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March 22, 2007

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

PROJECT NAME : Blackstone National Golf Club
PROJECT MUNICIPALITY : Sutton
PROJECT WATERSHED : Blackstone
EOEA NUMBER : 10787
PROJECT PROPONENT : Blackstone National Golf Club
DATE NOTICED IN MONITOR : February 20, 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 hereby determine that this project change **does not** require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

The project originally underwent MEPA review in June 1996 for the construction and operation of an 18-hole golf course with associated clubhouse, parking lot, maintenance area, access road, septic system, drinking water well, and irrigation well. The project proposed the removal of tree canopy from approximately 1.2 acres of forested wetlands and average daily water use of 85,000 gallons of water for use for course irrigation.

As described in the Notice of Project Change (NPC), the project consists of the same project as previously reviewed, with the exception of a change in anticipated water withdrawals. The project has been built in a manner consistent with its description the 1996 Environmental Notification Form, and has been in operation for several years. As part of the Record of Decision issued for this project on July 26, 1996, the Secretary of Environmental Affairs required that an

NPC be filed if the actual water use for the irrigation well exceeded 100,000 gallons per day (gpd) on average over the highest three months of water use. In this scenario, the project proponent would also be required to obtain a permit pursuant to the Water Management Act from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP).

The proponent has indicated that based upon irrigation records, the course needs an average of 119,000 gpd for irrigation, which is 34,000 gpd more than its previous approval for 85,000 gpd. The proponent has commenced the application process for a Water Withdrawal Permit from MassDEP by conducting pump tests and coordinating the review process with MassDEP staff. No new well construction is proposed; new permitting requirements are necessary due to higher water withdrawal rates from existing infrastructure. According to MassDEP, the Blackstone National Golf Course has been operating under an Administrative Consent Order for violating the Water Management Act by withdrawing in excess of 100,000 gpd without a permit. No complaints or adverse impacts due to pumping have been reported to MassDEP to date.

The project impacts do not warrant the preparation of an EIR. I encourage the proponent to continue water conservation measures to limit water withdrawals for irrigation purposes. In the absence of any significant changes, no further MEPA review is required. The project may proceed with its Water Management Act Permit approval process with MassDEP.

March 22, 2007

Date



Ian A. Bowles

Comments received:

01/25/2007 Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection - CERO

IAB/HSJ/hsj