new Senate bill might become part of that debate. Targeted specifically and only at Windham, the legislation declares that the Public Service Board should "issue a certificate of public good for a wind-generation plant located in the Town of Windham only if the board finds that the plant conforms to the town plan."

The bill goes on to point out that, in a 2006 survey, 287 residents opposed construction of wind turbines in Windham. Only 15 supported the proposal.

Also, the legislation notes that Windham's 2008 plan includes this sentence: "It is the policy of the Town of Windham that commercial wind energy systems are prohibited throughout all of town."

Gov. Peter Shumlin supports further wind power development, and he adamantly opposed a threeyear turbine-construction moratorium that had been part of a Senate bill introduced in January. But Shumlin also has said he supports the idea of towns having a say on whether turbines are built within their borders.

The Galbraith-White bill makes that point by quoting Shumlin from a June 2012 interview: "I have always said and I will always say I believe that no energy project should be built in a town in Vermont where the residents of that community don't vote affirmatively to host it," Shumlin said. "We shouldn't send them into towns that don't want them."

Additionally, the bill points out that the state Department of Public Service - which is a separate entity from the Public Service Board - last year opposed any test towers in Windham due to "the clear mandate of the town plan."

An Iberdrola spokesman said the company could not immediately comment on the Senate bill.

Mary Boyer, who chairs Windham Selectboard, earlier this week said she needed time to review the legislation before commenting on it. But Boyer also noted that there are other towns in Vermont dealing with the same concerns about turbines.

"We feel strongly that this is a statewide issue," Boyer said. "And we hope that will be included in this process."

Galbraith said the bill at this point was crafted as a direct response to the situation in Windham.

"This is about a town that we represent, and it's about respecting its wishes," Galbraith said. "The sentiment in Windham is overwhelming."

But he said other towns could be included in the bill as it is debated and possibly amended.

And Galbraith argues that, despite the recent failure of the proposed turbine moratorium in a bill labeled S.30, there is widespread support for greater local control when it comes to energy projects.

"There are some senators who were opposed to some of the provisions in S.30 who nonetheless would be supportive of this," Galbraith said.

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'Proposal would kill wind turbines in Windham, Vt.', *North Adams Transcript* (online), 13 Apr 2013 A06 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/145A512B2BF6E5E8">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/145A512B2BF6E5E8</a>



# Letter: Ill over turbines

March 5, 2013 | Recorder, The [30 Day Embargo] (Greenfield, MA)

Section: Home | 295 Words

OpenURL Link

I live about 3,000 feet from the nearest wind turbine of the Hoosac Wind Project in Florida and Monroe. I can see four of them from my property. Yet, we residents of Moores Road in Florida were not mentioned in the" Impact Study" done by the developer. The first indication that we would see the turbines was when I came home from work one day and saw them there. Now that they are turned on we constantly hear them. Life as I knew it is gone.

Oddly enough, the developer had to do a study which mentioned how birds, bats, plants and wetlands would be affected, but the state didn't ask the developer to consider in any detail how these 340-foot-tall moving structures would affect us humans. My family and our neighbors are already experiencing health problems. My wife's ears are ringing constantly and I have headaches around the clock. Our only relief comes when we leave our house. Baseline sound measurements in our towns were never required or performed, as far we know. If that had been done, the towns could have been warned that the noise from the turbines would likely exceed state regulations. Even that type of study would not have taken into account the Low Frequency Noise, which recent research shows causes many of the health effects are associated with living near turbines. We are now asking the Department of Environmental Protection to do all in their power to help me, my family, and my neighbors after the fact. We feel that our constitutional right to "the pursuit of happiness" has been taken away when we cannot feel safe in our own home. If you are being adversely affected by the Hoosac Wind Project, please call DEP. Visit www.hoosacwindproject.com for more information.

