

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Executive Office of Environmental Affairs ■ MEPA Office

ENF

Environmental Notification Form

<i>For Office Use Only</i> Executive Office of Environmental Affairs	
EOEA No.:	13382
MEPA Analyst:	Aisling Eglinton
Phone: 617-626-	1024

The information requested on this form must be completed to begin MEPA Review in accordance with the provisions of the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act, 301 CMR 11.00.

Project Name: Autumn Ridge Active Adult Community		
Street: Groton Road		
Municipality: Ayer	Watershed: Nashua River	
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: 15472045 N 949227 E (NAD 83)	Latitude: 042° 34' Longitude: 071° 34'	
Estimated commencement date: 4, 2005	Estimated completion date: 12, 2008	
Approximate cost: \$21 M	Status of project design: 95% complete	
Proponent: Mr. Steven H. Smith		
Street: 4 Douglas Road		
Municipality: Westford	State: MA	Zip Code: 01886
Name of Contact Person From Whom Copies of this ENF May Be Obtained: Calvin G. Mabvurunge		
Firm/Agency: Goldsmith, Prest & Ringwall	Street: 39 Main Street, Suite 301	
Municipality: Ayer	State: MA	Zip Code: 01432
Phone: 978.772.1590	Fax: 978.772.1591	E-mail: info@gpr-inc

- Does this project meet or exceed a mandatory EIR threshold (see 301 CMR 11.03)?
 Yes No
- Has this project been filed with MEPA before?
 Yes (EOEA No. _____) No
- Has any project on this site been filed with MEPA before?
 Yes (EOEA No. _____) No
- Is this an Expanded ENF (see 301 CMR 11.05(7)) requesting:
- a Single EIR? (see 301 CMR 11.06(8)) Yes No
 - a Special Review Procedure? (see 301CMR 11.09) Yes No
 - a Waiver of mandatory EIR? (see 301 CMR 11.11) Yes No
 - a Phase I Waiver? (see 301 CMR 11.11) Yes No

Identify any financial assistance or land transfer from an agency of the Commonwealth, including the agency name and the amount of funding or land area (in acres): None

Are you requesting coordinated review with any other federal, state, regional, or local agency?
 Yes (Specify: Ayer Sewer Department) No

List Local or Federal Permits and Approvals: DEP Sewer Connection/Extension Permit

Which ENF or EIR review threshold(s) does the project meet or exceed (see 301 CMR 11.03):

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Land | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rare Species | <input type="checkbox"/> Wetlands, Waterways, & Tidelands |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Water | <input type="checkbox"/> Wastewater | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energy | <input type="checkbox"/> Air | <input type="checkbox"/> Solid & Hazardous Waste |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ACEC | <input type="checkbox"/> Regulations | <input type="checkbox"/> Historical & Archaeological Resources |

Summary of Project Size & Environmental Impacts	Existing	Change	Total	State Permits & Approvals
LAND				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Order of Conditions <input type="checkbox"/> Superseding Order of Conditions <input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 91 License <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 401 Water Quality Certification <input type="checkbox"/> MHD or MDC Access Permit <input type="checkbox"/> Water Management Act Permit <input type="checkbox"/> New Source Approval <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DEP or MWRA Sewer Connection/ Extension Permit <input type="checkbox"/> Other Permits <i>(including Legislative Approvals) – Specify:</i>
Total site acreage	67.5			
New acres of land altered		12		
Acres of impervious area	0.5	5.2	5.7	
Square feet of new bordering vegetated wetlands alteration		2,300		
Square feet of new other wetland alteration		0		
Acres of new non-water dependent use of tidelands or waterways		0		
STRUCTURES				
Gross square footage	0	128,108	128,108	
Number of housing units	0	56	56	
Maximum height (in feet)	0	40	40	
TRANSPORTATION				
Vehicle trips per day	0	155	155	
Parking spaces	0	28	28	
WATER/WASTEWATER				
Gallons/day (GPD) of water use	0	9,000	9,000	
GPD water withdrawal	0	9,000	9,000	
GPD wastewater generation/ treatment	0	9,740/0	9,740	
Length of water/sewer mains (in miles)	0	0.46/0.87	1.33	

CONSERVATION LAND: Will the project involve the conversion of public parkland or other Article 97 public natural resources to any purpose not in accordance with Article 97?

