



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Executive Office of Environmental Affairs

100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900

Boston, MA 02114-2524

MITT ROMNEY
GOVERNOR

KERRY HEALEY
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

ROBERT W. GOLLEDGE, JR.
SECRETARY

Tel. (617) 626-1000
Fax. (617) 626-1181
<http://www.mass.gov/envir>

October 26, 2006

CERTIFICATE OF THE SECRETARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS ON THE 2nd NOTICE OF PROJECT CHANGE

PROJECT NAME: Boston Water and Sewer Commission Materials Handling Facility
PROJECT MUNICIPALITY: Boston
PROJECT WATERSHED: Boston Harbor
EOEA NUMBER: 12776
PROJECT PROPONENT: Boston Water and Sewer Commission
DATE NOTICED IN MONITOR: September 26, 2006

Pursuant to the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (M. G. L. c. 30, ss. 61-62H) and Section 11.10 of the MEPA regulations (301 CMR 11.00), I have reviewed the Notice of Project Change (NPC) submitted on this project and hereby determine that it **does not require** further MEPA review.

Project History

The Boston Water and Sewer Commission (the Commission) is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the wastewater, drainage and water distribution systems in the City of Boston. This maintenance function includes the periodic removal of materials that accumulate in the sewer and drain systems. The Commission currently operates a facility for handling these materials at the site of its former Calf Pasture pumping station at Columbia Point in Dorchester. The Calf Pasture pumping station site has been used for over 20 years to handle catch basin, drain and sewer cleanings and trench excavate. In 1999, the Commission was issued a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) stormwater permit by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) that required more catch basin cleaning and an increase in the amount of materials that are removed.

To effectively handle these materials, a new materials handling facility has been proposed. In 1999 the Commission reached an agreement with University of Massachusetts - Boston Campus (UMass) to swap the Calf Pasture site for a nearby parcel of UMass land where a new materials handling facility would be built. UMass proposed to renovate the Calf Pasture pumping station into a new center for environmental research. Several parties opposed the proposal outlined in the ENF however, and in response the Commission evaluated alternative sites throughout Boston. The proponent filed an Environmental Notification Form (ENF) with the MEPA Office in April 2002 for the proposed the construction of a new materials handling facility for materials from the City of Boston sewer and drain systems on a parcel of land on the University of Massachusetts (UMass) Boston campus in Dorchester. The project was not subject to any MEPA review thresholds under Section 11.03 of the MEPA regulations; however the Commission's enabling legislation requires the Commission to file with MEPA for projects costing more than \$1,000,000. On June 7, 2002, a Certificate on the ENF was issued that determined that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was not required for the project.

1st NPC

In 2005, the Commission filed a Notice Project Change (1st NPC) describing the selection of a new site for the construction of a materials handling facility and a salt storage shed. The proposed 17-acre site was owned by the City of Boston and located at 200-400 Frontage Road adjacent to Interstate 93. The Boston Department of Public Works used the Frontage Road site to store road salt in an open pile. As part of the project, the Commission proposed to construct a new shed to provide covered storage of road salt and sand. As proposed, the materials handling facility contained 26,000 square feet (sf), as compared to 37,500 sf originally proposed for the UMass site, and the salt shed was 14,000 sf. Other improvements consisted of reconfiguring traffic circulation and parking within the site and screening the site from the Walk-to-the-Sea. Under the proposed plan, UMass was to obtain control of the Calf Pasture site for its own use. According to the proponent, the project provided environmental benefits by relocating the facility to a more appropriate site and by providing covered salt storage, clean-up of contaminated soils, and improved appearance of the site from the Walk-to-the-Sea, a proposed pedestrian walkway.

2nd NPC Project Description

As described in this second Notice of Project Change (2nd NPC) the Commission is proposing an alternative project site for the construction of a materials handling facility on a 4-acre parcel of land recently purchased by the Commission located at 180 Alford Street (Route 99) in the Charlestown section of the City of Boston. The project site's western boundary borders on a tidal portion of the Mystic River. The materials handling facility building will contain approximately 34,250 square feet (sf), of materials processing space and office space. The proposed site drive will be located on Alford Street across from the signalized Boston Edison Gate/Alford Street intersection. An emergency access drive will be located approximately 160 feet south of the Dexter Street/Alford Street intersection.

The project also includes the construction of 12 surface parking spaces, internal roadway, and related utilities and stormwater management infrastructure. Other improvements will consist of reconstructing the proposed site drive/Boston Edison Gate intersection with a new curb cut to include wheelchair ramps, new pavement marking and signage, and installation of new traffic signal equipment.

