

Friday, June 20, 2008

Tilting at Windmills

It really is time for us as a society to take responsibility for the impact we are having on our planet and our fellow citizens.

Renewable energy sources will help us reduce our dependence on oil and reduce our need to put our people in harm's way fighting wars in countries like Iraq and Kuwait.

The current scrutiny over windmills is appropriate since we are unfamiliar with the impact on our town. We have approved many building projects without requiring noise studies, some of which make noise day and night for their neighbors. The sound study for the proposed windmill at the Tech Park clearly concludes that the project will not be audible to neighbors, the associated sounds being at the threshold of human hearing. (A singing bird would be louder.) There are plenty of uses in town that make more noise, generators, air conditioners, heavy equipment like trucks and earth movers.

Visually this windmill will be visible from a variety of places. I, myself, will be pleased to see this lovely machine, knowing that it is taking the place of images of war. This machine and others like it will be symbols of peace and sources of pride for our community.

It brings to mind the famous Don Quixote, a half-blind storybook character armed with a lance who dashed about the countryside attacking the revolving blades of windmills having mistaken them to be dangerous and ferocious giants. The windmills turned out to be harmless machines.

I am very sympathetic to the concerns folks have about development in their neighborhoods; change is a scary thing, and there are permanent nuisance factors associated with some projects. At the same time I hope folks will be in favor of this beautifully quiet project.

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