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April 24, 2009

CERTIFICATE OF THE SECRETARY OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS
ON THE
ENVIRONMENTAL NOTIFICATION FORM

PROJECT NAME : Southwick Parallel Interceptor Sewer
PROJECT MUNICIPALITY : Westfield
PROJECT WATERSHED : Westfield River
EOEA NUMBER : 14394
PROJECT PROPONENT : Town of Southwick
DATE NOTICED IN MONITOR : March 25, 2009

Pursuant to the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (G. L., c. 30, ss. 61-62I) and Section 11.06 of the MEPA regulations (301 CMR 11.00), I determine that this project **does not require** the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

Background

As described in the Environmental Notification Form (ENF), the Town of Southwick completed the construction of its Phase I municipal sewer collection system between 1985 and 2005. The Town's sewer system consisted of 15 miles of sewer pipe and six pump stations designed to collect and convey wastewater flows from homes located in the South and Middle Pond areas, Congamond Lakes area and the Town of Southwick's downtown business district. Under a 1998 Intermunicipal Agreement (IMA) with the City of Westfield, the Town of Southwick may convey up to 500,000 gallons per day (gpd) of wastewater flows directly to Westfield's wastewater treatment plant (Westfield WWTP) via 23,000 linear feet (lf) of 21-inch sewer interceptor pipe that extends from the Town of Southwick and parallels one of the City's existing sewer interceptor pipes to the Westfield WWTP. The Town of Southwick currently conveys approximately 175,000 gpd of wastewater flows to the Westfield WWTP.

Under the IMA, the City of Westfield allowed the Town to delay the construction of the last 3,600 lf portion of Southwick's new sewer interceptor and to construct a temporary connection to one of Westfield's existing sewer interceptors located at South Meadow Road to enable the Town to convey its wastewater flows to the Westfield WWTP until it could obtain sufficient funding to complete the construction of the Southwick parallel sewer interceptor project.

Project Description

This project involves the Town of Southwick's construction of the remaining 3,600 lf of new 21-inch sewer interceptor from South Meadow Road to the Westfield WWTP. Most of the proposed new interceptor alignment will parallel one of the City of Westfield's existing sewer interceptors and will be constructed within an existing 20-foot wide City of Westfield sewer easement corridor using open-cut trench technology. The City's existing sewer easement corridor will need to be expanded to a width of 40 feet. The City of Westfield will be responsible for obtaining revised easements from private land owners for all project work including those portions of the project located within the right-of-way of Mainline Drive, a privately owned street. The project will also require an access permit from MassHighway for work within the state highway (Route 20) right-of-way. The sewer interceptor project includes two perennial stream crossings at the Little River Westfield River.

Permits and Jurisdiction

The project is subject to review pursuant to Section 11.03 (3)(b)(1)(d) and (3)(b)(1)(f) of the MEPA regulations because it will result in the alteration of 5,000 sf or more of land under water (LUW) bordering vegetated wetlands (BVW) and the alteration of ½ or more acres of bordering land subject to flooding (BLSF) wetlands. The project as currently proposed requires a Sewer Extension Permit and a 401 Water Quality Certificate from MassDEP. The project requires a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Programmatic Construction General Permit (CGP) for stormwater discharges from a construction site of over one acre from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and a 404 Programmatic General Permit from the US Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE). The Project will require an Order of Conditions for construction in wetlands from the City of Westfield (and hence Superseding Order(s) from MassDEP if any local Orders were appealed). The Project also requires review by the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) to determine impacts to Priority and Estimated Habitat located on the project site. It will also require an Access Permit from the Massachusetts Highway Department (MassHighway) for the proposed crossing beneath Route 20.

Because the Proponent is not seeking financial assistance from the Commonwealth for the project, MEPA jurisdiction extends to issues that may cause Damage to the Environment and that are within the subject matter of required or potentially required state permits. In this case, MEPA jurisdiction extends to wetlands and wastewater.

REVIEW OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL NOTIFICATION FORM

Wetlands

As described above, the project will involve two perennial stream crossings, using open-cut trenching, at the Little River and Westfield River and will result in impacts to 110,750 sf of Bordering Land Subject to Flooding (BLSF), 6,605 sf of land under water wetlands (LUWW), 105 linear feet of stream bank associated with the Little River and the Westfield River, and approximately 26,000 sf of wetland buffer area. The Proponent estimates that approximately 240 yards of sediment will be excavated and repositioned as part of the stream crossing work. The project will also result in a small amount of impacts to bordering vegetated wetlands (BVW) from new shading of wetland areas and removal of tree canopy from forested wetlands. The Town should commit to complete all project construction and restoration activities located within the river areas during the seasonal low-flow period of July 1 – October 1. The proposed on-site wetland mitigation/replication activities include the restoration of disturbed streambeds, and the filling re-grading and planting/seeding of adjacent resource areas using clean fill and a topsoil/compost mix. This re-graded area will be re-seeded, and will incorporate an erosion control matting material. The Town of Southwick should consult with MassDEP to prepare a proposed planting schedule for the use of any bare-root wetlands plant material, the use of wetland replacement soils, and a wetland restoration monitoring program plan.

Rare Species

In its comments on the ENF, the State's Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) indicated that a portion of the project site is located within Priority and Estimated Habitat for the Tiangle Floater (*Alasmidonta undulata*) and Creeper (*Strophitus undulatus*). According to NHESP, the project design will need to be conditioned in order to avoid a "take" of state-listed species. NHESP will require the Proponent to complete a mussel survey in a manner consistent with NHESP's *Draft Mussel Survey Guidelines*. The Proponent may also be required to complete the translocation of mussels in accordance with NHESP's *Draft Mussel Translocation Guidelines*.

I ask that the proponent continue to consult with NHESP and the Westfield Conservation Commission during final project design to identify necessary project construction and post-construction conditions and commitments to avoid an adverse impact to resource area habitats of state-listed species located within and adjacent to the project site.

Construction Period impacts

All construction-related refueling and equipment maintenance activities should be conducted under cover on impervious surface areas with containment, and outside of any wetland resource areas, endangered species habitat areas, and wellhead protection areas. The Town should require its contractors to retrofit diesel-powered equipment with emissions controls, such as particulate filters or traps, and use low-sulfur diesel fuel.

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 the proposed parallel sewer interceptor project do not warrant further MEPA review. The project may proceed to state permitting.

April 24, 2009
DATE


for Jan A. Bowles, Secretary

Comments received:

04/07/09	Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC)
04/09/09	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC)
04/13/09	Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP)
04/14/09	Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP)