Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs ■ MEPA Office

For Office Use Only *Executive Office of Environmental Affairs*
MEPA Analyst:
Phone: 617-626-

Notice of Project Change

The information requested on this form must be completed to begin MEPA Review of a NPC in accordance with the provisions of the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act and its implementing regulations (see 301 CMR 11.10(1)).

EEA # **15835**		
Project Name: **Access Improvements to Western Avenue – East Phase**		
Street Address: **Western Ave, West Silver Street, Lloyds Hill Rd, Court St**		
Municipality: **Westfield**	Watershed: **Westfield**	
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: **4665922.5 N to 4665439.1 N, Zone 18T** **683629 E to 685165.1 E, Zone 18T**	Latitude: **42°7'26.08" N to 42°7'9.12" N** Longitude: **72°46'42.50" W to 72°45'36.24" W**	
Estimated commencement date: April 2021	Estimated completion date: November 2022	
Project Type: **Highway Reconstruction**	Status of project design: **25** %complete	
Proponent: **City of Westfield**		
Street Address: **59 Court Street**		
Municipality: **Westfield**	State: **MA**	Zip Code: **01085**
Name of Contact Person: **Michael R. Gagnon**		
Firm/Agency: **Milone & MacBroom, Inc.**	Street Address: **1350 Main St, Suite 1012**	
Municipality: **Springfield**	State: **MA**	Zip Code: **01103**
Phone: **(413) 241-6920**	Fax:	E-mail: **mgagnon@mminc.com**

With this Notice of Project Change, are you 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

Which MEPA review threshold(s) does the project meet or exceed (see 301 CMR 11.03)?

310 CMR 11.03(6)(b)2.b. cut five (5) or more living public shade trees of 14 or more inches in diameter at breast height.

310 CMR 11.03(6)(b)1.b Widening of an existing roadway by 4 or more feet for ½ or more miles

Which State Agency Permits will the project require?

A Request for Determination of Applicability (RDA) will be filed with the local Conservation Commission for work within the buffer zone to resource areas.

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:

Financial Assistance: Massachusetts Department of Transportation, $8,500,000

PROJECT INFORMATION

In 25 words or less, what is the project change? The project change involves . . .
The project was split into two phases due to funding constraints. MEPA requested the second phase be treated as a continuation of the first phase.

See full project change description beginning on page 3.

Date of publication of availability of the ENF in the Environmental Monitor: (Date: **March 21, 2018**)

Was an EIR required? ☐Yes ☒No; if yes,
was a Draft EIR filed? ☐Yes (Date:) ☐No
was a Final EIR filed? ☐Yes (Date:) ☐No
was a Single EIR filed? ☐Yes (Date:) ☐No

Have other NPCs been filed? ☐Yes (Date(s):) ☒No

If this is a NPC solely for lapse of time (see 301 CMR 11.10(2)) proceed directly to **ATTACHMENTS & SIGNATURES**.

PERMITS / FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE / LAND TRANSFER
List or describe all new or modified state permits, financial assistance, or land transfers not previously reviewed: **dd w/ list of State Agency Actions (e.g., Agency Project, Financial Assistance, Land Transfer, List of Permits)**

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation is providing $8,500,000 of financial assistance for the second phase (East Phase) of the project.

Are you requesting a finding that this project change is insignificant? A change in a Project is ordinarily insignificant if it results solely in an increase in square footage, linear footage, height, depth or other relevant measures of the physical dimensions of the Project of less than 10% over estimates previously reviewed, provided the increase does not meet or exceed any review thresholds. A change in a Project is also ordinarily insignificant if it results solely in an increase in impacts of less than 25% of the level specified in any review threshold, provided that cumulative impacts of the Project do not meet or exceed any review thresholds that were not previously met or exceeded. (see 301 CMR 11.10(6))
☐**Yes** ☒**No; if yes, provide an explanation of this request in the Project Change Description below.**

FOR PROJECTS SUBJECT TO AN EIR

If the project requires the submission of an EIR, are you requesting that a Scope in a previously issued Certificate be rescinded?
☐**Yes** ☐**No; if yes, provide an explanation of this request_____.**

