



Letters to the Editor

August 14, 2008

Support ice rink wind turbine

To the Editor:

We wholeheartedly support the application for a wind turbine at the Martha's Vineyard Arena to serve their electrical load.

Every possible metric shows that this project will be vital to promotion of the energy concepts of the Island Plan:

It will demonstrate the practicality of local on-site generation of electricity using solar energy (via the wind).

It will serve as a wonderful model for all of the youngsters at the ice rink, letting them see a viable solution to global warming in action, right at their skating rink.

It will show that wind turbines can provide an important revenue stream to reduce exposure to fossil fuel price increases.

It will be a practical example of the solar powered wind turbine/heat pump synergy that will be essential in our fight against global warming and shrinking fossil fuel supplies (the sun creates the wind that powers the turbine that runs the heat pump that cools the ice).

It will show that replacing fossil fuel use with renewable energy production is not a fantasy. Though only 25 percent of their energy needs will be met by this particular turbine, this 25 percent will represent an important and significant reduction in the number of gallons of fuel oil burned and CO2 sent into the atmosphere by the power plant making electricity used by the ice rink

As important as the above points is the fact that this project will mark an important milestone in the Island Plan. The broad implementation of the Island Plan goals will only happen when projects like the ice rink wind turbine pave the way.

We see an important momentum developing on the Vineyard, an accumulation of important energy projects that have helped to wake us up to what can be done to deal with our energy future: a multitude of solar electric installations; a multitude of solar hot water installations; a multitude of geothermal and air to air heat pump projects; the installation of small turbines at

the high school and around the island; the Charter School net zero wind turbine project; the pursuit of a wind turbine at the West Tisbury School; and now the Ice Rink wind turbine.

As mentioned earlier, the ice rink wind turbine also demonstrates the synergy between renewable energy generation and heat pumps.

Recognized worldwide as the only realistic replacement for fossil fuel heating systems in buildings, heat pumps powered by wind turbines and/or solar electric will reduce operating costs, reduce global warming, and increase our energy self-sufficiency.

While we can't affect the cost of fossil fuels, we will be able to affect the price of electricity through development of our land-based wind resource. With wind turbine projects such as the ice rink, Islanders will be able to actively stabilize their electricity prices.

With the success of the ice rink wind turbine/heat pump model, actively suppressing the Martha's Vineyard Arena utility costs for the next 20 years, we see a tremendous example and opportunity for the YMCA right next door to follow suit.

What was once fantasy now becomes a possibility and a reality - when the YMCA installs a heat pump system and their own turbine, they will be able to thank the visionaries at the Martha's Vineyard Arena for leading the way toward freedom from fossil fuels and escalating operating costs.

Given the amazing energy progress the Vineyard has made so far, and the amazing opportunities before us, we hope the Martha's Vineyard Commission will see fit to support this ice rink wind turbine project in any and every way possible.

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