- Yes (Specify _____) No

Will it involve the release of any conservation restriction, preservation restriction, agricultural preservation

restriction, or watershed preservation restriction?

Yes (Specify _____) No

RARE SPECIES: Does the project site include Estimated Habitat of Rare Species, Vernal Pools, Priority Sites of Rare Species, or Exemplary Natural Communities?

Yes (Specify: Estimated Habitat of Rare Species) No

HISTORICAL /ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES: Does the project site include any structure, site or district listed in the State Register of Historic Place or the inventory of Historic and Archaeological Assets of the Commonwealth?

Yes (Specify _____) No

If yes, does the project involve any demolition or destruction of any listed or inventoried historic or archaeological resources?

Yes (Specify _____) No

AREAS OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN: Is the project in or adjacent to an Area of Critical Environmental Concern?

Yes (Specify: Petapawag) No

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The project description should include (a) a description of the project site, (b) a description of both on-site and off-site alternatives and the impacts associated with each alternative, and (c) potential on-site and off-site mitigation measures for each alternative (You may attach one additional page, if necessary.)

SEE ATTACHED NARRATIVE

LAND SECTION – all proponents must fill out this section

I. Thresholds / Permits

A. Does the project meet or exceed any review thresholds related to **land** (see 301 CMR 11.03(1))
X Yes ___ No; if yes, specify each threshold:

II. Impacts and Permits

A. Describe, in acres, the current and proposed character of the project site, as follows:

	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Change</u>	<u>Total</u>
Footprint of buildings	<u>0</u>	<u>1.5</u>	<u>1.5</u>
Roadways, parking, and other paved areas	<u>0</u>	<u>3.7</u>	<u>3.7</u>
Other altered areas (describe) grading	<u>0</u>	<u>6.9</u>	<u>6.9</u>
Undeveloped areas	<u>67.5</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>55.5</u>

B. Has any part of the project site been in active agricultural use in the last three years?
X Yes ___ No; if yes, how many acres of land in agricultural use (with agricultural soils) will be converted to nonagricultural use?

C. Is any part of the project site currently or proposed to be in active forestry use?
___ Yes X No; if yes, please describe current and proposed forestry activities and indicate whether any part of the site is the subject of a DEM-approved forest management plan:

D. Does any part of the project involve conversion of land held for natural resources purposes in accordance with Article 97 of the Amendments to the Constitution of the Commonwealth to any purpose not in accordance with Article 97? ___ Yes X No; if yes, describe:

E. Is any part of the project site currently subject to a conservation restriction, preservation

NARRATIVE
to accompany
ENVIRONMENTAL NOTIFICATION
Autumn Ridge – Active Adult Community, Ayer, MA

GENERAL

The purpose of this project is to develop a 56 unit active adult (over-(age)55) clustered condominium development with 8 residential buildings and one small community building set on approximately 12 acres of a total 68 acre parcel of land. The site is located east of Washington Street, across from Nashoba Deaconess Hospital, just south the Ayer/Groton town line. The land is now undeveloped with no man-made impervious surfaces. The land consists of woods, open fields, and wetlands. Area classified as wetland covers about 18 acres, or about 29% of the site. Environmental protection will be improved through the employment of stormwater Best Management Practices (BMP).

Work under this notice will include the road and building construction and associated grading, water and wastewater systems, minimal related grading within Estimated/Priority Habitat for rare species, wetlands and the 100-Foot Wetland Buffer Zone and wetland replication.

