IN ATTENDANCE

Commissioners: (P = Present; A = Appointed; E = Elected)
P Bill Bennett (A - Chilmark)  - Jim Powell (A - W est Tisbury)
P John Breckenridge (E – O ak Bluffs)  P Camille Rose (A - A quinnah)
P Christina Brown (E - Edgartown)  P Doug Sederholm (E – Chilmark)
P Peter Cabana (E – Tisbury)  - Casey Sharpe (A – O ak Bluffs)
- Martin Crane (A – Governor Appointee)  P Linda Sibley (E – W est Tisbury)
P Carlene Gatting (County Appointee)  P Holly Stephenson (E – Tisbury)
P Chris Murphy (E – Chilmark)  P Andrew Woodruff (E – W est Tisbury)
P Katherine Newman (E – A quinnah)

Staff:  Mark London (Executive Director), Jo-Ann Taylor (Coastal Planner/ DCPC Coordinator), Mike Mauro (Transportation Planner assisting with meeting production)

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 P.M.

1. DESIGNATION OF ISLAND WIND DISTRICT OF CRITICAL PLANNING CONCERN: OCEAN ZONE – PUBLIC HEARING


Doug Sederholm opened the public hearing and read the hearing notice. The boundary of the proposed designation is that portion of the air space over all ocean waters within the County of Dukes County which exceeds two hundred twenty feet (220’) in height above mean sea level, and extending from the Mean Low Water Line seaward to the bounds of the municipal corporations.

Jo-Ann Taylor explained that the Commission is responding to nominations for the Ocean Zone of the Island Wind District covering all waters of Dukes County starting at 220 feet above the water because the nominations are focused on commercial wind.

- The draft decision is based on designation criteria which are based very closely on Chapter 831 regarding DCPCs.
- The qualifications deal with the need for designation and then with the type of district.
- There must be a need for the district. The nominations note that this is a regional issue.
• The waters are closely linked in use from town to town.
• The boundaries intend to go out to the three mile limit of jurisdiction.
• As far as the size and shape, the towns may find in preparing regulations that the height limitation isn’t functional. They could come back to the Commission to have that lowered or raised.
• It was nominated as a Wildlife Resource District and Cultural Resource District. The Qualifications are listed in the notes.
• Correspondence in favor of the Ocean Zone was received from County Commissioners and the Boards of Selectmen and Planning Boards.
• Simulations were submitted by Henry Stephenson illustrating the impacts on cultural resources.
• The draft Goals and Guidelines were drafted by the DCPC Committee.
• The Critical Planning District qualifications are the basis of the decision.
• The vote doesn’t have to take place until the 12th or the 19th of November.

Doug Sederholm noted pages two and three of staff notes as the most pertinent part of the Qualifications. The Commission has to determine whether the proposed District meets the Qualifications. He reviewed the criteria set out in the Qualifications.

1.1 Public Testimony

Jo-Ann Taylor explained that the map shows three miles out, the depth, and the town boundaries.

Doug Sederholm said the proposed Ocean Zone of the Island Wind District is somewhat larger than the Ocean Plan designation, as it starts from the shoreline.

There was a discussion of the inclusion of Gosnold.
• Carlene Gatting asked whether the designation includes Gosnold.
• Mark London explained that the Commission has been advised by Counsel to stick with the wording in the Martha’s Vineyard Commission Act. The jurisdiction of the Commission is the lands and waters of Dukes County with the exception of the Elizabeth Islands and the Indian Lands.
• Christina Brown read the legislation and explained there is ambiguity. The Elizabeth Islands and its waters are in Dukes County.
• Christina Brown and Doug Sederholm explained that lawyers are working on clarifying the MVC’s jurisdiction over the waters of Cuttyhunk, but that this decision would not exclude that area.

Mark London noted that there were some discrepancies on the maps, as the outer boundaries of jurisdiction on various GIS maps don’t quite line up. The boundaries of the towns, of Dukes County, and of the Commonwealth all go out three miles.

