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April 27, 2007

CERTIFICATE OF THE SECRETARY OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS ON THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

PROJECT NAME PROJECT MUNICIPALITY PROJECT WATERSHED EOEA NUMBER PROJECT PROPONENT DATE NOTICED IN MONITOR : Hampshire Mall Expansion
: Hadley
: Connecticut River
: 13478
: Pyramid Mall of Hadley, LLC
: March 7, 2007

As Secretary of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EOEEA), I hereby determine that the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) submitted on this project **does not adequately and properly comply** with the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (M.G.L. c. 30, ss. 61-62H) and with its implementing regulations (301 CMR 11.00). The DEIR submitted for this project does not contain an adequate description of the proposed project's impacts and mitigation to traffic in the project area and to surface and groundwater resources, and wetland resource areas located within and adjacent to the project site.

I am requiring the preparation of a Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Report (SDEIR) to ensure that the requirements of 301 CMR 11.07 are met, the aspects and issues of the project have been clearly described, the full range of project impacts have been fully analyzed, the proponent has committed to a set of mitigation that will allow the state agencies to satisfy their Section 61 obligations, and there will be meaningful opportunities for public review of the additional analysis prior to any Agency action. The SDEIR should resolve the following issues outlined below. It should include a copy of all comment letters from the ENF and DEIR submissions with the proponent's response to the comment letters, to the extent that they are within this scope, and a copy of this Certificate.



Many commenters have written to express opposition to the proposed project and to request that I deny the project. As part of the MEPA process, I do not make substantive judgements as to the proposed land use, nor do I act as an agent of appeal or affirmation of local land use decisions. MEPA is not a zoning process, or other type of permitting process. Rather, it is a process designed to ensure public participation in the state environmental permitting process, to ensure that state permitting agencies have adequate information on which to base their permit decisions, and to ensure that potential environmental impacts are described fully and avoided, minimized, and mitigated to the maximum feasible extent.

Project Description

As described in the DEIR, the proposed project now consists of the phased (Phase 1, Phase 2) development of approximately 309,200 sf of new additional retail space to the existing 788,000 sf Hampshire Mall located on a 116.0-acre site located on Route 9 (Russell Street) in Hadley. Phase 1 will involve the 12,000 sf expansion of an existing cinema complex and the construction of approximately 212,000 sf of additional retail space to accommodate a Super Wal-Mart store. In Phase 2, the proponent proposes to construct a new separate 97,000 sf retail building to be located east of the west end of the existing Mall building. The mall expansion project will include the construction of approximately 1,715 new surface parking spaces, and related utilities and stormwater management infrastructure. A new gasoline sales and automotive services facility, previously proposed in the ENF submittal, has been eliminated from the currently proposed project design. As described in the DEIR, the proposed mall expansion project's additional water supply demand (8,106 gpd) and wastewater flows (8,106 gpd) will be served by the Town of Hadley.

This project is subject to a mandatory EIR pursuant to Sections 11.03(1)(a)(2), (6)(a)(6), and (6)(a)(7) of the MEPA regulations because it will result in the creation of 10 or more acres of impervious area (approximately 25 acres of new impervious surface acres, 67.2 impervious surface acres total), the generation of 3,000 or more new vehicle trips (6,542 new vehicle trips, 32,502 total vehicle trips), and the construction of 1,000 or more (1,440 new parking spaces, 3,466 spaces total) parking spaces. A Massachusetts Highway Department (MHD) access permit will be required for access to Route 9. The project will require a Section 401 Water Quality Certificate from the Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP). It must comply with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit for stormwater discharges from a construction site of over one acre. The project may need a Section 404 Programmatic General Permit (Category II) from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE). An Order of Conditions will be required from the Hadley Conservation Commission for work within a resource area.

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The project may also require a construction permit from the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), and an air quality mesoscale analysis for ozone to assess the total volatile organic compounds (VOC) and nitrogen oxides (NOx) emissions associated with all projectrelated vehicle trips.

Because the proponent is not seeking financial assistance from the Commonwealth for the project, MEPA jurisdiction extends to those aspects of the project within the subject matter of required or potentially required state permits and that have potential to cause significant Damage to the Environment. In this instance, MEPA jurisdiction exists over issues related to land alteration, traffic, air quality, wetlands, stormwater, rare species, and agricultural resources.

Alternatives Analysis

The DEIR identifies three alternative development scenarios: 1) the DEIR Proposed alternative; 2) the Modified ENF Alternative; and, 3) the Potential Full-Build Alternative, designed to reduce the project's wetlands resource area impacts and the project's visual impacts on the Norwottuck Rail Trail. Two of the three alternative development scenarios involve the elimination of an existing triangular-shaped stormwater basin (East Basin) located adjacent to the east end of the existing Mall building. I note that the Hadley Conservation Commission and MassDEP have determined that the East Basin is a wetland resource area and protected under the Wetlands Protection Act. The proponent has appealed the jurisdictional wetland status of the East Basin to the Division of Administrative Law Appeals (DALA). The SDEIR should incorporate DALA's findings and determination into a preferred development scenario design. In the event that the proponent elects to submit the SDEIR document prior to DALA's decision, the SDEIR should further evaluate one alternative development scenario that maintains the East Basin as a wetland resource area, and one alternative development scenario that proposes to remove the existing stormwater basin. This alternatives analysis should include at least one project alternative that maintains the use of the existing East Basin while also maximizing the project's setback distance (200 feet) from the Norwottuck Rail Trail as requested by DCR. The SDEIR should contain additional information for MassDEP to evaluate the proponent's efforts to avoid or minimize the potential environmental impacts resulting from each proposed development alternative. The SDEIR should discuss the consistency of the proponent's alternative development scenarios with the Variance requirements under the Wetlands Protection Act (310 CMR 10.05 (10) or the Variance provisions of the 401 Water Quality Certification for Fill Projects in Waters and Wetlands pursuant to section 314 CMR 9.08.

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<u>Wetlands</u>

Resource Area Delineation

According to the comments received from MassDEP, the Hadley Conservation Commission, and others, the DEIR does not contain sufficient information to identify all the environmental resources areas located within the project site, and to evaluate the project's potential environmental impacts particularly to bordering vegetated wetlands (BVW), intermittent and perennial streams, and inland stream bank.

