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February 22, 2007

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CERTIFICATE OF THE SECRETARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS
 ON THE
 THE NOTICE OF PROJECT CHANGE

PROJECT NAME : Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan --
 Elizabeth Pole School, Harris Street Residences
 PROJECT MUNICIPALITY : Taunton
 PROJECT WATERSHED : Taunton River
 EOEА NUMBER : 13897
 PROJECT PROPONENT : City of Taunton Public Works Department
 DATE NOTICED IN MONITOR : January 9, 2007

Pursuant to the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (G. L., c. 30, ss. 61-62H) and Section 11.06 of the MEPA regulations (301 CMR 11.00), I determine that this project **continues to require** the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). In a separate Decision issued on February 22, 2007, I have proposed to **grant** a Phase I Waiver to allow this portion of the Taunton Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan (CWMP) to proceed prior to the completion of the EIR for the CWMP. This Certificate sets forth the issues that must be addressed by the proponent during permitting and discusses recommendations that were submitted on the project during the MEPA comment period.

Project Description

As described in the Notice of Project Change (NPC), the project entails the connection of sewer service to: the Elizabeth Pole School, an existing City of Taunton facility building, and ten existing single-family residences on Harris Street. According to the proponent, this Phase I project will generate 14,000 gallons of wastewater per day, and is located within a "priority needs" area (Area U) identified within the Taunton CWMP. Peak flows estimated from the project will be approximately 33,000 gallons per day (gpd). The project will consist of a sewage pumping station, 4,450 feet (0.84 miles) of 6-inch force main and approximately 2,750 feet (0.52 miles) of 8-inch gravity sewer. Portions of the sewer main and pump station installation will occur within buffer zone to wetland resource areas and the 200-foot Riverfront Area associated

with the Taunton River. Placement of sewer mains will occur within the existing paved public right of way, with standard erosion and sedimentation controls installed to prevent impact to adjacent wetland resource areas.

The wastewater flow from the project will be conveyed to the Taunton Wastewater Treatment Plant (Taunton WWTP) for treatment and disposal via a sewer extension from the project site to the City of Taunton's existing sewer collection system.

City of Taunton CWMP

The City of Taunton is developing a Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan (CWMP) (EOEA# 13897). This NPC has been filed in response to the Certificate on the ENF for the City of Taunton CWMP. The Certificate on the ENF stated that any project that is advanced in Taunton prior to completion of CWMP EIR and requires a MassDEP sewer extension or connection permit that has not already been approved by MassDEP at the time of the issuance of the ENF Certificate, will also require a Phase 1 waiver from the EIR requirement for the CWMP.

Wastewater

The operator of the Taunton Water Pollution Control Facility has provided documentation showing that the flows anticipated as part of this NPC can be accommodated under existing plant conditions and permits; mostly due to improved treatment capacity as a result of an aggressive inflow and infiltration (I/I) removal program undertaken by the City of Taunton.

Wetlands/Habitat

The project will impact approximately 16,700 square feet (sf) of Riverfront Area; 2,000sf of which will be temporary in nature. Furthermore, construction of the proposed cul-de-sac and sewer pumping station access/driveway will require filling of approximately 163 cubic yards of 100-year floodplain. Mitigation for this loss of floodplain will be achieved through compensation of equal size in an area contiguous to the proposed activity. Details of this mitigation and compensation should be reviewed as part of the Notice of Intent process with the Taunton Conservation Commission.

The Division of Marine Fisheries has indicated that a portion of the project work area abuts the Taunton River, which contains diadromous fish populations. Therefore, the proponent must take action to ensure that no runoff from construction activities be allowed to enter the river. If any activities, such as the construction of the 6' PVC line trench, tight tank removal or fill, will contribute to turbidity in the river, a no activity time-of-year restriction from March 15th through July 30th should be placed on any construction occurring within the 100 foot buffer zone

of the Taunton River. The proponent is reminded that should project construction activities disturb one or more acres of land, a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Stormwater Permit for Construction Activities may be required.

The Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) has stated that the proposed project area subject to this NPC is not located within *Priority Habitat* or *Estimated Habitat* as indicated in the 12th Edition of the *MA Natural Heritage Atlas*. Therefore, the NHESP does not anticipate that this portion of the larger Taunton CWMP will adversely effect resource area habitats of state-listed species or result in a "take" of state-listed species.

Conclusion

Based on a review of the information provided by the proponent and after consultation with the relevant public agencies, I find that the potential impacts of this project do not warrant further MEPA review. In a separate Draft Record of Decision (DROD) to be issued today, I propose to grant a Phase I Waiver to allow construction of the project to proceed in advance of the completion of the City of Taunton CWMP. Notice of the availability of the DROD for additional public review and comment will appear in the March 7, 2007 issue of the Environmental Monitor for fourteen days.

February 22, 2007
Date


Ian A. Bowles

Comments received:

- 01/22/2007 Division of Marine Fisheries
- 02/02/2007 Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection – MassDEP
- 02/07/2007 Fay, Spofford & Thorndike
- 02/12/2007 Division of Fisheries and Wildlife – Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program

13897NPC/Elizabeth Pole School, Harris Street Residences

IAB/HSJ/hsj