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January 30, 2009

CERTIFICATE OF THE SECRETARY OF ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS
ON THE
SUPPLEMENTAL FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

PROJECT NAME: BJ's of Quincy
PROJECT MUNICIPALITY: Quincy
PROJECT WATERSHED: Boston Harbor
EEA NUMBER: 14233
PROJECT PROPONENT: QBJ Land Development, LLC
DATE NOTICED IN MONITOR: December 24, 2008

As Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs, I hereby determine that the Supplemental Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) submitted on this project **adequately and properly** complies with the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (M.G.L. c. 30, ss. 61-62I) and with its implementing regulations (301 CMR 11.00). The Supplemental FEIR (SFEIR) provides additional information regarding the Proponent's proposed greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions mitigation measures, parking plan and transportation demand management (TDM) measures.

Project Description

As currently proposed, the project involves the redevelopment of a 7.5-acre parcel of industrially-zoned property bounded by Crown Colony Drive to the north, Centre Street to the east, the Burgin Parkway and Route 3 off-ramp to the south, and the Crown Colony Office Park to the west. The project includes the demolition of the existing two-story 42,230-square foot (sf) Patriot Ledger Newspaper Building and construction of an 84,360-sf BJ's Wholesale Club store, 387 surface parking spaces, and new stormwater management infrastructure.

The project site is located off Crown Colony Drive and Centre Street and near the MBTA Quincy Adams Red Line station in Quincy. The project will require 5,207 gallons per day (gpd) of potable water supply and will generate approximately 7,720 gpd of wastewater flow. Both water and wastewater needs will be met through existing municipal systems, administered by the City of Quincy.

Permits and Jurisdiction

The project is undergoing environmental review and required the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report pursuant to Section 11.03(6)(a)(6) of the MEPA regulations because it requires state permits and because it will generate more than 3,000 new average daily trips on roadways providing access to a single location. The project requires a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Construction Permit from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); an Indirect Highway Access Permit from the Massachusetts Highway Department (MassHighway); and an Order of Conditions (OOC) from the Quincy Conservation Commission. The project is also subject to the EEA Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions Policy and Protocol.

Because the Proponent is not seeking financial assistance from the Commonwealth for the project, MEPA jurisdiction is limited to those aspects of the project that are within the subject matter of required or potentially required state permits and that may cause Damage to the Environment as defined in the MEPA regulations. In this case, jurisdiction extends to transportation, wetlands, stormwater and GHG emissions.

REVIEW OF THE SUPPLEMENTAL FEIR

The Certificate on the FEIR required the Proponent to provide in the Supplemental FEIR (SFEIR) additional data and feasibility analysis related to several aspects of the project including: the Proponent's rationale for not making a commitment to use a solar photovoltaic (PV) system; the use of a third party for building commissioning to make sure the performance of all systems is maximized; the use of an MBTA transit pass reimbursement program that would provide reduced rate transit passes for BJ's employees to further reduce vehicle trips to and from the project, as part of the Proponent's proposed TDM plan; and, the Proponent's parking plan.

Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions Policy and Protocol

The Proponent committed to implementing the Mitigation Alternative to further decrease the project's GHG emissions. The Proponent's Mitigation Alternative is comprised of a number of mitigation measures to reduce the Project's direct and indirect energy-related CO₂ emissions including:

- Increase roof/ceiling insulation from R-24 to R-30;
- Duct Sealing;

- Energy Management System to Control Heating, Cooling and Lighting;
- High –Efficiency (EER – 11.0) HVAC System;
- Use of Energy Efficient Exterior Lighting with Automatic Controls;
- Use of Energy Efficient T-5 Interior Lighting for 95% of Lighting and T-8 Interior Lighting for 5%;
- Use of Skylights (2% of roof area) to Maximize Interior Day-Lighting;
- Use of a highly-reflective (high-albedo) Cool Roof Design;
- Use of a Recyclables Storage and Collection Program;
- Use of Energy Star Rated Appliances for Bakery Equipment; and
- Comprehensive Building Commissioning.

Solar Photovoltaic (PV)

The Certificate on the FEIR required the Proponent to provide in the Supplemental FEIR (SFEIR) a detailed evaluation of and a life-cycle cost analysis illustrating the expected payback for a rooftop PV system that takes into account the support of subsidies through the Commonwealth Solar and Massachusetts Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) programs and future incentives provided under the Green Communities Act.

