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January 22, 2007

CERTIFICATE OF THE SECRETARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL NOTIFICATION FORM

PROJECT NAME: Proposed Parking Lot, 100 Brookdale Drive
PROJECT MUNICIPALITY: Springfield
PROJECT WATERSHED: Chicopee River
EOEA NUMBER: 13938
PROJECT PROPONENT: Berkshire Development LLC
DATE NOTICED IN MONITOR: December 23, 2006

Pursuant to the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (G. L. c. 30, ss. 61-62H) and Section 11.06 of the MEPA regulations (301 CMR 11.00), I hereby determine that this project **does not require** the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

As described in the Environmental Notification Form (ENF), the project consists of the development of a 260 space parking lot for use by an adjacent U.S. Postal Service distribution facility. The project will result in the filling and regrading of approximately 32,600 square feet (sf) of Bordering Vegetated Wetland (BVW) associated with an existing wet bottom detention basin established in the early 1980's to control stormwater runoff from adjacent industrial properties. The basin has, due to lack of maintenance, progressed to a BVW and currently fails to properly function as previously intended for stormwater management purposes. Stormwater drainage from the proposed parking lot and adjacent properties will be controlled by utilizing large diameter pipe, infiltration and detention methods consistent with the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) Stormwater Management Policy. Filled BVW will be replaced and replicated down-gradient of the work area and abutting the project site.

The project will alter 2.4 acres of land, create 1.83 acres of impervious area, and generate an additional 725 traffic trips per day. Wetland replication areas will be provided at a ratio of 1:1. Additionally, the proponent has purchased an approximately 10 acre parcel of wetland and upland habitat area for the City of Springfield at an off-site location for preservation purposes.

The filling of wetland areas will require the movement of earth within the project site as well as the importation of fill to achieve proposed final grades. The project site is located within an industrial park that was master planned in the 1980's for separate development parcels and overall stormwater management.

This project is subject to review pursuant to Section 11.03(3)(b)(1)(d) of the MEPA regulations, because the project will require a State permit and involves the alteration of 5,000 or more square feet of BVW. The project will require a Section 401 Water Quality Certification from MassDEP and has received an Order of Conditions from the Springfield Conservation Commission. The project may require either a Category II Programmatic General Permit or an Individual Permit from the United States Army Corps of Engineers (U.S. ACOE). Finally, the project may require a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Construction General Permit from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA).

Because the proponent is not seeking financial assistance from the Commonwealth for the project, MEPA jurisdiction extends to those aspects of the project that may have significant environmental impacts and that are within the subject matter of required or potentially required state permits. In this case, MEPA jurisdiction exists over wetlands and stormwater.

Wetlands

The project will result in the filling of a substantial area of BVW (approximately 32,600sf). Replication areas indicated in the ENF are generally adjacent to existing wetland areas and proximate to the area of fill to accommodate the project. Wetlands mitigation areas have been proposed in a manner consistent with MassDEP's Inland Wetland Replication Guidelines. The proponent should continue to work with the U.S. ACOE to ensure that project design and wetlands impacts are thoroughly evaluated and mitigated under the Category II or Individual Permitting process prior to construction.

Stormwater

According to the ENF, the existing BVW within the stormwater management basin, while partially functioning as a source of groundwater supply, storm damage prevention, pollution prevention, and wildlife habitat, does not meet the nine (9) standards cited within the MassDEP Stormwater Management Policy. The ENF states that the proposed project will improve stormwater management through the use of sediment removal best management practices (BMPs) and infiltration via a "closed" stormwater management system prior to discharge to the down-gradient brook (Bircham Bend Brook). The project has been designed to treat both new stormwater runoff from the parking area and runoff currently treated by the existing detention basin at a level consistent with MassDEP standards. The stormwater storage capacity of the existing detention basin will remain the same and the existing notched weir will remain intact to reduce overall wetland impacts. The proponent should continue to work with the City of Springfield and MassDEP to ensure that effective stormwater management is achieved for all contributing parcels within the industrial park subsequent to the construction of the new parking facility.

Construction Activities


The project will require the clearing of existing vegetated land, the use of large construction equipment and the importation of fill materials. Erosion and sedimentation controls should be utilized to limit construction related runoff impacts to adjacent wetland resource areas. If necessary, the proponent should prepare a stormwater pollution prevention plan in accordance with a NPDES Construction General Permit. Work should be conducted in a manner consistent with conditions outlined by the Springfield Conservation Commission and the anticipated U.S. ACOE permit and Water Quality Certificate to be issued by MassDEP.

Conclusion

Based on a review of the information provided by the proponent and comments received from relevant public agencies, I find that the potential impacts of this project do not warrant further MEPA review.

January 22, 2007

Date



Ian A. Bowles

Comments Received

01/05/2007 United States Army Corps of Engineers

01/12/2007 Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection –WERO

IAB/HSJ/hsj