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# Outer Cape in loop on wind farm

■ Advocates, residents exchange views at forum in Wellfleet.

**By EMILY C. DOOLEY**  
STAFF WRITER

**WELLFLEET** – In the back and forth debate surrounding the Cape Wind proposal to build 130 turbines in Nantucket Sound, Outer Capers have often been out of the fray.

The turbines will not be visible from their homes. Their towns won't have to host cables carrying electricity from surf to shore. And federally mandated public comment sessions haven't come their way.

Mindful that some neighbors may be ill-informed or confused about the first proposed offshore wind farm in the country, Outer Cape Democrats hosted an informational forum yes-

terday about the project, now winding its way through a myriad of federal and state reviews.

The forum drew about 40 people, armed with questions and eager to have a voice in the larger debate surrounding renewable energy and a reliance on fossil fuels that many say can't be sustained.

The headliners were Matthew Palmer, executive director of Clean Power Now and a renewable energy advocate, and Ernie Corrigan, spokesman for the Alliance to Protect Nantucket Sound, the group trying to kill the Cape Wind proposal.

### Give and take debate

Several times, both men alluded to the point-counterpoint nature of the ongoing debate over the project. Corrigan likened it to a tennis match. Palmer asked people to put statements in context.

For instance, Cape Wind has said the power generated by the wind farm could provide as much as 75 percent of the electricity used on the Cape and islands. The Alliance has countered the project will only supply 1 percent of the energy used in all of New England.

"Both statements are true," Palmer said. "It's important to put things in their proper perspective."

Advocates and opponents present at yesterday's forum were eager to partake in the exercise in dodge and parry. There was heckling and applause, yeas and nays.

Many wanted to know how the local project would benefit them.



**Matthew Palmer**

*Country not on a "sustainable path."*



**Ernie Corrigan**

*"Size and location" problematic*

There was no easy answer.

The electricity will most likely come to the Cape first because it represents the closest demand, but what impact that may have on pricing is unknown, Palmer said.

One woman worried that leaving wind energy to private companies could lead to higher prices, as drivers are now experiencing with unregulated oil and gas companies.

"The fact that wind power is renewable is wonderful, but if it's owned privately, we could be held hostage by these companies," Maria Broudy of Truro said.

Clean Power Now is hoping Cape Wind will provide long-term rate agreements locally, perhaps locking in a rate over a 20-year period with modest inflation increases each year, Palmer said.

A Cape Wind representative did not speak at the meeting, but company officials have said they are willing to negotiate a long-term agreement of some kind.

Palmer and Corrigan offered opposing viewpoints on the merits

## Regulatory review of project twists, turns

Five years after the proposal for the Nantucket Sound wind farm first emerged, it is still being reviewed by a litany of state and federal agencies.

Last May, the state Energy Facilities Siting Board approved construction of the cables that would link the turbines to the shore, a critical step in the process.

But the Alliance to Protect Nantucket Sound has appealed the decision to the state Supreme

Judicial Court.

Meanwhile, at the federal level, the Interior Department's Minerals Management Service continues to review the proposal.

By the spring, the agency may release a new draft environmental impact statement on the project. A series of public hearings are tentatively scheduled for the summer, with a final report due in early 2007.

- KEVIN DENNEHY

of the Cape Wind project.

Palmer said renewable energy is the power source of the future, and he asserted Horseshoe Shoals has the sea and wind conditions outside of shipping lanes that make it an ideal site for a wind farm. "It's not a sustainable path that we're on right now," he said of the country's reliance on fossil fuels. "There is no one thing that we can do to solve this problem ... it's a whole collection of different things."

Wind is just one piece of the energy puzzle, he said.

Corrigan didn't argue that point, focusing instead on the need to consider other locations as possible wind farm sites.

"For a lot of people, the Cape is a special place and this is a project that will change that," he said.

Corrigan and others in the audience questioned why the project needs to be so large.

"The problem with this project really is size and location," he said.

### Audience participation

Fred Schlipp of Truro said Cape residents would probably be more accepting of the project if it were off Wellfleet - out in the ocean and not between the islands and the Cape.

Others pointed to wind farms in Denmark and said the United States needs to embrace wind power technology. In 2004, Danish turbines provided 32 percent of the European country's electricity needs.

"If it doesn't profit us right here, but it profits the country, I say go with it," Patty Tetrault of Truro said, eliciting applause from the audience.

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Staff writer Kevin Dennehy contributed to this report. Emily C. Dooley can be reached at [edooley@capecodonline.com](mailto:edooley@capecodonline.com).