

Karen has resolved to dig in and fight

The true story of a woman battling Wind Turbine Syndrome (MA)

excerpts from 7-6-12 post by Curt Devlin of Fairhaven, MA: windturbinesyndrome.com

Karen Isherwood does not think of herself as a victim. She's a fighter, perhaps I should say a combatant. Every day, she gets up in the morning and goes toe to toe with lymphatic cancer.

When you first meet Karen, her diminutive stature might lead you to believe she is a pushover, but that would be a mistake. She is tough, she has stamina, and she has a great team in her corner. Her daughters, Chelsea and Leah, are always there for her. Chelsea still lives at home and helps support the household because Karen has not been able to work since 2010. Fighting cancer is a full time job for her.

She has good doctors, too, ones she has gradually come to trust. Above all, they emphasize how important it is for her to nurture and strengthen her immune system. To do this, she has to eat right, get good sleep and, most importantly, she has to avoid stress as much as possible.

Till recently, Karen lived in the ideal place to follow her doctors' orders. You could say she had the home field advantage. She lives in what was once an idyllic little cul-de-sac in Fairhaven, MA called Teal Circle. There's no traffic at all, it is quiet, and she gets along well with her neighbors who share the circle. Shady woods loft directly behind her house. Beyond the woods, there is a quiet, marshy estuary flowing into Little Bay—a beautiful nook tucked into a recess of Buzzards Bay.

Karen chose this location with great care almost 25 five years ago. For all these years, song birds have serenaded her, hawks have hunted there, and the deer visit to take advantage of the salt lick she puts out at the edge of her property. Like many people who live here, Karen is very proud of her Portuguese-American heritage and her family who has made this area its home for four generations. Her place on Teal Circle is more than a piece of property, even more than a home; it is part of her roots and identity.

She had no intention of leaving this place—until recently. The other day, something ominous happened. Her neighbor's dog fell down the stairs. Ordinarily, you would not think of this as a remarkable event, but in this case it could be. When he took his dog to the vet, her neighbor expected the worst. So he was surprised to learn his dog had vertigo. Vertigo (dizziness) can usually be treated with the same kind of medicine you take for seasickness. This event is ominous because vertigo is one of the signature symptoms of a much bigger problem, something called Wind Turbine Syndrome. Vertigo is just one of the symptoms commonly caused by the low frequency sound emitted by large industrial turbines. Two of the most common symptoms are sleeplessness and an otherwise unexplained anxiety.

In short, it [WTS] is a worst nightmare for someone battling lymphatic cancer.

Early this spring, Charlie Murphy, Michael Sylvia, and Brian Bowcock, the Fairhaven Select board, secretly conspired with Executive Secretary Jeffrey Osuch to put up two large turbines[1.65MW, the same size as the two turbines at the Falmouth wastewater treatment plant] **just 1300 feet** from Karen's home. This was done in secrecy because the original plan, concocted by Sylvia, Bowcock and Manzone was defeated legally in 2008.

Teal Circle is now in the shadow of these 400 foot, life-destroying mechanical monsters that assault Karen randomly yet relentlessly, spewing toxic noise—day and night, 365 days a year. Many healthy people are forced to leave their homes when subjected this onslaught of audible and inaudible noise. Living in the shadow of turbines is extremely stressful and there is a growing body of medical evidence to prove it.

For Karen, however, the onslaught could be catastrophic. Neither she nor her daughter, Chelsea, is sleeping well anymore. This has begun to impact Chelsea's performance at work, a job which is critical for her own career as well as helping to support the household.

Karen knows that she desperately needs rest, relaxation, and good sleep to win her fight against cancer. But she also knows that what happened to the neighbor's dog is one more indication that the odds are turning against her. Her neighbors, Chris and Peter Goben, are subjected to hellacious flicker each sunny morning. (Try to imagine living somewhere that makes you hope you do not have bright sun and a breeze.) Karen knows that she will have to face this flicker herself this fall when the leaves drop behind her house.

Karen is losing the home field advantage. She has joined other abutters in Little Bay in a lawsuit against the town and against Fairhaven Wind, LLC.

Sumul Shah, Fairhaven Wind's CEO, has met with Karen to offer her "mitigations." In this context, mitigations denote steps like putting central air in your home or sound proofing your bedroom, ostensibly to reduce the effects of turbine noise.

Apparently, Shah is willing to throw her a bone to keep her quiet. Of course, Karen has educated herself, so she knows these mitigations are entirely ineffective against turbine infrasound and low frequency noise.

Karen Isherwood has courage and tenacity, but she's facing ferocious odds and she knows it. She knows time is not on her side.... Fairhaven Wind and town officials have confronted her with "Hobson's choice." Soon her choice could become as stark as "leave or die." Justice delayed is truly justice denied in her case. It is no metaphor or exaggeration to say she is in a fight for her life.