If the project requires the submission of an EIR, are you requesting a change to a Scope in a previously issued Certificate?
☐**Yes** ☐**No; if yes, provide an explanation of this request_____.**

SUMMARY OF PROJECT CHANGE PARAMETERS AND IMPACTS

Summary of Project Size & Environmental Impacts	Previously reviewed	Net Change	Currently Proposed
LAND			
Total site acreage	16.25	13.97	30.22
Acres of land altered	13.59	12.66	26.25
Acres of impervious area	1.80 (new IA)	0.15 (new IA)	1.95 (new IA)
Square feet of bordering vegetated wetlands alteration	0	0	0
Square feet of other wetland alteration	0	0	0
Acres of non-water dependent use of tidelands or waterways	0	0	0
STRUCTURES			
Gross square footage	0	0	0
Number of housing units	0	0	0
Maximum height (in feet)	0	0	0
TRANSPORTATION			
Vehicle trips per day	14,500	0	14,500
Parking spaces	0	0	0
WATER/WASTEWATER			
Gallons/day (GPD) of water use	0	0	0
GPD water withdrawal	0	0	0
GPD wastewater generation/ treatment	0	0	0
Length of water/sewer mains (in miles)	0	0	0

Does the project change involve any <u>new or modified</u>:

1. conversion of public parkland or other Article 97 public natural resources to any purpose not in accordance with Article 97? ☐**Yes** ☒**No**
2. release of any conservation restriction, preservation restriction, agricultural preservation restriction, or watershed preservation restriction? ☐**Yes** ☒**No**
3. impacts on Rare Species**?** ☐**Yes** ☒**No**
4. demolition of all or part of 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** ☒**No**

5. impact upon an Area of Critical Environmental Concern? ☐**Yes** ☒**No**

If you answered 'Yes' to any of these 5 questions, explain below:

PROJECT CHANGE DESCRIPTION (attach additional pages as necessary). The project change description should include:

(a) a brief description of the project as most recently reviewed

(b) a description of material changes to the project as previously reviewed,

(c) if applicable, the significance of the proposed changes, with specific reference to the factors listed 301 CMR 11.10(6), and

(d) measures that the project is taking to avoid damage to the environment or to minimize and mitigate unavoidable environmental impacts. If the change will involve modification of any previously issued Section 61 Finding, include a draft of the modified Section 61 Finding (or it will be required in a Supplemental EIR).

(A)

The previously reviewed project consisted of the Central Phase (Phase I) of access improvements to Western Avenue in Westfield, MA. Western Avenue roadway improvements are being pursued by the City of Westfield to improve access to and from Route 20 for the area of Westfield around Westfield State University (WSU), as well as to improve the safety for all roadway users, motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists.

The project involves the reconstruction of the Western Avenue corridor. It begins on Western Avenue at the intersection with Llewellyn Drive and extends easterly through the WSU campus area, continuing along Western Avenue to the intersection with Lloyds Hill Road for a total length of 1.4 miles, terminating approximately 175'± east of Fairview Avenue. Presently, this Urban Minor Arterial roadway averages 32 feet in width and has a bituminous concrete surface, closed drainage system, 5- to 6-foot-wide sidewalks on both sides and is located in a suburban setting. The abutting properties consist of relatively close-spaced residential homes, education institutions, and publicly accessible privately-owned parkland.

The safety improvements for this project consist of reconstruction of the existing pavement structure and box widening to accommodate wider shoulders and center turning lanes, upgrading the existing drainage system to reduce inundation of the roadway, traffic signal upgrades at the Western Avenue intersection with the Westwood Drive/WSU commuter parking lot, turning lanes at the intersection of Western Avenue and Lloyds Hill Road, construction of a multiuse path along the north side of Western Avenue, and installation of pavement markings and safety signage.