The SFEIR included an expanded discussion and analysis of a 50-kilowatt (kW) solar photovoltaic (PV) system for the proposed BJ's building pursuant to the requirement of the Certificate on the FEIR and the GHG Policy to consider alternative mitigation measures. The Proponent's analysis included in the SFEIR indicates that the payback period for a 50 kW solar system for the proposed project would be approximately six years. According to the Proponent, installing a PV system is not feasible because the technology is cost-prohibitive for a project of this scale, due to the projected rate of return.

However, as described in the SFEIR, and in supplemental information provided by the Proponent subsequent to the submission of the SFEIR, the Proponent has committed to construct a 20,000 sf portion of the BJ's building roof structure to support a future PV system that could be provided, installed and maintained by a third party vendor through a purchase power agreement. As a condition of my finding that the project adequately and properly complies with the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act and its implementing regulations, I am requiring the Proponent to include this commitment concerning the building's roof structure in its updated Section 61 Finding for MassHighway and in the self-certification requirement of the MassHighway Section 61 Finding for the project discussed below.

The SFEIR additionally indicated that the Proponent and BJ's are currently evaluating and researching the installation of a PV system through a third party vendor and that the Proponent is committed to pursuing this option. While I commend the Proponent for the commitment to roof structure noted above, and for its efforts in evaluating the feasibility of a third party PV arrangement, I also strongly encourage the Proponent and BJs to give serious consideration to adoption of a PV system prior to operation of the building. According to the SFEIR, incorporation of a 50kW PV system has the potential to significantly reduce project-related GHG emissions. In light of its GHG emissions reduction and utility cost reduction potential, I urge the Proponent and BJ's to continue to evaluate this option seriously.

Third-Party Building Commissioning

The SFEIR indicates that comprehensive building commissioning will be performed by BJ's internal Energy Management Team before the building becomes operational to ensure that the building's heating, cooling, ventilation, lighting, and energy management systems are operating according to their design specifications.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

The SFEIR includes a description of the Proponent's Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan proposed for the project. The Proponent has committed to complete an annual TDM monitoring program that will include an evaluation of site vehicle trip generation, pedestrian counts, parking, ride-sharing and transit usage.

The Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan includes:

- appointing an on-site Employee Transportation Coordinator (ETC);
- encouraging employees to use commuter assistance programs available through MassRides;
- providing employee direct deposit banking to full-time employees;
- installing secure on-site bicycle storage racks;
- providing an on-site food court;
- posting MBTA Quincy Adams Commuter Rail and bus schedules in centralized locations;
- scheduling non-standard hours employee work shifts;
- providing two on-site dedicated parking spaces for ZIP Cars;
- working with the Crown Colony Association (CCA) to explore opportunities to provide shuttle service between the project site and the Quincy Adams MBTA station; and,
- completing a 1 year TDM Monitoring Study to be submitted to MassHighway and the City of Quincy to evaluate TDM program, vehicle trip generation, pedestrian counts and transit usage.

I strongly encourage the Proponent to commit to providing safe pedestrian and bicycle connections, including pedestrian signage, between the project site and the MBTA Quincy Adams Commuter Rail station, Burgin Parkway, Columbia Street and other adjacent land uses located in the project area. I also strongly encourage the Proponent to establish clearly marked vehicle and pedestrian internal circulation patterns within the project site from the planned pedestrian access points through the parking areas and to the on-site buildings to facilitate safe pedestrian and vehicle movement to and within the project site. The Proponent should consider installing STOP signs at the project's main Burgin Parkway site driveway to allow for safe pedestrian and bicycle crossing at this location. The Proponent should consult with WalkBoston and the City of Quincy to identify additional opportunities to design and locate pedestrian facilities within the project site and project area that will enhance the pedestrian experience and successfully support the proponent's projections for pedestrian and bicycle trip generation.

Subsidized Employee Transit Passes

According to the comments previously submitted by MassHighway on the DEIR and FEIR for the BJ's Quincy project, an MBTA transit pass reimbursement program for BJ's employees would take advantage of the project site's close proximity to the MBTA Quincy Adams Station and reduce the project's overall traffic impacts and GHG emissions.

The Certificate on the FEIR required the Proponent to include in the SFEIR an evaluation of providing reduced rate transit passes for employees to further reduce vehicle trips to and from the project. The SFEIR did not adequately respond to the Certificate's direction beyond indicating why transit subsidy is not consistent with corporate policy. In the Response to Comments section of the SFEIR, the Proponent indicated that the BJ's Company determines benefits such as subsidized transit passes on a company-wide basis.

