

For Office Use Only
Executive Office of Environmental Affairs

EOEA No.: *13414*
 MEPA Analyst: *Aisling Eglinton*
 Phone: 617-626-*1024*

ENF Environmental Notification Form

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: The Woodlands at Laurel Hill		
Street: Nagog Park, Westford Lane (Acton)/Durkee Lane (Westford)		
Municipality: Acton and Westford	Watershed: Merrimack/SuAsCo	
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: N47 10 746N, E300 894E	Latitude: 42° 31' 31" N Longitude: 71° 25' 26" W	
Estimated commencement date: 2005	Estimated completion date: 2007	
Approximate cost: \$ 68,000,000±	Status of project design: 60%	%complete
Proponent: The Woodlands at Laurel Hill LLC		
Street: 676 Elm Street, Suite 300		
Municipality: Concord	State: MA	Zip Code: 01742
Name of Contact Person From Whom Copies of this ENF May Be Obtained: William E. Murray, RLA		
Firm/Agency: PLACES Site Consultants, Inc	Street: 694 Main Street, Suite 3	
Municipality: Holden	State: MA	Zip Code: 01520-1862
Phone: 508-829-0333	Fax: 508-829-0904	E-mail: wmmurray@verizon.net

- 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 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):

Massachusetts Development Finance Agency ("MassDevelopment")
HUD 221(D)(4) Program
Total amount of financial assistance - \$50,000,000±

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

List Local or Federal Permits and Approvals:

Notices of Intent (Westford, Acton); Sewage Disposal Works Permit (Westford, Acton); Water Extension Permit (Acton, Littleton); Street Opening Permit (Acton, Westford); Comprehensive Permits (Acton, Westford); NPDES Permit- EPA

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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 401 Water Quality Certification <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MHD or MDC Access Permit <input type="checkbox"/> Water Management Act Permit <input type="checkbox"/> New Source Approval <input type="checkbox"/> DEP or MWRA Sewer Connection/Extension Permit* <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other Permits (including Legislative Approvals) – Specify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Determination of Insignificance (IBT, MA Water Resources Commission) ▪ Groundwater Discharge Permit (MA DEP) ▪ Conservation and Management Permit (MESA)
Total site acreage	73.95			
New acres of land altered		15.39		
Acres of impervious area	1.76	12.83	14.59	
Square feet of new bordering vegetated wetlands alteration		0		
Square feet of new other wetland alteration		0		
Acres of new non-water dependent use of tidelands or waterways		0		
STRUCTURES				
Gross square footage	18,890	456,656	475,546	
Number of housing units	5	437	442	
Maximum height (in feet)	35'	11'8"	46'8"	
TRANSPORTATION				
Vehicle trips per day	50 adt	2,988 adt	3,038 adt	
Parking spaces	28	622	650	

WATER/WASTEWATER

Gallons/day (GPD) of water use	2,200	90,785	92,985
GPD water withdrawal	2,200	-2,200 +30,000 Irrigation	30,000i
GPD wastewater generation/treatment	2,200 (Title 5 systems)	92,985 (WWTF)	96,000 (WWTF capacity)
Length of water/sewer mains (in miles)	0 0	0.91 (sewer) 1.74 (water)	0.91 (sewer) 1.74 (water)

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

Three vernal pools identified as habitat for blue-spotted salamander, a species of special concern are located on the site.

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.*)

i 30,000 gpd estimated seasonal irrigation

(a) Existing conditions and proposed project

The proposed project, "The Woodlands at Laurel Hill", will create a total of 374 "for-rent" residential units, 296 in Acton and 78 in Westford. Of these, 75 Acton units and 20 Westford units will be affordable housing pursuant to the requirements of M.G.L. Chapter 40B. An additional 62 "for Sale" townhouses are proposed on Lot 4 in Acton a portion of which will be affordable. The site is 73.95 acres in size and is located off Nagog Park Road, an existing private road off Great Road, a state highway (Route 2A/119) and Durkee Lane/Westford Road. Neighboring uses include commercial and professional (Nagog Mall and Nagog Office Park), residential (single family homes, apartment buildings and condominiums) and recreational (a privately owned horseback riding facility, Westford Conservation land, abandoned railroad bed and "NARA", a Town of Acton recreation area featuring a variety of water and land-based activity opportunities).