In addition to the alternatives analysis for the Central Phase included in the previous ENF, an alternatives analysis for the East Phase of the project is summarized below:

Sidewalk Construction – Both Sides of Roadway in Urban Environment

Desirable/Minimum: Two Sidewalks throughout Project

Constructing sidewalks along both sides of Court Street, West Silver Street, Mill Street,

and Webster Avenue produces several negative impacts along the project corridor. The number of public shade trees requiring removal increases by a quantity of five trees. It is anticipated that two additional utility poles will require relocation and easements for guying. In addition, permanent easements will be needed at the corner of Court Street and Mill Street and the corner of West Silver Street and Mill Street to accommodate installation of wheelchair ramps and additional traffic signal equipment. Cumulative easements are estimated to total ±500 square feet. The sidewalks will result in a 12,000-square-foot total increase of impervious area, which will impact the capacity of the city's closed drainage system. Total increased project costs associated with providing sidewalks throughout the project is approximately $218,000±.

Alternative #1: Two Sidewalks – Court Street (including Holcomb Park)

Sidewalk Segment 1A: There is only one existing sidewalk on the north side of Court Street between West Silver Street and Webster Avenue. Select enhancements are proposed to this public park space to improve the accessibility and the recreational value to the residents of Westfield. It is critical that the proposed changes within the park area are appropriate and limited to enhancing the recreational use of the space to ensure a de mininis impact finding under Section 4(f). The City's preference is to provide an accessible route through the park area and not simply around it. Connections are proposed at the westerly and easterly ends of the park to the sidewalks on Court Street and West Silver Street. A sidewalk will be integrated into the park enhancements along Webster Avenue between proposed crosswalks at West Silver Street and Court Street. Constructing a 5-foot sidewalk on the south side of Court Street along the edge of Lawrence Holcomb Park (West Silver Street to Webster Avenue) will add 1,375 square feet of impervious area to the project's closed drainage system at an estimated to increase project cost of $18,000. This segment is considered redundant due to the sidewalk proposed though the park and the connections proposed at crosswalks on West Silver Street and Court Street.

Sidewalk Segment 1B: There is only one existing sidewalk on the north side of Court Street between Webster Avenue and Mill Street. This segment is one of the most constrained within the Western Avenue and Court Street corridor. The layout is reduced from the typical 82 feet to 66 feet. In addition, the segment is bound by curves that restrict where the roadway can be aligned. The existing roadway will be widened approximately 5 feet to the south for bicycle accommodation. MassDOT is requiring that the sidewalk to the north is replaced with a 10-foot-wide cement concrete multiuse path, which further restricts the width available for a sidewalk on the south side of the Court Street. Constructing a 5-foot sidewalk on the north side of Court Street through this segment will require the relocation of two additional utility poles carrying primary electric, secondary electric for services, and communications lines. Due to the constraints within this area, additional permanent easements are anticipated for guy wires (±50 square feet) of the shifted utility poles as well as for installation of wheelchair ramps and additional traffic signal equipment (±100 square feet) at the corner on Mill Street. The house on the southwest corner of the intersection of Court Street at Mill Street (100 Court Street) has encroached the right-of-way where the sidewalk is to be constructed and a private fence will need to be removed. While an acquisition is not required, the clearing and construction of the sidewalk will be perceived by the abutting property owner as a substantial impact, which will involve some form of mitigation. The additional sidewalk will add 2,850 square feet of impervious area to the project area's

closed drainage system. Construction of a new 5-foot sidewalk for this location is estimated to increase project cost by $60,000±.

Alternative #2: Two Sidewalks – West Silver Street (including Holcomb Park)

Sidewalk Segment 2A: Box widening for on-street bicycle accommodation is proposed for West Silver Street. Within the project limits, there is only an existing sidewalk on the south side of the street. The existing sidewalk will be replaced as part of the proposed improvement. Constructing a 5-foot sidewalk on the north side of West Silver Street along the edge of Lawrence Holcomb Park (Court Street to Webster Avenue) will add 1,900 square feet of impervious area to the project's closed drainage system. Construction of a new 5-foot sidewalk for this location is estimated to increase project cost by $24,000.

