

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Environmental Affairs ■ MEPA Office

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Executive Office of Environmental Affairs
MEPA Analyst: *Bill Gage*
Phone: 617-626-*1025*

NPC

Notice of Project Change

The information requested on this form must be completed to begin MEPA Review of a NPC in accordance with the provisions of the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act and its implementing regulations (see 301 CMR 11.10(1)).

Project Name: I-93/Lowell Junction Interchange Project		EOEA #: 14159
Street: I-93		
Municipality: Andover/Tewksbury/Wilmington		Watershed: Merrimack
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: 19 321854 E 4719087 N		Latitude: 42.60° N Longitude: 71.17° W
Status of project construction: 0 %complete		
Proponent: Massachusetts Highway Department / Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development		
Street: 10 Park Plaza		
Municipality: Boston	State: MA	Zip Code: 02116
Name of Contact Person From Whom Copies of this NPC May Be Obtained: John Fallon		
Firm/Agency: MassHighway		Street: 10 Park Plaza, Room 4260
Municipality: Boston	State: MA	Zip Code: 02116
Phone: 617-973 7408	Fax: 617-973-8879	E-mail: john.fallon@mhd.state.ma.us

In 25 words or less, what is the project change? The project change involves . . .
The interchange project's northerly limit on I-93 is being extended by a distance of 2.9 miles to include a fourth lane both northbound and southbound to I-495

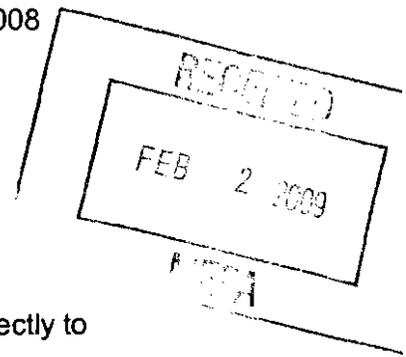
See full project change description beginning on page 3.

Date of ENF filing or publication in the Environmental Monitor: January 9, 2008

Was an EIR required? Yes No; if yes,
 was a Draft EIR filed? Yes (Date:) No
 was a Final EIR filed? Yes (Date:) No
 was a Single EIR filed? Yes (Date:) No

Have other NPCs been filed? Yes (Date(s):) No

If this is a NPC solely for lapse of time (see 301 CMR 11.10(2)) proceed directly to



"ATTACHMENTS & SIGNATURES" on page 4.

PERMITS / FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE / LAND TRANSFER

List or describe all new or modified state permits, financial assistance, or land transfers not previously reviewed: No new or modified permits.

Are you requesting a finding that this project change is insignificant? (see 301 CMR 11.10(6))

Yes No; if yes, attach justification.

Are you requesting that a Scope in a previously issued Certificate be rescinded?

Yes No; if yes, attach the Certificate

Are you requesting a change to a Scope in a previously issued Certificate? Yes No; if yes, attach Certificate and describe the change you are requesting:

Summary of Project Size & Environmental Impacts	Previously reviewed	Net Change	Currently Proposed
LAND			
Total site acreage	314.5 acres	12.25 acres	326.75 acres
Acres of land altered	13.3 to 36.4 acres	12.25 acres	25.55 to 48.65 acres
Acres of impervious area	5.6 to 18.5 acres	11.25 acres	16.85 to 29.75 acres
Square feet of bordering vegetated wetlands alteration	2.9 to 6.0 acres	0.0 acres	2.9 to 6.0 acres
Square feet of other wetland alteration	0 to 3.0 acres of BLSF	0.0 acres	0 to 3.0 acres of BLSF
Acres of non-water dependent use of tidelands or waterways	none	none	none
STRUCTURES			
Gross square footage	Not applicable (NA)	NA	NA
Number of housing units	NA	NA	NA
Maximum height (in feet)	NA	NA	NA
TRANSPORTATION			
Vehicle trips per day	I-93 / 136,000	0	I-93 / 136,000
Parking spaces	NA	NA	NA
WATER/WASTEWATER			
Gallons/day (GPD) of water use	NA	NA	NA
GPD water withdrawal	NA	NA	NA
GPD wastewater generation/ treatment	NA	NA	NA
Length of water/sewer mains (in miles)	NA	NA	NA

