

# Article would designate island Green Community

By Brian Bushard

[bbushard@inkym.com](mailto:bbushard@inkym.com) Nine years after a wind turbine was erected outside Nantucket High School, and two years after solar-energy panels were installed in a field at Bartlett's Ocean View Farm, former Select Board member and ACK Smart solar-energy installation company partner Tobias Glidden is making another push for renewable energy.

This time around, the goal is to designate the town a Green Community, a classification that makes it eligible for state grants it can use to pay for alternative-energy projects, he said.

Getting there requires the adoption of a so-called **stretch code** – whereby new buildings need to meet a certain level of energy efficiency – the designation of a solar-energy zone, a study of the town's oil, gas and electricity use, and a commitment to reduce energy use by 20 percent in five years of implementation and purchase energy-efficient municipal vehicles and conduct a town energy study.

The first three criteria are addressed in three citizen's petitions Glidden has submitted for a vote at the April 1 Annual Town Meeting.

“We desperately need this as a community,” Glidden said. “We need to show leadership as a community to address climate change and we have an obligation as a community to save our residents as much money as possible and becoming a Green Community is the first step in doing that.”

“This will generate hundreds of thousands of dollars in grants for the community,” he said. “And it will also save Nantucket residents tens to hundreds of thousands of dollars over the course of these buildings' lifespans.”

More than 200 towns and cities around the state have been designated as Green Communities since the program began in 2010. Nantucket sought the designation in 2011, but did not meet the criteria after voters took no action on several Town Meeting articles that would have satisfied the criteria, town energy coordinator Lauren Sinatra said.

Each year, the state doles out millions of dollars in grants for alternative-energy projects in those towns. Over the past nine years, the state Green Communities Division has appropriated \$85 million in grants to 210 communities.

Select Board member Matt Fee supports the initiative.

“We should be embracing electric vehicles and solar energy and windmills with a goal of making ourselves completely fossil-fuel-independent,” he said. “It will help with resiliency, it will give us options if there's a major storm.”

One of the articles, to adopt the **stretch code**, would increase the energy efficiency of new housing units and municipal buildings 11 percent above the state's base building energy **code** by requiring more efficient insulation, heating and cooling systems, Glidden said.

A similar **stretch-code** article was presented at the 2011 Annual Town Meeting that would have applied to building renovations as well. It was removed from the warrant before a vote could be taken because there was concern from several groups, including the Nantucket Preservation Trust, that installing new systems in historic homes could damage the buildings' structural integrity, NPT executive director Michael May. Glidden's article does not apply to renovations.

His second warrant article proposes to conduct a study on how much gasoline, oil and electricity the town is using. It requires a \$100,000 appropriation.

"Let's say the average household spends \$2,000 on gasoline, then they spend \$3,000 in heating oil or propane, then spend \$2,000 on electrical, so between that, that's about \$7,000 of money we ship off-island," he said.

Glidden's third article designates the Madaket landfill as a solar overlay district, meaning that once it is capped, solar energy panels can be placed on the property.

If the articles pass at Town Meeting, Sinatra said she hopes to submit an application for the Green Communities designation by this fall.

## **The Road to Town Meeting**