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November 21, 2008

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

PROJECT NAME: Stoneham Crossing  
PROJECT MUNICIPALITY: Stoneham  
PROJECT WATERSHED: Mystic (Boston Harbor)  
EEA NUMBER: 13836  
PROJECT PROPONENT: 225 Fallon Road Realty, LLC (c/o The Richmond  
Company, Inc.)  
DATE NOTICED IN MONITOR: October 22, 2008

Pursuant to the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (M. G. L. c. 30, ss. 61-62I) and Section 11.10 of the MEPA regulations (301 CMR 11.00), I have reviewed the Notice of Project Change (NPC) submitted on this project and hereby determine that the project **does not require** the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Furthermore, I hereby rescind the scope issued for an EIR, as set forth in both the Secretary's Certificate on the ENF issued on August 16, 2006, and the Secretary's Certificate on the Draft EIR issued on September 28, 2007.

Previously Reviewed Project

The previous project, as reviewed in the August 2007 Draft EIR, consisted of the construction of a 135,000 square foot (sf) retail home improvement store and a 12,000 sf multi-tenant office building on a 16.2-acre site located on the north side of Fallon Road at Interstate 93, Exit 35. An existing 70,000 sf commercial office complex would be demolished. The project

included the alteration of approximately 2,389 sf of Bordering Vegetated Wetland (BVW) and the generation of 4,270 new vehicle trips per day.

In previous MEPA filings, Lot B was designated as the area for the 12,000 sf office building, with Lot A designated for development of the home improvement store. Lot B is approximately 1.25 acres in area, and was anticipated to be altered in its entirety to accommodate the development plan. No direct BVW alteration was proposed on Lot B, and the office use was expected to generate approximately 260 vehicle trips per day and require 36 parking spaces. Water usage on Lot B was estimated at 1,350 gallons per day (GPD) along with 1,125 GPD of wastewater generation.

The previously reviewed project required numerous state permits, including an indirect highway access permit from the Massachusetts Highway Department (MassHighway), a highway access permit from the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), approvals from the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA), the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA), and the Town of Stoneham. Due to the potential for use of state grant funds, MEPA jurisdiction was broad and pertained to all aspects of the project that may cause damage to the environment as defined in the MEPA regulations.

#### Project Change Description

The project change consists of development of an 87,000 sf self-storage facility in lieu of the 12,000 sf office building on Lot B. Development on the remaining 15-acres of the project site (Lot A) is now undetermined and the existing 70,000 sf building and associated parking will remain in place at this time. Development of the five-story self-storage facility will result in the alteration of 1.1 acres of land and the creation of 0.8 acres of impervious area. The project will average approximately 220 vehicle trips per day and contain 15 parking spaces and four loading docks.

The project will no longer alter state-jurisdictional wetland resource areas. Since the traffic associated with the project will be minimal, the previously proposed transportation improvements are not included with this project. The project will require a MassHighway Indirect Access Permit since the project site abuts the State highway layout. Additional permits will be issued by the local authorities including site plan approval, a special permit and an Order of Conditions under the Stoneham Wetland Protection By-law for construction within 100 feet of a locally-jurisdictional wetland resource area.

#### Jurisdiction

The project was previously required to submit a mandatory EIR pursuant to Section 11.03(6)(a)(6) of the MEPA regulations because it would have required a State permit and generated 3,000 or more new vehicle trips. The project as proposed in the NPC (Lot B only) has reduced environmental impacts and no longer exceeds the mandatory EIR threshold for traffic

impacts. The project continues to require a MassHighway Indirect Access Permit. The project must comply with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (U.S. EPA) National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit for stormwater discharges. State funding is no longer proposed for the development of the project as proposed in this NPC.

### Review of the NPC

The NPC contained a discussion of three different site plan alternatives for a self-storage facility on Lot B, as well as the previously approved office building alternative. Different building footprints, orientation, access driveways, and parking layouts were evaluated to determine ways to avoid, minimize, or mitigate damage to the environment. The NPC contained a traffic and transportation study that compared trip generation rates and trip distribution between the current project proposal and the previous project proposal. The project will have negligible traffic impacts. Mitigation is limited to the relocation of the existing easternmost site driveway approximately 200 feet to the west, to achieve a greater physical separation and line of sight between the site driveway and the Exit 35 off-ramp from I-93. Additionally, the site driveway will be improved to meet design criteria for two-way traffic.

The NPC stated that due to the change in use and scale of the project, no transportation improvements are proposed in the vicinity of North Border Road and at Woodland Road and Pond Street, and the intersection of South Street and Main Street (Route 28) within the Middlesex Fells Parkways National Register District. The Proponent has also stated that the project as currently proposed will not have an adverse visual effect on the Middlesex Fells Reservation National Register District, and will avoid potential physical effects to the Middlesex Fells Reservation Parkways and Spot Pond Archaeological District, districts listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

There are no wetland resource areas located on Lot B. Development of Lot B will require work within 100 feet of a locally-jurisdictional wetland resource area. The development of the self-storage facility, including the access road, parking areas, loading areas, and utilities, will not encroach on the area previously proposed for the wetland replication area in conjunction with development of the entire project area (Lots A and B).

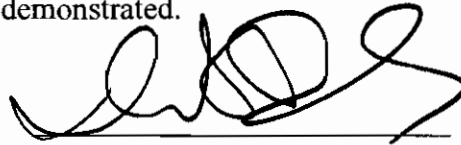
The NPC included a discussion of potential project stormwater impacts, stormwater calculations, and described how the project was designed to comply with the MassDEP Stormwater Management Regulations. To mitigate potential stormwater and water quality impacts, the project includes deep sump, hooded catchbasins, a Stormceptor® water quality unit, underground structured infiltration and detention systems, and a street sweeping program.

Water use and wastewater generation will be relatively minor, estimated at 80 gpd and 67 gpd, respectively. To accommodate the project, the Proponent will upgrade the local water supply (fire protection) line servicing the area and clean and upgrade capacity of the major local domestic sanitary sewer line. I note that the NPC estimated up to 500 gpd of water use for irrigation purposes. I encourage the Proponent to strive to limit the use of potable water for

irrigation purposes through the use of drought-tolerant native landscaping species and/or the use of rain barrels/cisterns to collect clean roof runoff for irrigation.

### Conclusion

Based on a review of the information provided in the NPC, I find that the project as outlined in the NPC does not warrant the preparation of an EIR. Furthermore, I hereby rescind the scope issued for an EIR, in both the Secretary's Certificate on the ENF issued on August 16, 2006, and the Secretary's Certificate on the DEIR issued on September 28, 2007. The Proponent will be required to submit a second NPC once plans for the remaining 15 acres of the property (Lot A) are known. This second NPC should provide a comprehensive evaluation of the entire project, including the self-storage facility, to allow for cumulative review of potential environmental impacts. I remind the State permitting agencies that they may not take final agency action relative to permitting development beyond Lot B described in the NPC until full compliance with the MEPA regulations is demonstrated.



November 21, 2008

Date

Ian A. Bowles

### Comments Received:

10/30/2008 Dr. Tapan K. and Mrs. Arundhati Gupta

IAB/HSJ/hsj