The SDEIR should include a reasonably scaled plan that accurately depicts all wetlands resource areas that have been delineated in the field, surveyed and mapped. The plan should accurately identify and locate the jurisdictional top of Bank at Mean Annual Flood Level for all existing on-site streams and drainage channels pursuant to MassDEP's Wetlands Regulations (310 CMR 10.54). Each wetland resource area located within the 116-acre project site should be characterized according to 310 CMR 10.00. I encourage the proponent to consult with MassDEP during the preparation of the SDEIR. MassDEP has indicated that isolated wetlands located south of the existing cinema complex may qualify as BVW and may be subject to state jurisdiction under the Wetlands Protection Act regulations. Questions regarding the jurisdictional status of these isolated wetland resources are included in the proponent's appeal currently before the DALA. MassDEP has also indicated that former farm fields located in the eastern and southern portion of the project site are characterized with wetland soils and may also be subject to federal jurisdiction. The SDEIR should respond to MassDEP's comments, and should include a discussion of the potential impacts to the project design if the wetland resource areas located south of the existing cinema complex and in the former farm fields located in the eastern and southern portion of the project site, are determined be subject to state or federal jurisdiction.

Impacts

The proposed mall expansion project will result in direct impacts to approximately 3,045 sf of BVW for the construction of the proposed West Gate Center Drive site drive, approximately 1,320 lf of inland Bank (25,200 sf) for the construction of a box culvert drainage channel under proposed new surface parking areas, and under a section of the new Phase 2 retail building. According to the proponent, the proposed culverted channel construction has been designed to replace the existing agricultural channel and will function to convey on-site and off-site stormwater flows to the existing farm pond located at the eastern portion of the project site. Each of the proponent's three alternative development scenarios would result in a similar amount of impacts to BVW and inland bank resource areas.

As noted elsewhere in this Certificate, the DEIR does not contain sufficient information to evaluate the project's potential environmental impacts to bordering vegetated wetlands (BVW), intermittent and perennial streams, and inland stream bank.

The SDEIR must accurately quantify the amount of direct and indirect alteration proposed to any/all resource areas located within the project site for each alternative development scenario and for Phase of construction. Where it has been demonstrated that impacts are unavoidable, the SDEIR should demonstrate that the impacts have been minimized, and that the project will be accomplished in a manner that is consistent with the Performance Standards of the Wetlands Regulations (310 CMR 10.00). The SDEIR should analyze the potential impacts to on-site resource areas and off-site resources areas including the US Fish & Wildlife Service's impoundment area.

Mitigation

The proponent has committed to providing mitigation for wetland resource area impacts and has proposed to construct a new intermittent stream system and approximately 1,330 lf of new inland Bank and Bank habitat (29,400 sf) replication (1:1) to be located adjacent to an existing wetland resource area in the southeastern portion of the project site, approximately 3,950 sf of BVW replication (1.3:1) to be located adjacent to the proposed Westgate Center Drive site drive, and approximately 600 sf BVW replication to be located adjacent to the proposed new stream/drainage channel. MassDEP is recommending a replication rate greater than 1:1.

For any amount of required wetlands replication, a detailed wetlands replication plan should be provided in the SDEIR which, at a minimum, includes: replication location(s) delineated on plans, elevations, typical cross sections, test pits or soil boring logs, groundwater elevations, the hydrology of areas to be altered and replicated, list of wetlands plant species of areas to be altered and the proposed wetland replication species, planned construction sequence, and a discussion of the required performance standards and monitoring. Many commenters have identified the extreme difficulty associated with the replication of inland streams and Bank habitat in New England. According to MassDEP, the construction of a new functional intermittent stream and inland Bank habitat, as proposed by the proponent, is extremely difficult to achieve. The new stream and inland Bank habitat will need to recreate or improve the physical features, hydrologic functions, and environment of the impacted agricultural drainage channel. The proposed culverting of the existing drainage channel and the construction of the new intermittent stream may not meet the General Performance Standards identified under the Wetlands Protection Act regulations (310 CMR 10.00). The SDEIR should respond to MassDEP's comments. The proponent should also consult with USACOE during the preparation of the SDEIR to ensure the project's compliance with prior wetland and stream restoration work required by the UASCOE as part of a previous site enforcement action. The proponent wetlands mitigation plan should include a commitment to monitoring the replication areas and conduct an invasive species control program for a period of five years.

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Drainage

The Hampshire Mall Expansion project will create approximately 25 acres of new impervious surface area. As described in the DEIR, the project's stormwater management plan has been designed to be consistent with this DEP's Stormwater Management Policy's standards for water quality, recharge to groundwater, and peak runoff impacts. On-site and off-site stormwater runoff will be collected by deep sump hooded catch basins and conveyed via a closed pipe system to two subsurface detention basins, and discharged to the proponent's proposed new culverted drainage channel to the existing on-site farm pond.

According to MassDEP, the project site soils are characterized as poorly drained and marked by high groundwater conditions which could limit the effectiveness of the proposed stormwater management plan. The SDEIR should provide additional information to demonstrate that the proponent's proposed use of subsurface detention basins with the project site soils is feasible, and is consistent with the Best Management Practices (BMPs) identified in the MassDEP Stormwater management Policy. The proponent should use the DEP Stormwater Management Handbook when addressing this issue. The SDEIR should respond to MassDEP's comments. The SDEIR should discuss consistency of the project with the provisions of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for stormwater discharges from construction sites.

The Hadley Mall Expansion project site is located in the Connecticut River Watershed and in the headwaters to Lake Warner, a state listed Impaired Water Body. The SDEIR should analyze the potential impacts to downstream resource areas including, but not limited to, the US Fish & Wildlife Service's wildlife impoundment area and downstream stream system, and Lake Warner resulting from the proposed project. Sufficient mitigation measures should be incorporated to ensure that no downstream impacts would occur. The SDEIR should include a detailed description of the proponent's proposed maintenance program, and should outline the actual maintenance operations, sweeping schedule, responsible parties, and back-up systems. I recommend that the proponent consider using a non-sodium based winter de-icing agent on parking areas and driveways. The SDEIR should include a detailed description of the proponent's plan to construct the stormwater management system in stages to coincide with the construction of the proposed Mall expansion project.

