



October 9, 2024

To the Editor:

Since the Vineyard Wind 1 turbine blade shattered and fell into the ocean off Nantucket and began washing ashore, Town leadership, like the public, has been alarmed and deeply concerned. While our community is committed to doing our part to address climate change, we have had to confront the very real and lasting adverse impacts of offshore wind development. The turbine blade failure contaminated our coastal waters, restricted access to our beaches, negatively impacted our local businesses, and has required months of focused attention to the aftermath which continues unabated. Our entire community has felt the repercussions of the turbine failure.

As your elected representatives on the Nantucket Select Board, my colleagues and I are committed to holding companies and federal and state government leaders accountable for the damage they caused. We want Nantucket residents to know what we are doing to address the harm done to our island and our community.

First, we are gathering information about what it will cost to repair the damage done by the turbine blade failure. This information is critical to securing fair compensation for Nantucket's government, residents, and businesses. We are:

- Hiring a nationally recognized damages expert to evaluate the short-, medium-, and long-term harms to Nantucket's environment and economy;
- Soliciting information from residents, business owners, and members of the fishing industry to quantify economic or other losses; and
- Researching the likelihood of future turbine failures and the potential costs involved.

Second, we are negotiating directly with the companies and government officials responsible for the operation of Vineyard Wind 1. We are:

- Insisting on additions to our community benefit agreement to improve communications and protocols for future technology failures, exceeding state and federal requirements;

- Demanding compensation for this event and establishing future safeguards from Vineyard Wind's owners and GE Vernova, the manufacturer of the turbine blades; and
- Collaborating with the Commonwealth to demand that the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) thoroughly assess potential harm to the natural and human environment from future infrastructure failures before construction is allowed to resume.

While the specifics of some of our meetings must remain confidential to uphold attorney-client privilege and comply with regulations for settlement discussions, we can confirm that we have met several times with the attorneys representing Vineyard Wind and GE Vernova. Although three months may seem like a long time for negotiations to be ongoing, we trust the community's understanding as we address a wide range of complex issues and concerns. We remain committed to achieving a resolution that is both effective and timely. Vineyard Wind, its owners, and GE Vernova have publicly committed to making the Town and the business community whole. As long as these talks continue to demonstrate progress, we will pursue them. The Town retains its full legal options, including the right to litigate in court should the discussions falter.

As Town officials have made clear over the past decade, U.S. law does not grant the Town authority to stop or prevent offshore wind development. However, there are legal avenues to ensure that permitting authorities adequately consider the ongoing harms the Town will suffer, generally, and specifically as it relates to impacts of the blade failure.

What can you do? Three things.

First, please continue to write to your federal and state elected representatives, as well as regulators at BOEM, the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER), and Brona Simon, the State Historic Preservation Officer, who are responsible for soliciting, siting, and permitting offshore wind energy projects. You can find their contact information on our website: www.nantucket-ma.gov/youropinion. If you've written before, write again. If you are a resident or property owner with legal or economic interests at stake, please email BOEM at Alison.Ferris@boem.gov to request consulting party status and participate in upcoming meetings and discussions.

Second, educate yourself. Do not rely solely on information translated by media opinion pieces or third parties, as they can often be inaccurate, incomplete, or speculative. The Town maintains a website containing an extensive collection of original documents related to offshore wind, including formal comments that the Town has filed on Nantucket's behalf articulating its positions and concerns: www.nantucket-ma.gov/offshorewind. We also provide regular updates: www.nantucket-ma.gov/windupdates.

Third, let's look to the future together. With all the interest in Vineyard Wind, we must not lose sight that other developers are planning three additional major wind farms off our

coast, all in various stages of permitting and approvals. We have been actively engaged in the formal process of evaluating the farms for several years, and much work remains. We are working to secure our federal rights to meaningful consultation by BOEM or, in the case of BOEM's refusal, then by the developers themselves.

Our goal remains to protect Nantucket's irreplaceable historic and environmental landscapes. If and when these future farms are constructed and eventually decommissioned, we want to be sure the government and companies responsible have the capacity to ensure we are not harmed.

Please know we are doing all in our means and power, as are so many others, to address the unwelcome threats posed by offshore energy development to Nantucket's irreplaceable natural and cultural heritage.

Brooke Mohr, Chair
Nantucket Select Board