



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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August 9, 2006

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

PROJECT NAME : Carpenter Estates
PROJECT MUNICIPALITY : Northbridge
PROJECT WATERSHED : Blackstone
EOEA NUMBER : 13832
PROJECT PROPONENT : C & S Realty Trust
DATE NOTICED IN MONITOR : July 10, 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).

The proposed project involves construction of 19 single-family homes on a 65.5-acre project site. The project will result in approximately 12 acres of land alteration and 3.5 acres of new impervious area. Approximately one third of the site (21 acres) contains wetland resource areas, including Bordering Vegetated Wetland (BVW), Isolated Wetland and Intermittent Stream Bank. The project will result in alteration of approximately 7,800 square feet (sf) of wetlands. Three wetlands replication areas are proposed for a total of 8,800 sf. Approximately 56% of the site will be protected as open space. The proponent anticipates that this open space, which contains wetland and upland areas and connects with adjacent recreation lands, will be transferred to the Town of Northbridge.

According to the Environmental Notification Form (ENF), water use and wastewater generation for the project is estimated at 8,360 gallons per day (gpd). The proposed project will be serviced by the municipal water system and includes construction of approximately 0.6 miles of water mains. On-site septic systems are proposed for the single-family homes. The proposed project will result in up to 190 vehicle trips per day.

The project is undergoing review pursuant to Section 11.03(3)(b)(d) because it will result in alteration of 5,000 sf or more of BVW. The project requires a 401 Water Quality Certification from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). The project requires an Order of Conditions from the Northbridge Conservation Commission (and on appeal only, a Superseding

Order from the DEP). The project requires a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Construction Activities Permit from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). 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 state permits with the potential to cause damage to the environment as defined in the MEPA regulations. In this case, MEPA jurisdiction extends to wetlands, water quality, land and stormwater.

The Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) has determined that, although the project site is not located within a Priority and/or Estimated Habitat, the Wood Turtle (*Glyptemys insculpta*) and Four-Toed Salamander (*Hemidactylium scutatum*), two state-listed species, have recently been documented to occur nearby. The NHESP has strongly recommended that the proponent be required to meet the optimum stream crossing standard of a minimum height of six feet and an openness ratio of 0.75 as stated in the "Massachusetts River and Stream Crossing Standards: Technical Guidelines", published by the Massachusetts Riverways Program, dated August 6, 2004. The proponent has committed to designing the stream crossing in accordance with these standards.

As noted in the DEP comment letter, the project must comply with any applicable wetlands-related Northbridge Bylaw as well as the performance standards of the 401 Water Quality Certification (WQC) and Order of Conditions. The proponent should submit an analysis to DEP, as part of the 401 WQC application, that explores practicable alternatives to avoid and minimize wetlands impacts. The DEP has suggested that the proponent consider reopening Casey Road as an alternative to the wetlands crossing. The proponent has indicated, during the site visit and in the ENF, that reopening of Casey Road has already been considered and deemed infeasible. The proponent should provide DEP with information to demonstrate why this alternative is not considered practicable.

The ENF indicates that the proposed project will fully comply with the DEP Stormwater Management Policy, including the requirement for 80% removal of total suspended solids (TSS), erosion and sedimentation controls, and an operations and maintenance plan. The proponent should ensure that mechanisms are in place for effective long-term operation and maintenance of the stormwater system.

The proponent is designing the project to incorporate low impact development (LID) techniques. I encourage the proponent to continue its efforts in this regard and to consider high-performance/green building and other sustainable design measures to avoid and minimize environmental impacts. Sustainable design measures, which can reduce project development and long-term operational costs, may include:

- EnergyStar Certification and Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Certification for Homes;
water conservation and reuse of wastewater and stormwater;
- use of renewable energy;
- ecological landscaping;
- optimization of natural day lighting, passive solar gain, and natural cooling;

- energy-efficient Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC), lighting systems, and appliances, and use of solar preheating of makeup air;
- use of building supplies and materials that are non-toxic, made from recycled materials, and made with low embodied energy;
- incorporation of an easily accessible and user-friendly recycling system infrastructure into building design; and
- implementation of a solid waste minimization and recycling plan.

I have determined that the ENF has sufficiently defined the nature and general elements of the project and that any remaining issues can be addressed during the state and local permit and review process. The project as proposed in the ENF requires no further review under MEPA.

August 9, 2006

DATE



Stephen R. Pritchard, Secretary

Comments Received

7/31/06 Department of Environmental Protection, Central Regional Office
7/31/06 Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program

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