I encourage the proponent to continue to evaluate opportunities for incorporating sustainable design alternatives including Low Impact Development (LID) techniques in the project's site design and stormwater management plans. LID techniques incorporate stormwater best management practices (BMPs) and can reduce impacts to land and water resources by conserving natural systems and hydrologic functions.

The primary tools of LID are landscaping features and naturally vegetated areas, which encourage detention, infiltration and filtration of stormwater on-site. Other tools include water conservation and use of pervious surfaces. Clustering of buildings is an example of how LID can preserve open space and minimize land disturbance. LID can also protect natural resources by incorporating wetlands, stream buffers and mature forests as project design features. For more information on LID, visit <u>http://www.mass.gov/envir/lid/</u>. Other LID resources include the national LID manual (Low Impact Development Design Strategies: An Integrated Design Approach), which can be found on the EPA website at: <u>http://www.epa.gov/owow/nps/lid/</u>.

Rare Species

In their initial comments on the ENF, the Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program (NHESP) indicated that the project site is located in close proximity to rare wildlife species including; Spotted Turtle (*Clemmys guttata*), and the Eastern Spadefoot toad (*Scaphiopus holbrookii*). I note that the Spotted Turtle was removed from the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act listing subsequent to the issuance of the Secretary's Certificate on the ENF. However, the Spotted Turtle is protected under the Wetlands Protection Act (WPA) as wildlife. The proponent has completed and presented to NHESP a site habitat survey to determine which areas of the site might constitute suitable habitat for the Spotted Turtle and the Eastern Spadefoot toad. According to NHESP, the project as currently proposed will not result in a take of the Eastern Spadefoot toad, and the will not adversely affect the actual Resource Area Habitat of state-protected rare wildlife species.

Drinking Water

The existing potable water supply for the Hadley Mall (approximately 20,110 gpd) together with the Hadley Mall Expansion project's additional potable water supply demand of approximately 10,450 gpd (30,560 gpd total potable water demand) will be served by the Town of Hadley's municipal water supply system which receives its water supply from four groundwater wells via the Hadley Water Treatment Plant. Under an existing Water Management Act (WMA) registration, the Town Hadley's water supply system has a registered withdrawal rate of .83 million gallons per day (MGD), and currently withdrawals an average of .628 MGD. The SDEIR should demonstrate that the proponent has secured permission from the Town of Hadley to obtain the necessary water supply from the proposed municipal water supply. I encourage the proponent to commit to incorporating water conservation technologies in the proposed mall expansion project.

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<u>Wastewater</u>

Currently, the Hadley Mall generates approximately 20,000 gpd of wastewater flow which is conveyed through the Town of Hadley's sewer collection system to the municipal sewer main in the Route 9 right-of-way and on to the Hadley Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) for treatment and discharge to the Connecticut River. The Mall expansion project's anticipated wastewater flows (9,400 gpd) will be conveyed to the municipal sewer system via gravity to an existing municipal sewer pipe and pump station located in the Westgate Center Drive right-ofway or via ejector pump to the municipal sewer main located in the Route 9 right-of-way.

According to the information provided by the proponent, the Hadley WWTP has a design capacity of .54 MGD and currently provides wastewater treatment for approximately .30 MGD. The SDEIR should demonstrate that the proponent has secured permission from the Town of Hadley's Sewer Department to direct the wastewater flows from the proposed project, and from the full-build scenario, off-site to the Town's sewer collection system and wastewater treatment facility for treatment. The SDEIR should outline the proponent's efforts to reduce water consumption and thereby reduce wastewater generation. I encourage the proponent to assist the Town of Hadley in its efforts to address long-standing issues of infiltration and inflow (I/I) in the project area and the Town of Hadley.

Transportation

MassHighway has indicated that the Hampshire Mall Expansion project's new additional vehicle trips will have significant impacts to traffic operations along Route 9 (Russell Street) which is currently experiencing significant growth. I continue to note that MassHighway has designated Route 9 as a Corridor of Critical Concern due in part, to the vital role Route 9 continues to play in serving the transportation needs of businesses, academic institutions and residents of the Pioneer Valley. MassHighway has indicated that the proponent's traffic study submitted as part of the DEIR document does not conform to the EOEA/EOTC Guidelines for EIR/EIS Traffic Impact Assessments, and does not include proposed traffic mitigation measures that will fully address the safe and efficient operation of the Route 9 corridor.

Trip Generation

According to MassHighway, the proponent must clarify the proposed project's trip generation and trip distribution patterns. The proponent should revise the traffic impact study to include trip generation estimates for the cinema expansion and the new retail development portions of the project based on Land Use Code (LUC) 820 for Shopping Center and an appropriate LUC for the cinema expansion. This analysis of trip generation should include a discussion of trip distribution (trip origin and destination) based on census data and the existence of other existing and proposed retail developments in the project area.

The SDEIR should graphically depict existing traffic volumes for each study area intersection and the project's potential traffic impacts for the evening peak hour and Saturday peak hour. MassHighway has requested that the proponent include additional information in the SDEIR to substantiate the Saturday peak hour volumes contained in the proponent's traffic study. The traffic impact study should include the 2012 No-Build and Build Conditions to reflect a five-year planning horizon.

The SDEIR should provide additional information regarding the existing vehicle diverging/weaving operations on the westbound segment of Route 9 between Route 116 southbound off-ramp and the Route 9/Hampshire Mall Driveway intersection, and existing safety issues at the Route 9/North Maple Street intersection, the Route 9/Middlle Street intersection, and the South Maple Street/Mill Street intersection. The proponent's traffic study should include a detailed discussion of the Hampshire Mall Expansion project's potential impacts to these intersections. MassHighway has requested that the proponent conduct a traffic signal warrant analysis, based upon the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) standards, for the South Maple Street/BayRoad; South Maple Street/Mill Valley Road; and South Maple Street/South Driveway intersection.