Sidewalk Segment 2B: Widening is proposed on West Silver Street for on-street bicycle accommodation as with Segment 2A. Constructing a 5-foot sidewalk on the north side of West Silver Street from Webster Avenue to Mill Street requires the removal of two public shade trees. Right-of-way impacts and acquisition of a permanent easement (±100 square feet) is anticipated to accommodate wheelchair ramps and additional traffic signal equipment. The sidewalk will add 2,000 square feet of impervious area to the project's closed drainage system. Construction of a new 5-foot sidewalk for this location is estimated to increase project cost by $40,000.

Alternative #3: Two Sidewalks – Webster Avenue and Mill Street

Sidewalk Segment 3A: No formal work is proposed on Webster Avenue other than matching into the proposed reconstruction on Court Street to the north and West Silver Street to the south. Under the existing condition, there are no sidewalks. As discussed previously under Sidewalk Segment 1A, The City is proposing an accessible route through the park area. A sidewalk will be integrated into the park enhancements along west side of Webster Avenue between proposed crosswalks at West Silver Street and Court Street. This connection will greatly increase the usability of the park and provide critical links to the wider sidewalk network and multiuse path. The proposed sidewalk alignment avoids impacts to two 30”-diameter public shade trees on the west side of Webster Avenue. With the proposed sidewalk connection on the west side of Wester Avenue a new sidewalk in the easterly side would be redundant. Constructing a sidewalk on the east side of Wester Avenue will require the removal and replacement of a private fence and acquisition of a permanent easement (±250 square feet). The east sidewalk will also require the removal of one 48"-diameter tree located at the edge of the existing layout. The easterly sidewalk will add 900 square feet of impervious area to the project's closed drainage system. Construction of a second 5-foot sidewalk on east side of Webster Avenue is estimated to increase project cost by $30,000.

Sidewalk Segment 3B: Only limited work is proposed on Mill Street. To the north, the proposed improvements are limited to full-depth reconstruction on Court Street. To the south, isolated intersection improvements are proposed at the intersection with West Silver Street. Under the existing condition, there are no sidewalks on the west side of Mill Street. Constructing a 5-foot sidewalk on the west side of Mill Street will require the removal of one public shade tree. The sidewalk will add 2,050 square feet of impervious

area to the project's closed drainage system. Construction of two 5-foot sidewalks on Webster Avenue is estimated to increase project cost by $26,000.

Lane Width

Desirable: 12-Foot Lane

Increasing the roadway cross section to accommodate 12-foot travel lanes produces several negative impacts along the project corridor. The number of public shade trees requiring removal increases by a quantity of approximately 10 trees, including a prominent 48" maple. The right-of-way 300' west of High Street narrows to 66'±. The additional lane width would eliminate the buffer between the roadway and proposed multiuse path. The multiuse path would also need to be reduced to 8 feet to fit within the existing layout. Impervious pavement area is increased by approximately 24,750 square feet, necessitating an increase in the capacity of the closed drainage system. There would be an increase in the number of pole relocations as well as additional replacement of cast iron natural gas lines to accommodate changes in cover and construction activity. An overall increase of $393,000± in project costs is anticipated with the increase to 12-foot travel lanes.

Minimum: 11-Foot Lane

Modifying the roadway cross section to accommodate minimum 11-foot travel lanes similarly produces negative impacts along the project corridor although to a lesser extent than the desirable 12-foot travel lane width. The number of public shade trees requiring removal increases by a quantity of four trees. As with the 12-foot travel lane option above, the added roadway width would eliminate the buffer between the roadway and proposed multiuse path approximately 300' west of High Street. The multiuse path would also need to be reduced to 8 feet to fit within the existing layout. Impervious pavement area is increased by approximately 12,400 square feet, necessitating an increase in the extent of system improvements. Lastly, the additional width would have a marginal increase in utility force account value. The total increased project costs associated with the increase to 11-foot travel lanes is approximately $145,000±.

