



Sean Kell

An Inconvenient Turbine: Conservation vs. Preservation

*Homeowners Who Go Green
Face Neighbors' Objections;
How Gore Got His Solar Panels*

By SARA SCHAEFER MUÑOZ

IN NEIGHBORHOODS across the country, there's a battle brewing: the environmentalists vs. the aesthetes.

As "green"-minded homeowners move to put in new energy-efficient windows, solar panels and light-reflecting roofs, they are bumping up against neighbors and local boards that object, saying the additions defy historic-district regulations, will look ugly or damage property values.

In Arizona, a man was recently ordered by his homeowners' association to take down a solar water-heating device from his roof or face a daily fine. In upstate New York, neighbors fought the installation of a wind turbine tower on a resident's 11-acre property, delaying the project by nearly a year. Even former vice president and outspoken environmental advocate Al Gore had trouble getting solar panels and a geothermal unit approved for his Nashville home. A local zoning board initially wouldn't consider the application for the solar panels. It then took an appeal, several redesigns and a property inspection before they were approved eight months later. (The community recently revised its ordinance to allow the devices.)

David Bannatyne was tired of the drafty, stubborn windows in his early 19th-century home in Concord, Mass., and was especially fed up with paying his \$5,000 heating bill each winter.

But when he applied for permission to put in 17 new, energy-efficient windows last fall, the town's Historic Districts Commission denied his request, concerned that the windows wouldn't blend in with the home's historic character. After some debate, Mr. Bannatyne agreed to restore the windows instead. While he says they're now easier to open, he says his heating bills haven't

changed. "I'm not doing the global warming issue any favors by keeping these windows," he says.

Environmental groups say that the often burdensome and contentious process for those who live in regulated developments or historic districts prevents more people from making energy-saving changes to their homes. "It's a hurdle. If people know there's such a delay, they say, 'Forget about it,'" says Nils Petermann, a research associate with the Alliance to Save Energy, a nonprofit advocacy group based in Washington, D.C.

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Haute Couture

*Paris Pads Its Signature Show
With Lots of Ready-to-Wear,
Entrée for New Designers*

AT THE SEMIANNUAL haute couture show last week in Paris, I was curious to learn about this exacting craft, which we are told caters to the 200 or so women in the world who buy hand-sewn, completely made-to-order dresses costing as much as a small house in Kansas City.

I attended the haute couture show of Lefranc-Ferrant, a pair of talented new designers who showed finely executed, flattering dresses and coats. The next

day, I called Lefranc-Ferrant to ask how or where I could buy a marvelous gray wool dress that he had walked the runway. They directed me to the Emmy Franck boutique on the rue St. Honoré. And there it was, in several sizes, priced at €1,040, or about \$1,400. Ms. Franck herself helped me try it on.

**FASHION
JOURNAL**

By Christina
Binkley

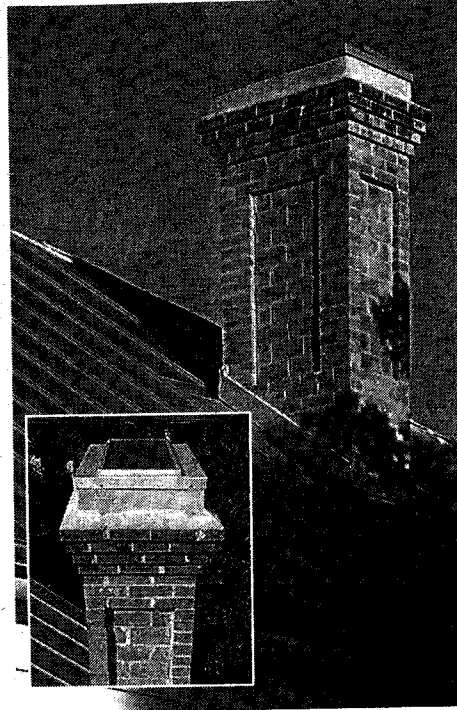
Some Neighbors Object to Green Homes

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 ington, D.C.

