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April 6, 2007

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

PROJECT NAME: F.W. Webb Company Warehouse/Distribution Facility
PROJECT MUNICIPALITY: Methuen
PROJECT WATERSHED: Merrimack River
EOEA NUMBER: 13987
PROJECT PROPONENT: F. W. Webb Company
DATE NOTICED IN MONITOR: March 7, 2007

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).

Project Description

As outlined in the Environmental Notification Form (ENF), the project consists of the development of a 127,770 square foot (sf) warehouse, distribution facility, and associated infrastructure on an approximately 21-acre site in Methuen. The project site is on Lindberg Avenue, a private street that runs through the property separating it into two parcels. The property abuts I-93 to the west; industrial property to the north and south; residential property to the east and south; and Mystic Pond and City of Methuen property to the north. The property has been used for many years as a contractor's storage yard and is heavily impacted. The project will result in impacts to Bordering Vegetated Wetlands (BVW), floodplain and buffer zone.

Jurisdiction

The project is undergoing review pursuant to Section 11.03(1)(b)(2) of the MEPA regulations because it will result in the creation of more than 5 acres of new impervious surface.

The project will require a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Construction Activities Permit from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); an Indirect Highway Access Permit from the Massachusetts Highway Department (MHD); an Order of Conditions from the Methuen Conservation Commission; a Variance and a Special Permit from the Methuen Zoning Board of Appeals; and Site Plan Approval from the Methuen Community Development Board. The proponent is not seeking financial assistance from the Commonwealth. Therefore, MEPA jurisdiction applies to those aspects of the project within the subject matter of required or potentially required state permits with the potential to cause damage to the environment. In this case, MEPA jurisdiction extends to wetlands, stormwater and transportation.

Stormwater and Wetlands

The project will result in the alteration of 3.5 acres of land and the creation of 7.9 acres of new impervious surface. The ENF included the narrative from the project's drainage report that assessed the impacts of the increased impervious area on stormwater runoff from the site. According to the ENF, the stormwater management system will incorporate closed drainage networks that direct stormwater through vortex hydrodynamic separators into one of four subsurface detention systems. The detention systems will be constructed of perforated corrugated metal pipe surrounded by a bed of stone which will allow for groundwater recharge. In its comments on the ENF, MassDEP has noted several deficiencies with the project's drainage report. Concerns regarding post-development peak rates of runoff; snow disposal and storage; and compliance with the Stormwater Management Policy Standards 4 and 5 must be addressed during the local wetlands permitting process.

The project will result in the alteration of 1,892 square feet (sf) of Bordering Vegetated Wetlands (BVW) and 11,579 sf of Bordering Land Subject to Flooding (BLSF). The proponent's Notice of Intent (NOI) filed with the Methuen Conservation Commission for these impacts and work in the buffer zone is currently under review. According to the ENF, the proponent will mitigate impacts to BLSF by providing 1,700 cubic yards of flood storage volume. The proponent should note comments from MassDEP regarding the project's compliance with the standards for compensatory storage at 310 CMR 10.57(4). The proponent will also be required to provide a BVW replication area. The wetlands replication area should be consistent with the BVW performance standards at 310 CMR 10.55(4) and the design for the replication should comply with MassDEP's *Massachusetts Inland Wetland Replication Guidelines* (March 2002).

Transportation

Using the Institute of Traffic Engineers (ITE) Land Use Code 150 (Warehousing), the proponent determined that the project will generate 258 new daily vehicle trips. The project requires an Indirect Highway Access Permit from MHD but does not exceed any MEPA thresholds related to traffic. The proponent included a Traffic Impact and Access Study (TIAS) for the project with the ENF. In the TIAS, the proponent evaluated existing traffic volumes at the project site and compared the future No-Build and Build conditions at the following intersections:

- Pelham Street and I-93 southbound ramp;
- Pelham Street and I-93 northbound ramp; and
- Pelham Street and Mystic Street.

According to the ENF, a comparison between the No-Build and the Build conditions indicates minimal change in the Level of Service (LOS) at the intersection of Pelham Street with the I-93 ramps due to the low volume of traffic generated by the proposed use. The project will have a negative impact on the intersection of Pelham Street and Mystic Street where left-turning vehicles exiting Mystic Street will face a significant delay. This intersection is under the jurisdiction of the City of Methuen. In response to comments from the Executive Office of Transportation (EOT), the proponent and the City should implement measures to minimize this impact. The project's traffic impacts and the proponent's traffic mitigation commitments will be addressed during the City of Methuen Site Plan Review process.

Construction Period Impacts

The proponent should note detailed comments provided by MassDEP regarding construction period impacts. Construction and demolition at the site must comply with MassDEP's Solid Waste and Air Quality Control regulations. The proponent should implement measures to alleviate dust, noise and odor nuisance conditions which may occur during the construction activities. I encourage the proponent to work with MassDEP to implement construction-period diesel emission mitigation through its Diesel Retrofit Program.

Conclusion

I have determined that the ENF has sufficiently defined the nature and general elements of the project and has proposed measures to avoid and mitigate environmental impacts. I am satisfied that any remaining issues can be adequately addressed during the state and local permitting and review process. The proposed project, as described in the ENF, requires no further review under MEPA.

April 6, 2007

Date



Ian A. Bowles

Comments Received:

- 3/27/2007 Department of Environmental Protection, Northeast Regional Office
- 3/30/2007 Executive Office of Transportation

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