

## Quotes concerning forced siting of industrial wind and solar projects

After the wind moratorium bill S30 was gutted and Gov. Shumlin ordered the creation of an Energy Siting Commission to evaluate studies of renewable energy projects Rep. Tony Klein (Chair House Energy Committee) said:

*"It's not going to be an open door policy because it's a study and there are certain things that are being asked to be studied," he said. "I don't need to hear from neighbors."*

<http://vtdigger.org/2013/03/28/s-30-energy-siting-bill-to-get-limited-airing-in-house-natural-resources/>

Vermont resident Peter Yankowski comments of Rep. Klein's actions:

*"What is even more odd than the absence of any objective rationale on Rep. Klein's part is the near total lack of notice or questioning of this gaping hole by the members of the House who support his thinking on S.30 and other related matters. For as adamant a position as Rep. Klein has taken in the face of so much public skepticism, one should have expected a bounty of sound data in support of his positions, but there has been none and his colleagues have failed to ask why. What is the general public to think?"*

<http://vtdigger.org/2013/05/02/yankowski-when-will-rep-klein-be-held-accountable/>

Quotes from The Barton Chronicle, 3 Jun 2015:

*"To the original sponsor of the bill (H40 Renewable Energy Standard and Energy Transformation), Representative Anthony Klein, of Montpelier, it's impossible to give towns the ability to regulate solar arrays without effectively allowing them to ban them. If towns had that power, people who hate solar power or wind power would get themselves elected to local boards and see to it that no renewable projects get built, he suggested."*

*"Senator (John) Rodgers) said the PSB (Public Service Board) is 'rubber stamping' projects without adequately considering the types of issues Act 250 boards pay close attention to."*

*"The problem is overstated, Representative Klein said. No one is likely to cut forests to put up a solar array, and farmers would not put them on prime agricultural land."*

Note: In Vermont there are currently 702.68 acres of agricultural land, forests and wetlands consumed by industrial wind and solar arrays.

Quotes from The Barton Chronicle, 3 Jun 2015 (continued):

*"Representative Robin Chestnut-Tangerman of Middleton Springs (member of the House Energy and Natural Resources Committee) "was on record saying 'I know exactly what needs to be in the bill (H40 RESET)'. At the end of four weeks he said, I have no idea what needs to be in the bill," Representative Klein said."*

5/6/13

Klein admitted that in recent years he has shifted his stance on renewable energy siting, saying now that he does oppose large-scale wind projects on state lands.

"Let's be real about this," he said. "I have moved my position forward. I acknowledge there are problems. I understand communities are being disrupted. And I'm trying to move towards that solution. If you want to hold somebody to whatever they've said once in their life can never be changed, I'm guilty."

6/13/13

MONTPELIER, Vt. (AP) -- The first meeting of a special legislative summer study committee on Vermont's energy future featured sharp disagreements over what its agenda should be.

The four-member panel is one of two committees that will look at energy issues between now and January. The other will include the full membership of the House and Senate panels that normally grapple with the issues.

At Thursday's session, Rep. Tony Klein, chairman of the House Natural Resources and Energy Committee, made clear he did not think the process was going to amount to much.

He and Sen. Diane Snelling argued over the scope of the committee's agenda.

6/14/13

Rep. Tony Klein, D-East Montpelier and chairman of the House committee, made clear throughout that he thought the entire process was, as he put it after the meeting "not my idea."

He said the summer study committees were a compromise designed to placate wind power opponents who had begun by calling for a moratorium and for sweeping changes in the way the Public Service Board, the state regulatory panel that reviews utility projects, does its work.

"I don't have any real strong problem with the way that things are done today," Klein said.

Klein and Sen. Diane Snelling, vice chairwoman of the Senate committee, spent much of the meeting arguing about the scope of the work -- for example, whether it should include what some see as the ill health effects of noise from the turbines.

Snelling suggested that a siting process might decide a rule for wind turbines that "you must be a mile from the nearest residence because (of) noise, if that's determined. That would be a siting requirement and standard, wouldn't it?"

"It would be if you predetermined or accepted that noise was a health issue," said Klein, who has expressed skepticism on that score."

