

Date: January 29, 2020

To: Jessica Damon, MDEP

From: Paula Kelso

Cc: Clifton Planning Board

Re: Silver Maple application Figures 27 and 28

#1) If a picture is worth a thousand words, these two figures are worth a whole bunch of words that I wouldn't say around my grandchildren. Having worked closely with the Clifton Planning Board in drafting and preparing their Land Use Ordinance for it to be helpful and instrumental in the Town satisfactorily handling an industrial wind energy project, I feel I have some knowledge to review a sound study. Not at a consultant level of course, but as an interested party in these monstrous turbines moving into my neighborhood.

#2) After trying to comprehend the import of the Silver Maple figures for some time, I got out the sound contour maps submitted by Pisgah Mountain in their application. I tried to figure out the significant differences in the modeled sound levels of five 1.8 megawatt turbines vs five 4.0 megawatt turbines. I'm hindered some in the Pisgah maps by the faintness of the color guides in the little boxes. But if you're persistent you can come out with some idea of the projected sound levels in relation to properties in the study area.

#3) Now to look at the Silver Maple maps. All the parcel boundaries and the roads are obscured by the dark green background. Yes, you can see little blue boxes of individual residences, but no handy dandy little chart showing predicted sound levels and distances from those receivers to nearest turbine. After many hours of studying the figures, I still don't know how the predicted Silver Maple sound contours compare to the predicted Pisgah sound contours. My immediate objective being of course to compare Pisgah projected to Pisgah operational and make inferences about SWEB. Apparently RSG conducted the compliance study and the application study at the same time in Nov. 2017. After hours of study, I've no idea what the figures supposedly show and how to put that information into context. I have no idea of the noise impact that the expanded project will have on my property or any one else's.

#4) Another observation, it also seems to me to be somewhat questionable to include the entire Bangor Water District parcel as a 'project parcel'. I have not looked up the SWEB

and BWD agreement yet, but will do that. Easements on unowned parcels or legal agreements with participating parcels are not ownership. As a matter of fact that project parcel boundary in the Figures also includes the entire Pisgah Mountain LLC land. Hmm. I thought this was not an expansion of Pisgah. This was a stand alone project. Did Pisgah file a revised site plan when they sold off land to SWEB?? Hmm. Did the DEP and the Planning Board determine that the new ownership configuration met all the standards for the original permitting of Pisgah Mountain LLC? Hmm.

#5) And then there's the 'Area Ownership Plan' in Section 1 and dated February 9, 2010. The table is neither organized alphabetically nor numerically, so you have to hunt for parcels. And the residences on Lower Springy Pond have neither map and parcel labels nor residence dots; although the table does include some of the map and lot and owners names. There may well be other errors on that 'Area Ownership Plan'. Otis and Dedham land within the encircled project area is not labeled at all. Bottom line, it's an essentially useless 'Plan'. *

#6) I have already communicated to the Planning Board my concern that the sound study got a less than stellar review by the MDEP consultant. Since then, I was able to access Mr. Hessler's review. It seems he wants to call the kettle black and white at the same time. I'm reminded of his Skype remark at the Pisgah public hearing. "It's only trees." You Maine dummies, trees don't have ears. He did not approve of the way the CLUO is written and he made that perfectly clear years ago. So I am not sure why the Town would go back to him for another go round. I am aware that SWEB responded to the DEP review but not whether all the points made were addressed and ironed out. So, in my mind the sound modeling and noise impact assessment are still very much in limbo.

#7) For the most part, I will leave it to others to address the visual and natural resources impacts of this huge project. I will say a little bit more though. I grew up in downeast Maine with extended family who all hunted, fished, some trapped, some owned blueberry land and some had wood lots. As kids, we spent most of our free time outdoors. We walked or rode bikes to Alamoosook, Toddy, Craigs Ponds and Great Pond Mountain. We swam all summer and spent a lot of time at camp. [Yes, we used pesticides and herbicides on the blueberry fields. I can't do anything about that now.]

#8) We grew up with an embedded connection to the land and the birds and the animals that you can't get in urban areas. My children and grandchildren haven't had quite as extensive or intensive immersion in Maine's natural bounty but they thoroughly appreciate it. My 15 year old granddaughter is contemplating a career in environmental policy. With each new generation we get farther from that Maine connection to nature that we treasure. We have always willingly let out-of-staters come and experience it.

They used to go home by Labor Day but now they stay around and since they love Maine like we do, we let them. But, when do we Mainers draw the line and say enough already. We don't need your 20 megawatts of electricity. We don't want your robotic skyscrapers blocking the view from Eagle Bluff and hovering over our neighbors on Rebel Hill. We don't want your blinking red lights in our windows all night. Go back to Nova Scotia and leave us alone.

#9) The 2005 Clifton Comprehensive Plan recognized the town's natural appeal to tourists and camp owners as it's greatest asset. It put a resource protection area around Pisgah Mountain in the Land Use Ordinance. My biggest mistake was to include industrial wind energy facilities as a 'utility use' with lenient locations instead of the 'industrial use' that they are and that would have limited their ability to mar our landscape and harm our citizens. I'm sorry that I did that and I apologize for that mistake. However, it is not too late to protect Clifton and neighboring towns from further desecration.

#10) As I read the DEP version of the application and checked again what the standards and guidelines are, it was a big hunh? We have all these submissions and guidelines for protecting the environment but where are the guidelines for protecting the community? There are setbacks and noise limits and visual impact rules, but where is the rule for protecting the community of Clifton? The ability to do that protection is in your hands.

#11) Last August, my husband went to Oregon for 2 weeks, so I took advantage and did a cleaning out and made a trip to the Salvation Army store. A car drove in behind me and Mrs. Fuller got out. We nodded and went about our business. Eventually however, she came over to me and asked if the sound from the turbines was as bad as I had worried it would be. I told her it was not the sound that concerned me the most from the application process and now the existence of the Pisgah facility. What was the most upsetting to me was the way the project has torn apart the community. She looked at me for a bit; she looked at the ground for a bit; she turned without saying anything and returned to her car.

#12) Clifton has always, at least in my 40 years here, been cliquy; but underneath that there was a feeling of ownership of the community. We could criticize each other, but don't let outsiders come in and do that. That's gone now. Personal boundaries are now set and very few take pride in what was once an attractive little Maine town on the border between Bangor-Brewer and downeast Maine. Clifton has now been sold out to be part of the downeast invasion of wind energy scams. We may have to settle for the 5 we have, but we can say no to 5 more and bigger blights on our landscape.

#13) At the very least, the people of Clifton and their neighbors deserve a rigorous and open review process with ample opportunities for landowners and residents to get information, make comments, and be part of the process. Boards may make decisions, but ultimately boards are accountable to the citizens they serve.

Thank you Jessica Damon and the DEP for this opportunity.

Thank you for your attention.

Attached:

Figure 27: Map of Model Results, 105 meter hub; sect. 5, p. 29

Figure 28: Map of Model Results, 117 meter hub; sect. 5, p. 30

Area Ownership Plan; section 1, p. 2

Pisgah Mountain Contour Model Maps (2)

*Please be advised that the Clifton tax maps have a large discrepancy along the Otis and Dedham boundary line. It seems to be off up to 750 feet in some places. This came to light when we had the tax maps digitized several years ago. So all 'maps' using the existing tax maps as a base should be taken with a grain of salt.