

FAA Reverses Denial Of Wind Turbine At Wastewater Treatment Facility

By CHRISTOPHER KAZARIAN

Last April the Federal Aviation Administration approved a proposal submitted by Notus Clean Energy LLC to erect a wind turbine in Falmouth Technology Park, determining that the structure would not be a hazard to air navigation.

On Christmas Eve, the FAA sent an e-mail to Daniel H. Webb, owner of Notus Clean Energy, notifying him that the approval had been revoked. "It was quite a surprise and a severe setback for the project," Mr. Webb said.

He was not the only one to receive such a surprise. The Falmouth town manager's office was also notified by the FAA that same day that their project to erect a 1.65-megawatt wind turbine at the Wastewater Treatment Facility on Blacksmith Shop Road in West Falmouth also had been revoked. Falmouth had received two FAA approvals, one in 2006, Assistant Town Manager Heather B. Harper said, and one this past September after GPS points had shifted based upon the location of the turbine.

Last month's decision by the FAA regarding the two projects related specifically to the flight approach on a specific runway at Otis Air National Guard Base in which the turbines appeared to be a presumed hazard.

After assessing the situation, Ms. Harper said, an oversight was found on the initial review of both the town's and Notus Clean Energy's application. "The FAA found that oversight and needed to address that, which is to the FAA's credit," she said. "The flight path was the issue."

On Monday, both Mr. Webb and Ms. Harper, working through Con-

gressman William D. Delahunt's office, met with the FAA in Boston in hopes of resolving the situation. They were accompanied by Captain Dan Abel, the commander of the United States Coast Guard Air Station Cape Cod.

Both Ms. Harper and Mr. Webb said Captain Abel was instrumental in coming up with what seems to be a potential solution to the problem that would involve altering the flight path. In conjunction

with the FAA and in speaking with his pilots, Captain Abel arrived at this solution, Ms. Harper said, which still needs to be studied and tested.

"Flying needs to occur to ensure that the technical solution is effective," she said.

Ms. Harper did not anticipate this would have an impact on the town's project, noting that

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As the sun sets, skaters play a little hockey on a cranberry bog on Old Barnstable Road Wednesday.

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both the FAA and Coast Guard have instructed the town to move ahead with the project. The goal of commissioning the turbine on May 2009 will not be delayed, she said.

The same cannot be said for Mr. Webb's project, which involves constructing a 1.5-megawatt turbine to help power Teledyne Webb Research, where he works as the general manager.

Mr. Webb said Notus Clean Energy had been prepared to re-

ceive bids this past Wednesday before the December e-mail from the FAA. "I had to postpone the whole bidding process until this is resolved," he said.

Both he and Ms. Harper are scheduled to meet again with the FAA, Monday, February 2.

Mr. Webb said the sooner this permit issue can be resolved, the sooner the bidding process can move forward. "I'd like to break ground in 2009, but I am at the mercy of the permitting process," he said. "If all goes well, we will do that this year."