Jo-Ann Taylor said that the written description is what counts in a DCPC. The boundary would remain the same regardless of when the mapping irregularities are resolved, if ever.
James Pritchard clarified that the reason we’re here is that the Commonwealth said if a commercial wind farm is to be developed it will be developed in proposed areas with no input from Martha’s Vineyard and we would like input.

- He added that he’s in favor of wind power. There’s a growing movement, but the further out the better. Also, the bigger the better.
- We heard that Rhode Island is further along. A large wind project could be integrated.

Christopher Watson stated the following:

- It’s a great idea to protect the sanctity of our surrounding water.
- We need alternative energy sources, but the wind turbines that are being proposed up to now are not the answer.
- Deeper water with floating turbines would be more effective.
- There is other technology available that could be more effective, like thermal depolymerization.
- He would like the Island to have power and voice and he would like the entire Island to vote on it as a democracy.

William Marks stated the following:

- He wrote the only book on wind power on Martha’s Vineyard, published in 1980.
- In the 1970s and ’80s he had exclusive rights from two companies to install windmills on the Vineyard.
- Certainly the Vineyard should have a vote. It’s reprehensible that the Act came out of the legislature without the Commission being part of it.
- The Commission and Chilmark have the jurisdiction over Nomans.
- He gave the history of Chilmark’s jurisdiction over Nomans.
- Birds and their habitat extend far beyond Nomans Land.
- He thanked the Commissioners for holding the hearing and hoped for their success in representing Martha’s Vineyard.

Gary Harcourt stated that he is for wind power in general.

- The 220 feet appears to have come from wanting to capture commercial size wind.
- If the goal is protecting the water, why aren’t we talking about all the airspace above the water?

Francie Desmone said as a sailor she is concerned with navigation.

- There is a lot of traffic that goes through the canal.
- She asked how close people can get to critical power plants and how fishing and recreation and commerce will be impacted. Doug Sederholm said that the Ocean Plan does address fishing and recreation and navigation of commercial and recreational vessels.
- She asked at what point the structures would be affected by hurricanes.
- She agreed that she would be in favor of the DCPC to regulate some of these issues.

Richard Knabel stated he testified at the EEA hearing in September for the town. One of the points Island representatives made was that they didn’t want the jurisdiction of the Martha’s Vineyard Commission compromised.
• The All-Island Selectmen and Dukes County Commissioners have proposed a meeting with Governor Patrick and Secretary Bowles. The delegation has an appointment with Secretary Bowles.
• It is essential for the Commission to assert its authority over these waters. If the Commission sees fit to support the designation of a DCPC, it helps the delegation to reinsert the Commission into the process and it helps to slow down the clock.
• We have to deal with the legislature and the executive. Decisions made by the Commission at this meeting can help the process.

Riggs Parker, chair of the Chilmark Selectmen, testified that every recreational season sailors stream out of Long Island Sound, stop at Cuttyhunk or go through the Canal. They also head to Menemsha and along to Nantucket. If sailors encounter 80 turbines off Cuttyhunk in the fog, it will be a disaster for navigation. This is a hot spot for navigation, which hasn’t been acknowledged by the state.

Chris Fried testified that what surprises him is the time and analysis going into the question of how the turbines might be harmful. We’re developing a very long list of why we want to avoid turbines. We fall back on how they look. More important is why we may want renewable energy resources.

• Climate change is happening, and fast. We need to cut 100% of our carbon emissions by 2020.
• Wind turbines are one of our energy generating tools. He would like to hear people make some effort to come up with reasons why we do want them so we get them and avoid catastrophic climate change

Mal Jones said he used to operate two dredges in the 1950s. Operating over water, you can get away with murder. He added that any construction over water has to have very strict rules about construction and clean up.

Spencer Booker, Aquinnah Selectmen, stated that he’s in favor of wind, but he’s not in favor of the scope of these projects. He wondered why we couldn’t do two turbines instead of 160. He wondered how any disaster related to turbines can be mitigated, the costs of which should be taken into account.

Mr. Pritchard wondered why the height is at 220 feet. He doesn’t think a number needs to be put in. He added that Martha’s Vineyard is at the center of wind power on the east coast and that gives us a special responsibility. We’re paying the costs of coal related cancer. We’re on the right track when we do this sort of thing.