The project also includes a portion of West Silver Street. West Silver Street is classified as an urban minor arterial. Providing the minimum 11-foot travel lanes incurs a moderate amount of additional negative impacts. A reduced lane width was evaluated to mitigate these impacts as a typical section with 10-foot travel lanes is proposed for the Western Avenue and Court Street corridor. There are two public shade trees that will be retained. While every effort will be made to reduce adverse impacts of the proposed box widening to the root systems, construction within the drip line of the two trees is required. Reduction of even a foot of excavation will help ensure the trees can be retained. In the south side of West Silver Street, there is a significant grade change. The section 250' from the intersection with Mill Street is particularly constrained. The sidewalk will need to be constructed adjacent to the curb to avoid acquisition of right-of-way. Provision of an 11-foot travel lane and 5-foot shoulder/bike lane will require a ±2-foot retaining wall and additional permanent easements for utilities and signal equipment at the intersection with Mill Street. Additionally, the 11-foot lanes add over 2,000 square feet of impervious area to the closed drainage system, necessitating an increase in the extent of system improvements. The total increased project costs associated with the increase to 11-foot

travel lanes is approximately $90,000±.

Horizontal Alignment – Compound Curve Radius

Desirable: Elimination of Compound Curve in Alignment

The originally proposed alignment of Western Avenue for the 25% design submission dated July 8, 2014, generally followed the existing centerline. Under this design, a 10,000-foot radius curve was followed by a 158-foot tangent segment before a second curve in the same direction was introduced at a radius of 2,500 feet. While technically a broken back curve, this layout is not one of the designated controlling criteria and would not require a design exception.

On September 29, 2018, the MassDOT Complete Streets Engineer met with representatives of the city to discuss the multiuse path limit. At this meeting, it was determined that MassDOT would require the 10-foot cement concrete multiuse path to continue along the northerly side of Western Avenue to the intersection of Court Street with High Street and Mill Street. This was a significant change as previous designs terminated the multiuse path in advance of the Pine Hill Cemetery. Extension of the trail under this alignment would require the removal of six additional public shade trees of substantial diameters (20", 30", 48", etc.). The city and area residents were not supportive of removing these trees. Additionally, MassDOT Cultural Resources commented that grading work should not be performed north of the wrought iron fence of the Pine Hill Cemetery. The alignment of Western Avenue was shifted to the south to accommodate the required multiuse path to (1) preserve the significant shade trees, and (2) eliminate grading impacts to the Pine Hill Cemetery.

The difference in project costs between the original "footprint" alignment and south alignment is marginal.

Minimum: The radius of the tighter curve should be no less than 50% of the radius of the flatter curve.

There is one compound curve proposed on the project. The radius of the first is 10,000', and the second radius is 3,000', which is 30% of the flatter curve. To meet the minimum required radius, the 3,000-foot radius curve needs to be increased to a 5,000-foot radius curve. The larger radius curve will push the resulting alignment of Western Avenue north toward the Pine Hill Cemetery. Under this alignment, there would be approximately 22' left to the centerline. Once the 10-foot travel lane and 5-foot shoulder are considered, there would only be 7 feet available for the required 10-foot multiuse path and 5-foot standard grass buffer. Constructing the multiuse path along this alignment would require significant grading within the Pine Hill Cemetery, removal of the historic wrought iron fence, and relocation of grave sites. Therefore, this option is considered nonbuildable due to the cemetery and cultural resource impacts. The total increased project costs associated with increasing the compound radius to 5000 feet is approximately $448,000.

Alternatives #2 and #3: Separation of the Compound Curves

Two additional alternatives were considered to address the nonstandard compound

curve. Alternative #2 would introduce a short tangent segment of 180' between the 10,000-foot radius curve and a tighter 1,800-foot radius curve. Separation of the two compound curves with a short tangent would result in an equally undesirable broken back curve. However, additional impacts would be marginal when compared to the compound curve alignment. The total increased project costs associated with Alternative #2 is approximately $56,000.

Alternative #3 would introduce a longer tangent segment of 220' between the 10,000-foot radius curve and a tighter, minimum radius curve of 800 feet. However, the length of the smaller curve would not meet minimum length requirements and is not considered a viable option. The total increased project costs associated with Alternative #3 is approximately $75,000.

