

Enfield Wind Farm Project is a Fraud at Fundamental Levels Paul Sheridan / Guest Column

There is an adage, “The road to hell is paved with good intentions.” Indeed, when the subject is complex and esoteric the common person needs to be on-guard. Self-proclaimed proponents of energy and the environment have a notorious history of taking advantage of our good intentions. A contemporary example for the Ithaca community is the ludicrous proposal of John Rancich to deface the Finger Lakes landscape with windmills under the guise of “sustainable energy.”

Rancich has offered to do you a favor you don't recall asking for. The esoteric reality is that the general proposal is a fraud at fundamental levels, and so fundamentals are what he will publicly avoid like the plague! Let's take a look at just a few.

Fundamental: All of the components Rancich will use to build his personal memento will come from factories powered by everything BUT wind. Indeed, the only reason these wind farm components are manufactured at all, is because the profit margins are supported by non-wind powered factories, and high prices that abjectly ignorant politicians are cajoled into paying, but from the taxpayer treasury!

Fundamental: Study after study also proves that if wind farms were the energy source for their own manufacture, the return-on-investment (ROI) would be so out-of-whack that no objective person would even consider it. In other words, even with the alleged savings in energy, a wind farm is such a dead end, it cannot even pay for itself! So how can it be justified, except by fraud or politics? Indeed, the ROI's are supportable ONLY when the taxpayer is being taken for a ride by elected officials. Ask yourself this: Why are there NO examples of a private company, such as Wal-Mart, putting up a wind farm to power their factory or store? If a decent ROI stood on its own merit (i.e. no help from the taxpayer), don't you think those greedy, money-hungry capitalists would have already done it!? The ONLY examples of these eye-sores are the politically mandated, taxpayer-funded charades lobbied for by the likes of Rancich.

Fundamental: If a project is not financially viable, how can it be “sustainable”?

Fundamental: You can also assure yourself that trendy politicians will be prioritizing their career mementos, but only covertly. Publicly the politicians will proclaim energy independence as their motivation.

Let's step back and think about the ‘big picture’ that got us here in the first place. Here we have George Bush in the White House chasing the priorities of his military contractor and oil baron suitors. Having driven the price of energy to the highest levels in human history, the Bush/Cheney crowd has ostensibly forced well-meaning people to take a second look at silliness like wind mills. Now that the proverbial price is right, and whether he admits it or not, Rancich is essentially declaring that the viability of his wind farm is based on the shenanigans of Bush/Cheney. Rather than wealth promoting schemes like wind farms, shouldn't Rancich help the rest us revolt against an “administration” in Washington that has repeatedly failed at even a grammar-school level national energy policy? The Bush energy policy amounts to ‘no windfall profits left unexploited.’

Alternatively, has anyone looked at the national energy policy of, say, France? How is it France has decoupled itself from a dangerous dependence on imported hydrocarbons? How is it France was able to shut down and stop all power plant usage of coal in 2004? Do you think that the nation of France powers its modern society and economy with Rancich-style wind farms? Spare me!

Trust me, I love the wind and I love the sun. I will do everything I can to protect the wildlife and the environment. I have always revolted against the abject incompetence of not having a national energy plan for the United States. Indeed, it is in these contexts that the Rancich wind farm is not viable.

On a personal note, I must admit my displeasure with an intrinsic part of the Rancich PR: The process of labels and labeling. In this case he has made the claim that the primary rejection he has heard from the Ithaca community is 'not in my backyard' (NIMBY). I doubt that claim. Since I am writing this from Dearborn, Michigan this Rancich stunt only served to put me on-guard. He states that the majority of the people "he's asked" have been in favor of the project. But when they're not in favor he resorts to slanders with the NIMBY label. His wind farm highway is full of fundamental potholes, and should be dropped from consideration.

For those that need an esoteric primer on the physical and political fundamentals of wind farms, see Professor Howard Hogan's "The Solar Fraud: Why Solar Energy Won't Run the World." Available here: <http://www.amazon.com/Solar-Fraud-Energy-World-Second/dp/0971484546> and elsewhere.

Paul Sheridan lives in Dearborn, Michigan

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