Gary Harcourt said he’s not opposed to wind power in water. He believes that Martha’s Vineyard should have a voice in the process.

Richard Knabel said that 166 turbines for these commercial areas will not mitigate climate change. Unless there is linkage between the construction of wind turbines and the reduction of fossil fuel consumption, the projects are a huge giveaway.

William Marks said that in the last few years, the U.S. has discovered that we have a huge natural gas supply that could satisfy our energy needs.
• He spoke about the potential impact of a Category 5 hurricane.
• He wondered if Otis Air Force Base has been considered for a wind farm.
• Global warming and climate change are things he’s been involved with for forty years.
• He noted the natural resources required for manufacturing and transporting the turbines and supporting infrastructure.
• He hopes the Commission is successful in communicating its authority to the state.

Doug Sederholm said the Commission is working on creating a legal framework for appropriate development of wind offshore. The Commission is not working on prohibiting or encouraging wind power per se.

Riggs Parker said Chilmark’s nomination for a DCPC on the waters had no limit on the height. He asked about the process for bringing the DCPC down to the water.

Jo-Ann Taylor explained that the geographic area that was noticed was above 220 feet. To change the height would require a new public hearing. Should the Commission chose to make the designation; the geographic area could be amended. She added that changing the height limitation to the water would create a moratorium on any development on the water, including aquaculture projects.

Doug Sederholm confirmed that the waters of the Elizabeth Islands are included in the boundary.

Chris Fried said turbines are more benign than coal and nuclear or oil-powered plants. We’re looking to slow or halt climate change. Wind turbines are a cleaner alternative. What we do here does tie into the national strategy.

Ken Wentworth commented that it costs an awful lot of money to put turbines in the two commercial areas. Wind turbines are not a clean technology if they don’t produce the energy required to construct the turbines. He added that taking out the voice of the people sets a terrible precedent for the future.

Peter Cabana clarified that Otis Air Force Base is looking to put a turbine in conjunction with the Cape Cooperative. The Cooperative is hoping to get more power than is needed for the base.

Holly Stephenson said that the draft guidelines do call for towns to reevaluate the height coverage of the district. Under the draft guidelines, a portion of any income should go to reducing the local consumption of fossil fuels. She added that if the state regulates projects, then we don’t have any say in conservation. Vineyard regulations could connect wind farm development with conservation.

Mal Jones said Otis Air Base is a great place for windmills because it’s already polluted.

Gary Harcourt said that coal-fired electricity is the greatest source of carbon going into the atmosphere.

Ken Wentworth would like to re-emphasize thermal de-polymerization. The technology of trash into energy could get funding. Thermal depolymerization would upstage wind turbines completely and be at the forefront of a solution.
Jo-Ann Taylor reviewed the draft Goals and Guidelines developed by a DCPC Committee which included Doug Sederholm, Christina Brown, Holly Stephenson, John Breckenridge, Jim Powell, Peter Cabana, Carlene Gatting and Camille Rose.

Chris Fried asked whether there will be a discussion about big picture impacts such as mountain top removal. Gary Harcourt added that we should know that our energy comes from coal and mountain top removal.

Mark London said staff will review the testimony and try to address all the issues in the Goals and Guidelines.

Spencer Booker raised the question of regulating ocean activity, specifically sand dredging and aquaculture. Doug Sederholm said the current goals and guidelines address only development 220 feet above the water.

Chris Murphy commented that we’re all aware of the environmental problems that we’re creating. The Commission is not looking at the question of stopping the windmills. It’s a question of not wanting to create more harm.

Doug Sederholm made several comments.
- At the end of the draft Guidelines there is a statement that towns are encouraged to find creative solutions.
- The Commission is talking about balancing multiple interests and protecting the values it was created to protect. The Commission is always in this balancing act.
- The DCPC has to have a specific definition of the boundary. This boundary is intended to address commercial-scale wind. There’s been some testimony that perhaps the boundary should be reconsidered.
- The towns will need to create the regulations based on the guidelines.