Both of these alternatives shift the roadway to the south at the intersection with West Silver Street. The Lawrence Holcomb Park is located just east of this intersection. Therefore, a shift in alignment to the south would adversely impact dedicated public park land (Alternative 2: 1,000sqft, Alternative 3: 2,000sqft).

(B)
The current proposed project incorporates the East Phase (Phase 2) of the project. The project was split into two phases due to funding constraints and MEPA has requested that the East Phase be treated as a continuation of Central Phase (Phase 1) under a single ENF. The East Phase of the project will involve the reconstruction of the Western Avenue and Court Street corridor in Westfield, MA. The project will commence on Western Avenue slightly east of Fairview Avenue where the Central Phase terminates and extends easterly for approximately 1.03 miles, where Western Avenue begins and Court Street ends. It continues approximately 350'± east of Mill and High Streets along Court Street. The project involves intersection reconstruction and widening, roadway widening for left-turn lanes, sidewalk construction and reconstruction, and drainage system improvements. An 8.0' HMA multiuse path is also proposed for the west side of Lloyds Hill Road.

On June 2, 2020 the Assistant City Engineer and the City of Westfield Tree Warden walked the project to assess project impacts and review proposed tree removals. In may cases the proposed sidewalks were adjusted to retain high value trees and reduce impacts. During the site walks, several trees were determined to be near their life expectancy and unlikely to survive nearby construction activity. The results of this review have been incorporated in the proposed design plans for the project.

(C)
The proposed changes impact the following factors referenced in 310 CMR 11.10(6):

- **<u>(a) Expansion of the Project</u>: The acreage of the proposed project will increase from 16.25 acres to 30.22 acres, an increase in area of approximately 86%, which is considered significant according to the definition of 310 CMR 11.10(6). However, there will be minimal environmental impacts as a result of the increase in area, as the project involves the reconstruction of an existing roadway and there will only be an approximately 0.15 acre increase in impervious area for the East Phase. The table below summarizes the changes in impervious area due to**

the increased scope of the project.

	Central Phase	East Phase	Total
Existing Impervious Area (Ac)	7.75	8.54	16.29
Proposed Impervious Area (Ac)	9.55	8.69	18.24
Change in Impervious Area (Ac)	1.8	0.15	1.95

- **(c) Change in expected date for Commencement of the Project, Commencement of Construction, completion date for the Project, or schedule of work on the Project: Due to the addition of the second phase to the ENF, the date of completion and schedule of work will extend past the Fall 2020 completion date of the original ENF. The East Phase is anticipated to be completed by November 2022.**
- **(d) Change of the Project Site: The project site extends approximately 1.03 miles east of previously reviewed termination point at Fairview Avenue.**

(D)
The project largely consists of the reconstruction of an existing roadway, so environmental impacts are minimal. Erosion and sedimentation controls will be implemented and maintained during construction until all disturbed areas have been stabilized to prevent environmental impacts on adjacent areas.

ATTACHMENTS & SIGNATURES

Attachments:

1. Secretary's most recent Certificate on this project
2. Plan showing most recent previously-reviewed proposed build condition
3. Plan showing currently proposed build condition
4. Original U.S.G.S. map or good quality color copy (8-1/2 x 11 inches or larger) indicating the project location and boundaries
5. List of all agencies and persons to whom the proponent circulated the NPC, in accordance with 301 CMR 11.10(7)

Signatures:

10/20/2020	11/11/20
Date Signature of Responsible Officer or Proponent	Date Signature of person preparing NPC (if different from above)
Mark Cressotti, P.E.	Michael Gagnon, P.E.
Name (print or type)	Name (print or type)
City of Westfield - Engineering Dept.	Milone & MacBroom, Inc.
Firm/Agency	Firm/Agency
59 Court Street	1350 Main Street, Suite 1012
Street	Street
Westfield, MA 01085	Springfield, MA 01103
Municipality/State/Zip	Municipality/State/Zip
413-572-6219	413-241-6920
Phone	Phone