

Island Opinion

• EDITORIAL •

Cape Wind proposal of interest to islanders

Federal hearings are underway this week in Massachusetts to solicit public comment on the environmental impact of a proposed wind farm in Nantucket Sound.

You've probably heard about the ongoing debate. A private developer wants to build 130 wind turbines, each 440 feet tall. Included would be a massive 10-story electrical service platform. The project would cover 25 square miles.

The proposal has divided the residents of Cape Cod, Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard. While many people favor green sources of energy, they are concerned about the losing forever the natural beauty of Nantucket Sound.

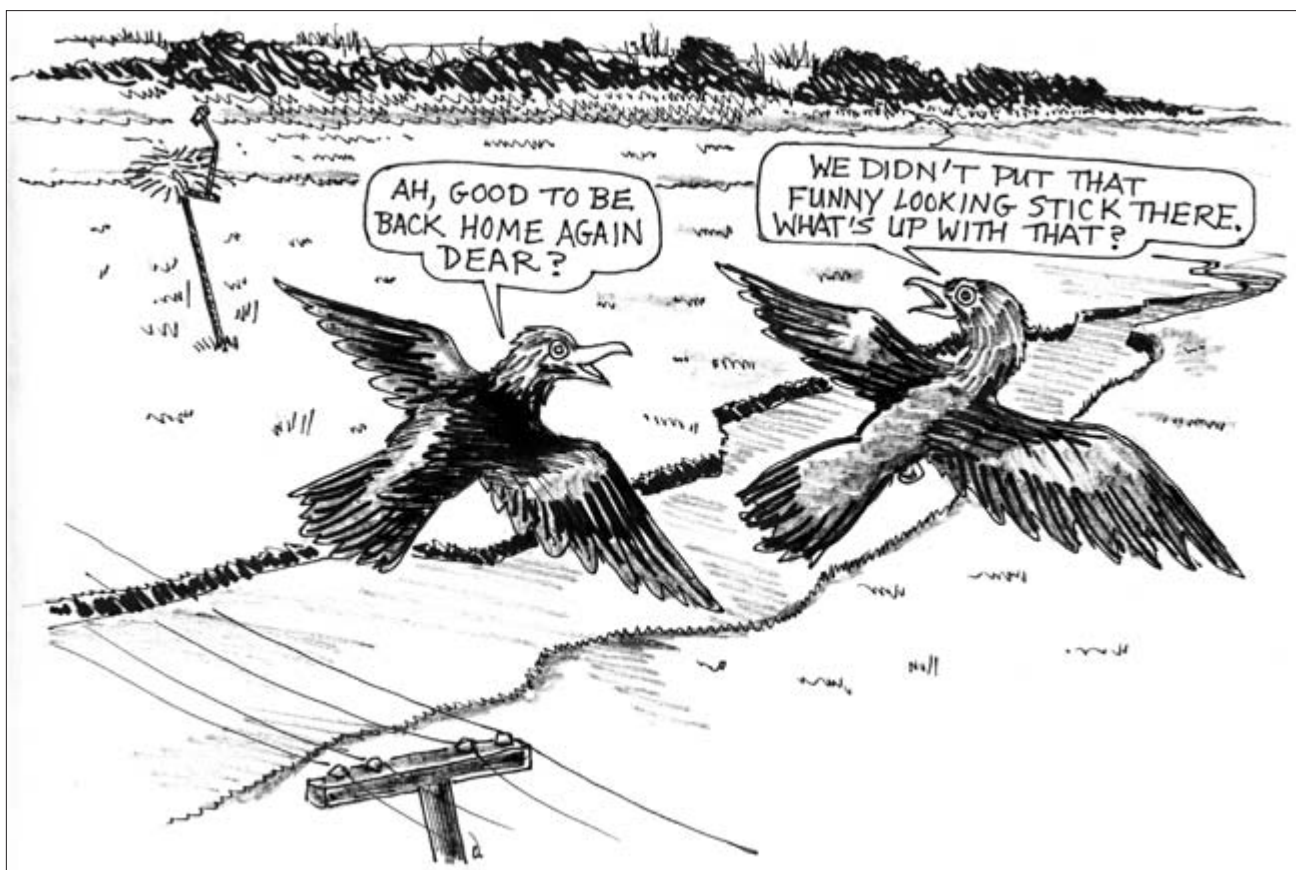
How does this proposed wind farm impact Jamestown? For starters, many us are boaters who frequently cruise the waters of Nantucket Sound.

But, we should pay close attention because we may see a similar wind farm proposed off the shores of Conancicut Island. Rhode Island lawmakers are actively encouraging the development of renewable energy resources. There are at least two wind farm investors who have expressed interest in building an electrical generating project similar Cape Wind in our local waters.

Currently, the Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Council in considering a one-year moratorium on renewable energy projects. The CRMC's next meeting is on March 25.

You can learn more about the Cape Wind debate on the Internet at www.saveoursound.org and at www.capewind.org. Both Web sites have information on the project and details about how to voice your opinion.

— Jeff McDonough



Regulations hurt baking industry

I am a member of the U.S. baking industry and am proud to be a part of a business that produces an essential staple of our diet — bread. From toast or bagels in the morning, to a sandwich at lunch, and rolls at dinner, bread truly lives up to its descriptor as the “staff of life.”

Today, bakers suddenly find themselves on the front line of an intensifying food industry crisis, facing rapidly shrinking supplies of flour due to tight wheat supplies, accompanied by escalating raw material and commodity costs. The “recipe” for this crisis includes diverse ingredients; increased worldwide demand for wheat; the devaluation of the dollar;

• LETTERS •

and droughts in key wheat-producing countries.