There was a discussion of the lower height limit.
- John Breckenridge asked about the town’s use of the 220 foot boundary.
- Jo-Ann Taylor clarified that it is the Commission that designates the boundary. If the town wants to change the boundary, the amendment would have to be heard and voted by the Commission. There’s an expectation that it be reasonably uniform from town to town across the Island. The towns don’t set the boundary unilaterally.
- Mark London clarified that the boundary of 220 feet creates a moratorium on commercial-sized wind turbines, not on smaller turbines.
- Jo-Ann Taylor clarified that it would take another public hearing to modify this boundary by the Commission.
- Andrew Woodruff said he was a little surprised that the boundary was defined at 220 feet.
- Mark London said that under the Ocean Sanctuaries Acts, very little development was possible. With the Ocean Act, a lot more development is possible. The most immediate concern that was expressed was for large scale wind and so 220 feet was used to define the boundary. Redefining the boundary would have to take place at another noticed public hearing.
The Commission has to vote on this designation with the 220-foot height definition by November 19th.

The Commission could vote, after the designation, to reconsider the 220 foot height definition, after a new public hearing. A height definition change would have to go through the amendment process with public notice and a hearing.

The Commission initiates and designates the DCPC with Goals and Guidelines; the towns draft by-laws for the Commission to review for conformance with the guidelines. The regulations are then voted on at town meeting.

2. DESIGNATION OF ISLAND WIND DISTRICT OF CRITICAL PLANNING CONCERN: OCEAN ZONE - DELIBERATION AND DECISION


Linda Sibley suggested that the Commission consider changing the boundary down to 50 feet in height and beyond 100 feet from shore. A change in boundary should include all the areas that should be protected.

Ned Orleans suggested that discussion be stopped at this point. Commissioners should vote on the designation and then continue discussion to determine next steps.

Ned Orleans moved, and it was duly seconded, to designate the Island Wind DCPC: Ocean Zone as presented, based on review of the nominations and testimony with respect to the Qualifications, and to adopt the Goals and Guidelines for the DCPC as presented.

Andrew Woodruff asked about rewording the Guidelines.

Mark London said there was discussion at the hearing about a general Guideline on the benefit of generating clean power and the carbon footprint used in construction and maintaining the turbines.

Peter Cabana suggested there should be a link between wind and carbon that’s produced in Massachusetts. He asked whether it is appropriate to link development of wind energy to a curtailment of carbon reducing electricity with priority given to coal.

Doug Sederholm commented that it’s a laudable goal and but probably it’s undoable in this particular instance.

Holly Stephenson moved to change the language from ‘while allowing’ to ‘while encouraging wind energy facilities’. There was no second.

Commissioners agreed by consensus that the draft Goals and Guidelines should be adopted as presented.

Mark London explained, regarding carbon reduction, that the language of the Guidelines allows a town to come up with a regulation to choose one project over another project. If two developers come in and one proposes a low carbon footprint, towns could find a measurable difference in applications based on carbon impact.

Christina Brown reiterated that there is consensus that the Commission will hold a public hearing regarding the height boundary, the date of which will be decided at a later meeting. She pointed out that all six towns and the County Commission and the Commission agree that the Commission should have regulatory say on wind turbines on the waters.

3. CONSIDERATION OF NOMINATION OF ISLAND WIND DISTRICT OF CRITICAL PLANNING CONCERN: LAND ZONE - DELIBERATION AND DECISION


Christina Brown explained that the purpose of this portion of the agenda item is to vote on accepting the nomination of the Island Wind District Land Zone above 220 feet.

- The Up-Island School District has a West Tisbury School turbine project 218 feet tall.
- Joe Alosso wrote that Edgartown Waste District has turbine project of 363 feet.

Chris Murphy moved that the lands and inland waters of the Town of Edgartown be excluded from consideration.

