

I want to voice my support for Governor Romney's Ocean Management Task Force's initiative and I am pleased with the recommendations they have proposed for state governance of our ocean resources. As I have listened to the proposal of Cape Wind to build a power generating plant in the middle of Nantucket Sound I have become more and more concerned that we the public are being taken for the biggest financial ride since Enron.

I question the why a private business can simply take over a significant area of public property for personal gain without any reimbursement to the public owners of that land. Cape Wind argues that it will not impede our use of the sound - perhaps it won't until they put a fence around everything to keep us out. And I have no doubts that that fence will go up sooner than later.

There is can be no denying that between tax incentives, free rent for 20 some square miles of prime ocean property that Cape Wind will stand to reap significant windfalls - if indeed the project is successfully built. If they are successful there is little that indicates that we the public owners of that property will benefit in kind from this windfall - and I have no doubt that if it is built and isn't viable that Cape Wind will move on and the public will be left with the problem.

To support the wind farm a large 15,000 square foot 100 foot tall power collection facility is to be built as part of the project - that has never been depicted in any proposed plan for the project that I have seen nor has it been shown in any proposed view of the project. There is absolutely no mention that I can find on the Cape Wind Web Site and it has never been mentioned in any of the public hearings Cape Wind has had. This is a significant sized building and it houses a significant environmental hazard in the form of transformers. It is not possible to build a building even a 1/3 of that size on Cape Cod or other areas without significant review. A building supply company went through more hoops than Cape Wind has to build a store on the Cape and they were forced to greatly reduce the amount of paint they could stock because of environmental concerns. Yet we have no control over a 15000 square foot building holding somewhere in the neighborhood of 40,000 of fuel oil - to be built in a fragile environment like Nantucket Sound. I suggest that there is no place in the US where I could put up a commercial building that size without paying for the land to put it on or paying taxes on the building and property. And I have no doubt that in the event that there is a problem - the public will be the ones to suffer and will be the ones paying for the cleanup. Yet the current situation will allow Cape Wind to build that on public land without as much as 1 cent of contribution to the public for the use of that land nor without being required to pay any taxes on the use of the property. And we must simply sit by and be forced to take what ever is dealt to us. How can we allow this? Without local oversight and governance how we can be sure that Nantucket Sound doesn't end up in the same sorry environmental condition as Otis?

The merits of finding alternative forms of energy to produce electricity cannot be denied. But we must move forward insuring that we don't allow the wholesale taking of public property for private gain, that benefits to the general public are clearly measurable and that whatever we do fits into a more strategic solution and with proper oversight so our oceans don't simply become the next site of uncontrolled and mismanaged industrialization.

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