



# *The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*

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September 7, 2006

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

PROJECT NAME : State Street Reconstruction  
PROJECT MUNICIPALITY : Springfield  
PROJECT WATERSHED : Connecticut River  
EOEA NUMBER : 13853  
PROJECT PROPONENT : **Massachusetts Highway Department (MassHighway)**  
DATE NOTICED IN MONITOR : August 8, 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).

This project consists of the reconstruction of 19,800 feet of State Street in Springfield to address traffic congestion, improve safety and aesthetics and to increase pedestrian, bike and transit access along the corridor. State Street is the principal arterial roadway in the Pioneer Valley region connecting downtown Springfield with communities to the east. The project area is a highly urbanized corridor with buildings, sidewalks, parking and private property to the edge of the roadway layout. The corridor includes one wetland resource area near Berkshire Avenue that drains to a stream that is culverted under State Street. Numerous properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places are located along the project corridor including: Springfield Armory National Historic Landmark; Winchester Square, McKnight and Quadrangle-Mattoon Historic Districts. In addition several properties are listed individually in the National Register including: the Masonic Temple, the 1767 Milestone, the Radding-Winthrop Building, the Springfield Fire and Marine Insurance Company, the Springfield Safe Deposit and Trust Company Building and the United Electric Company Building.

The project will include pavement cold-plane and full depth reconstruction from East Columbus Avenue to Berkshire Avenue. The project includes reconstruction of several side streets including portions of Elliot Street, Spring Street and Walnut Street. In addition, traffic control upgrades, a bus priority signalization system and streetscape improvements are included. Overall, impervious surfaces will be decreased by approximately 3.73 acres through the reduction of parking and creation of landscaped medians. Over 300 new trees will be planted along the corridor and within planted medians; however, widening of the right-of-way (ROW) will result in the cutting of 67 mature public shade trees. MassHighway has indicated that trees were identified for removal in consultation with the City of Springfield Parks Department.

The project is undergoing MEPA review pursuant to Section 11.03 (6)(b)(2)(b) because it requires a state permit and will cut five or more living public shade trees of 14 or more inches in diameter at breast height. The project requires review by the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC). It requires an Order of Conditions from the Springfield Conservation Commission (and hence a Superseding Order of Conditions in the event the local Order is appealed). Because the project will be funded with state funds, MEPA has broad scope jurisdiction that extends to all issues that may cause Damage to the Environment.

Comments from the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) indicate that the project will improve the regional transit system through reduced delays and increased reliability and will improve pedestrian circulation and safety through construction of bulb-outs, sidewalks and improved pavement markings. MHC has requested that the proponent provide additional information and detailed plans and specifications to assist in its review including: 1) planned removal and reconstruction of the brick sidewalk associated with the Springfield Armory and 2) the location and caliper size of each of the trees that have been identified for removal. MHC is concerned about removal of mature vegetation within the National Register Historic Districts and impacts on the character and setting of the historic districts.

The review of the ENF has served to adequately disclose the potential impacts associated with this project. Based on the information in the ENF and after consultation with relevant public agencies, I find that outstanding issues can be addressed through state and local permitting. No further MEPA review is required.

September 7, 2006

Date

  
Robert W. Goffe, Jr.

Comments Received:

8/29/06	Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP)
8/28/06	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC)
8/24/06	Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC)

RWG/CDB/cdb