As described by the Proponent in the SFEIR, providing a transit pass subsidy to BJ's Quincy store employees would reduce car trips by 10% or 1.1 ton of CO₂ per year. However, according to the comments received from MassDEP, the proximity of the project site to the Quincy Adams MBTA station provides an opportunity to further reduce employee and customer trips generated by the proposed BJ's project. MassDEP cites studies from the Transit Cooperative Research Program measuring the effectiveness of subsidized transit benefits that indicate that single occupancy vehicle (SOV) trips can be reduced by up to 20% with the implementation of an employee transit subsidy program. In addition, MassDEP notes that a transit pass subsidy would have the added benefit of reducing non-work trips made by the same employees, thereby further reducing GHG emissions. In light of MassDEP's comments, it appears that the SFEIR may have underestimated the carbon dioxide emissions reductions associated with a transit subsidy.

Subsequent to the submittal of the SFEIR, the Proponent has provided additional information to the MEPA Office that describes the Proponent's commitment to make reduced rate transit passes available to store employees as part of the project's TDM program. Therefore, as a condition of my finding that the BJ's Quincy project adequately and properly complies with the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act and its implementing regulations, I am requiring the Proponent to include an update of its program to offer reduced rate transit passes to store employees as part of the self-certification requirement of the MassHighway Section 61 Finding for the project.

The Proponent was also required to include in the SFEIR an analysis for establishing a shuttle service between the project site and the Quincy Adams MBTA station and discuss the benefits of this measure including trip reduction and associated GHG emissions. The SFEIR contains a brief discussion of the Proponent's commitment to continue to work with the Crown Colony Association to identify opportunities to provide shuttle service and promote the use of the Quincy Adams MBTA station through the BJ's Employee Transportation Coordinator. The Proponent has also committed to construct a food court within the BJ's building that will sell snacks and sandwiches to BJ's employees and patrons. According to the Proponent, the food court will result in a 1% reduction of project generated daily vehicle trips and 1.8 tpy of reduction in CO₂ emissions.

Parking

The Proponent proposes to construct 387 surface parking spaces to serve the BJ's project. According to the comments received from the Quincy Department of Planning and Community Development, the proposed parking plan continues to significantly exceed the City of Quincy's local zoning ordinance for required parking for retail located in an industrial district by more than 200 parking spaces. As described in the SFEIR, the minimum amount of parking typically needed for BJ's stores in Massachusetts is 1 space for 200 square feet of gross floor area (GFA). The Proponent's currently proposed parking plan is based on 1 space for 218 sf of GFA. According to the Proponent, further reducing the project's total number of on-site surface parking spaces may create inadequate parking availability especially during peak shopping periods. Given the close proximity of the project site to the Quincy Adams MBTA station, it is likely that a reduced demand for parking may be achieved by the TDM measures the Proponent has proposed for the project. I therefore strongly encourage the Proponent to revisit its parking demand analysis in light of the reduced demand for parking that may be achieved by providing reduced rate transit passes for employees and to reduce the number of parking spaces associated with this project.

Mitigation/Section 61

The Proponent should submit an updated Section 61 Finding for MassHighway as part of the permitting process that reflects the Proponent's additional mitigation commitments made subsequent to the Proponent's submittal of the SFEIR to the MEPA Office and reflected in this Certificate.

Upon completion of construction, the Proponent should provide a certification to the MEPA Office signed by an appropriate consultant (e.g., engineer, architect, general contractor) indicating that all of the above-referenced GHG reduction and TDM mitigation measures have been incorporated into the project, or equivalent measures to reduce total CO₂ emissions by 12.7 percent. The certification should be supported by as-built plans. For those measures that are operational in nature (i.e. subsidies for transit, TDM, recycling) the Proponent should provide an updated plan identifying the measures, the schedule for implementation and how progress towards achieving measures will be obtained. I request that MassHighway incorporate this self-certification requirement into its Section 61 Findings for this project.

January 30, 2009

Date


for Ian A. Bowles, Secretary

Comments received:

01/23/09 City of Quincy, Department of Planning and Community Development (PCD)
01/27/09 Vanasse & Associates, Inc.
01/29/09 **Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) - Boston**

IAB/NCZ/ncz

EEA #14233 Supplemental FEIR