Mitigation

The SDEIR should present a detailed discussion of the feasibility of any proposed traffic mitigation improvements, including suitably scaled conceptual plans, to accommodate the proposed project. As described by MassHighway, the traffic mitigation plan should depict proposed lane widths and offsets, layout lines and jurisdictions, and adjacent land uses. The SDEIR must demonstrate a clear commitment to completion of the proposed traffic mitigation roadway improvements. The Hampshire Mall Expansion project's traffic mitigation measures should be coordinated with the traffic mitigation measures to be completed by the Home Depot project (EOEA #13055), and the Lowe's project (EOEA #13539). The proponent's proposed 4-lane widening of the northbound South Maple Street approach at the Route 9/North Maple Street/South Maple Street intersection should be coordinated with the Lowe's project together. The proponent must work closely with MassHighway's Public/Private Development Unit and the District 2 Office, the Town of Hadley, and local area businesses and neighborhoods to successfully resolve design issues for the overall traffic mitigation plan proposed for the Hampshire Mall Expansion project.

Parking

As currently proposed, the Hampshire Mall Expansion project will result in the addition of 1,440 new surface parking spaces to serve the proposed retail addition and the cinema expansion (939 parking spaces), and the new separate retail store (501 spaces). Upon completion of the project, the Hampshire Mall will include a total of 3,466 on-site surface parking spaces.

The SDEIR should describe how the number of proposed new parking spaces (1,715) was determined, and assess whether the total number of surface parking spaces (3,466 spaces) for the Hampshire Mall will actually be required to handle parking demand generated by the expanded Hampshire Mall.

If the total parking supply is greater than the amount required under local zoning, the SDEIR should explain why, and discuss the feasibility of an alternative with fewer spaces. In this section of the SDEIR, the proponent should include a discussion of how the Town of Hadley's Transfer Development Rights bylaw may be utilized by the proponent to develop the project's parking plan. The SDEIR should discuss the impacts of a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program on the proposed parking plan.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

The SDEIR should include a description of the proponent's proposed comprehensive Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan for employees and patrons of the Hampshire Mall and the Hampshire Mall Expansion project. The proponent's proposed TDM plan should consider incorporating a number of measures for reducing project generated vehicle trip generation including but not limited to:

- the appointment of an Employee Transportation Coordinator (ETC);
- the use of staggered employee work hours;
- the implementation of an employee ride-matching program program;
- the implementation of a "Guaranteed Ride Home" program for employees;
- work closely with the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority's (PVTA), and UMass to extend existing bus service (B43, M40, Amity Shuttle) to proposed new on-site transit amenities including bus shelters and bus stops, and posting of transit schedules on-site;
- promote the use of on-site amenities including employee direct deposit banking;
- install bicycle amenities including secured bicycle storage racks at each building, and bicycle shoulders along site driveways; and
- construct sidewalks along site driveways to connect to existing sidewalks on South Main Street.

The TDM plan should also consider including the use of staggered work hours and flex time work schedules outside the Hampshire Mall's current weekday AM and PM peak periods; implementation of a carpooling and vanpooling program; implementation of a ridesharing program, preferential parking; and promotion of the use of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority's (PVTA) public transit service. All Hampshire Mall project tenants and businesses should be required to participate in the proposed TDM plan. The TDM plan should describe any monitoring necessary to ensure the success of the program. The SDEIR should demonstrate the proponent's commitment to implement, monitor, and continuously fund the proposed TDM plan.

Transit

The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) currently operates two bus routes (B43 local – Northampton/Hadley Mall/Amherst, and the M40 express-Northampton/Amherst) along the Route 9 corridor through the project area. An existing bus stop for the B43 bus route eastbound and westbound is located at the west end of the existing Hampshire Mall near the south sitedrive/South Maple Street intersection. The University of Massachusetts (UMass) currently operates the Amity Shuttle which connects the UMass campus to businesses located in the Route 9 corridor. I note that the existing Amity Shuttle will serve the Home Depot retail development project site.

The proponent has proposed to construct a second PVTA bus stop with a semi-enclosed and lighted shelter structure to be located at the eastern portion of the expanded project site. The proponent continues to work cooperatively with the Lowe's project proponent, PVTA and MassHighway and has committed to provide bus priority traffic signal controllers at nine Route 9 intersections in Hadley and Amherst, identified by MassHighway, to offset the proposed project's impacts to the total trip time PVTA bus routes through the Route 9 commercial area. As discussed elsewhere in this Certificate, the proponent's Transportation Demand Management Plan should include a description of the proponent's efforts to encourage transit use by Hampshire Mall employees. The SDEIR should evaluate the feasibility of expanding the Amity Shuttle service to also serve the expanded Hampshire Mall site. I strongly encourage the proponent to participate as a member of the Route 9 Corridor Transportation Management Association (Route 9 TMA), to identify opportunities for expanding the existing PVTA bus service and Amity Shuttle service to provide direct access to the Route 9 corridor businesses in Hadley while reducing vehicle trips. The proponent should propose mitigation for proposed project impacts on existing bus and shuttle services.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

As currently designed, the Mall's existing on-site pedestrian sidewalk system will be expanded to include the new pedestrian paths and sidewalks proposed as part of the proposed Mall expansion project. The expanded on-site pedestrian sidewalk system will connect to proposed sidewalks to be located on the west side of Westgate Center Drive extending north to Route 9, a proposed crosswalk to be located at the Hampshire Mall south drive/South Maple Street intersection, and to the Norwottuck Rail Trail located along the southern boundary of the project site. The proponent may be required to apply to DCR for a construction permit to connect to the Norwottuck Rail Trail. The SDEIR should include a detailed discussion of the feasibility of constructing sidewalks along the project's site driveways, along the east side of South Maple Street from the Norwottuck Rail Trail to Route 9, and along the south side of the project site's Route 9 frontage.

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The SDEIR should provide an update of the proponent's ongoing efforts to coordinate with the Lowe's project proponent, the Town of Hadley, the Route 9 TMA, and MassHighway to evaluate the feasibility of additional pedestrian and bicycle improvements within the project area and the Route 9 corridor in response to the regional and local traffic concerns that may arise out of the proposed Hampshire Mall expansion project.