### MICHAEL FAIRNENY

#### Florida

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# • Citation (aglc Style)

'Letter: Ill over turbines', *Recorder, The* (online), 5 Mar 2013 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?</a> p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/144DEC385FCCC710>



### LETTER BOX - WIND POWER

March 1, 2013 | Brattleboro Reformer (VT) Section: Opinion | 1466 Words Page: 04

Page: 04
OpenURL Link

Editor of the Reformer: A wind turbine project in Florida, Mass., has turned my two best friends into wind turbine refugees.

The Hoosac Wind Power Project, brought to their neighborhood on Tilda Hill Road by Iberdrola Renewables, has literally put my friends out of their home. Since the gigantic wind turbines started producing power, residents of the neighborhood have been experiencing many different types of illnesses including headaches, dizziness, stomach upsets, breathing difficulties, chest pains and other maladies. My friends literally abandoned their home in the middle of the night during a snowstorm because they could no longer stand the sick feelings they were experiencing from the wind turbine vibrations. Wild animals have abandoned the area, which used to be home to bear, moose and other mountain creatures, as well as reports of neighborhood pets being sick.

Though the wind turbines sound like a jet engine 24 hours a day, they also emit a low-frequency vibration that a person cannot hear, but bodies can feel. Those vibrations are what caused my friends to experience all of the above listed illnesses.

Once they left the area for a few days, they started to feel better. Presently, they are staying with me in South Newfane and trying to figure out what to do next. Aside from participating in a neighborhood lawsuit, they are attempting to recover from the initial shock of losing their home and property value.

If the residents of Grafton and Windham want to visit the area and see the Iberdrola sponsored wind turbines, all they have to do is drive up Route 2 to Florida and turn on to Tilda Hill Road. Look to the right and you will be shocked to see how large these things are and how ominous they appear.

I am not against wind power, only against big companies that are not from the United States coming into our areas and ruining the lives of a town full of people for their own profit. Smaller wind turbines are great, but the extra large size that now lives on Tilda Hill Road should not be allowed in Vermont.

Susan E. Rosano.

South Newfane, Feb. 22

Editor of the Reformer:

My husband, Ron, and I urge Sen. Jeanette White to vote in favor of Senators Hartwell and Benning's bill, S. 30. Industrial wind projects should meet all existing state standards and requirements for development, town plans should not be overridden, and we must take the time to assess, objectively and rigorously, the economic and social impact of these divisive projects on our communities and state.

As you are aware, we in the towns of Grafton and Windham now face the possibility of an industrial wind project along the boundary ridge between the two towns. It turns out that there are hundreds of homes in Grafton and Windham that are within two miles of the proposed project's turbines. This is not a project in a remote and unihabited part of the state. Easily 1,000 people will be directly vulnerable to the noise, lights, shadows, and detrimental health affects of the inaudible sound waves. Surely such costs are too high, especially given the reality that wind power is not going to significantly reduce the state's reliance on conventional energy sources.

We respectfully ask that White support the moratorium bill. It is time for this little, beautiful state of ours to step back and take some time to think seriously about the pros and cons of industrial wind. Our health, wellbeing, welfare, and magnificent ridgelines require nothing less.

Anna Vesely Pilette,

Grafton, Feb. 25

Editor of the Reformer: We have been puzzled by the intensity of opposition to wind power in Vermont in the last year. The National Resource Defense Council, long known for the integrity of its positions on the environment, continues to see wind power as "an affordable, efficient and abundant source of domestic electricity." Yet, we hear reports that wind towers are "horrendously and permanently invasive," and that they kill wildlife, leach money from our economy, lower real estate value in nearby towns, and damage human health, causing seizures, deafness, insomnia, high blood pressure, and diabetes.

This rhetoric of fear begins to sound oddly familiar; thus, we were not surprised to learn of a network of ultra-conservative groups who have been "ramping up an offensive on multiple fronts to turn the American Public against wind farms and Barack Obama's energy agenda." These groups were summoned together over a year ago by John Droz, Jr, a long-time opponent of wind energy and a senior fellow at the American Tradition Institute, notorious for lawsuits against climate scientists, including James Hansen, and for having been denounced by the Association for the Advancement of Science for contributing to an "environment that inhibits the pure exchange of scientific findings and ideas."

