



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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April 21, 2006

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

PROJECT NAME	: Hollis Hills
PROJECT MUNICIPALITY	: Lunenburg
PROJECT WATERSHED	: Nashua
EOEA NUMBER	: 13754
PROJECT PROPONENT	: Hollis Hills, LLC
DATE NOTICED IN MONITOR	: March 22, 2006

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 determine that this project **does not require** the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

As described in the Environmental Notification Form (ENF), the proponent proposes the phased (Phases 1-6) construction of a 140-unit affordable housing development, and one single family house on a 33.86-acre site located off Hollis Road and West Street in Lunenburg. Approximately 26 percent of the apartment units (37 units) will be affordable and available for purchase by persons who meet the HUD Affordability Requirement. The project's estimated total water supply demand (55,330 gallons per day (gpd)) will be served by the Town of Lunenburg's municipal water supply system. The Hollis Hills project's wastewater flows (approximately 55,330 gpd) will be collected by the Town of Lunenburg's sewer collection system and conveyed to the City of Leominster's Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF) for treatment and disposal. As currently designed, the project will have a looped main site access drive on West Street, and additional site access drives via two roadway connections on Hollis Street and Carr Avenue. The project site is located within a Zone III Water Supply Protection District for the Town of Lunenburg.

The project is undergoing review pursuant to Sections 11.03 (1)(b)(2), and (5) (b)(3)(c) of the MEPA regulations, because the project will result in the creation of five or more acres of impervious surface area (approximately 7.3 acres total), construction of one or more sewer mains ½ miles or more miles in length (1.22 miles total). The project will require a Section 401 Water Quality Certificate and a Sewer Extension Permit from DEP. The project also require Orders of Conditions from the Lunenburg Conservation Commission (and hence Superseding Order(s) from DEP if any local Orders were appealed). The project must comply with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit for stormwater discharges from a construction site of over one acre. If blasting will be required during project construction, the proponent will need to prepare a blast design plan pursuant to the Board of Fire Protection Regulations (577 CMR 13.09) for the construction of roads, houses and utilities within the project site. Blasting mixtures that include perchlorate have been identified as the source of contamination in many Massachusetts public water supplies and thus should be prohibited from use in the project watershed.

The proponent is not seeking financial assistance from the Commonwealth for the project. MEPA jurisdiction therefore extends to those aspects of the project that are within the subject matter of required or potentially required state permits and that have the potential to produce significant Damage to the Environment. In this case, MEPA jurisdiction extends to issues of land alteration, stormwater, wetlands, water supply and wastewater.

Wetlands:

The project site contains an extensive system of wetlands resource areas located primarily within the western portion of the project site. The Hollis Hills project will impact approximately 3,354 square feet (sf) of bordering vegetated wetlands (BVW) for the construction of internal roadways (approximately 2,930 sf), and sewer main (approximately 430 sf). The proponent has committed to construct approximately 5,480 sf (1.5:1) of on-site wetlands replication. As depicted in the Hollis Hills site plan, portions of twelve separate buildings (approximately 43 residential units), internal roadway, and stormwater management infrastructure, are located within the 100-foot wetland buffer zone. The project will result in the alteration of approximately seven acres of wetland buffer area. I strongly encourage the proponent to examine methods of avoiding or minimizing encroachment into buffer zones including, but not limited to, reducing the total number of residential units. The proponent should also consider placing deed restrictions on any residential properties that will be located within 600 feet of any vernal pools, or within the 100-foot wetlands buffer zone as a method for avoiding and/or minimizing future wetlands and water quality impacts from homeowner activities.

As noted in the ENF, approximately 14.50 acres of the project site (43 percent) will be permanently protected as dedicated Open Space. I ask the proponent to consider placing a Conservation Restriction (CR) on those portions of the project site proposed to be maintained as Open Space to ensure for their permanent protection.

Water:

The project's total potable water supply needs (approximately 55,330 gpd) will be served by the Town of Lunenburg's municipal water supply system. The proponent has proposed to extend the municipal water main approximately one mile within the West Street right-of-way, through the project site, and back to an existing municipal water main located in the Crest Street right-of-way. According to DEP, the proposed municipal water main extension will require a Distribution System Modification Permit from DEP. I anticipate that DEP's permitting process will require the proponent to demonstrate that the Town of Lunenburg has sufficient capacity to meet the project's potable water supply needs including requirements for fire flow, distribution pressure, and storage capacity.

