

OPINION: “Windmills Do Not Work That Way!” -Morbo, Futurama



We missed the chance to be part of the first advance towards renewable energy, let's not balk again.

by Patrick Correia

This winter was rough. Look at the season as a whole, by which I mean February. Our winters, much like our other seasons, are in a state of chaotic fluctuation. Winter seems to have been condensed into an unnecessarily snow filled blur we once called February. Climate change isn't affecting us as bad as Maldives, but that doesn't mean it will always only be as annoying as someone stealing your space saver or having to wearing pants in August. I hate pants in August.

The Cape Wind project has been dealt another excessive blow. What was to become a leased staging area in New Bedford, will now be delayed indefinitely. This delay is a criminal limitation on our energy resources.

The Brayton Point station is the coal burning facility in Somerset that once provided about 1/5th of the electricity used in the Commonwealth. It's not very environmentally friendly, as anyone who took fourth grade biology might infer, and will be retired in 2017. You may know this as the Simpsons-esque cooling towers when you head west on the Braga Bridge, which is surprisingly missing from this list.

While this closure is a step in the right direction, we're depending more and more on liquefied natural gas (LNG) as an alternative, cleaner fuel source. It's cleaner burning. Actually procuring the stuff ruins local environments. I'm sure you've seen the videos of Appalachian families lighting their water on fire or read about the ongoing efforts of environmental activists to end the practice of Hydraulic Fracturing. Sounds a lot scarier when it's the whole word, doesn't it?

We need a sustainable, ecologically responsible form of energy. For example, why has no one done this to the New Bedford Harbor? Just probably something to bookmark or share on Facebook to impress your ex who keeps posting socially conscious Huffington Post articles.

Did the environmental part not piss you off? According to the WBUR article by Michael Norton of the State House News Service mentioned above, "The lease accord called for the project to pay the clean energy center \$4.5 million in rent for the use of the 28-acre facility, which was specifically designed to handle large cranes and meet the demands required of a wind energy project staging area." \$4.5 Million. That is lush. I'm going to say it again; Lush!

Are you afraid of "Wind Turbine Syndrome"? I can't put big enough quotes around that phrase for my own comfort. You live in New Bedford. You have much more to be nervous about than the whooshing sound of a windmill miles away. Route 6 at rush hour? By that logic we should be concerned about Providence

being too loud, in some odd macro noise complaint situation.

Is it the birds being injured? I'm fairly certain the Burger King on Cove Road has lead to more gull diabetes related deaths than even the most nefarious turbine could tally. At the very least I'm sure Gull obesity rates are troubling.

Contact your local representative and let them know you're interested in a renewable energy resource and demand a proud step forward for the Greater New Bedford Area. Demand that these delays be rectified and the project move forward. Deepwater Wind LLC has already received the financing to become the nation's first offshore wind farm in Block Island Sound and is expected to become operational in 2016. We missed the chance to be part of the first advance towards renewable energy, let's not balk again.
