In recent weeks four major energy projects have made “groundbreaking” announcements: the closing in 2019 of the Pilgrim Nuclear Power Station, the commencing of construction of Deep Water Wind, New England’s first off-shore wind farm off the coast of Rhode Island, a new proposal by Denmark’s DONG Energy for an offshore wind farm off the coast of Martha’s Vineyard, and President Obama’s denial of the permit for the Keystone pipeline.

How will these changes affect the cost and supply of energy in the region and what impact will these changes have on attempts to confront climate change and to promote solutions to global warming? The projections are in, but completion of both the shut-downs and build-ups are a few years off, as are the actual impacts.

In the meantime, both Boston and Massachusetts continue to lead the nation in energy efficiency, according to the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE), with neighbors Vermont and Rhode Island also in the top five. According to the Commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER) “innovation and a shared commitment to ongoing improvement in energy efficiency policies and programs” are credited as the “hallmarks of Massachusetts’ national clean energy leadership.” Additionally, the Massachusetts Green Communities Act (GCA), is also cited with providing the impetus through its statutory mandate to achieve cost-effective energy efficiency.

Other incentives include: raising the net metering cap for solar energy in Massachusetts, which did not pass the House prior to the close of the 2015 legislative session; and the expiration of the federal Investment Tax Credit for commercial and residential renewable energy in December 2016, unless it is extended.
Susan Bernstein is an attorney at law, Needham, Mass.

New England Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540