Water Conservation

The proponent will need to demonstrate to DEP that the final project design meets the Commonwealth's water conservation standards. I strongly encourage the proponent to incorporate water conservation and water use efficiency in the project design to comply with the March 1989 state plumbing code. Specifically, the proponent should commit to employing efficient residential water conservation technologies for the project including water saving devices, low flow toilets, and low flow appliances (dishwashers, washing machines). The proponent should also consider implementing a Irrigation Management Plan (IMP) to further reduce the project's irrigation water demand. An IMP could involve the use of amended soils and compost, the planting of native and drought-tolerant species of trees, shrubs, and turf grasses, an automated water efficient irrigation system, and a water management protocol for drought conditions. I ask that the proponent consult with DEP, and refer to the Massachusetts Water Resources Commission's *Lawn and Landscape Water Conservation, An Addendum to the Water Conservation Standards for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, October 2002*, during the final design of the proponent's IMP.

Wastewater:

According to the information provided in the ENF, and statements made by the proponent during the April 7, 2006 MEPA site visit held for this project, the wastewater flow generated by the Hollis Hills project (approximately 50,400 gallons per day (gpd)) will be directed to the Town of Lunenburg's sewer collection and conveyance system, and the Carr Avenue/Dana Street pump station. The proponent proposes to construct two sewer extensions from the Dana Street pump station within the located in Electric Avenue right-of-way to the project site's western boundary, and within the Carr Avenue right-of-way to the project site's southern boundary. As described by the proponent, the proposed sewer plan will enable approximately 15 off-site residential properties (approximately 4,950 gpd) located on Carr Ave, Crest Avenue, Hollis Road, and West Street, currently served by on-site Title V septic systems, to connect to the Town of Lunenburg's municipal sewer collection and conveyance system.

The Town of Lunenburg's Dana Street pump station conveys wastewater flow to the City of Leominster's wastewater treatment facility (WWTF) under an existing inter-municipal agreement (IMA) between the Town of Lunenburg and the City of Leominster. The proponent must demonstrate to DEP that the Town of Lunenburg's sewer conveyance system has the capacity to accommodate the additional wastewater flows from the project, and that these additional flows can be accommodated within the total volume of wastewater flow allocated to Lunenburg under the existing IMA.

Stormwater:

The proponent's stormwater management plan incorporates both structural and non-structural best management practices (BMPs) consistent with DEP's Stormwater Management Act Guidelines and the Wetlands Protection Act performance standards. The proposed stormwater management plan includes periodic road sweeping, deep sump hooded catch basins, and a total of two stormwater detention basins with sediment forebays. The project's stormwater flows will discharge to Bordering Vegetated Wetlands (BVW) abutting the project site's western boundary.

I encourage the proponent to evaluate sustainable design alternatives such as Low Impact Development (LID) techniques in site design and stormwater management plans. LID techniques incorporate stormwater best management practices (BMPs) and can reduce impacts to land and water resources by conserving natural systems and hydrologic functions. The primary tools of LID are landscaping features and naturally vegetated areas, which encourage detention, infiltration and filtration of stormwater on-site. Other tools include water conservation and use of pervious surfaces. Clustering of buildings is an example of how LID can preserve open space and minimize land disturbance. LID can also protect natural resources by incorporating wetlands, stream buffers and mature forests as project design features. For more information on LID, visit <http://www.mass.gov/envir/lid/>. Other LID resources include the national LID manual (Low Impact Development Design Strategies: An Integrated Design Approach), which can be found on the EPA website at: <http://www.epa.gov/owow/nps/lid/>.

Construction Period:

The proponent should analyze and mitigate construction-period impacts, including temporary impacts to wetlands, and the extent of any blasting and/or re-grading during construction. The proponent should consult with the Town of Lunenburg, and DEP to ensure that the proponent will meet any performance standards associated with a federal NPDES permit for all project construction activities.

As I have indicated above, if blasting will be required during project construction, the proponent must prepare a blast design plan. The proponent should work closely with the Lunenburg Fire Department, the Lunenburg Conservation Commission, and local area residents in the design and implementation of the blast plan.

Based on the information provided by the proponent and consultation with relevant public agencies, I conclude that no further MEPA review is required. The review of the ENF has served adequately to disclose potential impacts and mitigation, and to demonstrate that project impacts do not warrant the preparation of an EIR. The proponent can resolve any remaining issues in the permitting process.

April 21, 2006

Date



Stephen R. Pritchard, Secretary

Comments received:

04/18/06 Department of Environmental Protection - SERO

04/19/06 McCarty Engineering, Inc.

SRP/NCZ/ncz

EOEA #13754