



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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December 8, 2006

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

PROJECT NAME : Washington Hills
PROJECT MUNICIPALITY : Holliston
PROJECT WATERSHED : Charles
EOEA NUMBER : 13904
PROJECT PROPONENT : Pulte Homes of New England L.L.C.
DATE NOTICED IN MONITOR : November 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).

The proposed project involves construction of a 66-unit age-restricted (55+) housing development on a 49-acre project site. The project will result in approximately 21.4 acres of land alteration and 6.3 acres of new impervious area. A portion the site is mapped as Estimated and Priority Habitat for rare species. The Environmental Notification Form (ENF) indicates that 25 acres of the project site will be placed under a permanent Conservation Restriction to protect rare species habitat.

According to the ENF, water use and wastewater generation for the project is estimated at 9,900 gallons per day (gpd). An on-site subsurface sewage disposal system is proposed for the development and water supply will be provided by the municipal system. The project includes construction of approximately 0.75 miles of water and sewer mains. Traffic impacts associated with the proposed development are estimated in the ENF at 450 vehicle trips per day.

The project is undergoing review pursuant to Section 11.03(1)(b)(2) because the project will result in creation of five or more acres of impervious area and Section 11.03 (2)(b)(2) because the project will result in a taking of a rare or endangered species or species of special concern. The project requires a Conservation and Management Permit from the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP). The project also requires an Access Permit from the Massachusetts Highway Department (MHD) for access onto Route 16. The project requires an Order of Conditions from the Holliston Conservation

Commission for work within the wetlands buffer zone (and on appeal only, a Superseding Order from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP)). The project requires a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Construction Activities Permit from the U.S. 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 rare species, traffic, wetlands, land, stormwater and drainage.

The NHESP has determined that the proposed project will result in a "take" of the Four-toed Salamander (*Hemidactylium scutatum*), as defined in the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act Regulations (321 CMR 10.00). The proponent has submitted a draft Conservation and Management Permit application to NHESP. As stated in its comment letter, NHESP expects to be able to issue a Conservation and Management Permit for the project upon completion of the MEPA review process. The proponent has committed to a 25-acre Conservation Restriction, rare species signage and other on-site mitigation measures, and to provide funding to NHESP for off-site rare species habitat protection. I expect that the proponent will continue consultations with NHESP to finalize the mitigation package during the permitting process.

The Executive Office of Transportation (EOT) has determined that the additional trips associated with the project will not significantly impact the state highway and recommends no further review under MEPA. As recommended in the EOT comment letter, the proponent should continue to work with the MassHighway District 3 Office to address any comments or concerns that may arise during the permitting process.

The proponent should ensure that the proposed project is designed to 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.

As noted in the ENF, the project will have direct access to the Holliston portion of the Upper Charles Trail Project, a future "rails-to-trails" project, which crosses the site. I encourage the proponent to continue consultations with the Town regarding design of the project's main access roadway, to avoid and minimize potential conflicts with the "rails-to-trails" path.

As noted in the ENF and during the site visit, the proponent has made some changes to the project layout to reduce rare species and wetlands impacts. I encourage the proponent to consider additional opportunities to cluster buildings and to integrate Low Impact Development (LID) techniques in site design and storm water 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 <http://www.mass.gov/envir/lid/>. 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: <http://www.epa.gov/owow/nps/lid/>.

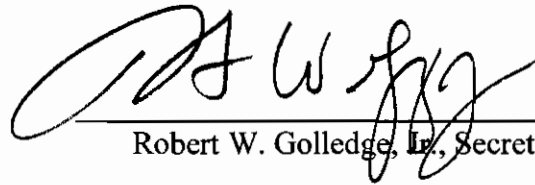
I encourage the proponent to consider high-performance/green building and other sustainable design measures to avoid and minimize environmental impacts. Such measures may include:

- 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 proposed measures to avoid and minimize or mitigate impacts. I am satisfied 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.

December 8, 2006

DATE



Robert W. Golledge, Jr., Secretary

Comments Received

- 11/28/06 Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program
- 11/29/06 Executive Office of Transportation

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