



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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June 9, 2006

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

PROJECT NAME : Wachusett Woods Residential Subdivision
PROJECT MUNICIPALITY : Holden
PROJECT WATERSHED : Nashua River
EOEA NUMBER : 13794
PROJECT PROPONENT : Holden Heights, LLC
DATE NOTICED IN MONITOR : May 10, 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 hereby determine that this project **does not require** the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

This project consists of a 39-lot subdivision and associated infrastructure including roadways, water and sewer service and a stormwater management system. The 30-acre project site is located to the east of Highland Street (Route 31), south of Wachusett Street and west of a tributary to the Wachusett Reservoir. The site is a sparsely vegetated gravel pit with a fringe of undeveloped forest around the perimeter. The site includes areas mapped as Estimated Habitat for rare species by the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) and recharge areas and buffer zones associated with public water supplies.

The project is undergoing MEPA review pursuant to Section 11.03 (5)(b)(3)(c) because it requires a state permit and includes construction of one or more new sewer mains ½ or more miles in length. The project requires a Sewer Connection permit from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Also, it requires an Order of Conditions from the Holden Conservation Commission. MEPA jurisdiction is limited to the subject matter of required or potentially required state permits. These include wastewater, water supply and water quality.

The proponent has designed the project to be consistent with the Watershed Protection Act and to minimize impacts to wetland resource areas. Design elements include avoiding direct alteration of wetlands, minimizing alteration within the buffer zone to wetlands and avoiding and minimizing alterations within the buffer zones for the public water supply. The project includes a stormwater management system consisting of swales and an infiltration basin with a sediment forebay. No work is proposed within areas mapped as Estimated Habitat for rare species. The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) has indicated that the project appears to be consistent with the Watershed Protection Act. DCR previously identified additional issues with the stormwater management system that should be addressed by the proponent as the project proceeds to final design.

Wastewater will flow via gravity sewer to a pump station on the site. The pump station will discharge to the municipal system for treatment and discharge at the Upper Blackstone Wastewater Treatment Plant. Given the proximity of the project to a tributary of the Wachusett Reservoir, DEP has noted concern with the proposed private ownership of the proposed sewage pump station. DEP has indicated that the proponent and the Town should ensure the pump system is reliable and durable and consider contracting agreements to ensure it will be maintained and managed appropriately.

The review of the ENF has served to adequately disclose the potential impacts and mitigation associated with this project. Based on the information in the ENF and after consultation with relevant public agencies, I find that outstanding issues can be addressed through state and local permitting. No further MEPA review is required.

June 9, 2006

Date


Stephen R. Pritchard

Comments received:

6/2/06 Department of Environmental Protection/Central Regional Office (DEP CERO)
5/26/06 Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)

SRP/CDB/cdb