

**TAB 15**

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
CONNECTICUT SITING COUNCIL**

**Petition of BNE Energy Inc. for a  
Declaratory Ruling for the Location,  
Construction and Operation of a 3.2 MW  
Wind Renewable Generating Project on  
New Haven Road in Prospect, Connecticut**

**Docket/Petition No. 980**

**February 14, 2011**

**Prefiled Testimony of Mark Cool**

**1. Please state your name and address for the record.**

My name is Mark Cool. I reside at 250 Firetower Road, Falmouth, MA. I am 52 years old.

**2. What is your occupation?**

I am an FAA air traffic controller (31 years).

**3. How long have you lived at your current residence?**

Since April 1, 1995 (16 years).

**4. Why did you move to Falmouth?**

We sought a quiet, “off the beaten track” type of place. Living in the woods, on an Ancient Way (in the Indian lore) seemed like the perfect place.

**5. Do you live close to a wind turbine? If so, how close is it to your home?**

Yes. I live 1629 ft (496 meters) from Falmouth’s wind turbine #1, called “Wind1” in our community.

**6. How tall is Wind1?**

Wind1 is a Vestas82 standing 398 ft (121m) tall (tip height) with a rotor diameter 269 feet (82m).

**7. Did you support Wind1?**

Yes. WIND 1 was going to harness the wind and by doing so it was going to capture 1.5 million kWh of electricity. This is how this project was marketed in Falmouth. At a town meeting, a parade of advocates stood and touted that it would translate into lowering taxes while increasing sustainability of our community. I supported this wonderful concept. Who wouldn't? The town assured citizens through community outreach and according to a 2005 Feasibility Study, the actual implementation of such a fine concept would have both minimal noise and view shed impact.

**8. What was your property like before Wind1?**

Before the wind turbine was erected, my property was a quiet, rural location with the associated rural sounds.

**9. Has that changed? If so, please explain.**

My property has become a home abutting an industrial power plant. When the winds are from the North - Northeast, at velocities in excess of 8 -10 kts, I cannot enjoy my yard as I did before. I cannot work on or enjoy my property without the onset of pressure headaches. The agitation it causes my wife's sleep habits has a causal effect on my own sleep. And when the winds are shearing and gusty in nature, the thumping and banging, notwithstanding my wife's aggravations, disrupt my sleep.

**10. Have you experienced any adverse health effects from Wind1? If so, when did they begin?**

Yes. I suffered my first exposure last spring while in my yard cleaning-up, tree trimming and burning. I went to the doctor for pollen allergy medicines, since it was a high pollen spring. Though I had never suffered allergies before, I knew you could be afflicted at various stages in

life. The medicine prescribed didn't work. Gossip amongst the neighbors started during late spring and most were sharing similar unexplained pressures and sleep disturbances. I then started my on-line search for equivalent experiences in communities having industrial wind turbines.

**11. Please state all of the adverse health effects that you have experienced and continue to experience.**

Headaches are my prominent effect. I never before experienced headaches that were not associated with the flu or cold symptoms. My wife and I experience disturbed sleep in terms of the number of awakenings during the night and quality of sleep. The after-effects for us both, during the day following disturbed sleep have caused lack of energy, moodiness, leading to occasional memory lapses.

**12. Do you take any medication to treat these health problems? If so, did it help?**

I can't, due to air traffic regulations, though I have brought my headache and disturbed sleep routine to the attention of both the FAA regional Medical Flight Examiner and the Civil Aerospace Medical Institute ("CAMI").

**13. Have the adverse effects you suffered as a result of Wind1 impacted your ability to perform as an air traffic controller? If so, please explain.**

Yes. I now second-guess life-critical decisions when I work. Before the turbine, I didn't allow second-guessing to distract me from the job at hand; I was confident and a good controller. Since the turbine, I'm indecisive and struggling.

The NTSB (National Transportation Safety Board) mandates pilots and controllers an allowance of a minimum of 8 hours "stress-free" non-operational time between flight/control operations. The turbine is forcing me from compliance because of sleep deprivation and the

added stress of wondering if I'll sleep tonight. If my sleep is disturbed, I become anxious about the toll it will take on the subsequent day's performance.