Does the project change involve any new or modified:

1. conversion of public parkland or other Article 97 public natural resources to any purpose not in accordance with Article 97? Yes No

2. release of any conservation restriction, preservation restriction, agricultural preservation restriction, or watershed preservation restriction? Yes No

3. impacts on Estimated Habitat of Rare Species, Vernal Pools, Priority Sites of Rare Species, or Exemplary Natural Communities? Yes No

4. impact on any structure, site or district listed in the State Register of Historic Place or the inventory of Historic and Archaeological Assets of the Commonwealth?

Yes No; if yes, does the project involve any demolition or destruction of any listed or inventoried historic or archaeological resources? Yes No

5. impact upon an Area of Critical Environmental Concern? Yes No
If you answered 'Yes' to any of these 5 questions, explain below:

PROJECT CHANGE DESCRIPTION (attach additional pages as necessary). The project change description should include:

- (a) a brief description of the project as most recently reviewed
- (b) a description of material changes to the project as previously reviewed,
- (c) the significance of the proposed changes, with specific reference to the factors listed 301 CMR 11.10(6), and
- (d) measures that the project is taking to avoid damage to the environment or to minimize and mitigate unavoidable environmental impacts. If the change will involve modification of any previously issued Section 61 Finding, include a proposed modification of the Section 61 Finding (or it will be required in a Supplemental EIR).

See attached pages 5-7.

ATTACHMENTS & SIGNATURES

Attachments.

1. Secretary's most recent Certificate on this project
2. Plan showing most recent previously-reviewed proposed build condition
3. Plan showing currently proposed build condition
4. Original U.S.G.S. map or good quality color copy (8-1/2 x 11 inches or larger) indicating the project location and boundaries
5. List of all agencies and persons to whom the proponent circulated the NPC, in accordance with 301 CMR 11 10(7)

Signatures:

<u>1/30/09</u>	<u>Kevin M Walsh</u>	<u>1/30/09</u>	<u>David P Derrig Jr</u>
Date	Signature of Responsible Officer or Proponent	Date	Signature of person preparing NPC (if different from above)

<u>KEVIN M. WALSH</u>	<u>David P Derrig Jr</u>
Name (print or type)	Name (print or type)

<u>MASS HIGHWAY</u>	<u>AECOM</u>
Firm/Agency	Firm/Agency

<u>10 PARK PLAZA, Rm. 4260</u>	<u>300 Baker Avenue</u>
Street	Street

<u>BOSTON, MA 02116</u>	<u>Concord MA 01742</u>
Municipality/State/Zip	Municipality/State/Zip

<u>(617) 973-7484</u>	<u>978-371-4000</u>
Phone	Phone

NPC Project Change description

a) **A brief description of the project as most recently reviewed**

As described in the ENF, the proposed project consists of the construction of a new highway interchange on I-93 in the Towns of Andover, Tewksbury and Wilmington. The new interchange is proposed between the I-93/Route 125 interchange in Wilmington and the I-93/Dascomb Road interchange in Andover, in an area referred to as Lowell Junction. Three interchange configurations were proposed for further study, based on a previously accepted Interchange Justification Report. In addition to a new interchange, each of the alternatives included widening of I-93 from three to four lanes in each direction between the I-93/Route 125 interchange (Interchange 41) and the I-93/Dascomb Road interchange (Interchange 42). The Secretary's Certificate on the ENF recommended that these three alternatives, a No-Build Alternative, a No-Interchange Alternative, and a Consensus Alternative be analyzed in a Draft Environmental Impact Report.

b) **A description of material changes to the project as previously reviewed**

The proposed project change consists of the northerly extension of the previously recommended widening of I-93 between Exits 41 and 42, now continuing through I-93/Route 133 (Exit 43) to I-93/I-495 (Exit 44). All widening from Exit 42 (Dascomb Road) to Exit 44 (I-495) associated with the project change can be accommodated within the existing highway median. The proposed additional widening (combined in both directions) is approximately 32 feet for a distance of approximately 2.9 miles.

