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Connecticut Siting Council
10 Franklin Square
New Britain, CT 06051

Distinguished Council Members,

My name is Walter M. Zima. I live at 12B Greenwoods Turnpike in Colebrook, CT. In 1992 I bought my small ranch home. Just beginning my family, the quite, peaceful, small town community setting Colebrook offered was the major selling point. Over the years I have transformed my home with the help of my father. This has been a labor of love and an experience that afforded me precious time with my dad. I have two sons- Derek, 20 years old and Mark, 13 years old. Last year my fiancée, Brandy and her 10 year old daughter, Kaitlyn, moved into our home. Since their arrival I have made several more improvements with more plans for future expansion, including an outdoor living space. Last Spring we added a deck, with plans for an expanded patio this summer.

In early December it was brought to my attention that BNE Energy, Inc. proposed to build a three turbine wind farm, Petition 984, on Rock Hall Road. This information was shared with me while eating dinner at a local restaurant in Norfolk, CT. This was the first I had heard of this plan. I had attended a meeting the previous year that pertained to the installation of a weather recording station. However, further information regarding the proposed three turbine wind farm located on Flagg Hill Road, Petition 983, had not been forthcoming. It was my understanding that residents on Flagg Hill Road were disputing the ability of the Planning and Zoning Board to allow the meteorological tower to be installed in the first place.

Since the information regarding these proposed projects was, in my case, surprising, limited, and not readily available, I began to do research. I discovered several pieces of information that I found disturbing and potentially dangerous. The first being the lack of regulations. Increased government grants and calls for the decreased reliance on fossil fuels have made wind power seem to be a perfectly safe and reasonable alternative. However, as with all new endeavors, there are many unknowns. Although the GE turbines proposed to go in are considered more efficient, quite, and less intrusive, it does not mean that potential dangers and disturbances to neighbors are decreased. This is a residential area, even though there is a driving range, gun club, and recreational area nearby, these do not pose the same potential threats to the health and safety of my family as 492 foot turbines with enormous blades spinning above my home do. Furthermore, my home will be sandwiched between both wind farms, which means my family will be impacted by SIX turbines, if not more. The proposals would lead one to believe that the gun range causes more distraction to residents than these quite giants, however, there is not gun fire during the night. Intermittent gun fire will not cause the health problems associated with wind turbines. In addition, I do not see the golf range from the windows in my home, and a rogue golf ball does not have the same potential dangers to my home and property values as six, 492 feet wind turbines do. Lastly, the recreation center is used seasonally and one would not know there was a function taking place until driving by.

In an article published in September 2010, a landowner in Wyoming addressed the issue of property values affected negatively (http://www.casperjournal.com/article_113f34f7-c657-53b7-a042-3afafc2d2139.html) by proximity to wind turbines. I contend that selling a home with a turbine in the backyard does not make the property more desirable. Especially, when the once peaceful, serene backyard view is now peppered with turbines.

I would like to draw the Siting Council's attention to the wind energy ordinance 2010 passed in Jackson, ME. Specifically, sections 13.0, 13.1, 13.2, and subcategories pertaining to setbacks from residences and public roads, as well as noise standards. Some note worthy ordinances:

“A setback from the property line of 13x the turbine height for a 400' turbine is 5200 feet, approximately one mile” (see attached document).

“Setbacks for public roads are based on an approximation of a 1680-foot debris field for ice throw. Four times the turbine height for a 400' Wind Turbine is equal to 1600 feet” (see attached document).

In the testimony given by Dr. Apt during the April 23, 2009 Hearing on the American Clean Energy Security Act: Panel on Low Carbon Electricity, Carbon Capture and Storage, Renewables and Grid Modernization, he refers to the importance of decommissioning funding, along with the large task of creating a transmission system. Looking at page 3

(see attached document), Apt states, "...wind and solar can lower the amount of fossil fuels used for a generation, but they don't lessen the need for spending money on always-available generation capacity, nor do we get all the air emissions benefits we once expected. For new generators, the capital cost is the vast majority of new costs and so the savings by having free fuel from the wind or sun are small."

At this early developmental stage and with limited knowledge of the effects turbines have on the surrounding ecosystem and human neighbors this is not something to rush into. If this form of energy is more effective, then funding will remain available until informed decisions can be made, with all aspects considered. These turbine farms will affect the communities in which they are proposed. I ask that the council consider the people affected by having to live around them, the ecosystems that may be damaged and forever changed; more so than the potential profit a corporation stands to make.

Sincerely,

Walter M. Zima

References:

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