Seeing an opportunity to create a groundswell movement against wind power, this confederation has been working at the state and local level to cause, "subversion in message of (the wind) industry so that it effectively becomes so bad no one wants to admit they are for it." In a coordinated nationwide campaign, "wind warriors" have been dispatched to fight the wind industry anywhere, anytime. "Wind warriors" rely on supposedly "scientific" reports generated by ultra-conservative think tanks with close ties to the oil and gas industry and the Koch family. Another aspect of the confederation's 20-point strategy is promoting an antiwind curriculum in public schools and colleges, including discouraging students from entering wind energy projects in science fairs. The confederation's complete proposal is available online at National Campaign PR Proposal.

The people in these think tanks (ATI, the Heartland Institute, the John Locke Foundation, and Americans for Prosperity, among others) are not stupid: They are very skilled at creating the appearance of science. One example is their claim that wind turbines generate low-frequency sound and infrasound that endanger human health. Reviews of the literature commissioned by both the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection and the New Zealand Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority have discredited such claims. These were independent studies, in contrast to the plethora of white papers issued by scientists who share the think tanks' ultraconservative views and mission.

For our democracy to flourish (or even survive), we must have before us reliable information in order to make wise decisions. Well-funded ultra-conservative think tanks and networks make our job of discerning what is or is not factually true doubly hard. We must be alert to deception and careful in our research. And we must not be blind, in our work to save this planet, to the extremes to which the opposition will go.

Charlene Ellis, Fred Taylor,

Dummerston, Feb. 25

Editor of the Reformer: A recent letter ("The negative side effects of wind power," Feb. 21) recycled myths about wind power.

Across the country, wind power has already brought economic benefits to rural areas, with minimal environmental impact. But perhaps more importantly, the time is now to deploy clean energy sources to meet the carbon dioxide

reduction targets science tells us are urgently needed. When the wind is blowing, the electricity generated by a wind farm causes the utility system operator to reduce the output of the most expensive, least efficient (and often dirtiest) power plant on the system - reducing carbon dioxide emissions and saving consumers money on their electricity bills.

That's because wind power, which uses no fuel, has long-term, fixed-rate pricing and acts as a hedge to protect against price spikes in the often volatile fossil fuel markets. In fact, a recent New York Times article noted that the New England region is particularly dependent on natural gas, and is experiencing a "remarkable spike in electricity prices brought on by high heating demand and rising natural gas prices for electric generators."

The good news is that a study by the New England utility system operator, ISO New England, found that obtaining 20 percent of the region's electricity from wind would reduce electricity prices by more than 10 percent. That's why a proposed moratorium on this well-developed and understood technology simply does not make sense.

Effective energy policy choices require a careful cost-benefit analysis of what is best for both the long-term economic and environmental health of our communities. It is important to remember that while all energy development has some impact on wildlife and the environment, wind energy's is minimal.

Wind power requires no mining or drilling for fuel - activities which often have massive environmental impacts. Wind energy also has the distinct advantage of not emitting air pollutants that are harmful to human health, such as sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, particulates, and mercury. Those pollutants can cause respiratory problems, cardiovascular disease, and developmental problems in vulnerable populations such as children and the elderly.

Vermont has ample wind resources. With a thoughtful siting policy, we can do our part to reduce regional carbon dioxide emissions and air pollution while preserving the natural beauty of our state.

Thomas O. Gray,

Norwich, Feb. 25

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# Wind Project neighbor appeals to DEP

March 1, 2013 | North Adams Transcript (MA)

Section: News | 307 Words

Page: A04 OpenURL Link

#### To the Editor:

I live about 3,000 feet from the nearest wind turbine of the Hoosac Wind Project in Florida and Monroe. I can see four of them from my property. Yet, we residents of Moores Road in Florida were not mentioned in the "Impact Study" done by the developer.