7/15/13

Rep. Tony Klein, who chairs the House Natural Resources and Energy Committee, said that as ISO New England innovates and as Bill Stenger pursues \$600 million in manufacturing and resort development projects in the Northeast Kingdom the curtailment problem would recede.

"Curtailment is not a long-term issue," Klein said. "It's a bump in the road, and it's caused by a variety of issues. It's caused by a temporary decrease in load demand at the moment, and it's caused by a changing generation landscape. ISO is going to have to adapt to those changes, and they're going to have to modernize."

8/12/13

Rep. Tony Klein, who chairs the House Natural Resources and Energy Committee, was hesitant last session to make any changes to the decades-old process and opted to wait for the report and recommendations from the governor's commission.

"We've acknowledged we would look into making the Public Service Board process more accessible to the average Vermonter," he said. "But making the board process more accessible doesn't mean the average Vermonter will get what he or she wants. And I'm not sure that the average Vermonter will understand what utility regulation is all about, which is making sure the services Vermonters depend upon are delivered in a reasonable, efficient, reliable and cost-effective manner."

Klein said he wants the public to offer suggestions at the committees' joint meeting in September.

"I haven't heard any, quite frankly," he said. "I've heard finger-pointing and complaining, but I haven't heard what can make it better. I've heard they don't like the outcome, and because they don't like the outcome, they don't like the process. We are all ears and ready to hear them."

# New energy bill does not resolve siting problems for renewables

BARTON  
CARRVILLE  
6/3/2015

by Joseph Gresser

In the final days of the recent session of the Vermont Legislature, the Senate and House passed a bill intended to deal with a problem that could have raised electric rates in the state substantially. The bill, which is expected to be signed into law soon by Governor Peter Shumlin, calls for increasing the amount of renewable energy projects.

The bill doesn't deal well, however, with a related issue, how new solar arrays and wind towers ought to be sited, said state Senator John Rodgers of Glover in a recent interview.

He unsuccessfully attempted to add an amendment to the bill, known as H.40, allowing

"The solar arrays are like drip edge," he said, comparing them to the eaves of a house. "Water flows off them and washes soil off the fields."

Barton's solar array, Senator Rodgers said, has caused more loss of soil in a single year than in the past 100 years — enough to plug culverts.

He said he worries that some unscrupulous developers will clearcut land to site solar arrays, thus eliminating a part of the landscape that absorbs carbon and defeating the purpose of renewable generation.

"Developers of Walmart and other projects have to conform to Act 250 and town regulations," he said. "Why shouldn't the developers of power projects have to do the same?"

He said the Public Service Board (PSB), which issues certificates of public good for power projects, is good at deciding technical questions, but not as good at considering environmental and aesthetic matters when making their judgments.

Representative Klein strongly disagreed. The PSB, in his view, is doing a very good job. Its members know they don't have expertise on those issues and so rely on experts from the Agency of Natural Resources to help them make judgments.

towns and regional planning organizations to set siting regulations, provided they don't prevent renewable projects from being built in the town or region.

To the original sponsor of the bill, Representative Anthony Klein, of Montpelier, it's impossible to give towns the ability to regulate solar arrays without also allowing them to effectively ban them. If towns had that power, people who hate solar power or wind would get themselves elected to local boards and see to it that no renewable projects could be built, he suggested.

Senator Rodgers said the PSB is "rubber stamping" projects without adequately considering the types of issues that Act 250 boards pay close attention to.

The problem is overstated, Representative Klein said. No one is likely to cut forests to put up a solar array, and farmers would not put them on prime agricultural land.

He emphasized the word "prime," and continued by noting

that some farmers may want to take land out of production for one reason or another.

Earning some income by building a solar array is not a bad choice, he said, noting that it's reversible because the land is not paved over.

Representative Klein, who is chairman of the House Committee on Natural Resources and Energy, said that concern about the action of other New England states meant it was important to pass H.40 quickly.

His committee later spent four weeks looking into the question of how to site renewable power generation plants.

Representative Robin Chestnut-Tangerman of Middleton Springs "was on record saying 'I know exactly what needs to be in the bill.' At the end of the four weeks he said, 'I have no idea of what needs to be in the bill,'" Representative Klein said.

While there may be problems in siting solar arrays and wind towers, those problems may not have a legislative solution, he said.