Norwottuck Rail Trail

The Hampshire Mall project site is located adjacent to DCR's 10-mile long Norwottuck Rail Trail which provides a very popular bicycle and pedestrian recreation and commuting connection through the Towns of Amherst, Hadley and Northampton. The Norwottuck Rail Trail crosses South Maple Street and continues in an easterly direction along the southern boundary of the Hampshire Mall property. According to DCR, the proposed project's anticipated increased traffic on South Maple Street will significantly impact the ability of trail users to safely cross South Maple Street. DCR has requested that the proponent conduct a comprehensive analysis and evaluation of alternative South Maple Street including:

- a signalized at-grade crossing(s);
- a bike path bridge over South Maple Street;
- a bike path tunnel under South maple Street; and
- a South Maple Street vehicle bridge over the bike path.

The proponent should respond to DCR's comments. The SDEIR should include a separate section on the Norwottuck Rail Trail containing the proponent's analysis and evaluation of South Maple Street roadway crossing design options, and alternative project designs to maximize the mall expansion project's setback from the rail trail. The SDEIR must respond to DCR's comments. I ask the proponent to work closely with the DCR and others during the preparation of the SDEIR.

Air Quality

The proponent conducted an air quality mesoscale analysis for the project under the 2010 Build scenario and determined that the predicted emissions of volatile organic compounds (VOC) and nitrogen oxides (NOx) associated with all project-related vehicle trips are less than the existing 2005 No-Build scenario. The proposed project will result in a slight increase in VOC emissions (5.7%) and NOx emissions (5.6%). As described elsewhere in this Certificate, the proponent has proposed a number of mitigation measures that will help minimize the trafficrelated air quality impacts of the proposed project including: enhancing existing PVTA bus service within the project area and implementing TDM measures.

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The SDEIR should continue to explore additional opportunities to enhance pedestrian, bicycle, and transit modes to reduce the air quality impacts of the proposed project. The SDEIR should also discuss the project's compliance with MassDEP's Ridesharing Regulations (310 CMR 7.16), and Idling Regulations (310 CMR 7.11).

Agricultural Land

According to the proponent, the project site's expansion parcel and east parcel contain a total of approximately 42 acres of agricultural land area and prime agricultural soils currently maintained as active corn crop farmland. The proposed project will result in the permanent conversion of approximately 23 acres of active farmland.

Agricultural land in Massachusetts is a finite natural resource that is threatened by competing land use pressure. The proposed conversion of Agricultural land triggers the applicability of the Commonwealth's Preservation of Agricultural Land Policy (Executive Order 193) that requires mitigation for the conversion of agricultural land to nonagricultural use. As described in the DEIR document, the proponent is working closely with the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (DAR), and the Town of Hadley to identify a satisfactory mitigation plan to address the project's impacts to state important and USDA prime soils in accordance with DAR's Agricultural Land Mitigation Policy, and the Town of Hadley's Farmland Preservation Program. The SDEIR should include a detailed summary of the proponent's agriculture land mitigation planning and design process.

Construction Period Impacts

The SDEIR should include a construction mitigation plan to satisfactorily address the project's potential impacts to local businesses and nearby residential neighborhoods from construction-related project impacts including noise and dust. I strongly encourage the proponent to consult with MassDEP, and the Town of Hadley, and to meet with local area residential neighbors from the project area during the design of the proponent's construction mitigation plan. I ask that the proponent consider requiring its contractors to use On-Road Low Sulfur Diesel (LSD) fuel in their off-road construction equipment that can increase the removal of particulate matter (PM) by approximately 25% beyond that which can be removed by retrofitting diesel-powered equipment. All construction-related refueling and equipment maintenance activities should be conducted under cover on impervious surface areas with containment, and outside of any wetlands resource areas, endangered species habitat areas, residential areas and wellhead protection areas. The proponent should also commit to specific TDM measures that can be implemented during construction.

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Mitigation/Section 61

The SDEIR should contain a separate chapter on proposed traffic mitigation roadway improvements plan, and a Draft Section 61 Finding for all state permits that describes a clear commitment to completing the proposed traffic mitigation roadway improvements.

The plans should show proposed lane widths and offsets, layout lines and jurisdictions, and the land uses (including access drives) adjacent to areas where improvements are proposed. Any proposed mitigation within the state highway layout must conform to MassHighway standards, including but not limited to, lane, median and shoulder widths, bicycle lanes and sidewalks. The traffic mitigation roadway improvement plan should state whether land takings are necessary to implement proposed improvements and must clearly identify the party(s) responsible for such takings. The Draft Section 61 Finding should contain a clear commitment to any/all mitigation, an estimate of the individual costs of the proposed mitigation, and the identification of the parties responsible for implementing the mitigation. A schedule for the implementation of all roadway mitigation, approved by MassHighway, must also be included.

Comments

The SDEIR should respond to the comments received to the extent that the comments are within the subject matter of this scope. Each comment letter should be reprinted in the SDEIR. I defer to the proponent as it develops the format for this section, but the Response to Comments section should provide clear answers to questions raised.

Circulation

The SDEIR should be circulated in compliance with Section 11.16 of the MEPA regulations and copies should also be sent to the list of "comments received" below and to town officials from the Towns of Hadley, Amherst and Northampton. A copy of the SDEIR should be made available for public review at the Hadley, Amherst and Northampton Public Libraries.

Ian A. Bowles, Secretary

<u>April 27, 2007</u> DATE

Cc: Craig Givens, DEP/WERO

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3/20/07	Amy Vickers (e-mail)
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3/22/07	Michael Sullivan (e-mail)
3/22/07	Michael Giles (e-mail)
3/22/07	Ray J. Pfeiffer, Jr. (e-mail)
3/22/07	Ellen Ferris (e- mail)
3/23/07	Walter Sadlowski (e-mail)
3/23/07	Elise and Edward Button (e-mail)
3/24/07	Barbara H. Formica (e-mail)
3/24/07	Theresa West (e-mail)
3/25/07	Dorothy H. Fradera (e-mail)
3/25/07	Elena Ciampa (e-mail)
3/26/07	Brenda Kennedy (e-mail)
3/26/07	Kathleen Wellspring (e-mail)
3/26/07	Leslie Elliott (3 e-mail)
3/26/07	Susan Norris (e-mail)
3/26/07	Ruth Krafft (e-mail)
3/26/07	Patrice Woeppel, Ed.D. (e-mail)
3/26/07	H. Martin Wobst (e-mail)
3/26/07	M. Olarmark (e-mail)
3/26/07	The Rev. Ann Hallstein (e-mail)