The first indication that we would see the turbines was when I came home from work one day and saw them there. Now that they are turned on, we constantly hear them. Life as I knew it is gone.

Oddly enough, the developer had to do a study which mentioned how birds, bats, plants and wetlands would be affected, but the state didn't ask the developer to consider in any detail how these 340foot-tall moving structures would affect us humans. My family and our neighbors are already experiencing health problems. My wife's ears are ringing constantly and I have headaches around the clock. Our only relief comes when we leave our house.

Baseline sound measurements in our towns were never required or performed, as far we know. If that had been done, the towns could have been warned that the noise from the turbines could exceed state regulations. Even that type of study would not have taken into account the Low Frequency Noise, which recent research shows causes many of the health effects associated with living near turbines.

We are now asking the Department of Environmental Protection to do all in its power to help me, my family and my neighbors after the fact. We feel that our constitutional right to "the pursuit of happiness" has been taken away when we cannot feel safe in our own home.

If you are being adversely affected by the Hoosac Wind Project, please call DEP.

Visit the Friends of Florida & Monroe website, www. hoosacwindproject.com, for more information.

Michael Fairneny

#### Florida Feb. 28

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# Berkshire Regional Planning Commission - Events aim to map out solutions to reduce use of fossil fuels

February 25, 2013 | Berkshire Eagle, The (Pittsfield, MA) Author: Dick LindsayBerkshire Eagle Staff| Section: Berkshire | 405 Words Page: B01 OpenURL Link

PITTSFIELD - Regional planners are hoping Berkshire residents' board game skills can lead to a viable county- wide energy plan.

This week the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission will host a pair of public meetings titled "Energy and Climate: An Interactive Community Workshop."

Tuesday's gathering is at Lenox Town Hall; Wednesday at MCLA's Center Social Hall in North Adams.

Both workshops run from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

BRPC officials say workshop participants will break up into small groups, each with a Berkshire map and game pieces representing solar arrays, wind turbines and energy efficiency.

The groups must determine where best to place on the map as many game pieces as possible to indicate where the county can reduce its dependency on fossil fuels.

The public input is intended to shape a long-range energy proposal from the BRPC and Center for Eco-Technology (CET) based in Pittsfield.

The collaborative effort, expected to produce a final plan in May, is part of the BRPC's development of an overall "Sustainable Berkshires" master plan.

The document due in early 2014 also will look at enhancing economic development, housing, recreation and other quality- oflife areas.

The energy workshops serve a dual purpose, according to Melissa Provencher, a BRPC senior planner.

"The exercise partly benefits us, partly benefits the participants as it gets them to stretch their brains about sustainable energy," she said.

Nancy Nylen, CET's associate director, believes the game play can lead to some hard data for long-range energy planning in the Berkshires.

"This is an opportunity to pro-

duce real numbers and show how much savings we can achieve from these solutions," Nylen said.

The BRPC and CET also hope workshop attendees approach solar, wind and other alternative energy resources with an open mind.

While household and commercial solar projects are becoming more commonplace in the Berkshires, regional and environmental planners say local controversy keeps swirling around wind turbines.

Earlier this month, town of Florida residents living near the Hoosac Wind Project filed formal complaints claiming

the commercial turbines exceeded state noise limits.

In addition, potential municipal wind projects in Lee and Lenox have met some turbulence from townspeople.

Given Massachusetts needs to meet a 20 percent reduction of all carbon emissions by 2020, energy efficiency alone won't help the state meet its goal, according Amy Kacala, a BRPC senior planner.

"We could weatherize every house in the Berkshires and still not reach 20 percent," Kacala said.

To reach Dick Lindsay: rlindsay@berkshireeagle.com, or (413) 496-6233.

