

MEPA Analyst: Anne Canada

Phone: 617-626- 1035

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: Granite Hills		EOEA #: 13322	
Street: Highland Street			
Municipality: Northbridge		Watershed: Blackstone	
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: 280453.0E, 4667161.6N		Latitude: 71° 39' 22.1" W Longitude: 42° 07' 33" N	
Status of project construction: 0 %complete			
Proponent: Granite Hill Development Corporation			
Street: 91 Main Street, Suite 103			
Municipality: Marlboro		State: MA	Zip Code: 01752
Name of Contact Person From Whom Copies of this NPC May Be Obtained: Cheryl Peterson			
Firm/Agency: Heritage Design Group		Street: One Main Street	
Municipality: Whitinsville		State: MA	Zip Code: 01588
Phone: 508-266-2066	Fax: 508-266-2067	E-mail: cpeterson@Heritage-dg.com	

In 25 words or less, what is the project change? The project change involves . . .
 Increase in housing units (97 to 124), change in type (55+ condos to 40B), no longer under town bylaw due to change to 40B

See full project change description beginning on page 3.

Date of ENF filing or publication in the Environmental Monitor: **Published on July 24, 2004**

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): **Published in Monitor on Dec. 7, 2005**) No
NPC Certificate, dated January 6, 2006, stated that an EIR was no longer required.

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: **Comprehensive Permit and DEP Sewer Extension Permit (never applied for during prior projects)**

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Are you requesting that a Scope in a previously issued Certificate be rescinded?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	53.7 Ac.	-14.64 Ac.	39.06 Ac.
Acres of land altered	21.5 Ac.	+0.41 Ac.	21.9 Ac.
Acres of impervious area	8.1 Ac.	+0.2 Ac.	8.3 Ac.
Square feet of bordering vegetated wetlands alteration	1,592 sq. ft.	0	1,592 sq. ft.
Square feet of other wetland alteration	0	0	0
Acres of non-water dependent use of tidelands or waterways	0	0	0
STRUCTURES			
Gross square footage	168,729 sq. ft.	+2,984 sq. ft.	171,713 sq. ft.
Number of housing units	97	+27	124
Maximum height (in feet)	30 ft.	0	30 ft.
TRANSPORTATION			
Vehicle trips per day	338	+433	771
Parking spaces	201*	+73	274**
WATER/WASTEWATER			
Gallons/day (GPD) of water use	23,474***	+8,316	31,790****
GPD water withdrawal	0	0	0

GPD wastewater generation/ treatment	21,340	+10,450	31,790
Length of water/sewer mains (in miles)	Water = 0.82 Sewer = 0.82 mi.	Water = +0.24 mi. Sewer = +0.41 mi.	Water = 1.06 Sewer = 0.77 mi. gravity sewer; 0.46 mi. forcemain sewer

* Driveway parking spaces only (2 per unit)

** Driveway parking spaces (2 per unit) and 26 guest parking spaces

***Domestic and irrigation water

****Domestic water only

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 **Plant Species: Variable Sedge**
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:

Site planning of some form has been active on this particular piece of property for 5 years now as Granite Hills. At the time of the last NPC filing, NHESP identified the endangered species, Variable Sedge, to be found in the vicinity of the proposed project. As a result, the applicant hired Dr. Donald Padgett to perform a survey of the area to determine if the species was present on the site. Following the survey, NHESP determined that a "take" would not occur on the property. Please refer to Appendix A for the correspondence with NHESP.

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).

The Granite Hills project (as previously reviewed) consisted of a 97 unit condominium development for senior housing on approximately 54 acres located off of Highland Street in

Northbridge. Emergency access to the site would have also been available from Quarry Road, located within the Marston Heights Condominium Association at "The Hills At Whitinsville". The project was subject to environmental review as it involved the construction of one-half or more miles of new sewer mains not in the right of way of existing streets, and required a Sewer Extension Permit from DEP. It also required an Order of Conditions from the Northbridge Conservation Commission, potentially a Superceding Order of Conditions from DEP, and 401 Water Quality Certification. The Notice of Project Change Certificate issued by the Secretary stated that no further action was necessary.