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3/27/07	Robert House (e-mail)
3/27/07	Greg Nichols
3/27/07	Eleanor Manire-Gatti
3/27/07	Rebecca Fletcher
3/27/07	Linda Harris (e-mail)
3/27/07	Donna McCallum (e-mail)
3/27/07	Molly Coon (e-mail)
3/27/07	Hannah Jacobson-Hardy (e-mail)
3/28/07	Maxine Oland (e-mail)
3/28/07	Elizabeth "Betsy" A. Alden, Ph.D
3/28/07	Michael Wm. Gilbert (e-mail)
3/28/07	Adele Gladstone-Gilbert (e-mail)
3/28/07	Fran VanTreese (e-mail)
3/28/07	Eleanor Lake (e-mail)
3/29/07	Greg Kline (e-mail)
3/29/07	Dan Clawson (e-mail)
3/29/07	Stuart Warner (e-mail)
3/29/07	Hannah Jacobson-Hardy
3/29/07	Mr/Mrs. Christopher V. Freitag
3/29/07	Whitey Hagadorn (e-mail)
3/29/07	Amy Cohen (e-mail)
3/29/07	Nancy Sachs (e-mail)
3/29/07	Eesha Williams (e-mail)
3/29/07	Mary Gabriel (e-mail)
3/30/07	Mr. A.R. LaPalme
3/30/07	Vivian Bresnitz
3/30/07	Andrew Bellak (e-mail)
3/30/07	Claudia Canale-Parola & Matthew Blumenfeld (e-mail)
3/30/07	Richard G. Guzowski (2 letters)
3/30/07	Mary Gabriel (e-mail)
3/31/07	Suzanna Wilbur (e-mail)
3/31/07	Mbaceski (e-mail)
3/31/07	screencrazy
4/1/07	Amy Rose and Neil Zagorin (e-mail)
4/1/07	Robert and Emily Weir (e-mail)
4/1/07	Carole Zakrzewski (e-mail)
4/1/07	Diane Stengle (e-mail)
4/1/07	Katherine Fite (e-mail)

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4/1/07	Susan L. Bethel (e-mail)
4/1/07	Leonard A. Cohen, Ph.D. (e-mail)
4/1/07	Judy Pierson (e-mail)
4/1/07	Orville Pierson (e-mail)
4/1/07	Jennifer Normanly (e-mail)
4/1/07	Darcy DuMont (e-mail)
4/1/07	Mark Zinan (e-mail)
4/1/07	Ruth Levine (e-mail)
4/2/07	James van Luik (e-mail)
4/2/07	Patricia M. Hamilton (fax)
4/2/07	Patricia Olander (post card)
4/2/07	Sarah Jane Fuller
4/2/07	Neil M. Broome, LCSW MSW
4/2/07	Maureen Ippolito
4/2/07	Leslie Nyman
4/2/07	Meredith Feltus
4/2/07	Valerie Vaughan
4/2/07	Mrs. Roberts Baulanger
4/2/07	Claudia Phillips (e-mail)
4/2/07	Emily Lewis (e-mail)
4/2/07	Lynne Ivers Thompson, MS (e-mail)
4/2/07	Susan Ryan-Miller (e-mail)
4/2/07	Jim Plaza (e-mail)
4/2/07	Kimberly Hyslip (e-mail)
4/2/07	James van Luik (e-mail)
4/2/07	Yuri Friman (e-mail)
4/2/07	Shahla Farzan (e-mail)
4/2/07	Tom Adams (e-mail)
4/2/07	Mary Hoyer (e-mail)
4/2/07	Willa Jarnagin (e-mail)
4/2/07	Bruce Docherty (e-mail)
4/2/07	Joanne D. Lind (e-mail)
4/2/07	Mara Shulman-Ryan (e-mail)
4/2/07	Lynn Bengston (e-mail)
4/2/07	Jay Alexander (e-mail)
4/2/07	Gertrude G. Swain (e-mail)
4/2/07	Enid Gorman (e-mail)
4/2/07	Anya Malkin (e-mail)

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Comments	received:	(continued	on	next page)	
Commento	recerted	(commada	U 11	none page/	

4/2/07	Alan Eccleston (e-mail)
4/2/07	Dianne Klenotic (e-mail)
4/2/07	Andrew M. Richmond (e-mail)
4/2/07	Anna-Beth Winograd (e-mail)
4/3/07	Donna Brooks
4/3/07	H.W. Hopp
4/3/07	Mary Anne Antonellis
4/3/07	Alan Eccleston
4/3/07	Neil Hofrichter
4/3/07	Saralee Morse
4/3/07	Diana Peters-Ross
4/3/07	Jazer Giles (e-mail)
4/3/07	Ellen Bollier (e-mail)
4/3/07	Shel Horowitz (e-mail)
4/3/07	Katie Allan Zobel (e-mail)
4/3/07	Elissa Rubinstein (e-mail)
4/3/07	Filemon Inocencio Jr. (e-mail)
4/3/07	Deborah Walsh (e-mail)
4/3/07	Donna Ingalls (e-mail)
4/3/07	Erika Arthur (e-mail)
4/3/07	Karen Jones (e-mail)
4/3/07	Ann Lewin R.N. (e-mail)
4/3/07	Beverly J. Weeks (e-mail)
4/3/07	Alan Root (e-mail)
4/3/07	Jim Ireland (e-mail)
4/3/07	Christopher Golden (e-mail)
4/3/07	Guilford B. Mooring PE (e-mail)
4/3/07	Richard Newman (e-mail)
4/3/07	Ann S. Lowell (e-mail)
4/3/07	Heather White and Freddie Bryant (e-mail)
4/3/07	Joan Barberich (e-mail)
4/3/07	David Roitman (e-mail)
4/3/07	Tim Holcomb (e-mail)
4/3/07	Jonathan Tauer (e-mail)
4/3/07	Tina Richard (e-mail)
4/3/07	Sharon Povinelli (e-mail)
4/3/07	Tim Wichland (e-mail)
4/3/07	Ruth Wade (e-mail)