Wetlands

Most of the project site is filled, landlocked tidelands. The two proposed buildings are separated from flowed tidelands, Fort Point Channel, by West Fourth Street; are at least 800 feet from the high water mark; and are not located in a Designated Port Area. Therefore, the project is not under Chapter 91 jurisdiction and a waterways license is not required. In their comments, the Charlestown Waterfront Coalition has indicated that portions of the project site may be located within the Mystic River floodplain. I ask that the proponent consult with the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) to ensure that any proposed construction located within the 100-year floodplain will meet applicable state building codes (Section 3107.0) and comply with applicable federal flood plain management policies (Executive Order 11988, Flood Plain Management) for the construction of buildings within the 100-year floodplain.

Water and Wastewater

The Commission estimates that the facility will handle approximately 100 tons per day (tpd) of catch basin cleanings, 2 tpd of sewer cleanings, and 35 tpd of trench excavate. As described in the 2nd NPC submittal, the facility will generate approximately 5,035 gpd of wastewater for washdown of the facility's floor and drains as well as for restroom facilities (285 gpd), and approximately 4,750 gpd from the dewatering of catch basin cleanings) which will be discharged to the existing Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) sewer system. These quantities are the same as those reviewed in the ENF and the 1st NPC. The discharge of wastewater from the project to MWRA's sewer system will require a Sewer Use Discharge Permit from the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA). The proponent will work with the MWRA to ensure that the facility complies with MWRA regulations and to obtain the permit.

Transportation

The proposed materials handling facility will generate approximately 60 vehicle trips per day. The NPC included a traffic impact and access study for the Alford Street site that concluded that the proposed materials handling facility will have no significant impact on traffic operations at the Dexter Street/Alford Street and site drive/Alford Street intersections. The proponent has discussed the project with the Massachusetts Highway Department (MHD), which has determined that a State Highway Access Permit is not required.

Noise and Air Quality

The materials handling facility will generate noise from truck traffic accessing the site. The operations of loading, unloading and handling the materials will be entirely enclosed within the proposed building, which will reduce noise and odors. The proponent should note comments from DEP and the City of Boston related to construction period air quality impacts.

Solid Waste

The MassDEP has determined that the proposed facility is exempt from site assignment and permitting as a solid waste facility under 310 CMR 16.00 and 310 CMR 19.00, provided that the facility incorporates good management practices for the handling and storage of material; that the operation is carried out in a manner that prevents the discharge of pollutants; and that the facility involves only the temporary storage and handling of materials at the site and does not include processing or treatment of the materials.

Hazardous Waste

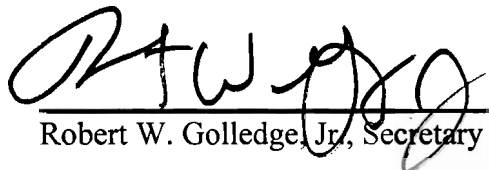
In their comments, MassDEP has identified at least two sites, located within and adjacent to the project site where a release of hazardous waste material or fuel oil to soil or groundwater has been reported (RTN 3-0025988, RTN 3-0022499). I strongly recommend that the proponent consult with MassDEP's Bureau of Waste Site Cleanup (BWSC) in the final design of this project to explore what impacts, if any, the proposed project might have on these hazardous waste release sites, and to evaluate the proponent's need for retaining a Licensed Site Professional (LSP) to assist in the project's construction. The proponent should ensure that the project contractors and sub-contractors maintain an emergency response plan for performing appropriate response actions in the event contamination is encountered during project construction.

Construction Period Impacts

The proponent should evaluate and mitigate construction period impacts, including impacts from earth moving/blasting, impacts to vegetation, potential impacts from erosion and sedimentation, traffic impacts on adjacent roadways, and impacts to adjacent land uses. MassDEP has recommended that the proponent implement a construction period diesel emission mitigation plan and should require its contractors to retrofit diesel-powered equipment with emissions controls, such as particulate filters or traps, and use low-sulfur diesel fuel. The proponent should also commit to specific TDM measures that can be implemented during construction. The proponent should consult with MassDEP during final project design and construction.

Based on a review of the information provided in the 2nd NPC, and after consultation with the relevant public agencies, I find that the potential impacts of this project change do not warrant the preparation of an EIR. No further MEPA review is required at this time.

October 26, 2006
Date


Robert W. Golledge, Jr., Secretary

Comments Received:

10/16/06 Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) – NERO
10/16/06 Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries
10/18/06 Charlestown Waterfront Coalition

RWG/NCZ/ncz

2nd NPC #12776