U.S. government policy has also played an important role. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Conservation Reserve Program takes viable acres out of production by offering farmers incentives not to produce crops on their land, when the government ethanol program, through special subsidies and incentives grow sfood crops for alternative fuel purposes.

The end result is that bakers are struggling to provide a consistent supply of reasonably-priced bread and other baked goods to the market, and consumers are juggling grocery bills that are taking ever bigger bites

out of stretched monthly food budgets.

Here are three steps the government can take now to help alleviate the current commodity crisis. Increase the flexibility of the reserve program. We believe that as much as one-third of enrolled acres could be returned to production without sacrificing environmental conservation goals. Implement a more balanced policy to address food and fuel needs. Land once used to produce wheat and other crops for food is now being used to grow crops for fuel. It is important to find alternative, cleaner fuel sources, but not at the expense of the food Americans purchase to feed their families. Factor-

ing domestic industry needs into wheat export decisions. In this environment, the appropriate role of government should be to take whatever steps are necessary to keep supplies flowing to the market, with priority given to domestic users.

While remaining hopeful that the coming growing season will result in strong harvests of all commodities including wheat, I remain concerned that without changes in government policy, current market problems will become long-term trends — to the detriment of the American food industry and ultimately the American consumer.

Andrea Colognese
Village Hearth Bakery

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Got something to say?

Write to us. Send your letters to: Editor, The Jamestown Press, 42 Narragansett Ave., Jamestown RI 02835. Our fax number is (401) 423-1661. Our e-mail address is news@jamestownpress.com. Please include your name, address, and a daytime telephone number for verification. Anonymous letters will not be considered for publication. Letters must be limited to 700 words or less.

The news of 10 and 15 years ago is from the Jamestown Press. The news of 100 years ago came from the collection of the Newport Historical Society.

100 years ago

From the Newport Daily News, March 11, 1908

The Whitewood cottage is being moved on the lot on Walcott avenue where it is to be located.

From the Newport Daily News, March 12, 1908

A number of blackbirds and robins have been seen on the island the past few days.

From the Newport Daily News, March 13, 1908

Another party of cottage seekers was on the island today.

The children of the Grammar school were given a fire drill yesterday and although the first practice of that sort held at the school the building was emptied in one minute.

From the Newport Daily News, March 14, 1908

The pleasant weather last evening brought out the largest attendance at the Gardner House hall since the hall has been opened for roller skating.

From the Newport Daily News, March 16, 1908

A number of Newport contractors crossed the island yesterday to watch the laying of the Fort Greble water main across the channel.

75 years ago

From the Newport Daily News, March 13, 1933

A coupling challenge between members of the No. 1 and No. 2 pumpers of the local fire department was held Saturday evening, the No. 2 doing the stunt in three minutes, 45 seconds and No. 1 in 4:42.

50 years ago

From the Newport Daily News, March 10, 1958

Fire of undetermined origin yesterday morning destroyed a barn and its contents on the Jamestown farm of Ernest R. Vieira. Losses estimated at between \$6,000 and \$7,000 was partly covered by insurance. (Twelve cows were safely led



This week in Island history

Compiled by Sue Maden

Week of March 13

from the barn.)

From the Newport Daily News, March 11, 1958

The Rhode Island Supreme Court reserved decision yesterday after hearing arguments on the petition of certain property owners that action of the Town Council in abandoning part of Eldred Avenue for use by the Commerce Oil Corp. be quashed.

The Jamestown Town Council last night asked the Jamestown Ferry Authority to request the state Public Utilities Administration to authorize free ferry passes for Jamestown high school pupils attending school in Newport and for a reduction in rates for service personnel.

25 years ago

From the Newport Daily News, March 11, 1983

The R. I. Congressional delegation will try to convince federal officials that federally owned parcels at Fort Wetherill and Beavertail are best suited for park and recreational use. U.S. Rep. Claudine Schneider is host to the tour Monday of the two sites to provide General Services Administration officials a close up look at the land the Reagan administration has earmarked for sale to the highest bidder.

From the Newport Daily News, March 14, 1983

Efforts to inspire federal officials with the beauty of federal land at Beavertail and Fort Wetherill were made easier with clear skies and bright sunshine this morning. Officials from the General Services Administration said they were

impressed with the beauty of the area, but were reluctant to make any commitment on future action. A 6.8 acre parcel at Beavertail and 7.6 acres at Fort Wetherill, were slated for public auction under recent presidential order.

From the Newport Daily News, March 15, 1983

The property revaluation approved by voters at the annual financial town meeting will get underway in about a month.

From the Newport Daily News, March 16, 1983

A 60 to 80 year old sewer system and a week of heavy rains just don't mix. ... Last week's rain was more than one of the town's three pumping stations could handle. Water from the sewer lines backed up onto the streets.

15 years ago

From the Jamestown Press, March 11, 1993

Homeowners will have to have their septic tanks pumped out every three years or risk fines of \$100 a day, if a proposed wastewater management ordinance becomes law.

The Jamestown Philomenian Library will close for five weeks starting March 27. According to librarian Judy Bell, the library will be closed for public safety because the walls between the new addition and the older section must be demolished.

Town officials want to meet with Bridge and Turnpike Authority officials to discuss the possibility of their agency paying a user's fee in lieu of taxes.

10 years ago

From the Jamestown Press, March 12, 1998

Monday the town started using water brought over from North Kingstown through the emergency pipeline that was built by the National Guard after the summer drought of 1993, when North Pond reservoir almost went dry.

The Friends of the Conancicut Battery received a grant last week (of \$25,000) that will enable them to get rolling on the restoration of the revolutionary War-era fort off Battery Lane.