- Commissioners discussed whether Edgartown should be included in the Land Zone of the Island Wind District.
- The MVC received nominations for the land of five towns, but no one has nominated the lands of Edgartown. The Edgartown Board of Selectmen have specifically asked that Edgartown be excluded from the land zone of the DCPC.
- Earlier in the year there was a draft proposal from the Commonwealth to adopt a new act that would allow the Commonwealth to override town and Commission decisions for facilities of more than 2 megawatts. The wording that was developed in May would have allowed a developer to put a project anywhere and go to the Energy Facility Siting Board for final approval, notwithstanding what the town or regional planning agency had decided. The draft wording now states that if a Regional Planning Agency denies a project, an appeal would go to court. Only third party appeals would go to Energy Facilities Siting Board. The draft of the Siting Reform Act is still being considered in committee. It isn’t a sure thing.
- Allowing a third party appeal to the Energy Facilities Siting Board makes the appeal process meaningless.
- A 40-story turbine in Edgartown would be visible all over the Island.
- Any Board of Selectmen could, under a discretionary referral, refer a turbine to the MVC as a DRI if it feels the turbine has a regional impact.
- It would be a missed opportunity to not work to get Edgartown to be part of the DCPC.
• Besides being reactive to what the Commonwealth is doing, the Commission also has a responsibility to look at what wind turbines will do to the entire Island.
• Edgartown's argument why they should be excluded applies to the whole Island. Everyone should be subject to regulations.
• Five towns have asked the Commission to consider helping them enhance control of what goes on in their community. The Commission is not excluding Edgartown from anything; the Commission is just responding to what the five towns have requested.
• Windmills have an impact on the entire Island. Even though other Boards of Selectmen could refer a project from Edgartown, it doesn't mean that wind turbines in Edgartown don't have regional impact and shouldn't be part of a regional plan.
• The five towns have asked the Commission to protect the whole Island.
• The Commission has to give some deference to Edgartown's concerns, but their regulations are pretty weak and don't protect the regional interests that the Commission wants to protect.
• Edgartown is relying on the special permit process which doesn't address the scenic and cultural historic values that a DCPC can address.
• Chapter 831 gives the Commission the power to create a DCPC for all six towns even though one town doesn't want to be part of it. However, the Commission needs to respect the Town's request. The Commission has carefully used the DCPC process to enhance the powers of the towns.
• Edgartown may discover that it needs the Commission's help and can't write as effective by-laws for themselves.
• There are rational arguments that the DCPC should be for the whole Island, but it's politically counterproductive to impose a DCPC on a town that has specifically asked to be excluded.
• While the wind regulations in Edgartown may be weak, the general criteria for special permits probably have enough teeth.
• Other scenarios were discussed for dealing with Edgartown's request for exclusion.
• The possibility was discussed of using the exemption process for three specific projects.
• Christina Brown clarified that Commissioners would be voting on the motion to exclude Edgartown from consideration as part of the nomination:
• Chris Fried commented that Tisbury has been proposing a wind turbine for longer than Edgartown; the designation would be affecting that project, too.

A voice vote was taken on the motion to exclude the town of Edgartown from consideration. In favor: 12. Opposed: 2. Abstentions: 0. The motion passed.

Linda Sibley moved, and it was duly seconded, to accept for consideration the nomination of the Island Wind District of Critical Planning Concern: Land Zone, made up of that portion of the air space over all lands and inland waters within the County of Dukes County, except the Elizabeth Islands, the land and inland waters of the town of Edgartown, the Indian Common Lands (generally known as the Cranberry Bogs, the Clay Cliffs and Herring Creek) and the Settlement Lands, which exceeds two hundred twenty feet (220') in height above mean
natural grade (for land areas) and/or surface water level (for inland water areas), extending from the Mean Low Water line landward.

- **Andrew Woodruff** said he’s still uncomfortable with 220 feet. He doesn’t feel like he has the facts and the numbers. He wishes those who proposed the Motion would have brought a lower number. He doesn’t want the boundary to contradict what the Commission is trying to accomplish.

- **Camille Rose** said the 220 foot figure came out of consensus at the All-Island Selectmen’s meeting when it was discovered that megawatts couldn’t be used. If it were to be changed, she suggested that the Selectmen who proposed the DCPC be consulted.

