

ENF Environmental Notification Form

<i>For Office Use Only</i> <i>Executive Office of Environmental Affairs</i>	
EOEA No.:	12922
MEPA Analyst:	ARTHUR Pugsley
Phone: 617-626-	1029

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: Plantation Heights		
Street: 505-509 Plantation Street		
Municipality: Worcester, Massachusetts	Watershed: Blackstone	
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: 19 271 92W 46 855 58 N	Latitude: 71 ⁰ 76' 98 W	Longitude: 42 ⁰ 28' 98" N
Estimated commencement date: March 2003	Estimated completion date: March 2006	
Approximate cost: \$33 million	Status of project design: 100 %complete	
Proponent: Mirick & Daniels, Inc.		
Street: 15 Ararat Street		
Municipality: Worcester	State: MA	Zip Code: 01606
Name of Contact Person From Whom Copies of this ENF May Be Obtained: Doug Vigneau		
Firm/Agency: BSC Group, Inc.	Street: 33 Waldo Street	
Municipality: Worcester	State: MA	Zip Code: 01608
Phone: 508-792-4500	Fax: 508-792-4509	E-mail: dvigneau@bscgroup.com

- 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. 5994) No
- Has any project on this site been filed with MEPA before?
 Yes (EOEA No. 5548) 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 301 CMR 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): The project is not seeking either financial assistance or a land transfer from an agency of the Commonwealth.

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

List Local or Federal Permits and Approvals: The project has received all Local and Federal Permits and Approvals, including but not limited to: Order of Conditions from the Worcester Conservation Commission; Worcester Planning Board Site Plan Approval; Worcester Building Permit and, USEPA NPDES Construction 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 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 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 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	52.0			
New acres of land altered		12.73		
Acres of impervious area	4.38	7.21	11.59	
Square feet of new bordering vegetated wetlands alteration		880		
Square feet of new other wetland alteration		0		
Acres of new non-water dependent use of tidelands or waterways		N/A		
STRUCTURES				
Gross square footage	160,000+	509,500+	669,500+	
Number of housing units	107	330	437	
Maximum height (in feet)	<70	<70	<70	
TRANSPORTATION				
Vehicle trips per day	635	1,977	2,612	
Parking spaces	200+	640	840+	
WATER/WASTEWATER				
Gallons/day (GPD) of water use	21,890	65,670	87,560	
GPD water withdrawal	N/A	N/A	N/A	
GPD wastewater generation/ treatment	21,890	65,670	87,560	
Length of water/sewer mains (in miles)	0.27	0.25	0.52	

* Order of Conditions issued on May 24, 1999 (DEP File No. 349-632 and WCC File No. 99-11). Permission to extend the Order has been granted by the Worcester Conservation Commission.

**DEP Sewer Extension Permit (#W014128) issued November 30, 2000 – Permit was issued without the realization that MEPA Certification is also required. Permit Application incorrectly indicated that MEPA review is not required.

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 _____) 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 _____) 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.*)

The project consists of the construction of three multi-unit apartment buildings, each having 110 dwelling units, on an approximately 27.9+ acre parcel located at 505-509 Plantation Street in Worcester, Massachusetts. Approximately one-third of the project site has previously been cleared while the remainder of the property site consists largely of mature deciduous vegetation. Within the wooded area, wetlands bordering on Coal Mine Brook will remain undisturbed. Coal Mine Brook, so-named for a coal mine in operation on a portion of the site from 1822-1833 will be fully protected from development as well as from any direct discharge from stormwater runoff. In addition, the developer has an agreement with the Regional Environmental Council for preserving this area and providing a hiking trail.

The total project area is approximately 52+ acres which has been subdivided into four lots and the project lot has been further subdivided (for financing purposes only) into three lots (lots 4-1 (12.8+ acres); 4-2 (7.2+ acres); and, 4-3 (7.9+ acres). Lot 1 (9.6+ acres) is the site of an existing 107-unit mid-rise (5 and 6 story) apartment building constructed in 1986. An ENF was filed for that project in 1985 (EOEA #5548). No further MEPA review was required. Lot 2 (7.3 acres) and Lot 3 (7.2 acres) are undeveloped and there are no plans to develop these lots at this time. Lot 3 in particular is largely wetland and provides no viable alternatives for development. It is likely that Lot 3 will either be placed in conservation restriction and/or deeded for use by Mass Audubon. Lot 2, which is adjacent to the existing site access drive, provides a bucolic vista for residents and visitors entering the Plantation Tower residential complex. Although development of Lot 2 is not currently contemplated, in keeping with the full disclosure requirements of MEPA, this property could be developed as multi-family housing under City of Worcester zoning. Due to topographic considerations, the maximum number of multi-family units that could be constructed on Lot 2 is capped at 24 units.

Development of three additional apartment buildings in similar size and scope has been contemplated since 1986 (EOEA #5994). However, because of the decline in the housing market in the late 1980's further onsite development was abandoned and the former project proponent discontinued the conclusion of the MEPA review process. At the time of that filing and under the MEPA Regulations in effect at that time, the project triggered a Categorical Inclusion for the preparation of an EIR as a result of the number of housing units (350 units) proposed (301 CMR 10.31 (17)). That threshold no longer exists, as it did not speak specifically to a project's potential to impact the environment adversely.

Instead, the revised MEPA Regulations capture projects that have the potential to impact the environment adversely and in this case, MEPA review is now triggered as a result of the project's creation of five or more acres of impervious area (301 CMR 11.03(1)(b)(2)). The current project has received all local approvals and potential impacts to the environment have proven to be negligible. The various review agencies within the City of Worcester have agreed through their approvals of the project that sufficient water, wastewater capacity, and traffic accommodations exist to support the project. In fact, the water, wastewater and other utility lines existing in the Plantation Heights access road to Plantation Street are already sized to accommodate the additional flows that will be generated by the larger project. Hence, there will be no need to excavate/construct on any City property or roadways. Stormwater will be treated and recharged on site. The ENF contains considerable information with respect to these approvals and issues.

Access to the new buildings will be from the existing access road that ascends from Plantation Street. The existing and proposed apartment buildings are set well back (approximately 800 to 1,400 feet) from Plantation Street on a wooded hill that provides excellent screening to both Plantation Street to the south and west and Route I-290 to the north. Green Hill Park borders the site to the east and will continue to be well buffered from the site largely as a result of the forested wetland area bordering on Coal Mine Brook. A greenbelt easement along the north side of the site preserves views and woodland habitat. Access to the proposed East Side Trail complex will be available from the site.

By the original zoning, the developer had the option of constructing approximately 174 single-family homes that would have resulted in the development of the entire 52 acres (excepting wetland areas). Another potential development plan called for the construction of five buildings totaling 540 units. This plan was eliminated from further consideration based both on fiscal and environmental considerations. Alternatives to the project consist of a lesser build out; however because sufficient infrastructure exists and moreover the project does not overly burden those systems the preferred build out is appropriate. The preferred alternative has significantly lower impact to the site, preserving more than 10± acres of undisturbed land (this acreage includes the potential for developing Lot 2).

In addition to the greenbelt easement and protection of the coal mine itself, the project has been designed to maximize preservation of the natural environment, including locating the buildings to blend with the site's existing topography. Tree removal will be selective to maximize preservation of mature vegetation. The project site will be fully landscaped and similar to the existing program. The overall design of the project incorporates the landscape plan with existing vegetation and trees. Native species of trees, grasses and ground cover will be utilized and signature specimens will be planted to soften the mass of the buildings proposed.