The Westford portion of the site is mostly wooded and includes existing residential structures and a barn accessed from Durkee Lane. The Acton portion has been previously disturbed for access roads, drainage structures, and other features intended for industrial/office park development, i.e. expansion of the existing Nagog Office Park just south of the site. No hazardous waste sites are on or in the vicinity of the site. A small portion of 100-year floodplain is in the southeasterly corner of the site; no work is planned within the floodplain. Undeveloped portions of the site now feature wooded knolls, open areas with grass and low herbaceous plants, and bordering vegetated wetlands along the site's western boundary. Three vernal pools providing breeding habitat for blue-spotted salamander have been identified and evaluated. The proponent's biological consultant, Oxbow Associates, Inc. has conducted field study of the area and conferred with NHESP. A draft Conservation and Management Plan pursuant to the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act has been prepared in conjunction with NHESP. Components of the Conservation and Management Plan, developed with NHESP, include placement of a Conservation Restriction on lands adjacent to Town of Westford conservation land for the perpetual protection of rare species habitat. Additional measures include post-construction monitoring and habitat improvement endorsed by NHESP.

The project will be served by public water (Littleton Public Water District and Acton Water District) and by a new wastewater treatment facility. On-site wells will be installed for the purpose of obtaining water for irrigation.

(b) Alternatives

Alternative uses allowed by zoning include the following:

Westford RA Zoning District: Single-family dwellings and associated uses (home occupation, accessory structures, parking, storage); religious; educational (on land owned or leased by the Commonwealth or any of its agencies), child care facility; municipal facility; agricultural/ horticultural; sale of produce, wine and dairy products; nonprofit membership club; sand and gravel removal; access to other district; professional office.

Acton OP-1 Office District: Agriculture, Conservation, Municipal, Education, Religious, Child Care Facility, Office, Health Care Facility, Repair Shop, Technical Shop, Building Trade Shop, Warehouse, Manufacturing.

Acton Affordable Housing Overlay District: Minor or Major Affordable Housing Development.

The site previously was approved for construction of a 115,000 s.f. office building as an addition to the existing Nagog Office Park. Recent local, regional and state planning documents indicate that there now is a primary need to provide housing for employees of existing area businesses, specifically rental units.

The Executive Office for Administration & Finance Policy Report 4 Bringing Down the Barriers – Changing Housing Supply Dynamics in Massachusetts October 2000 notes: "The rising prices increase the housing cost of renters and prospective homeowners, make it difficult for people to live in the communities in which they grew up or currently work, and hurt the economic competitiveness of the state to the extent that businesses and employees choose to locate in states with lower housing costs." The report also points out the fact that Massachusetts' housing production trails national rates, even while price increases lead the nation, and that Massachusetts produces multifamily housing at about 1/3 the per capita rate that the nation does. "Multifamily developments play an important role in creating lower cost, lower priced housing while preserving open space."

2020 Vision: Planning for Growth in the Northern Middlesex Region (Northern Middlesex Council of Governments) notes: "Affordable rentals for families who cannot afford to buy are especially scarce."

During the preparation of this document, one of the conclusions of a charrette session in February 1999 was that, among the "hardest tasks" needed is to "promote a more equitable distribution of affordable housing in the region."

The *Regional Development Plan for Metropolitan Boston* (Metropolitan Area Planning Commission, 1993) notes that homeownership has grown but 22 communities experienced a net loss of rental units: "The loss of rental housing occurred in spite of a very strong need for rental units." Among the Plan's Goals & Objectives is "Promote greater access to affordable housing throughout the region."

The most recent Town of Acton Master Plan Update 1998 notes that "Acton still lags in the provision of affordable housing, even in comparison to surrounding communities with similar or higher average incomes and residential values."

Another recent Town of Acton document, "*To Live in Acton*" Exec Order 418 Community Development Plan June 2004, reports, "during the 1990's, homes that served as rental units were converted to homeownership when market demand for housing accelerated after the recession."

