

Our situation in Windham is pretty easy to understand. Windham got a close look at industrial wind development in 2005, when a developer proposed a 27 turbine project on a ridgeline to the west of town. We got busy and did our homework and decided for a long list of reasons that we were going to write a town plan that excluded industrial wind turbines from the list of appropriate land uses in the forested resource lands of our town. The plan was written with the best advice we could get from professional planners and our town attorney. Our voters and property owners supported the plan overwhelmingly.

When we were told last spring that Iberdrola was going to apply for a cpg to put meteorological towers on a land parcel to the east of town, we clearly felt we owed it to our property owners to invoke the town plan and argue that the permit should be denied because in the developer's own words, their intention was to gather data in support of a large wind project – a clearly prohibited land use. We went through the 246 process and the Department of Public Service attorneys thought our plan was so clear and unambiguous they said it should be considered dispositive. They went further and said to the public service board that the Met tower application should be denied. The public service board read all of our filings and all of Iberdrola's filings and the department's opinion and they granted the cpg because, the application filing, they said, met the criteria of Section 246. They further said that the law as written left them no discretion to decide otherwise regardless of the town plan. Now, instead of invoking our town plan against temporary met towers as a precursor to an industrial scale project, we will have to find the resources to fight a much larger battle against opponents with no local interests and no regard at all for the wishes of our community and very deep pockets. In fact they have already stated their intention, in a footnote to one of their filings, to try to change our town plan and to change the town's elected leadership if necessary.

I'd like to say a word or two about Town Plans and what they mean or should mean. Looked at in the simplest terms, a well written town plan is a social contract among the members of a community. The purpose of the plan is to set out an agreed-upon vision for the town's future development within the context of the town's history, setting and its community values. That vision is set out as clearly and

unambiguously as language will permit so that no single member of the community can distort, destroy or dominate the interpretation or execution of that shared vision through inappropriate land uses.

In this situation Windham is faced with an absentee landowner who owns contiguous acreage equal to 25 % of the town's land area. They have teamed with the largest international developer of wind generation projects and declared their intention to turn that acreage into a generating plant in order to improve the income from their land holdings due to a downward cycle in the timber products industry.

We know the landowner and developer will be aided and abetted by the states regulatory process simply because the project qualifies as "renewable energy".

EPA says Vermont produces electricity with the lowest emissions of green house gases in the country at a rate of 2 pounds per megawatt hour. The average of the other states is almost 1300 pounds per megawatt hour. The next lowest state average is Idaho with 222 pounds per megawatt hour. The point is that Vermont already leads the country in carbon free electrical generation.

But here's the other side of the coin. We also lead the country in the percentage of our carbon footprint that comes from both transportation and home heating. Emissions from home heating as a percentage of total emissions in Vermont is 22% - which is higher than any other state and three times the national average. CO₂ from transportation in Vermont is 59% of our carbon output. Also higher than any other state - including California which produces 58% of their CO₂ from transportation. We have already done our work to clean up electric generation. We've been doing it for decades. *Our opportunity to make a difference now lies in the two areas where we lead the nation in emissions.*

In view of these basic facts and the apparent inadequacy of our present regulations to lead to well reasoned decisions we badly need the time this moratorium would provide to make sure we are asking and answering the right questions about the future of energy in Vermont.

I would like to close my remarks with a very partial list of essential questions that are being ignored in our rush to build industrial scale wind in Vermont. Answers are available, but we need time to gather the information, learn from the experience of others and guide our regulators to a fact-based framework of public policy. Our present system for permitting these projects was designed for a different era in the electrical power industry. We need time to set the system right and give our regulators the tools they need to insure that the permitting process does, indeed, serve the public good rather than the economic interests of a very few.

- How good must a ridgeline wind resource be to make it worth the kinds of massive destruction necessary to erect 450 foot turbines in mountainous terrain?
- What are the real health effects of inaudible sound waves, pressure pulses and shadow flicker on humans in homes and schools within 2 miles of industrial scale turbines?
- What is the real effect on property values for residences near these sites?
- How are the interests of landowners who want to develop big wind on their land to be reconciled with adjacent landowners who don't want development of this kind near their property and whose values will suffer if it occurs?
- How are the economic interests of adjacent towns to be reconciled when their residents and voters have different goals for development and suffer different impacts from it?
- Is it reasonable to abandon the long practice of permitting new electrical generation solely on the basis of need and replace it with a policy that says, "If it's renewable, it's good; so build it now" – even if we don't need the power ?