JURISDICTION

The primary resource area is an intermittent stream that starts on the property just beyond (southeast of) the front property line and flows north to south. Attendant to this resource are bordering vegetated wetlands whose buffer zones project onto portions of the development. Review thresholds triggering MEPA review of this project under Environmental Notification are as follows:

301 CMR 11.03 (1)(b) Land Section

The development will result in about 5.2 acres of impervious area. This is made up of access roads and driveways, parking, and buildings. Consideration was given to ground water recharge by reducing paved surface to minimum acceptable for safety, and more consideration given to preserving open space and the view-shed from Groton Road.

301 CMR 11.03 (2)(b) Rare Species

The wildlife habitat areas identified include a corner of the field and some of the woods along the edge of the field where this development is proposed. The habitat area within the development site is approximately an acre, which is less than 3% of the estimated habitat area on this site. The proposed disturbance is at the very outer edge of the estimated habitat areas.

A rare turtle nesting habitat study was performed as requested by Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP File: 04-14426). Both the area of the project that is within the Estimated/Priority Habitat for rare species, as well as the upper field and the adjacent field that are outside of the estimated habitat, were observed. The study results indicate that the grass was extremely thick, making travel slow and difficult for turtles, and the root mass was also thick enough that digging for nesting would be very difficult.

Consequently, no evidence of any turtles of any kind, nor of turtles nesting, was found within the estimated habitat area, or in the adjacent areas at any time throughout the study. The small area of disturbance this project will cause is not within the actual habitat area of the local rare species of turtles, and will not result in a prohibited "take" under the MA Endangered Species Act (321 CMR 10.04) (SEE TURTLE NESTING STUDY).

301 CMR 11.03 (3)(b) Wetlands, Waterways, and Tidelands

The proposed construction will not meet any review threshold related to Wetlands, Waterways, and Tidelands. However, the project does require a local order of conditions. A comprehensive Erosion and Sediment Control Plan has been included to minimize adverse impacts on protected resource area as required (310 CMR 10.00).

301 CMR 11.03 (5)(b) Wastewater

The proposed construction will not meet any review threshold related to Wastewater. However, the project does require DEP Sewer Connection/Extension Permit for extension of sewer main on Groton Road as well as connections to said extension along Groton Road.

301 CMR 11.03 (11)(b) Area Of Environmental Critical Concern.

The site is within the Petapawag ACEC. Of the nine groups of the inland resource features listed in the ACEC Regulations, inland wetlands and habitat resources are the two inland resources on this site. A minimum of four groups of the inland resource is required for nomination review under these regulations.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

The watershed will drain into two detention basins as shown on the plans. Runoff from the access roadway will be handled in open swales alongside the roadway which will provide sediment removal and water quality treatment prior to runoff reaching a resource area. This development project meets the MDEP Stormwater Management Standards through the employment of Best Management Practices that address groundwater recharge, water quality (first flush) retention, and suspended solids removal. Deep sump catch basins, water quality swales and detention basins have been incorporated to intercept / pre-treat runoff from the site.

ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS

Given the slopes on this site, high ground water in low lying areas and location and size of resource areas to be protected, there are no practicable alternatives that will accomplish the Project Purpose of preserving view-shed from Groton Road and open space. This makes finding alternatives development areas infeasible. Because the stream bisects the site separating the developable area from the access route, alteration of this resource and attendant wetlands is unavoidable under a development scenario. Sewer tie-ins provided to abutters constitutes a significant environmental improvement to what currently exists.

CONCLUSION

A comprehensive Operations and Maintenance Plan has been designed to ensure compliance with federal/state/local plans and regulations. From a master planning perspective, the land is located within the Cluster Residential Option bubble shown on Major Plan Recommendations, Ayer Comprehensive Plan – Phase II, dated October, 1997. The proposed use is consistent with the intent and spirit of this plan as well as housing, land use and resource protection recommendations of the Town of Ayer Comprehensive Plan Update draft (2004).