The revised project consists of a 124 unit residential condominium affordable housing development on approximately 39 acres of land located off of Highland Street in Northbridge. The project now requires a Comprehensive Permit from the town, potential approval from the state Housing Appeals Committee based on a potential appeal of the Comprehensive Permit, an Order of Conditions from the Northbridge Conservation Commission, a potential Superceding Order of Conditions from DEP, and the potential need for a Conservation Management Permit from NHESP. A 401 Water Quality Certification is no longer necessary as the development is not a subdivision nor is the parcel the result of a subdivision in the past.

The land area being developed is exactly the same as originally proposed under the senior living development, however, a second parcel of non contiguous land containing 13.7 acres was part of the agreement for the purposes of providing open space only. Under the current development proposal, the 13.7 acre parcel of land is still being left as open space as it is landlocked, however, it is no longer part of the development nor is it under the control of this applicant. Not only is the current development on the same parcel of land as the previously reviewed development, but the roadway layout, grading, and wetland disturbances are the same as well. For this reason, the wetland alteration area (for roadway construction only) is exactly the same as has already been reviewed. Bordering vegetated wetland disturbed (1592 sq. ft.) due to roadway construction will be replicated in kind with 2275 square feet. In order to allow for the additional density without increasing the disturbance area, the floor areas of the condominium units were reduced, thereby only creating an additional 0.2 acres or 2% more impervious area. As part of the layout adjustment, an additional 0.41 acres or 2% more land area alteration is required.

The development that was previously reviewed was for senior housing, consequently, the domestic water needs and vehicle trips per day were much lower than for standard residential housing. As a result, the domestic water demand for the project has increased by 8,316 gallons per day. In following with the increase in domestic water, the wastewater generated from the site will increase by 10,450 gallons per day. Although there is an increase in wastewater generation, the Northbridge Treatment Plant has the capacity to handle the additional flows. The design capacity of the plant is 2.1 million gallons per day while the average daily flow to the plant is between 1 and 3 million gallons per day depending on stormwater flows. The increase in gallons per day is different for water and wastewater due to irrigation water being accounted for in the previously reviewed project. The current design does not contain any provisions for irrigation so as to maintain the lowest association fee as possible.

Due to the change in housing types, the number of vehicles per day has also increased. Senior housing generates less vehicle trips per day than for standard residential housing. As a result, the vehicle trips per day has increased by 433 trips per day. The large increase in vehicle trips does not represent a direct correlation to a similar increase in the number of units or floor space. The project started as 97 units of senior housing and increased to 124 units of residential housing, however, the increase in floor area between the two projects only increased by 2,984 square feet.

When the ENF was filed in July 2004, Natural Heritage submitted a comment letter to MEPA notifying the proponent that a protected species, Variable Sedge, existed in the area of the proposed development. Natural Heritage requested in their letter that a survey and habitat assessment be conducted by the proponent to determine if the species was present on the subject site. The proponents hired Dr. Donald Padgett in 2005 to conduct the survey and assessment. Dr. Padgett determined that Variable Sedge did not exist on the subject parcel. In February 2006, Natural Heritage issued a letter stating that the project will not result in a "take" of a protected species. In spite of the results of this study, the site remains mapped for the presence of Variable Sedge. Prior to filing this NPC, an Information Request was submitted to NHESP to determine what species was present to warrant the mapping as shown on the October 2008 maps. NHESP responded with a letter indicating that Variable Sedge was present in the vicinity of the subject parcel. Please refer to Appendix A for copies of the correspondence with Natural Heritage.

