

# How will Congress tilt on Windmills?

No news as restrictive amendment keeps Cape Wind in suspense

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Mark Rodgers, communications director of Cape Wind, says it's "almost a sleazy way of trying to enact policy."

Charles Vinick, president and CEO of the Alliance to Protect Nantucket Sound, says there's "no reason to think that this kills Cape Wind."

The matter in question is an amendment advanced in a Washington conference committee by U.S. Rep. Don Young of Alaska that would prohibit construction of wind farms within 1.5 nautical miles of ferry or shipping routes. Young is seeking to attach the provision to the Coast Guard

Reauthorization Act.

That's the part that particularly irritates Rodgers.

"It wasn't considered or passed by the House or Senate," he said. "There was no opportunity for hearings. Rep. Young only met with the other side. He refuses to meet with us."

A message left with Young's legislative assistant Grant Thompson was not returned by press time yesterday.

"This was drawn with us in mind," Rodgers said. "We're almost one and a half nautical miles from the Nantucket to Hyannis ferry route, but we're only half a nautical mile from the Hyannis to Martha's Vineyard route. That would ironically take out turbines from the shallowest part of Nantucket Sound."

Overall, said Rodgers, the restriction "would render the project not economically viable to develop as a commercial project."

"It is only Cape Wind that has said this amendment kills Cape Wind," Vinick said. "This amend-

ment would require a safe separation from the ferry routes and shipping lanes. (Cape Wind) is the largest project on the books today. All those other projects are smaller. It cannot be because the others are economically not feasible."

Both sides are trumpeting support from environmental organizations in the struggle to pass or block the amendment. Rodgers said the Coast Guard itself is opposed to the legislation, concerned that a "one-size-fits-all" policy is too restrictive.

Vinick said he understands that the Guard wants "to make their own rules and regulations," but added the amendment has brought new attention to navigation issues, including possible radar interference.

## Alliance moves around the corner

Last February, the *Patriot* moved around the corner from 4 Barnstable Road in Hyannis to 396 Main St. over Puritan's Clothing. The Alliance was

the paper's new neighbor, sharing space on the second floor.

Last week, the organization left for new quarters: the *Patriot's* old ones. Rather than being in a collection of unconnected offices, the Alliance now has a more open floor plan.

And, as the newspaper's staff found in its old locale, it's easy to give directions. Just say, "We're over Hooters."

## What if they win?

What would the future hold for the Alliance if it actually defeated the Cape Wind project?

"We are the Nantucket Soundkeeper," president and CEO Charles Vinick said. "In that regard, (the project) is the major threat we see to Nantucket Sound today, but other issues such as pollution, nitrogen loading that truly impact on the sound will continue in the future. Without question, that's the reason we are the Nantucket Soundkeeper and that's the reason I came."