Accuses City of Ignoring Opposition to Wind Turbine

Editor:

 Despite outcries from many San Leandrans, the BZA approved a variance permitting the first wind turbine on Bay Area shores.

 California law prohibits off-shore wind farming due to junkyard-like aesthetics. If wind turbines are off-shore blight, then by the spirit of the law, wouldn't a turbine built *on*-shore be worse? Nevertheless, the BZA unanimously voted against the spirit of California Law, ignoring alarmed San Leandran's pleas.

 Numerous residents shared health, safety, aesthetic, and environmental concerns, requesting (1) variance denial, (2) Environmental Impact Report (EIR) completion (instead of settling for old, incomplete research), and (3) turbine policy adoption. However, the BZA opted against their due diligence, renouncing valid concerns of many for the whim of one – a successful businessman, without need for this turbine for his already lucrative business.

 This turbine isn’t “green energy” and won’t fight global warming. In fact, it’s dangerous, kills birds, and hasn’t been adequately researched. In prior meetings, the owner reported no 24-hour staffing, and unsafe delays when extinguishing a 100-foot high, nocturnal, turbine blade fire. Given the windy location, without an immediate fire safety policy, thousands of neighboring residents, businesses, and shoreline wildlife are in danger.

 This 10-story rotating eyesore, immediately adjacent to acres of marshlands, will be in the direct flight path of millions of birds, several endangered. We should advocate against adding to the numerous avian predators on our shoreline.

 I’m shocked over the BZA’s blatant disregard for its citizen’s resounding opposition, and its eager acquiescence to this businessman who threatens moving out of San Leandro if an EIR is required. Equally frightening, no official agreements were drawn prohibiting more shoreline turbines. Many outraged voices went unheard.

 If San Leandro takes pride in American Democracy, then why were the voices of so many unheeded, and the whisper of just one individual’s application so earnestly embraced?

—**Stephanie L. Smith,** *San Leandro*

Calls Drones a Useful Part of Technology to Prevent Crime

Editor:

 To your Inquiring Reporter column on Feb. 21 *(“Should the police be allowed to use drones?”)*: Yes. Law enforcement should be able to use any modern technology available to prevent crime, monitor criminal activity in real time, and solve crimes after the fact.

 To Mr. Serzon comment in the Page One story *“Sheriff Says Alameda County Needs Drones,”* flying cameras are
not
“science fiction” and “Big Brother.” Wake up. It’s 2013.

 Hobby helicopters and CCD camera technology have been around for more than a decade. Any store owner can have cameras at their entrance, banks will snap your photo at the street ATM, and crossing the Golden Gate Bridge now generates a photo of your car.

 Our police officers can wear a camera on their uniform, mount dash-cams in their cars, and the city has deployed cameras at dangerous intersections for years. What you are calling science fiction can easily be created by anyone with some duct tape, an iPhone, Facetime app, and a hobby heli.

 The camera is an extension of our memory and, when used properly, enhances our ability to capture images and video of events. The helicopter is an extension of our arm. The flying camera is already an approved technology in California for law enforcement. Our CHP has a fleet of full sized helicopter with pilots and cameras at the ready.

 Is drone use automatically an invasion of privacy? No. It isn't. A remote-controlled flying camera is just a cheaper version of a full staffed police helicopter. Drone technology is much lower cost and can be deployed in minutes thus increasing the availability of the already accepted eye-in-the-sky technology.

—**John Clouston**, *San Leandro*

One 'Yes' Vote for Drones

Editor:

 So I vote we have a “Take a criminal to lunch day.” May as well, no one want to lock them up. Until we get serious about fighting crime, the A.C.L.U. has another meaning, All Criminals Love Us.”

 Drones are simply easier than carrying a 20-foot ladder. D.R.O.N.E. – “Doing Right Often’s Never Easy.” Write your supervisors, they need to know we’re tired and we’re not going to take it anymore. The alternative is more people buying guns and blowing a foot off, or worse.

—**Larry Arnold**, *San Leandro*

Drones: Great for Finding Lost Seniors or Fighting Zombies

Editor:

 Regarding: Drones for Finding Lost Seniors. Great idea.

 Or maybe it would be cost effective to trap seniors and put radio transmitter collars on them.

 Or maybe the Alameda County Board of Supervisors can just pass a senior leash law to prevent seniors from wandering (they can range free at the San Leandro Senior Center). And it would be reassuring to know that the Alameda County Sheriff has plenty of drones; they could be especially useful against zombie attacks.

—**Richard Eisenman**, *San Leandro*

Says GOP Using 'Bald-Faced Lies' To Oppose Higher Wages

Editor:

 In his recent State of the Union address, President Obama called for Congress to raise the minimum wage in the United States to $9 an hour and peg yearly increases to the rate of inflation. This is a very popular proposal; polls show over 60% of Americans in support of it.

 Neither the opinion of the people or proper analysis of factual information are priorities for the modern Republican Party, however. GOP members of Congress immediately rejected the proposal.

 Among those who detailed their “reasoning” was a Republican House member who recalled her first job making $2.15 an hour. Supporting Speaker Boehner’s factually-wrong statement, “When you raise the price of employment, guess what happens? You get less of it,” this Congresswoman claimed that if the minimum wage were raised, businesses like the one that first employed her would not have been able to provide her entry-level job.

 We expect members of Congress to understand this sort of thing, but this Republican actually made a strong case for raising the hourly minimum wage much higher than $9. Based on the rate of inflation in the U.S. since the years she had that $2.15 job, a current minimum wage that matched her wage as a young person in Missisippi would be around $13.50 an hour.

 The modern Republican Party’s ignorance of what makes a consumer-based capitalist economy work, and their desire to hold down the vast majority of working Americans in poverty and financial vulnerability, is expressed by their political leaders attempting bald-face lies like this one.

 I am not a Republican, but I desperately want their Party to return to sanity. Their current leaders’ ideology has taken away their ability to help solve the problems Californians and Americans face. How long must we suffer them?

—**Doug Jones**, *San Leandro*