



VINEYARD WIND

Yarmouth Board of Selectmen
1146 Rt 28
Yarmouth, MA 02664

Project Update: March 27, 2018

Dear Board of Selectmen and Administrator Knapik:

Following please find an update on the Vineyard Wind project, and please let me know if we can answer any questions or provide further details.

Federal permitting:

Federal permitting for offshore wind falls under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

The lead agency for the NEPA review is the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM). The document utilized for this review is the Construction and Operations Plan (COP). The COP is made up of several volumes and several thousand pages of supporting documentation detailing every aspect of the project. The preliminary COP was submitted to BOEM in December 2017. BOEM has now completed its initial review of Vineyard Wind's COP and confirmed that is complete. BOEM provided us with some initial comments on the COP, which we addressed and then submitted an updated COP to BOEM on March 15, 2018.

At this point we anticipate that BOEM will issue a Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Statement within the next two weeks; the NOI initiates the year-long NEPA review process. BOEM will also release a public version of the COP at the same time as the NOI; we will post the COP on our website as well. An experienced environmental consulting firm has been engaged by BOEM to support their review the COP and prepare the Draft and Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), and other NEPA review documentation.

Public comments (see below) and regulators' review of the COP will be used to produce a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), which we anticipate will be issued in the Fall of 2018. Public comments (see below) and regulators' review of the Draft EIS will then be used by the independent consultant to produce a Final EIS, which we anticipate will be issued in the first quarter of 2019. BOEM's decision approving or disapproving the COP comes only after public issuance of the Final EIS.

In parallel to this NEPA process, we will be completing other federal agency reviews and applying for other federal permits.

700 Pleasant Street, Suite 510, New Bedford, MA 02740

TEL 508.717.8964 EMAIL info@vineyardwind.com

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State permitting:

Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs, Matthew Beaton, issued a Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) Certificate on our Environmental Notification Form (ENF) on February 9, 2018. This Certificate outlines the scope of the required Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR), which the Project is scheduled to submit by April 30, 2018. After receiving additional public and regulator comments, we will prepare a final Environmental Impact Report, which the Secretary's office would then review before issuing a final MEPA Certificate.

The Project is also subject to review by the Massachusetts Energy Facilities Siting Board (EFSB). Within the next two weeks, required notifications will be mailed to more than 1,500 residents, businesses and other landowners along the Preferred and Noticed Alternative onshore cable routes and near the proposed substation. This notice will inform abutters about the project and opportunities for comment to the EFSB, as described below. We have already mailed all of the same recipients, providing details on the project and inviting them to attend a community meeting or to schedule a meeting with project staff regarding the project.

Local permitting: The Cape Cod Commission (CCC) will also conduct a review under their adjudicatory process. Vineyard Wind will file its application for Development of Regional Impact (DRI) immediately following receipt of the Final MEPA Certificate, described above. On Cape Cod, local permits follow the CCC DRI process. These will include Conservation Commission filings, as well as street opening authorizations (or grants of location) in Yarmouth and Barnstable. Meanwhile, Vineyard Wind staff and our environmental consultants, Epsilon, are in regular contact with public works and natural resources (including shellfish) staff of Barnstable and Yarmouth to update and consult on various aspects of the project. We are always available and are eager to hear from residents and take up any issues of concern.

Community Outreach

For the past two months, we have made a concerted effort to meet with local residents and stakeholders regarding the project. We have hosted several open house meetings in Yarmouth and Barnstable, and continue to hold weekly office hours in Yarmouth. These and future events are advertised in the Cape Cod Times as well as the weekly newspapers. In addition, we have encouraged residents unable to attend these events to schedule direct meetings with the project staff. We have made a particular effort to meet with the shellfishermen and oyster farmers of Lewis Bay, and have sent direct mailings to residents along the proposed cable route. These discussions have been productive, as we have gained insights from those who work and live on Lewis Bay, and have been able to clarify various features of the project over which residents have expressed concern.

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We will continue conversations throughout the life of the project, as these conversations inform our work and provide opportunities to minimize inconvenience to fishermen, residents and other parties during construction. There is an understandable amount of concern over a project seeking to come through neighborhoods, and our view is that these conversations go a long way to addressing concerns, identifying solutions to issues, and generally improving the project plan and design. We very much appreciate residents of Barnstable and Yarmouth taking the time to meet with us.

Public Consultation and Public Comment Opportunities

There will be opportunity for the public to comment on the COP prior to the preparation of the Draft EIS, as well as opportunity for comment on the Draft EIS. BOEM will provide instructions for submitting public comment when it issues the NOI, which we anticipate happening by the end of March, as well as when they issue the Draft EIS.. Any and all concerns posed to BOEM by way of this public comment will be addressed directly in writing during their review process.

Below is the most recent information we have on public hearings. It is important to note that in all cases, public comment can be made without attending a scheduled meeting, and comments received in this manner will have as much consideration as those made at a meeting. We will update with details to make such comments once we hear them from any agency.

First BOEM public meetings:

We recently learned from BOEM that they are planning a series of public scoping hearings regarding the Project for the week of April 16. We've been told hearings will be held in New Bedford, Cape Cod, Martha's Vineyard, Nantucket, and Rhode Island. We will provide full details once BOEM confirms and makes a definitive announcement, which we are urging BOEM to do as soon as possible.

The EFSB has recently confirmed to us their public hearing:

When: Tuesday, April 24, 2018 7:00 PM-11:00 PM

Where: Barnstable High School, 744 West Main Street, Hyannis, 02601.

Offshore Surveys

Marine geological and ecological surveys were conducted in 2016 and 2017. In early April, we will begin our third marine survey campaign, which will include the turbine area south of the Islands, the cable route alternatives through Muskeget Channel and Nantucket Sound, and in Lewis Bay and other near-shore areas. This third survey undertaken by Vineyard Wind will be the most extensive offshore study to date for the project, and will extend into early Summer.

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These surveys collect data needed to compile geological and ecological information that will inform permitting reviews and ensure installation in a timely, safe, and environmentally responsible manner. The surveying is planned through guidance and consultation with local, state, federal regulators, including Yarmouth and Barnstable shellfish constables and natural resource officers, as well as environmental groups.

The marine surveys will collect a range of important project data, including bathymetry (water depth), geology and makeup of the sea floor, benthic habitat types as well as the presence of shellfish, eel grass, and other resources. Several data collection techniques will be employed, often simultaneously, including video surveys, seafloor sampling, sonar and boring samples.

Additional follow-on studies will be conducted after completion of this campaign, including pre-, during-, and post-construction fisheries and benthic studies.

Surveys will involve at least six different vessels operated by at least three different companies and will include a shellfish survey in Lewis Bay, the design of which was reviewed by Barnstable and Yarmouth officials. Vessels will work offshore continuously, with port operations currently planned out of New Bedford, Hyannis, and Vineyard Haven. Local Notices to Mariners about survey work will be communicated through all appropriate official channels, including the Coast Guard and US Department of Defense. Vineyard Wind also is conducting extensive outreach to the fishing industry to ensure coordination. Survey vessels using towed gear or boring equipment will have observers to watch for marine mammals and other protected species. Survey operations will be halted at times in an abundance of caution to protect North Atlantic Right Whales and other marine animals.

We look forward to continued and constructive dialogue as the Vineyard Wind project moves through the process, and will be sure to keep the town administration and Board of Selectmen updated. Again, please do not hesitate to reach out to me if you have any questions or would like further information.

Sincerely,



Erich Stephens
Chief Development Officer