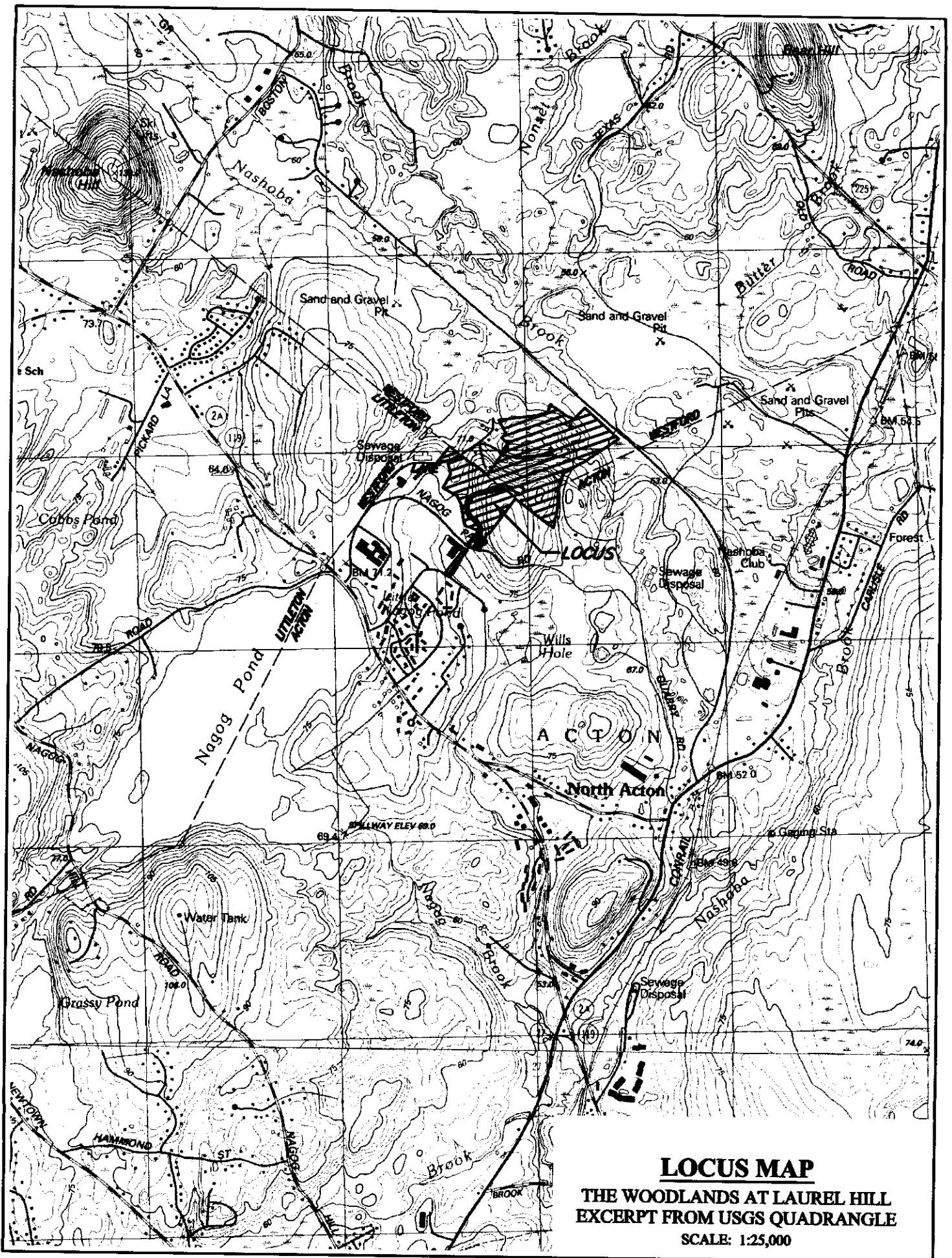
This document further notes that the inventory of rental units in Acton's region is characteristically expensive, older than home ownership units, and vulnerable to homeownership conversion.

A priority of the Town of Westford, as expressed in a report of the Land Use Priorities Committee authorized by Board of Selectmen in January 2000 is "to provide alternative housing."

A number of different alternative scenarios for affordable housing were discussed with the towns of Westford and Acton before the plans represented by this ENF were submitted to the Boards of Appeal in each town for Comprehensive Permits under M.G.L. Chapter 40B. The resulting plan reflects the priorities and preferences expressed at these pre-application meetings, and it is consistent with goals and objectives of local and regional planning documents. The alternative layouts generally resulted in greater overall site disturbances than the selected development scheme.

(c) Mitigation Measures

Proposed mitigation measures include site plan design to prevent impacts to vernal pools and rare wildlife habitat; a comprehensive stormwater management plan utilizing "BMPs" consistent with current DEP stormwater policies; modifications to existing traffic signal timings and phasings at affected intersections to mitigate additional traffic generated by the proposed project and to maintain acceptable operating conditions.



LOCUS MAP

THE WOODLANDS AT LAUREL HILL
EXCERPT FROM USGS QUADRANGLE

SCALE: 1:25,000