

February 3, 2011

Re: House Bill 6249

Dear members of the energy and technology committee:

I am Susan Wagner, from 117 Pinney Street in Colebrook, and am an abutter to the proposed wind turbines on Rock Hall Road ("Colebrook North.")

My husband and I bought 200 acres of Colebrook in the early 90's, attracted by the serene untouched nature here, the opportunity to watch backyard birds, water birds such as the mergansers and herons who visit the pond, the red tailed hawk that lives near-by, the turkey and bear and deer who frequent our area, and to walk in the pristine woods. We wanted also to enjoy a quiet rural life in our retirement.

We designed and built a house with huge windows, to embrace the beauty of the landscape around us. We applied for all the usual permits, and found that Colebrook officials are assiduous in the performance of their duties, making sure that any construction is done correctly. The wetlands were amply marked on the site by tags and black cloth screening and stakes with color coding. Every regulation was followed exactly. An inspector deemed, for instance, that the railing on the steps leading down to the pond was too high, so we were instructed to install another railing about 8 inches below the first.

The P and Z will note and remonstrate any resident who places a garage a foot too close to the road, or for any tiny infringement of the clear regulations they have created. I found it hard to believe, then, that a trio of structures, each taller than any office building in Hartford, could be approved for placement adjacent to my property without any town permission, any discussion, even any notice sent to the abutter. My neighbors and I first heard of the Rock Hall (Colebrook North") wind turbine proposal at the 'informational hearing' on November. We thought we had come to learn about the proposal for Colebrook South, Flagg Hill, so were understandably stunned when announcement was made of additional turbines on the street behind us. Nothing this large, or so potentially deforming of our quiet country life, should be done by stealth, however inadvertent the timing may have been. Surely in a democracy one has the right to descriptions and discussions prior to such a transformative intrusion into the community.

We built this home not only for our own retirement, but as an ingathering place for our family. Our grandchildren come all through the year on vacations, but particularly do they love it in the summer at "granny camp." So the studies of the ill effects from sound and infrasound, while decried by many developers as "fear mongering," are of grave concern to me. As one reads on the internet in the various complaints and studies, the same cluster of symptoms are found across the world, from Australia to America to Europe. Surely there is some ill effect for at least some of the people who live near the turbines. Since the sonic and subsonic rays seem to be most harmful to the elderly such as I, and the young, such as my grandchildren, I believe this subject should be pursued scientifically in the next year or two, before unalterable constructions are built. Constructions which may bring harm. This

is an issue which is being actively studied as well as litigated at the moment. I implore the state of Connecticut to move with caution until more is known.

Within a mile of the 6 proposed turbines are about 100 houses. There is much juggling of opinions and facts, and on the part of developers countrywide a denial that proximity will have any diminishing affect on real estate prices. But the preponderance of studies show that there is indeed a downward pressure on market prices. From a pure common sense point of view, which one of us, if looking for a quiet pristine neighborhood, would choose to purchase a house overshadowed by monstrously large wind turbines? These are three times the height of cell towers, and noisy as well. In our own town already, a previously agreed upon price has been subject to renegotiation downward once the buyer learned of the wind turbine proposal.

According to the online tax database, there is about \$22 million worth of assessed real property within the mile radius of the 6 turbines. Beyond that, there are many many houses which will have the turbines in view, according to the developer. Both of these affects decrease property values, and hence, the tax income to the town. I certainly will not be amenable to paying my current real estate taxes if I find my house and property are much diminished in value. This is, in effect, an act of 'taking' of the town's income. For many of my neighbors, their house is their main, and in many cases, their only significant asset. Decreasing its value is also a form of 'taking.' If the developers are so sure that there will be no ill effect on market value, they may be willing to give what is required in another state, a "guaranteed property value" bond by which homeowners will be compensated for their loss. There is a long record of developers buying up residences close to turbines; that admits that there is lowered worth.

For the fairness and protection of the citizens of Connecticut, it is imperative that these issues be dealt with scientifically, thoroughly, and thoughtfully, before the Siting Council is directed to give permissions.

Susan Wagner, Colebrook, CT