



# The Town of Barnstable

## Office of Town Manager

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**Mark S. Ells, Town Manager**

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August 15, 2025

Secretary Rebecca L. Tepper  
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs  
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900  
Boston, Massachusetts 02114

Andrew Greene, Director  
Energy Facilities Siting Board  
One South Station, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor  
Boston, MA 021010

**Re: Vineyard Wind, EFSB 17-05/DPU 18-18/18-19**

Dear Secretary Tepper and Director Greene:

On February 20, 2025, I wrote on behalf of the Town and its residents to Secretary Tepper, with a copy to Director Greene, to express concerns and the public's interest in electromagnetic field (EMF) readings from electric transmission cables under Covell's Beach in Centerville. In that correspondence, I inquired regarding the possibility of whether the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) could implement a routine monitoring protocol so that the public and the Town could understand what is, or is not, happening at Covell's Beach. The Town hoped that a review by EEA and its agencies would allow for a response to the residents' concerns, which would be in everyone's interest for assuring the safe use and enjoyment of Covell's Beach. I have attached a copy of my February 20 correspondence. Because I did not receive a response to that correspondence, I am following up now on that request.

Since the Vineyard Wind project was approved in May 2019 by the Department of Public Utilities (DPU) and the Energy Facilities Siting Board (EFSB), the public's interest has grown regarding EMF from transmission cables and its potential for public health and safety impacts, including at public recreational beaches such as Craigville and Covell's Beaches. A little over four and half years after the EFSB approved the Vineyard Wind project, the EFSB engaged in a more robust consideration of EMF in its December 15, 2023, decision approving the Park City Wind project (EFSB 20-01/DPU 20-56/20-57). While the EFSB's Vineyard Wind decision did not contain any onshore conditions regarding EMF, its Park City Wind approval included Condition I, which requires:

Given the public interest in the potential health and safety risks from magnetic fields, the Siting Board directs the Company to provide a compliance filing within 100 days of each of the following milestones, for informational purposes, that shall demonstrate that the actual magnetic fields at the Craigville Beach landfall site are consistent with the modeled results it has presented in this proceeding: (a) after first energization; (b) when the facility is capable of producing 400 megawatts; and (c) full commercial operation. For this Condition, "full commercial operation" shall mean the date when the PCW Energy Facility is installed and capable of delivering approximately 800 MW of energy.

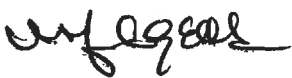
Further, under its required Condition T filing, Park City Wind agreed to:

In addition to complying with the requirements of Condition I, Park City Wind will perform additional magnetic field monitoring along the Onshore Cables and the western property line of the Onshore Substation when the monitoring required under Condition I occurs: (a) after first energization; (b) when the facility is capable of producing 400 megawatts; and (c) full commercial operation, as "full commercial operation" is defined in Condition I. Further, Park City Wind has agreed that, following "full commercial operation," it will perform magnetic field monitoring of the Onshore Cables and the western property line of the Onshore Substation once per year for three years, and then once every five years. Monitoring of the Onshore Cables will occur at one-mile intervals.

We recognize that the Park City Wind conditions follow a greater awareness and consideration of public health and safety concerns. Because the Town has no jurisdiction over these aspects of the Vineyard Wind project, the Town asks that EEA and the EFSB make these Park City Wind conditions equally applicable to the Vineyard Wind project. We believe good cause exists for EEA and the EFSB doing so due to the evolving considerations of EMF and the public interest in potential health and safety impacts, as recognized by the EFSB in its Park City Wind approval. Implementing these basic conditions would be in everyone's interest for the safe use and enjoyment of Covell's Beach and other public property used by the Vineyard Wind project.

I appreciate your attention to this letter. Thank you.

Respectfully,



Mark S. Ells  
Town Manager

Attachment

cc: Governor Maura Healey  
Lieutenant Governor Kim Driscoll  
Joan Foster Evans, General Counsel, EFSB  
State Senator Julian Cyr  
State Representative Kip Diggs  
State Representative Steven Xiarhos  
Town Council President Craig A. Tamash  
Karen L. Nober, Barnstable Town Attorney

**Smith, Tracey**

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**Subject:** FW: EFSB 17-05; Vineyard Wind 1 - Magnetic Field Information

**From:** Ells, Mark

**Sent:** Thursday, February 20, 2025 9:09 AM

**To:** 'Rebecca.L.Tepper@mass.gov' <Rebecca.L.Tepper@mass.gov>

**Cc:** 'Andrew.Greene@mass.gov' <Andrew.Greene@mass.gov>; 'dpu.efiling@mass.gov' <dpu.efiling@mass.gov>

**Subject:** FW: EFSB 17-05; Vineyard Wind 1 - Magnetic Field Information

Dear Secretary Pepper,

Please see below my request submitted to Vineyard Wind on February 3, 2025, along with Vineyard Wind's reply of February 10.

I wrote recently to Vineyard Wind after I became aware of posts on social media discussing electromagnetic field (EMF) readings at Covell's Beach. Some of these posts, which were called to my attention by residents, included photographs of hand-held EMF monitoring devices showing readings in the range of 190 milliGauss (mG) at ground level in the parking lot at Covell's Beach. The 190 mG reading appears to diverge from Vineyard Wind's modeling filed with the Siting Board and referred to in the Siting Board's decision for the Vineyard Wind project. Likewise, this reading differs very much from the 3-5 mG reading for the parking lot referred to in the June 28, 2024, letter addressed to me by EEA Undersecretary Michael Judge and DPU Commissioner Dr. Robbie Goldstein. The social media posts have raised health concerns among some residents for their safe use of Covell's Beach, particularly where the EMF reading involves the electric current from only one operational turbine. Residents have expressed concern about what might happen when the project is fully operational. Due to these concerns, I reached out to Vineyard Wind, asked for a response and hoped that they could speak to the matter.

