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June 6, 2005

CERTIFICATE OF THE SECRETARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS  
ON THE  
NOTICE OF PROJECT CHANGE

PROJECT NAME : Waterworks Park  
PROJECT MUNICIPALITY : Boston  
PROJECT WATERSHED : Charles River  
EOEA NUMBER : 13416  
PROJECT PROPONENT : Waterworks Park, LLC  
DATE NOTICED IN MONITOR : N/A

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 change is insignificant and does not require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report.

As originally described in the Environmental Notification Form (ENF), the project involved the conversion of the historic Chestnut Hill Waterworks to provide a mix of residential and commercial uses. The 7.9-acre project site is located on the south side of Beacon Street across from the Chestnut Hill Reservoir. As originally proposed, the three historic buildings on the site - the High Service Pumping Station, the Low Service Pumping Station, and the Operations Building - will be rehabilitated for residential units, commercial office uses, a shared community space, and an exhibit area open to the general public.

The proposed project also includes construction of a new residential building called the Pipe Yard Building on a 1.2-acre portion of the project site. The design, height, and materials of the new residential building will be compatible with the existing historic buildings on the site. The Pipe Yard Building will contain 81 residential units, the Low Service Pumping Station will contain 20 residential units, and the Operations Building will contain seven residential units. An important component of the proposed project will be the restoration of the main level of the Hall of Machines in the High Service Pumping Station, which houses the historic Leavitt steam engine, designated as a National Historic Mechanical Engineering Landmark. The engine will be

restored as the part of the exhibit space that will be open to the public. In the ENF, the High Service Pumping Station was originally proposed to contain commercial offices, shared community space, and an exhibit area.

According to the NPC, the project change entails the reprogramming of space in the High Service Pumping Station from commercial uses, as originally proposed in the Environmental ENF, to residential uses. The reprogramming would add four housing units to the project, resulting in a total of 112 units. Some of the previously proposed commercial space will also be reconfigured to provide a larger community center for the entire project. The proposed change would result in slight decreases in traffic generation, water consumption and wastewater generation from the project originally proposed in the ENF.

I find that the proposed project change is insignificant, in accordance with the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) regulations at 310 CMR 11.10(6), and that no further review of the project under MEPA is required. However, given that the project change entails the reprogramming of space from an ostensibly public use (commercial) to private uses in the building proposed to contain public exhibition space that will interpret the history of the Chestnut Hill Reservoir and Pumping Stations complex, I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate the concerns that I previously expressed in the Certificate on the ENF regarding public access. I strongly urge the proponent to continue to work with the state permitting agencies and stakeholders to ensure that public access to this important historic site is maximized. The Community Access Plan contained in the ENF was vague with regard to both the hours of operation for the only remaining public portion of the historic buildings, as well as to the available public parking on the site. I remind the proponent that public access is a key component of the original bill that allows for the disposition of this state property in private use and therefore must be clarified during the permitting process.

The impacts of the project within MEPA jurisdiction do not warrant further MEPA review. The proponent can resolve any remaining issues during the state and local permitting processes.

June 6, 2005  
Date

  
Ellen Roy Herzfelder

ERH/ACC/acc