

January 3rd, 2014

Friends:

I wanted to quickly get you this report about last night's Carteret County's [public hearing](#) on a wind energy moratorium — so pardon any typos, omissions, etc.

Some were concerned about how many people would show up on a poor weather night, in the holiday season, with the flu being prevalent. The answer: the Civic Center was jam packed ([sample pix](#)).

60+ citizens spoke (each was allowed 3 minutes — which amounted to 3± hours). About 20 of those supported the [Mill Pond](#) project, and 40+ opposed it. Since you already know [our science-based position](#), let's look at the main reasons given by the supporters, and a brief reality-check for each:

*1 - That the current state wind approval process is good.*

It's hard to understand that thinking since this is the first wind project to go through the new state process ([H484](#)), so how do they know it's "good"? Simply reading H484 would show that the state's process for assessing health impacts is woefully wanting. How is that "good"?

*2 - We should give the state process a chance to work.*

What that means is wait until all the approvals have been granted, and then object if we don't like the results. But of course at that time it would be too late to do anything!

*3 - The DOD banned wind energy in a NC offshore location.*

That is a serious misunderstanding, as DOD has no such authority. [BOEM](#) banned wind energy in certain offshore areas — due to a variety of inputs — but that has zero applicability to our onshore case.

*4 - Cherry Point is a real part of the approval process.*

Yes, Cherry Point is asked for their input. The reality of the current political situation is that their superiors have instructed them not to give any negative answer. “No comment” is not a true part of a meaningful process.

*5 - Any military issue will be satisfactorily mitigated.*

Mitigated means “make less bad” which is not the same as fixed. Military spokesmen made it very clear that mitigated issues will be a negative score during a [BRAC](#) evaluation. It was also pointed out that one possible mitigation would be to close Cherry Point.

*6 - We won't lose tourists as some will come to see turbines.*

Indeed some tourists come to see something different. So if we built a local prison for terrorists, would these same wind advocates support that facility as a tourist draw?

*7 - Wind has issues but it will replace coal which is worse.*

This type of claim is made by people who have no grasp of energy technical realities. NC could have 1,000 turbines and the amount of coal used would not change.

8 - *Wind turbines don't kill that many birds and bats.*

Cats kill small birds, but no bats or raptors. The fact that these “environmentalists” so cavalierly ignore huge eagle kills says volumes about their true agenda.

9 - *NC is losing out by not jumping on the wind bandwagon.*

This thinking reflects the [ENC article](#) that appeared in the paper last week. Here is how former commissioner [Bettie Bell](#) addressed that nonsense.

10- *Wind energy just needs to be properly sited.*

What is the “proper siting” for an energy source that does not make technical, economic or environmental sense? If this was their honest position, they would all be opposed to the absurdly poor siting that Mill Pond is.

Note that *every one* of the project supporters’ main positions is **FALSE!** That is evidently why they employed a “shotgun strategy” — which means to throw a lot of baloney against the wall and hope *something* sticks.

I’ll give them credit for one success: a much larger percentage of the Mill Pond supporters got up and spoke.

Since many who opposed the project chose not to talk, it gave observers an erroneous impression of how the community is divided on this issue. From the speakers perspective it appeared to be 33%± in favor and only 67%± against.

The reality is that among those educated on this matter, about 90% are against it. *We need to do better next time!*

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There were MANY very good talks opposing the wind project. We did an excellent job of staying focused on inclusion of the [Bullet Points](#), and numerous people expanded on those. Since this report is already too long, let me just include my [opening remarks](#).

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After the public comment period ended, the Commissioners voted on the 60-day moratorium. *It passed unanimously.*

Following that, Commissioner Bill Smith introduced a motion to send the [Bullet Points](#) to the County Planning Department for them to review for inclusion into the existing [Tall Structure Ordinance](#). *That also passed unanimously.*

The next meeting is where the Commissioners and the Planning Department get together to discuss what will be incorporated into the current law. This is scheduled for 5 PM on January 6th at the Commissioners' meeting room. It is open to the public, but not for public comment.

Thanks to the efforts of many good people, all-in-all we did reasonably well. Next time we need to do a better job in a few areas, particularly tourism.

This campaign will be finished when: **a)** the County has a much better wind law, **b)** Newport passes their proposed wind law improvements, and **c)** Torch throws in the towel.

My optimistic expectation is that these can all be accomplished within two months. Let me know any questions.

regards,

john droz, jr.