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# • Citation (aglc Style)

Dick LindsayBerkshire Eagle Staff, 'Berkshire Regional Planning CommissionEvents aim to map out solutions to reduce use of fossil fuels', *Berkshire Eagle, The* (online), 25 Feb 2013 B01 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?</a> p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/144AC7001A3C81C8>



# BRPC to hold energy workshops

February 25, 2013 | North Adams Transcript (MA) Section: News | 401 Words Page: A05 OpenURL Link

By Dick Lindsay

**New England Newspapers** 

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The groups must determine where best to place on the map as many game pieces as possible to indicate where the county can reduce its dependency on fossil fuels.

The public input is intended to shape a long-range energy proposal from the BRPC and Center for Eco-Technology (CET) based in Pittsfield.

The collaborative effort, expected to produce a final plan in May, is part of the BRPC's development of an overall "Sustainable Berkshires" master plan. The document, due in early 2014, also will look at enhancing economic development, housing, recreation and other qualityof- life areas.

The energy workshops serve a dual purpose, according to Melissa Provencher, a BRPC senior planner.

"The exercise partly benefits us, partly benefits the participants as it gets them to stretch their brains about sustainable energy," she said.

Nancy Nylen, CET's associate director, believes the game play can lead to some hard data for long-range energy planning in the Berkshires.

"This is an opportunity to produce real numbers and show how much savings we can achieve from these solutions," Nylen said.

The BRPC and CET also hope workshop attendees approach solar, wind and other alternative energy resources with an open mind. While household and commercial solar projects are becoming more commonplace in the Berkshires, regional and environmental planners say local controversy keeps swirling around wind turbines.

Earlier this month, town of Florida residents living near the Hoosac Wind Project filed formal complaints claiming the commercial turbines exceeded state noise limits. In addition, potential municipal wind projects in Lee and Lenox have met some turbulence from townspeople.

Given Massachusetts needs to meet a 20 percent reduction of all carbon emissions by 2020, energy efficiency alone won't help the state meet its goal, according Amy Kacala, a BRPC senior planner.

"We could weatherize every house in the Berkshires and still not reach 20 percent," Kacala said.

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# LETTER TO THE EDITOR - A voice of support for Florida, Monroe wind protesters

February 20, 2013 | North Adams Transcript (MA)

Section: News | 267 Words

Page: A04 OpenURL Link

#### To the Editor:

I feel very sorry for Florida resident Michael Fairneny, his family and others who are suffering from the Hoosac Wind turbines.

Like many small towns, Florida and Monroe needed more revenue and a majority of people in the two towns believed that this is what the turbines would give them. They evidently did not believe that these huge industrial machines could cause sleep disturbances, nausea and headaches, or that they kill birds and bats and scare away other wildlife. Wind salespeople are very good at glossing over detracting factors like loss of property value and loss of peace and quiet, and they routinely inflate the amount of electricity turbines produce and the length of time they will last.

Turbine salespeople insist that the wind installations will help the environment by reducing carbon in the atmosphere and this is a selling point for some well-intentioned people. But the fact is that turbines require huge amounts of fossil fuel when manufactured - for transportation, for the roads which need to be built for them and for their construction. Wind proponents don't mention that the turbines need fossil fuels to backup their power contribution to the grid when the wind does not blow.

I wish those people in Florida and Monroe protesting the turbine disturbances luck. They will need to be very persistent to get any relief.

It's the reverse of closing the barn door after the horse has gotten out: The doors in Florida and Monroe were opened to let the turbines in when, in my opinion, they should have been kept shut.

Trina Sternstein

## Hawley Feb. 18

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# Franklin County tops green-growth goal

February 19, 2013 | Daily Hampshire Gazette [30 Day Embargo] (Northampton, MA) Author: RICHIE DAVIS Gazette Contributing Writer | Section: News | 861 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?" said Sloan.

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 the Franklin County of Government website.

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