Unfortunately, Vineyard Wind's response did not address the substance of the Town's request and mostly suggested referring the public to older data that they posted early last year on their website. That suggestion does nothing to address the present concerns raised by some residents. Since Vineyard Wind didn't address the concerns raised, we turn to your office for assistance because, unlike the Town, EEA and its agencies have jurisdiction over the project. I respectfully ask that EEA review why these higher EMF readings were registered when such low levels of electricity are flowing under Covell's Beach and what this may mean as more turbines are brought online. I understand that the individuals taking these readings may not be experts, and we do not know the reliability or calibration of the devices being used. Nonetheless, this is the information being presented, and we are not aware of any other recent data that can speak to the matter. Perhaps EEA or Vineyard Wind could implement a routine monitoring protocol to understand what is, or is not, happening at Covell's Beach. We hope that a review by EEA and its agencies will allow for a response to the residents' concerns, which would be in everyone's interest for assuring the safe use and enjoyment of Covell's Beach. I appreciate your office's attention to this matter. Thank you.

Respectfully,

Mark S. Ells  
Barnstable Town Manager

**From:** Steve Tadros <[STadros@vineyardwind.com](mailto:STadros@vineyardwind.com)>

**Sent:** Monday, February 10, 2025 4:07 PM

**To:** Ells, Mark <[Mark.Ells@town.barnstable.ma.us](mailto:Mark.Ells@town.barnstable.ma.us)>

**Cc:** Craig Gilvarg <[cgilvarg@vineyardwind.com](mailto:cgilvarg@vineyardwind.com)>; Michael Clayton <[mclayton@vineyardwind.com](mailto:mclayton@vineyardwind.com)>; Dana Rebeiro <[drebeiro@vineyardwind.com](mailto:drebeiro@vineyardwind.com)>; JOHNSON, PATRICK <[patrick.johnson@avangrid.com](mailto:patrick.johnson@avangrid.com)>; Clyburn, Andy <[andy.clyburn@town.barnstable.ma.us](mailto:andy.clyburn@town.barnstable.ma.us)>

**Subject:** RE: Vineyard Wind 1 - Magnetic Field Information

Town Manager Ells,

Thank you for your reply.

As previously stated, the project conducted magnetic field monitoring in June 2024 with a qualified, professional consultant, with representatives from the Town of Barnstable, Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities, and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health on site during the exercise. At that time, there were three turbines operating, producing roughly 35 MW of power. We posted this data online for the public to access, and we stand behind the validity of this data and the methods by which it was collected.

Currently, Vineyard Wind has one turbine in operation. We cannot speak to the accuracy of the readings you reference, as we cannot verify that the equipment used was legitimate or properly calibrated. We would recommend referring the public to the data collected and made publicly available via the Vineyard Wind website in June.

Best,  
Steve

Steven Tadros  
C: 508.439.2934



**From:** Ells, Mark <[Mark.Ells@town.barnstable.ma.us](mailto:Mark.Ells@town.barnstable.ma.us)>

**Sent:** Monday, February 3, 2025 2:03 PM

**To:** Steve Tadros <[STadros@vineyardwind.com](mailto:STadros@vineyardwind.com)>

**Cc:** Craig Gilvarg <[cgilvarg@vineyardwind.com](mailto:cgilvarg@vineyardwind.com)>; Michael Clayton <[mclayton@vineyardwind.com](mailto:mclayton@vineyardwind.com)>; Dana Rebeiro <[drebeiro@vineyardwind.com](mailto:drebeiro@vineyardwind.com)>; JOHNSON, PATRICK <[patrick.johnson@avangrid.com](mailto:patrick.johnson@avangrid.com)>; Clyburn, Andy <[andy.clyburn@town.barnstable.ma.us](mailto:andy.clyburn@town.barnstable.ma.us)>

**Subject:** RE: Vineyard Wind 1 - Magnetic Field Information

Dear Mr. Tadros,

Recent posts on social media have been discussing electromagnetic field (EMF) readings at Covell's Beach. Some of these posts have included photographs of hand-held EMF monitoring devices showing readings in the range of 190 milliGauss (mG) at ground level in the parking lot at Covell's Beach.

Vineyard Wind's modeling filed with the Siting Board, and upon which the Siting Board's decision was made, represents EMF levels that are a small fraction of the EMF levels being shown in the photographs on social media. We understand that the Siting Board decision states that Vineyard Wind reported maximum modeled EMF at ground level above the cables at 43.6 mG at landfall, 3.6 mG in the middle of the beach, 21.1 mG at the landward edge of Covell's Beach abutting the parking lot, and 32.5 - 52.1 mG directly above duct banks, with those levels dropping off rapidly when moving laterally away from the cables. The June 28, 2024, letter from EEA Undersecretary Michael Judge and DPU

Commissioner Dr. Robbie Goldstein notes that the ICNIRP 2,000 mG exposure limit guideline is nearly 95 times greater than the highest modeled EMF levels at Covell's Beach.

**All of this information indicates that a 190 mG EMF reading should not occur at Covell's Beach under any conditions, including with every turbine operating at maximum output in the range of 800 MW.** Yet, residents are sharing these readings for an output in the range of 0.6 MW (flowing outbound when the turbines aren't running) or up to 13 MW for the single turbine that may be online. Accordingly, I ask that Vineyard Wind review and explain why such high EMF readings are being registered for such low levels of electricity flowing under Covell's Beach and what this means as more turbines are brought online.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Respectfully,  
Mark S Ells  
Barnstable Town Manager