The extension of the I-93 fourth lane to I-495 in each direction will provide increased safety for the traveling public. At present, use of the breakdown lane is permitted during peak periods on both northbound and southbound three-lane segments of I-93 between I-495 and the Shawsheen River (the existing three-lane/four-lane transition location) in order to accommodate traffic demand. The provision of a formal fourth lane will provide increased driver confidence and restore the proper breakdown lane function in this heavily traveled interstate segment.

The I-93 / I-495 interchange is a logical breakpoint to shift to four lanes in each direction from three lanes in each direction on I-93. In each direction, there is a difference in I-93 traffic volumes of 10,000 vehicles per day from the proposed widening from four lanes to three lanes north of Dascomb Road (approximately 76, 500 vehicles per day both northbound and southbound) to points immediately north of the I-495 interchange (approximately 66, 000 vehicles per day both northbound and southbound).

The extension of the fourth lane on I-93 to I-495 is consistent with transportation planning goals for the I-93 corridor. The extension of a fourth lane on I-93 from the Shawsheen River to the New Hampshire state border is identified in the long-range transportation plan of each of the three affected regional planning

commissions: Merrimack Valley Planning Commission, Metropolitan Area Planning Council, and Northern Middlesex Council of Governments.

c) The significance of the proposed changes, with specific reference to the factors listed in 301 CMR 11.10 (6)

Expansion of the Project. A change in a Project is ordinarily insignificant if it results solely in an increase in square footage, linear footage, height, depth or other relevant measures of the physical dimensions of the Project of less than 10% over estimates previously reviewed, provided the increase does not meet or exceed any review thresholds.

In addition to the interchange proper, the original project included the widening of I-93 to four formal lanes in each direction from the Route 125 interchange northward to the Dascomb Road interchange, a distance of approximately 2.2 miles. The project change extends the I-93 widening for an additional 2.9 miles. This results in a 60 to 200% increase in the range of impervious surface when compared to the ENF estimate, and a 34 to 92% increase in the range of altered area. No increase in estimated wetlands impact is projected.

Generation of further impacts, including an increase in release or emission of pollutants or contaminants during or after completion of the Project. A change in a Project is ordinarily insignificant if it results solely in an increase in impacts of less than 25% of the level specified in any review threshold, provided that cumulative impacts of the Project do not meet or exceed any review thresholds that were not previously met or exceeded.

There is no expected generation of further impacts, other than those associated with the increase of impervious surface (increased stormwater treatment). Land disturbance in the median occurs in areas previously disturbed during the original highway construction, with the exception of two potential detention areas of approximately 0.5 acres each.

Change in expected date for Commencement of the Project, Commencement of Construction, completion date for the Project, or schedule of work on the Project.

There is no expected change in the project schedule or estimated date of completion at this time.

Change of the Project site.

The primary project site (the interchange site) is unchanged. The component that includes the widening of I-93 has been extended from Dascomb Road to I-495.

New application for a Permit or New request for Financial Assistance or a Land Transfer.

There are no new permits or requests required.

For a Project with net benefits to environmental quality and resources or public health, any change that prevents or materially delays realization of such benefits.

The project change will increase benefits to air quality (reduced congestion) and safety (elimination of peak-hour use of the breakdown lane), without delay to previously stated benefits also to air quality and safety.

For a Project involving a lapse of time, changes in the ambient environment or information concerning the ambient environment.

Not applicable.

- d) **Measures that the project is taking to avoid damage to the environment or to minimize and mitigate unavoidable environmental impacts. If the change will involve modification of any previously issued Section 61 Finding, include a proposed modification of the Section 61 Finding (or it will be required in a Supplemental EIR).**

The project change will occur within the existing median of I-93. No additional clearing of previously undisturbed land will occur, nor will there be any additional impacts to wetland and wildlife resource areas. Stormwater structures required to accommodate the additional highway widening will incorporate Low Impact Design (LID) techniques.

There is no current Section 61 Finding associated with the project.