- **Riggs Parker** asked to speak in support of the Commission’s overall problem. The Island is about to be assaulted with all kinds of wind turbines. The Commission has a real opportunity to say to the Island that it will try to give towns some ideas about how to handle proposals. He urged the Commission to lower the height boundary. All of these towns have height restrictions on the buildings because they don’t want tall buildings. To say 220 feet is fine for the Island runs counter to everything that the Island has stood for forever. The Island has stood for nothing huge. It’s important to recognize that the Commission is trying to keep the character of the Island. His suggestion is to bring the height down.

- **Andrew Woodruff** said he doesn’t believe it would be objectionable to the nominators to widen the discussion. It is the time in the history of the Island to look at the issue.

Doug Sederholm moved, and it was duly seconded, that the boundary consideration be changed to 150 feet and all school properties be excluded from consideration.

- **Doug Sederholm** explained that his motion is based on the idea of broadening the discussion to cover any tall structure.

- **Gary Harcourt** explained that the high school turbine is 100 feet with 12 foot blades, the Yoga Barn’s turbine is 120 feet with 12 foot blades, and the Woods Hole Research tower is 100 feet with 30 foot blades on a 6 foot monopole base. 220 feet allows a lot of turbines. Size depends on what kind of pole you put it on. In his mind, 180 feet is a good number.

- **Mal Jones** said in 1969 he built a 65 foot windmill that pumped 20,000 gallons a day. It had an 18 foot diameter with 16 foot blades. The FAA said he couldn’t build anything over 35 feet high within eight miles of the end of the runway.

- **Sander Shapiro** explained his concerns. He has been helping West Tisbury School and the Up-Island School District. He doesn’t want to get into the heights other than to say 130 feet and below are for household turbines. Above 130 feet, we’re discussing turbines for agricultural units and school areas and potentially towns. The height has to do with the output of the turbine. The smaller turbines have a relatively small output. FAA requirements allow below 200 feet without a special application and up to 235 feet with special application. His concern is that the work on the West Tisbury School turbine will come to a halt if the height is lowered below 220 feet and the property isn’t excluded because the funding will disappear during the moratorium.

A voice vote was taken on the amendment to 150 feet and school property exclusion. In favor: 13. Opposed: 0. Abstentions: 1. The motion passed.
Doug Sederholm moved, and it was duly seconded, to accept the nomination for consideration, as amended, having found in the nomination statements sufficient basis for investigation of the need for further regulation of development in the nominated area. A roll call vote was taken. In favor: J. Athearn, B. Bennett, J. Breckenridge, C. Brown, P. Cabana, C. Gatting, C. Murphy K. Newman, N. Orleans, C. Rose, D. Sederholm, L. Sibley, A. Woodruff. Opposed: None. Abstentions: H. Stephenson. The motion passed.

A public hearing on the nomination will be held on December 10th. The DCPC Committee will convene to draft Goals and Guidelines.

3. FLAT POINT FARM: DRI NO. – PUBLIC HEARING (CONT.)

Linda Sibley reopened the public hearing and, no new written testimony having been received, she closed the public hearing without taking any additional testimony.

4. CAPE WIND


Doug Sederholm moved, and it was duly seconded, that the Commission file an amicus brief in the Cape Cod Commission’s appeal of the Energy Facilities Siting Board’s approval of the Cape Wind application. A voice vote was taken. In favor: 12. Opposed: 1. Abstentions: 1. The motion passed.

5. ISLAND PLAN

Jim Athearn reported the Island Plan Steering Committee has received comments and has made a lot of revisions to the draft plan, based on these comments. Commissioners will be asked to discuss changes and whether the Commission should adopt the plan as one of its policy plans.

6. OTHER

Ken Salazar has asked for a Massachusetts task force for wind development in federal waters. The first meeting is on November 19th at Mass Maritime.

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 P.M.

Chairman  

5/20/10

Date  

Clerk-Treasurer  

5/20/10

Date

Minutes of the Meeting of the Martha's Vineyard Commission, November 5, 2009