Significance of the changes

Regarding the factors listed at 301 CMR 11.10(6):

- (a) *Expansion of the project.* The project is on the same site as previously reviewed when considering the second non-contiguous parcel that made up for the additional land area on the previously reviewed project was for open space only. The parcel containing the proposed development is of the same acreage for both the previously reviewed project and the current one.
- (b) *Generation of further impacts.* Due to the change in housing type, the impacts due to water, wastewater, and traffic will increase, however, land use impacts are expected to remain the same or increase by an insignificant amount (2%). The amount of wetland disturbance remains the same while the land disturbance and impervious areas increase by a modest 2%.
- (c) *Change in the expected date of commencement of the project...* Due to the downturn in the senior housing market in particular, the applicants opted to modify the design plans for the site so as to accommodate standard residential housing. Although the housing market in general remains difficult at this time, this type of housing will provide an affordable option for buyers seeking a new home. For this reason, the expected commencement date of the project is now expected to be in the Fall of 2009.
- (d) *Change of the project site.* The project site remains the same.
- (e) *New Application for a permit...* The Granite Hills project described in this NPC will require an application to DEP for a Sewer Extension Permit, a Notice of Intent application to the Northbridge Conservation Commission (therefore a Superceding Order of Conditions from DEP may be required), a Comprehensive Permit to the Northbridge Zoning Board of Appeals (therefore a potential approval from the state Housing Appeals Committee may be required based on a potential appeal of the Comprehensive Permit) and potentially a MESA permit. The only application listed above that would be revised is the Notice of Intent. Under the previously reviewed project, a Notice of Intent application was filed but was withdrawn by the applicant prior to an Order of Conditions being issued. All other permit applications will be

new.

- (f) *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. This factor is not applicable.*
- (g) *For a project involving a lapse of time, changes in the ambient environment or information concerning the ambient environment. This factor is not applicable.*

Measures to Avoid, Minimize or Mitigate Environmental Impacts

While the project will result in increased impacts for water demand, wastewater generation, and traffic, the proposed development will provide for affordable housing in the town of Northbridge without increasing the bordering vegetated wetland disturbance areas. Wetland impacts have been minimized as much as possible with the use of interlocking block retaining walls on both sides of the proposed roadway to minimize fill to the bordering vegetated wetland as much as possible. Stormwater management BMP's for the project will include deep sump hooded catch basins, street sweeping, stormwater detention, sediment forebays and infiltration. It is expected that the project will meet the requirements of the Stormwater Management Policy.

Insignificant impacts will be created for the land disturbance and impervious areas, however, the increase is only in the order of 2%.

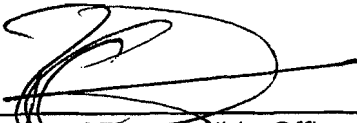
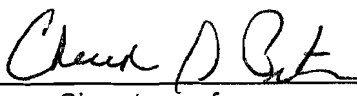
Although Northbridge is no longer under an Administrative Consent Order with DEP which required a 4:1 removal rate of inflow and infiltration for every gallon of wastewater generated, the Northbridge Board of Selectmen have adopted the same 4:1 removal rate under their own Inflow/Infiltration Policy. For this reason, the amount of inflow and infiltration that will be required to be removed from the existing system will significantly increase due to the change in housing type. The total number of I/I gallons that would have been removed under the prior project (senior housing) was 85,360 gallons whereas the total number of I/I gallons to be removed under the current plan is 127,160 gallons. This will result in the increased mitigation of an additional 41,800 gallons to be removed from the existing system.

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:

4/13/09			
Date	Signature of Responsible Officer or Proponent	Date	Signature of person preparing NPC (if different from above)

Rick Olstein	Cheryl G. Peterson, PE
Name (print or type)	Name (print or type)

Granite Hill Development Corp.	Heritage Design Group, LLC
Firm/Agency	Firm/Agency

91 Main Street, Suite 103	1 Main Street
Street	Street

Marlboro, MA 01752	Whitinsville, MA 01588
Municipality/State/Zip	Municipality/State/Zip

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