



# *The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*

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July 21, 2006

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

PROJECT NAME: South Street Reconstruction Project  
PROJECT MUNICIPALITY: Dalton  
PROJECT WATERSHED: Housatonic  
EOEA NUMBER: 13821  
PROJECT PROPONENT: Massachusetts Highway Department  
DATE NOTICED IN MONITOR: June 21, 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).

As described in the Environmental Notification Form (ENF), the proposed project involves the reconstruction of a 1.7-mile section of South Street in Dalton, beginning at Division Road at the Dalton/Pittsfield town line, and extending north to Main Street (State Routes 8 and 9). The existing roadway surface is deteriorating and the horizontal and vertical alignments do not meet current minimum safety requirements. The Massachusetts Highway Department (MHD) is proposing to reconstruct and slightly realign the roadway in order to improve vehicular, bicyclist and pedestrian safety along the project route. Portions of the project are located within the Riverfront Area of the Housatonic River and Barton Brook. In addition, portions of the project are located within the National Register-listed Cranesville Historic District.

The project is undergoing review pursuant to Section 11.03(6)(b)(1)(b),

11.03(6)(b)(2)(b) and 11.03(3)(b)(1)(f) of the MEPA Regulations because it involves the widening of an existing roadway by four or more feet for one-half or more miles; because the project will result in the removal of more than 5 public shade trees measuring fourteen or more inches in diameter breast height (dbh); and because the project will result in alterations to greater than ½ an acre of “any other wetlands”, in this case Riverfront Area.. The project requires a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Construction General Permit from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); a Category 1 Programmatic General Permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA); review from the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC); and an Order of Conditions (OOC) from the Dalton Conservation Commission. Because the proponent is a state agency, MEPA jurisdiction is broad and extends to all aspects of the project that may cause significant damage to the environment.

The project involves widening the existing 24.5 to 26.9-foot roadway by 6.7 feet for a total width of 31.2 feet. The increased width of the roadway will accommodate 4-foot shoulders on either side of the roadway and two 11.6-foot travel lanes. An existing sidewalk on the west side of South Street will be reconstructed and extended to run the length of the project area. As part of the project, a paved parking area is proposed at the Town of Dalton’s Greenridge Park to accommodate park visitors.

Geometric improvements are proposed at two intersections. At the southern boundary of the project area, the offset intersection of Hubbard Avenue and Division Road with South Street (which turns into East Street at the Pittsfield border) will be reconfigured to align Hubbard Avenue and Division Road. The realignment will require the demolition of a vacant single-family residence at the northeast corner of the intersection (1125 South Street). The intersection of Grange Hall Road with South Street will also be reconfigured. The existing Y intersection with a large triangular island at its center will be converted to a more standard T intersection. Additional project work includes full depth pavement reconstruction, pavement cold planing and overlay, fence replacement, driveway and walkway reconstruction, landscaping, and installation of guardrail, curbing, wheel chair ramps and pavement markings.

The proposed roadway reconstruction will not result in any new untreated stormwater point discharges. The proposed project meets the definition of a redevelopment under DEP’s Stormwater Management Policy. Although post-development discharge rates will exceed pre-development discharge rates, the drainage system is designed to control the 2- and 10-year storm events. While the project includes an increase in impervious area, the proposed design incorporates changes to improve stormwater runoff conditions, such as curbing to eliminate sheet flow; the installation and/or replacement of 125 catchbasins, 97 of which will be deep sump hooded catchbasins; and street sweeping. In response to comments from the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, the proponent should consider reducing the number of catch basins in the project area by incorporating Low Impact Development site design principles.

The project will result in impacts to 66,112 square feet (sf) of Riverfront Area, 812 sf of impacts to Land Under Water, and 36 linear feet of Bank. An existing 9.8-foot span culvert that carries South Street over Barton Brook will be replaced with a concrete box culvert 9 feet wide and 10 feet high, embedded at least one foot below grade. The culvert replacement was designed in compliance with the General Standards defined in the Massachusetts River and Stream Crossing Standards. The proponent has received an Order of Conditions for the project from the Dalton Conservation Commission (DEP #140-0159). The project will result in the removal of vegetation from the Riverfront Area. A restoration plan incorporating native trees and other vegetation indigenous to Berkshire County should be developed and submitted to the Dalton Conservation Commission. A copy of the Notice of Intent and Order of Conditions should be submitted to the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission as requested.

Proposed work within the National Register-listed Cranseville Historic District will include full depth reconstruction of the roadway, including up to 6.7 feet of widening; a slight realignment of the roadway; sidewalk reconstruction; drainage improvements; wheelchair ramp construction; and guardrail replacement. The work will necessitate the removal of 11 trees within the historic district. The MHC is currently working with the proponent to determine if the proposed road design within the Cranseville Historic District can be adjusted in a way that does not require the removal of public street trees.

MHD's Cultural Resources Unit has reviewed the project under Section 106 of the National Historical Preservation Act and has determined that the proposed improvements will have an Adverse Effect on the Cranseville Historic District. The Effect Finding along with a draft Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) outlining proposed mitigation measures has been submitted to the Federal Highway Administration and the MA State Historic Preservation Officer for review. Mitigation measures outlined in the MOA, which was also submitted with the ENF, include photo documentation of character-defining features of the Cranseville Historic District prior to construction in order to preserve a historic record of the area.

The entire project will result in the removal of approximately 60 public shade trees, including the 11 in the historic district as mentioned above. This impact will be mitigated by the replacement of approximately 120 new trees of a 1.5"-2.5" diameter. The proponent should use native species only for replacement trees and vegetation. I encourage the proponent to consider planting trees of a diameter greater than 1.5"-2.5". Planting more mature trees can help to reduce vehicle speed along South Street and will more readily recreate the historic character of the Cranseville Historic District. The proponent should make clear to the Town the procedures by which it will replace sick or dead trees.

The proponent should note recommendations from the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission regarding the project design. Specifically, the proponent should consider installing advanced warning signage/beacons along South Street approaching the Greenridge Park pedestrian crossing; should add "Bikes on Roadway" signage; should restripe all crosswalks along South Street; and should consider the installation of new

crosswalks at Elaine Avenue/South Street and Grange Hall Road/South Street.

The proponent should note comments from DEP regarding conformance with the Department's Air Pollution Control Regulations and Solid Waste Management Regulations. In addition, comments from DEP's Bureau of Waste Site Cleanup (BWSC) provide guidance regarding the potential for disposal sites that could impact construction activities.

I have determined that the ENF has sufficiently defined the nature and the general elements of the project and proposed measures to avoid and mitigate environmental impacts. I am satisfied that any remaining issues can be adequately addressed during the state and local permitting process. Based on a review of the information provided by the proponent and after consultation with the relevant public agencies, I find that the potential impacts of this project do not warrant further MEPA review.

July 21, 2006

Date



Stephen R. Pritchard

Comments received:

7/6/2006	Massachusetts Historical Commission
7/11/2006	Department of Environmental Protection, Western Regional Office
7/13/2006	Berkshire Regional Planning Commission
7/17/2006	Dalton Historical Commission

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