

Emissions goal should be applied equitably

Your article on the Conservation Law Foundation's appeal against permitting for Sandwich's gas power plant raised important issues ("Approval of canal plant expansion appealed to SJC," Sept. 6, Page 1).

Several years ago, the foundation appealed to the Supreme Judicial Court to block permitting for Salem's gas power plant. Under an eventual agreement the plant's owner will annually decrease emissions in accordance with our Global Warming Solutions Act's emissions targets. Moreover, Salem's plant must close by 2050.

Now the foundation appealed to the Supreme Judicial Court to block permitting for Sandwich's proposed plant. The siting board had issued a permit, and argued that since the Department of Environmental Protection hasn't issued regulations under the act, emissions requirements aren't applicable to Sandwich's plant. However, the siting board had approved CLF's agreement with Salem's plant! The siting board should, at least, have applied the same emissions schedule to Sandwich! The failure to set equivalent schedules for both plants makes the process inequitable and also impedes our ability to meet the act's targets and forces the foundation to sue again.

Gov. Baker and our Legislature should observe that the siting board wouldn't overlook and misjudge details if we simplified the process by enacting a state carbon emissions fee that increases based on emissions targets.

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Brookline

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