The clashes come as states and utilities are increasingly offering incentives for energy-efficient improvements. At the same time, the number of designated historic districts and homeowners associations continues to grow, and with them the number and scope of local governing bodies that can restrict the changes people make to home exteriors.

There were 412,900 locally designated historic properties reported in 2006, up from 304,000 five years earlier, according to the office in the National Park Service that encourages local preservation. And the number of condominium, co-op and homeowners associations—which are usually governed by an elected board of residents and can control everything from pets to exterior paint color—has grown to about 300,000 from 240,000 five years ago, according to the Community Associations Institute, an education and advocacy group based in Alexandria, Va.

Because the issue of green improvements versus aesthetics is cropping up in communities around the country, the institute earlier this year put together a committee to review its policy guidelines on energy-efficient improvements. "Renewable energy and aesthetics don't have to be mutually exclusive," says institute spokesman Frank Rathbun. "But agreeing to projects without regard to the architectural guidelines of the community can



Photovoltaic panels atop an 1899 chimney cap—and the view from above (inset)

make energy-efficient improvements easier. California has long restricted homeowners' associations from blocking solar-panel installations, and New Jersey and Arizona passed similar legislation this year. A bill in Connecticut would override zoning restrictions and make it easier for people to put in wind turbines on their property. It wasn't passed, but lawmakers hope to revive it next session.

create divisiveness and can affect property values."

In the case of Mr. Bannatyne's windows, local officials point out that restored windows can be just as energy-efficient as new ones if done properly. And they say windows, especially, preserve a building's historic value, says Carol Kowalski, the town's staff planner at the time of Mr. Bannatyne's application.

"The worst things you can do to a historic building, besides arson, is take out historic windows," she says.

Some states are trying to

Matt Burdick, a 33-year-old communications director in Chandler, Ariz., pushed for the Arizona measure after his community association pressured him to remove a solar water heater he installed last September. Mr. Burdick had splurged on a swimming pool for his children, ages 7 and 10, and because he wanted to get the maximum use of it year-round, he put in the solar heater to keep the water warm and avoid an estimated \$200 a month in pool heating costs.

Soon after, he started receiv-

ing notices from his homeowners association. Finally faced with a \$50 daily fine, he says, he took down the seven panels in April, and is waiting for the new law to go into effect in September. Meanwhile, the panels are sitting in his tool shed. "This is a great way to make use of solar energy—it avoids using a fossil fuel," he says. "People are losing sight of the big picture."

The property manager of Mr. Burdick's association did not return several phone calls seeking comment.

Responding to concerns about aesthetics, some companies have been introducing products designed to be unobtrusive. Atlantis Energy Systems Inc. in Poughkeepsie, N.Y., is expanding its line of solar roof tiles—which generate solar energy but are cut to look like standard roof tiles, instead of the traditional single solar panel.

Energy-efficient window-makers, too, are pitching products that blend in with older homes: Jeld-Wen Inc. this year introduced a new double-hung window that can fit into existing older frames but still provide better insulation. Houston-based Standard Renewable Energy uses a racking system that positions solar panels to look flush against the roof. The company provides homeowners with a complete "green" service—from consultation to installation of items like solar panels—and will also go before an association or zoning board to help sell the project.

Portico Residential LLC

SMARTMONEY STOCK SCREEN | Profitability
 Aspen Technology is trying investors' patience. In June, the Cambridge, Mass., software maker announced the latest in a string of accounting blunders that will force it to restate past results. Were it not for math along to shareholders as net earnings per share. Our screen also looks for modest debt levels, rising earnings estimates and generally favorable analyst recommendations. In its third quarter Aspen reported an operating margin of 18.5% up from a year-earlier state past results. Were it not for math

counting fees can eat some 1% of trust assets daily, with fees dropping dramatically the larger the trust count. Many trust companies offer different levels of service and fees, depending on level of fiduciary responsibility they undertake. Wachovia Corp., for example, charges 1.5% on \$2 million

For its wealthiest trust clients — her for both existing trustees Peter Gordon, a Wilmington,