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October 10, 2007

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

PROJECT NAME : Taunton High School and Parker Middle School
 Additions and Renovations/New Pole Elementary School
 PROJECT MUNICIPALITY : Taunton
 PROJECT WATERSHED : Taunton
 EOE A NUMBER : 14099
 PROJECT PROPONENT : City of Taunton, Department of Public Buildings
 DATE NOTICED IN MONITOR : September 10, 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).

This project consists of consists of the expansion and renovation of the Taunton High School and Parker Middle School, construction of a new elementary school in Taunton, MA and construction of associated infrastructure including access drives, parking areas and utilities. The Taunton High School and Parker Middle School building will be expanded by 64,474 square feet (sf) and will support 3,200 students and 87 staff members. A 98,000 sf building will be constructed for the Pole Elementary School which will support 770 students and 87 staff members. The project includes reconstruction of the track and field facility.

The 105-acre site is located on the northeast corner of the Honorary Gordon M. Owen Riverway east of downtown Taunton. The site is bounded by the Taunton River to the north, Harris Street and existing residences to the east, Williams Street to the south and the Honorable Gordon M. Owen Riverway to the west. It contains existing school buildings, a skating rink, driveways, parking areas, athletic fields, tennis courts and other smaller accessory buildings. Wetland resources areas are located on the northern edge of the site, along the main access drive

and adjacent to the track and field. The Ox Bow Farm Cemetery, which is listed in the Inventory of Historic and Archaeological Assets of the Commonwealth, is located on a knoll between a baseball field and tennis courts to the north of the high school.

The project is undergoing MEPA review pursuant to Section 11.03 (1)(b)(1) and (1)(b)(2) because it requires a state permit and will alter over 25 acres of land and create more than 10 acres of new, impervious area. The project requires a Sewer Connection/Extension Permit from the Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP). Also, it requires an Order of Conditions from the Taunton Conservation Commission. The project may receive state funding through the Department of Education/School Building Assistance Program.

Because the project may be funded by the state, MEPA has broad scope jurisdiction that extends to all issues that may cause Damage to the Environment. These include wetlands, wastewater, water quality and traffic.

The project requires a Sewer Connection Permit for the extension of the sewer system to the Elizabeth Pole Elementary School. This extension, and its consistency with Taunton's Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan (CWMP) (EEA #13897) was reviewed as a Notice of Project Change (NPC)/Request for Phase 1 Waiver filed in February 2007. A Certificate on the NPC was issued on February 22, 2007 and a Final Record of Decision (FROD) granting the Phase 1 Waiver was issued on March 22, 2007. Subsequently, MassDEP issued a Sewer Extension Permit for this element of the project. The current project includes a 23,860 gpd increase in wastewater flows associated with the expansion of the Taunton High School/Parker Middle School. In addition, existing sewer lines and an existing pump station will be replaced. These activities do not appear to require a Sewer Connection Permit from MassDEP.¹

The project requires three separate Orders of Conditions related to the construction of the Elizabeth Pole Elementary School, the reconstruction of the track and field and construction associated with expansion of the Taunton High School/Parker Middle School. The Taunton Conservation Commission issued an Order of Conditions on January 30, 2007, February 1, 2007 and September 27, respectively. As part of this review, the Conservation Commission evaluates consistency with the Wetlands Protection Act and the MassDEP Stormwater Management Policy. Comments from MassDEP identify concerns with the sizing of the detention basin proposed to the northwest of the High School. I encourage the proponent to consult with MassDEP and, if necessary, the Taunton Conservation Commission to ensure that the detention basin will function effectively.

Comments from WalkBoston indicate that the emphasis on improving internal circulation for pedestrians and vehicles should improve the walkability of the site. They encourage the City to encourage walking to the school by ensuring safe pedestrian access is provided to the site, including crosswalks and pedestrian countdown crossing signals at major intersections, and make recommendations for improving the existing circulation plan. I encourage the proponent to consider these comments as the design progresses.

¹ Within 60 days after commencement of use of the connection, the proponent and its engineer are required to submit a one-time certification (BRP WP 73) to MassDEP.

The Ox Bow Cemetery is located outside the area of proposed work. The Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) has requested that the proponent include the boundaries of the cemetery on the existing conditions plan and include protective fencing around it during construction.

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 adequately through state and local review. No further MEPA review is required.

October 10, 2007

Date



Ian A. Bowles

Comments Received:

10/1/07	Department of Environmental Protection /Southeast Regional Office (MassDEP/ SERO)
9/11/07	Massachusetts Historical Commission
9/28/07	Walk Boston

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