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4/3/07	Aaron Somoza (e-mail)
4/3/07	J.M. Stowe (e-mail)
4/3/07	Darcy Sweeney (e-mail)
4/3/07	Carolyn B. Cave, Ph.D. and Kyle R. Cave, Ph.D. (e-mail)
4/3/07	Alice C. Swift (e-mail)
4/3/07	John and Elizabeth Lombard (e-mail)
4/3/07	Michael DeChiara (e-mail)
4/3/07	Evelyn M. Snyder
4/4/07	Diana Sanchez (e-mail)
4/4/07	Patricia G. Ramsey (e-mail)
4/4/07	Christina Ewing (e-mail)
4/4/07	Shaneka (e-mail)
4/4/07	Alicia Morton
4/4/07	Judy Yen
4/4/07	Virginia Kendall
4/4/07	Mary Hoyer
4/4/07	Alison Morse
4/4/07	Joseph Morse
4/4/07	Debra Courage
4/4/07	Emilie S. Woodward
4/4/07	David P. Schmidt
4/4/07	Joanne Caloon
4/4/07	James N. Shamey
4/4/07	Margot Bittel (e-mail)
4/4/07	Mr. Benjamin M. Kalish (e-mail)
4/4/07	Shawn Durrett (e-mail)
4/4/07	Martha and Irwin Spiegelman (e-mail)
4/4/07	Robbie Murphy (e-mail)
4/4/07	Tusi Gastonguay (e-mail)
4/4/07	Gabor Lukacs (e-mail)
4/4/07	Theo Pravitz-Rosen (e-mail)
4/4/07	Lydia Peterson (e-mail)
4/4/07	Lucy McMurrer (e-mail)
4/4/07	Steven Miller (e-mail)
4/4/07	Beth Girshman (e-mail)
4/4/07	Bruce Scofield (e-mail)
4/4/07	Emily Bloch (e-mail)
4/4/07	Mark Lattanzi (e-mail)

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4/4/07	Justin Cifello (e-mail)
4/4/07	Sigrid Schmalzer (e-mail)
4/4/07	Alan R. Anacheka-Nasemann, PWS (e-mail)
4/5/07	Teresa Sandler
4/5/07	Michael Southesland
4/5/07	Mrs. Flora Lee Newman
4/5/07	Alan Reynolds
4/5/07	Florence Rosenstock, M.S.W.
4/5/07	Jennifer Seavey
4/5/07	Susie Woods
4/5/07	Sarah Gurvitch, Hannah Chastain and John Chastain
4/5/07	Hadley Board of Selectmen
4/5/07	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC)
4/5/07	Jeff Gelbard (e-mail)
4/5/07	Dr. Peggy Shannon (e-mail)
4/5/07	Donna L. Kurkul, MLS (e-mail)
4/5/07	Andrea B. Stone (e-mail)
4/5/07	Diane Scherrer, MS,BSN,RN (e-mail)
4/5/07	Jane Plaza (e-mail)
4/5/07	Barry Daggett (e-mail)
4/5/07	Dick Yourga (e-mail)
4/5/07	Patrick Pritchard (e-mail)
4/5/07	Patricia Duffy (e-mail)
4/5/07	Mauro and Claire Aniello (e-mail)
4/5/07	Mary C. McKitrick (e-mail)
4/5/07	Melissa Adams (e-mail)
4/5/07	Catherine Rubinstein and Aaron Rubinstein (e-mail)
4/5/07	Jennifer Addas (e-mail)
4/5/07	Paul and Lisa Tucker and Family (e-mail)
4/5/07	Kirsten Lindblom (e-mail)
4/5/07	Lora Talbot (e-mail)
4/5/07	Stephanie Carlson (e-mail)
4/5/07	Joe Silverman, PhD and Karen Beyel (pharmacist) and children (e-mail)
4/5/07	Sara Blaylock (e-mail)
4/5/07	Andy Morris-Friedman (e-mail)
4/5/07	Barbara S. Wurtzel (e-mail)
4/5/07	Amy Zuckerman (e-mail)
4/5/07	Evelyn Snyder (e-mail)

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4/5/07	Edith Lipp (e-mail)
4/5/07	Megan Durling (e-mail)
4/5/07	Patti A. Prunhuber, Esquire
4/5/07	Judith S. Eiseman (e-mail)
4/5/07	Silas Kopf (e-mail)
4/5/07	Sarah Hills (e-mail)
4/5/07	Alexandra Dawson (e-mail)
4/5/07	Frank S. Aronson (e-mail)
4/5/07	Martha Johnson (e-mail)
4/5/07	Mark R. Knox (e-mail)
4/5/07	Jeanne Yocum (e-mail)
4/5/07	Catherine and John Manly (e-mail)
4/5/07	Elizabeth M. Austin (e-mail)
4/5/07	David Bollier (e-mail)
4/5/07	Esther Latham (e-mail)
4/5/07	Ann Garner (e-mail)
4/5/07	Sheldon Ross (e-mail)
4/5/07	Hayat Abuza, MD (e-mail)
4/5/07	Ashleigh Pyecroft (e-mail)
4/5/07	Kevin Eddings (e-mail)
4/5/07	Nathalie Bourdeu-Root (e-mail)
4/5/07	Joan Vohl Hamilton (e-mail)
4/5/07	Carol Labelle (e-mail)
4/5/07	Judith W. Solsken (e-mail)
4/5/07	Thomas Davies (e-mail)
4/5/07	Sylvia Brandt (e-mail)
4/5/07	Stacey Wenczel (e-mail)
4/5/07	Peggy H. Davis (e-mail)
4/5/07	Michael Lindberg (e-mail)
4/5/07	Matt Rigney (e-mail)
4/5/07	Lindsay McManus (e-mail)
4/5/07	Chris Tucker (e-mail)
4/5/07	Anne Woodhull (e-mail)
4/5/07	Carolynn Laurenza (e-mail)
4/5/07	Lori Thayer (e-mail)
4/5/07	Daniel Kelleher (e-mail)
4/5/07	Lisa MacCullough (e-mail)
4/5/07	Kerry Homstead (e-mail)

