



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114

Deval L. Patrick
GOVERNOR

Timothy P. Murray
LIEUTENANT
GOVERNOR

Ian A. Bowles
SECRETARY

Tel: (617) 626-1000
Fax: (617) 626-1181
<http://www.mass.gov/envir>

November 8 2007

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

PROJECT NAME : Symmes Hospital Redevelopment
PROJECT MUNICIPALITY : Arlington
PROJECT WATERSHED : Boston Harbor (Mystic River)
EOEA NUMBER : 13334
PROJECT PROPONENT : Symmes Redevelopment Authority
DATE NOTICED IN MONITOR : October 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 hereby determine that this project change does not require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report.


The project was the subject of an Environmental Notification Form (ENF) in 2004, for which an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was not required. As originally proposed, the project entailed the redevelopment of the 15-acre site of the former Symmes Hospital, including the demolition of the existing hospital building; its replacement with up to 275 residential units in a combination of townhouse and multi-unit buildings; and the re-use of the former nurses' dormitory into a medical office facility. The project was reviewed pursuant to 301 CMR 11.03(1)(b)(7) of the MEPA regulations because it involved the approval in accordance with M.G.L. c. 121B of a new urban renewal plan in combination with the requirement for a Sewer Connection Permit from the Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP).

As described in the Notice of Project Change (NPC, the proposed project change entails the demolition of the nurses' dormitory building and its replacement with a new medical office building and a reduction in the proposed number of new housing units from 275 to 200. The

proposed project change exceeds the MEPA review threshold at 301 CMR 11(1)(b)(1) for the destruction of a historic structure listed on the Inventory of Historic and Archeological Assets of the Commonwealth. At the time of the submission and review of the ENF, none of the existing buildings on the site were listed on the Inventory, but subsequently, both the hospital building and nurses' dormitory were included in the Inventory and, in its comments, the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) has determined that the nurses' dormitory is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and that its proposed demolition would have an Adverse Effect on this property. However, the building is structurally unstable and has been in an abandoned state for several years and its demolition was authorized by the Arlington Historical Commission in 2004. In its comments, the Arlington Redevelopment Board states that while the intended use of the proposed renovation of the nurses' dormitory was the continued provision of medical services on the project site, the proponent faced much difficulty marketing the building to potential medical service providers. Hence, the proposed project change is intended to attract medical service providers to the site by constructing a new medical office building.

I note that the proponent has engaged in an extensive consultation process with the Arlington Historical Commission to develop suitable archival and photographic documentation for both the structure and the overall project site. In its comments, MHC states that no prudent and feasible alternatives to demolition were identified and that the proposed mitigation is adequate and appropriate. MHC recommends, and I concur, that a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) be developed for the project that includes provisions for archival and photographic documentation and public interpretation and display, as proposed by the Arlington Historical Commission. The proponent should work both with MHC and the Arlington Historical Commission to develop the MOA. No further review of the project under MEPA is required as a result of the proposed project change.

November 8, 2007
Date



Ian A. Bowles

Comments received:

- 10/11/07 Gregory Jackmuth
- 10/11/07 Patricia Worden
- 10/17/07 Lorelei Kolegue
- 10/18/07 Sandi Bourgeois
- 10/19/07 Arlington Redevelopment Board
- 10/31/07 Arlington Historical Commission
- 11/07/07 Massachusetts Historical Commission

IAB/RB/rb