Wind1 has forced me into my basement where I've made a make-shift bedroom. It is here I am less impacted and less stressed. It is only in my basement that I get a good night's sleep and sufficient "stress-free" time to perform my job at the high level I am used to. My concern is, as a property owner and taxpayer, should I be forced to redesign sleeping accommodations in my own home?

**14. Is your job as an air traffic controller stressful? If so, how do you deal with that stress?**

Yes. My solace from air traffic control stress had been my 2 acres of gardens that are surrounded by town-owned conservation lands.

**15. How has that changed since Wind1?**

Since Wind1, I suffer pressure headaches when I'm in the yard and while wind directions are from the north-northeast. Wind velocities also have an effect because stronger winds produce the onset of headache more rapidly. As a result, the work I do in my yard and around my property depends on the wind velocity. Yard work and shoveling of snow must be done. I wear ear plugs and chew gum, which prolong my ability to withstand the headaches. But the point is that I should be able to work in my yard and enjoy my property for as long as I want. I should not have to measure and limit the use and enjoyment of my property because of wind turbine effects.

**16. Please describe the pressure emanating from Wind1.**

The best description is akin to the pressure experienced just before your ears pop while an aircraft climbs or descends through pressure altitude. The "pop," in the case of being a

passenger, offers relief. In my case, relief is gained not by a “pop” of my ears but by being chased from my gardens to the relief offered by my basement or inside the house.

I have found ear plugs and chewing gum does mitigate the severity of the pressure. I never had been a gum chewer until April 2010. Should I have to do this on my own property?

**17. Does Wind1 produce any vibrations? If so, how has it impacted your life?**

Yes. Vibrations seemingly have started causing a structural effect on my house (built in 1988). The topography of the land is that of a glacial moraine. The crown molding and molding adorning the dining room chandelier has fallen or become detached. This was recorded in early December 2010. Also, and only in that that room, the drywall nail heads have started to become exposed. The latex paint pliability, so far, prevents the nail heads puncturing the paint coats. It is unique in that this is the only room presenting these symptoms. The dining room is at the center of the house, neither closest to, nor furthest away from, the turbine.

**18. Do you have any concerns about the value of your property as a result of its location next to Wind1? If so, please explain.**

Yes. Despite all the industry claims to the contrary, significant value impacts have occurred, and have resulted in the abandonment of homes, as well as nuisances, health problems, etc. My wife is one of the Cape and Islands top real estate sales agents. She has contacted real estate agents and real estate appraisers throughout Canada, the West and Midwestern states in the US, and they all agree that never has there been such a widespread and consistent series of similar, negative reports coming from residents living by any other type of facility or unique enterprise.

The depreciation of property value as a consequence of wind turbine siting is an observable trend in the market, both for owner-occupants and the home-buying market. A wind project sited poorly has ruined the return on our 20-year investment.

**19. Please identify any interactions that you have had with local and state authorities concerning Wind1.**

I have sent numerous letters to our State Governor, State Health Commissioner, State Environmental Protection Agent, as well as my district State legislators. Their responses have been practically non-existent. The County authority has been taking public comment while they develop Minimum Performance Standards for the region. The County's initial proposal was much too lenient, allowing unchecked wind farm industrialization. Newer standards are now under public scrutiny. My comment is that, though the revised standards allow for greater restriction, loopholes left therein allow manipulative opportunity for developers.

Locally, our Planning Board has pressed for a 1-year moratorium on future turbine projects in Falmouth. However, the attention my neighborhood has brought to bear on the town hall stands to make little effect on those turbines already operational. Wind1 was the first erected in Falmouth and is the source of my and my wife's greatest discontent.

**20. Based on your experience, do you have any final comments on the siting of wind turbines near residential communities?**

Yes. The impacts of turbines too often are classified under "quality of life" rather than illness issues. This may or may not be. Build industrial turbines 1629 feet (496m) from service critical personnel. Build them next to the residence of your emergency room doctors and nurses, your firemen and policemen, your legislators and your servicemen and women. Then ask yourself, whose quality of life are we talking about? All those occupations listed make life-

altering decisions for the public. Decisions, good or bad, are in good measure correlated to the quality and quantity of sleep one receives.

In conclusion, the process of educating decision makers has been very very slow. As new information becomes available, it appears the private citizen has become the watch-dog checker on credible data and information. This begs the question: What are those government officials, entrusted to do this very job, doing? It shouldn't be this way. It shouldn't be this way in the USA, where democracy protects the people.