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September 26, 2008

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

PROJECT NAME : Neponset River Restoration Master Plan – Phase II  
 PROJECT MUNICIPALITY : Boston and Milton  
 PROJECT WATERSHED : Neponset River  
 EEA NUMBER : 14305  
 PROJECT PROPONENT : Department of Conservation and Recreation  
 DATE NOTICED IN MONITOR : August 27, 2008

Pursuant to the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (G. L. c. 30, ss. 61-62I) 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).

According to the Environmental Notification Form (ENF), the proposed project consists of the construction of Phase II of the Neponset River Restoration Master Plan, which is comprised of an approximately eight-foot wide primary path of 5.5 miles with secondary and tertiary trails and a greenway of 125 acres along the Neponset River from the Lower Neponset River Reservation Greenway to Paul's Bridge on the Neponset Valley Parkway with 11 miles of riverbanks. The Lower Neponset River Reservation Greenway currently terminates at Central Avenue on the Milton/Boston line. The project includes a primary bituminous trail, a secondary trail and a tertiary trail. It provides scenic overlooks, new canoe landings, canoe and kayak ramps, a bridge over the river, parking facilities, conservation enhancements, signage and interpretive elements. The proponent will fund the project incrementally over a 10-15 year period.

The proponent has available funding for Phase IIA from the DCR Field House near Mattapan Square to the Martini Shell in Hyde Park. Phase IIA of the Greenway is approximately 14,700 linear feet (lf) or 2.8 miles. The portion of the Greenway from Dana Avenue to approximately 1,300 feet north of Fairmont Avenue is excluded from this Phase IIA. Phase IIB of the project includes the area between Central Avenue and Mattapan Square, the portion of the Greenway from Dana Avenue to approximately 1,300 feet north of Fairmont Avenue, and the area from the Martini Shell to Paul's Bridge. The proponent has not finalized its preferred

alternative for Phase IIB. In 1996, Phase I of the Neponset River Reservation Master Plan was submitted for MEPA review as EOE A #10664.

The project is subject to review pursuant to Sections 11.03(1)(b)(1), 11.03(1)(b)(2), 11.03(3)(b)(1)(d), 11.03(3)(b)(1)(f), and 11.03(6)(b)(2)(c) of the MEPA regulations because the project alters 25 or more acres of land, creates five or more acres of impervious area, alters 5,000 or more square feet of bordering vegetated wetlands (BVW), alters greater than 0.5 acres of other wetlands, includes the cutting of more than five living public shade trees. A Chapter 91 Waterways License for a new boat (canoe and kayak) ramps at the Martini Shell Park and the Greenway bridge over the River and trail system will be required from the Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP). The project may also require a Section 401 Water Quality Certificate from MassDEP. It will require the overall review of the project by the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. Both the Truman Parkway and Neponset Valley Parkway are listed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places. The project will require Orders of Conditions from the Boston and Milton Conservation Commissions. The proponent will be seeking these Orders as a "limited" project under the Wetlands Protection Act. The project will need a Section 10 Permit and a Section 404 Programmatic General Permit from the U.S Army Corps of Engineers. It may also have to comply with the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit for stormwater discharges from a construction site from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Because an agency of the Commonwealth is the proponent, MEPA jurisdiction extends to all aspects of the project that may cause Damage to the Environment, as defined in the MEPA regulations.

According to the proponent, the proposed project would affect approximately 215 lf of Bank, 13,000 square feet (sf) of BVW, 32,300 sf of Bordering Land Subject to Flooding (BLSF), and 145,800 sf of Riverfront Area (RA). The Boston Conservation Commission will be reviewing potential impacts of approximately 75 lf of Bank, 13,000 sf of BVW, 32,300 sf of BLSF, and 25,500 sf of RA. The Milton Conservation Commission will be reviewing potential impacts of approximately 140 lf of Bank and 120,300 sf of RA. The majority of the proposed impacts to wetland resource areas will occur during Phase IIB. The proponent has committed to replicate BVW on a one-to-one basis at a minimum. It will assess appropriate locations along the Neponset River for the development of new BVW and consult with both the Boston and Milton Conservation Commissions. The NPC that will be submitted for Phase IIB will outline these areas in detail.

The quality of stormwater runoff generated by the project will be improved by the implementation of Best Management Practices. Existing site runoff is sheet flow. The project will create approximately 6.3 acres of impervious area. The Greenway design incorporates a two-foot wide infiltration trench along the length of the pathway that will provide stormwater treatment, groundwater recharge, and attenuation. Overflow from the trenches will overtop the

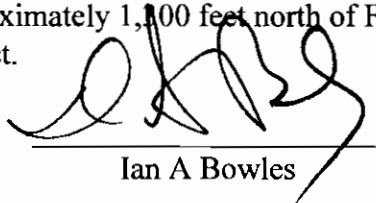
curb and flow through the existing catch basins located within the roadway that outlet to the Neponset River at multiple locations. The proponent has committed to perform an annual inspection and maintenance program for the stormwater collection system and a seasonal sweeping program of the bituminous paths. The proponent should consult with the Boston Water and Sewer Commission (BWSC) regarding any construction-related dewatering that may flow to a BWSC sewer.

Since the banks and adjoining uplands of the Neponset River are considered archaeologically sensitive by MHC, DCR should resolve MHC's concerns regarding Phase IIA of the Greenway prior to any project construction. DCR should conduct an archaeological reconnaissance survey for Phase IIB if it is determined to be necessary by MHC.

Based on a review of the information provided by the proponent, a review of the comment letters, and after consultation with the relevant public agencies, I find that the potential impacts of Phase IIA do not warrant the preparation of an EIR. Phase IIB, most notably from Mattapan Square to Central Avenue, were identified by the proponent for further study to refine the preferred alternative and to identify its specific environmental impacts. The proponent should submit a Notice of Project Change (NPC) when it has refined the preferred alternative for Phase IIB of the project. The NPC should also identify DCR's preferred alternative for the portion of the Greenway from Dana Avenue to approximately 1,000 feet north of Fairmont Avenue, which was excluded from Phase IIA of the project.

September 26, 2008

Date



Ian A Bowles

Comments received:

Boston Natural Areas Network, 8/28/08

dotbike.org, 9/10/08

MHC, 9/12/08

Blue Hill Adventure, 9/15/08

Joseph Tack, 9/15/08

WalkBoston, 9/15/08

BED, 9/16/08

MassDEP/NERO, 9/16/08

BWSC, 9/16/08

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