



The Nantucket select board sent Vineyard Wind a laundry lists of demand, largely centered on improved communication.  
*Ray Ewing*

## Nantucket Demands Change From Vineyard Wind

**Ethan Genter** *Wednesday, July 30, 2025 - 12:00pm*

Nantucket officials this week raised the possibility of suing Vineyard Wind due to poor communication, continued light pollution and lack of planning for future emergencies at the offshore wind energy farm.

During a press conference on Tuesday, the select board and town attorneys demanded Vineyard Wind provide better notifications about the project, pay damages for each day that the light system designed to turn on when aircraft fly overhead isn't activated, and create a \$10 million escrow account to deal with any cleanup costs due to blade failures.

“When Vineyard Wind arrived in our community seven years ago, they made many promises to the public, federal and state governments, and to Nantucket,” said select board member Booke Mohr. “Our messages this morning are clear to Vineyard Wind. We say: lead or leave.”

Vineyard Wind, a planned 62-turbine project under construction off the coast of the Vineyard and Nantucket, has been under federal investigation since one of its blades broke in July 2024. Thousands of pieces of fiberglass spilled into the ocean at the time, and much of the debris washed up on the beaches of Nantucket.

In the months after the blade failure, Vineyard Wind has largely not stayed in touch with Nantucket officials, a violation of a community agreement, known as the Good Neighbor Agreement, signed in 2020, town officials said.

The select board went through a laundry list of alleged violations of the agreement, which could be at the heart of a lawsuit moving forward, according to Greg Werkheiser, the town’s special attorney for offshore wind.

“The town retains all of its options, which could include litigation to enforce the agreement,” he said.

The town sent Vineyard Wind a list of 15 demands, many of which involved regular communication. The select board members asked that they be alerted in the case of any future blade issues, and to have any questions responded to within three days. The board also asked that Vineyard Wind provide monthly updates on the project, as well as turn over any reports relevant to the wind farm within a week of them being submitted to government agencies.

The town also demanded that any violations of the communication protocols set out by the town result in a \$250,000 fine.

On the monetary end of things, the town also wanted \$25,000 a day for every turbine that did not have its aircraft detection lighting system on. The light system, which is designed to turn on only when aircraft fly overhead, has long been a sticking point on Nantucket. It has not yet been turned on, resulting in constant red blinking lights along the horizon.

“They’ve not accurately or timely explained the delays in their activation of the aircraft lighting detection system that is required by the [community agreement] to reduce turbine lights that have now been polluting Nantucket sky for years,” said Ms. Mohr.

The board called on Vineyard Wind to commit to suspend any new projects if a future incident resulted in beach closure or shellfishing bans for seven consecutive days, or 14 days over a six-month period.

The town set a two-week deadline for Vineyard Wind to respond to the demands, and said it was considering all of its options if the offshore wind energy company did not come to the table.

Nantucket officials said they have not heard from Vineyard Wind in months, despite an attempt to discuss the fallout of the broken blade.

Earlier in July, GE Vernova, the manufacturer of the defective turbine blade, reached a \$10.5 million settlement with the town.

“Since the blade failure and the presidential election, your leadership has essentially gone into hiding,” Ms. Mohr said. “This is unacceptable.”

Vineyard Wind was not in attendance at the virtual conference, which had members from both the Massachusetts and national press.

In a statement Tuesday, Vineyard Wind seemed to downplay the dispute, saying that \$10.5 million settlement with GE Vernova resolved any issues stemming from the blade failure. Vineyard Wind added that it expected to resume traditional communications and coordination with Nantucket now that the settlement process is over.

“Vineyard Wind believes the settlement represents a fair and conclusive outcome for all parties, and hopes the Town of Nantucket will move forward in the spirit of that settlement and work together towards a constructive, positive relationship,” the company wrote.

Nantucket officials and residents have been far more active than Vineyarders in their protestations about Vineyard Wind. Residents have filed repeated legal challenges and the town has held several public meetings with state lawmakers, wind executives and federal officials.

Mr. Werkheiser, the attorney for the town, said that the town isn’t against offshore wind energy in general, but called for a balance to be struck.

“It is a false choice that has been presented by the industry for a number of years, that you have to choose [to] either get green energy and save the world, or sacrifice things like tourism,” he said. “It makes no sense to devalue and sacrifice the character, content and economic welfare of those communities at the same time you’re pursuing their environmental survival.”

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