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415107	
4/5/07	Jonathan Rymasz (e-mail)
4/5/07	Matt Lampiasi (e-mail)
4/5/07	Jeannette Wicks-Lim (e-mail)
4/5/07	Amber O'Reilly (e-mail)
4/5/07	Fran and Carol LaBelle (e-mail)
4/5/07	S. Ryan Isakson (e-mail)
4/5/07	Richard A. Hunter (e-mail)
4/5/07	Steve Sandler (e-mail)
4/5/07	Roy Faudree (e-mail)
4/5/07	John Kinchla (e-mail)
4/5/07	Ellen Ellsberg Edge (e-mail)
4/5/07	Jeffrey J. Thelen
4/5/07	Elizabeth Chalfin (e-mail)
4/5/07	Laurie A. Long (e-mail)
4/5/07	Ron Miller & Tomma Henckel (e-mail)
4/5/07	Samuel Gladstone (e-mail)'
4/5/07	Sara Coblyn Porth (e-mail)
4/5/07	Teresa Sandler (e-mail)
4/5/07	Barbara Weinberg, Lic.An. RN (e-mail)
4/5/07	Jenny Daniell (e-mail)
4/5/07	Kathleen Winkworth (e-mail)
4/5/07	Joseph Chenelle (e-mail)
4/5/07	Aron P. Goldman (e-mail)
4/5/07	Carol I (e-mail)
4/6/07	Candice and Dan Pratt (e-mail)
4/6/07	Pamela H,. See (e-mail)
4/6/07	Elaine P. Bowditch (e-mail)
4/6/07	Natalie Lyalin (e-mail)
4/6/07	Marion Hoffman (e-mail)
4/6/07	Roxanna Pitkin McKeever (e-mail)
4/6/07	Jim Brissette (e-mail)
4/6/07	Daniel S. Miller (e-mail)
4/6/07	Susie Woods (e-mail)
4/6/07	Wendy Yaffe (e-mail)
4/6/07	David Elvin
4/6/07	Brian Baldi (e-mail)
4/6/07	Nancy K. Mahoney (e-mail)
4/6/07	James Lowenthal (e-mail)

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4/6/07	Michele Morris-Friedman (e-mail)
4/6/07	Ata Moharreri (e-mail)
4/6/07	Emily Toder (e-mail)
4/6/07	Daniel Finn (e-mail)
4/6/07	Spike A. Nowak (e-mail)
4/6/07	Catherine Hinard (e-mail)
4/6/07	Chris Leong (e-mail)
4/6/07	Lisa Gaughran (e-mail)
4/6/07	Sean Burns (e-mail)
\4/6/07	Catherine Newman (4-mail)
4/6/07	Margaret Christie
4/6/07	Elizabeth A. MacHaffie (e-mail)
4/6/07	Amy Pybus (e-mail)
4/6/07	Rosemary Kofler (e-mail)
4/6/07	Charles Heath (e-mail)
4/6/07	John Sheehan (e-mail)
4/6/07	Ruth Jacobson-Hardy (e-mail)
4/6/07	Elizabeth Dillman (e-mail)
4/6/07	Carlyn Saltman & Tom Sullivan (e-mail)
4/6/07	Kara M.Leistyna (e-mail)
4/6/07	Ari Feld (e-mail)
4/6/07	Lyle Denit (e-mail)
4/6/07	Gary Powsner (e-mail)
4/6/07	Lesley Yalen (e-mail)
4/6/07	Catherine Eden (e-mail)
4/6/07	Jon Weissman, Director (Jobs with Justice) – Petition
4/6/07	Peter D. Daniell
4/6/07	Chris Boulton
4/6/07	C. Euma Linderman and Milton Hanzel
4/6/07	Nancy Campbell
4/6/07	Amy Allen
4/6/07	Gabor Lukacs
4/6/07	Mark McLeod and Jacqueline T
4/6/07	Jacquelyn Compton and John Kuzeja, Jr.
4/6/07	Northampton Planning and Development
4/6/07	Hadley Conservation Commission
4/6/07	Lorna M. Peterson, Five Colleges, Inc.
4/6/07	Steven Abdow

4/6/07	Michael Hempstead (fax)
4/6/07	Allan E. Byan, General Manager, UMass Transit
4/6/07	Lynn Werthamer
4/6/07	James A.H. Hafner, Ph.D.
4/6/07	Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)
4/6/07	Executive Office of Transportation (MassHighway)
4/6/07	Ward Morehouse
4/6/07	Carolyn Toll Oppenheim
4/6/07	Tom Maclean (2 e-mail)
4/6/07	Brandon McPhail (e-mail)
4/6/07	Howard (e-mail)
4/6/07	L. Burns (e-mail)
4/6/07	Millicent S. Thayer (e-mail)
4/6/07	Frannie Ness (e-mail)
4/6/07	Alissa Thuotte (e-mail)
4/6/07	Patricia Gorman (e-mail)
4/6/07	Cecil and Louise Currin (e-mail)
4/6/07	Steve Anderson (e-mail)
4/6/07	L. Maya Apfelbaum (e-mail)
4/6/07	Rona Leventhal (e-mail)
4/6/07	Michael Hempstead (e-mail)
4/6/07	Christy Grecsek (e-mail)
4/6/07	Susan I. Hollingsworth (e-mail)
4/6/07	Barbara Johnson (e-mail)
4/6/07	Maggie Malone (e-mail)
4/6/07	Cheryl Stevens MD (e-mail)
4/6/07	Andrew Seeberg (e-mail)
4/6/07	Leslie Fraser (e-mail)
4/6/07	John Svoboda (e-mail)
4/6/07	Margie Kolchin (e-mail)
4/6/07	Ava Gips (e-mail)
4/6/07	Theodore E. Dziok (e-mail)
4/6/07	Christina Young (e-mail)
4/6/07	Nina Filbert (e-mail) Robert L. and Elizabeth A. Rowall (a mail)
4/6/07 4/6/07	Robert L. and Elizabeth A. Rowell (e-mail)
4/6/07	John Mieczkowski (e-mail)
4/6/07	Janet Ryan (e-mail) Ann Walker and Stephen Goodale (e-mail)
4/0/07	Ann Walker and Stephen Goodale (e-mail)

Comments received: (continued)

4/6/07	Susan L. Newton (e-mail)
4/6/07	Elisa K. Campbell (e-mail)
4/6/07	Brooke and Shirley Thomas (e-mail)
4/6/07	Steve Herrell (e-mail)
4/6/07	Katie Durham (e-mail)
4/6/07	Connecticut River Watershed Council (CRWC)
4/13/07	Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) – CERO

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