

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

Project ID No: (issued by OPM)

Date: 3/22/2016

Staff Contact: Helen Muniz

Municipality: Suffield

Project Name: The Hamlet on East Street South Phase II

Funding Source: TBD

State Funds: TBD

Type of State Agency Review

Stage 1 X Stage 2

This assessment is being conducted in conformance to the department's Environmental Classification Document to determine CEPA obligations

Project Description: Dakota Partners Inc. is seeking state financial assistance for Phase II of a housing development project at 898 East Street South, Suffield, CT. The overall proposed activity consists of 75 townhouses and 96 apartments for a total of 171 units on approximately 29.72 acres of land. Phase II activity consists of 9 one bedroom and 27 two bedroom apartment units located within three 12 unit buildings and 60 surface parking spaces on approximately 3.85 acres of vacant land. The overall proposed activity will also include a community building and a footpath which will connect the campus to the adjacent Stony Brook River to the north.

Note: environmental remediation is a positive environmental impact, but not a CEPA activity.

RCSA sec. 22a-1a-3 Determination of environmental significance (direct/indirect)

1) *Impact on air and water quality or on ambient noise levels*

a) *Air*— none

b) *Water Quality*— The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) strongly supports the use of low impact development (LID) practices such as water quality swales and rain gardens for infiltration of stormwater at the proposed housing site. Stormwater discharges from construction sites where one or more acres are to be disturbed, regardless of project phasing, require a permit from the DEEP Permitting & Enforcement Division. For projects disturbing five or more acres, registration describing the site and the construction activity must be submitted to the DEEP prior to the initiation of construction.

c) *Noise*— none

2) *Impact on a public water supply system or serious effects on groundwater, flooding, erosion, or sedimentation*

a) *Water Supply*— The project area is served by the Connecticut Water Company, Northern Region. The Water Supply Plan for the utility, revised in November 2011,

concludes that additional groundwater supply, interconnection with the Metropolitan District Commission and upgrades to the Rockville water treatment plant will be needed to meet maximum day demands with projected growth of the system. The ability of the utility to provide supply should be confirmed. The ability of the Suffield water pollution control facility to treat the proposed sanitary discharges should also be confirmed.

- b) *Groundwater*- This project does not appear to be in a public water supply source water area.
 - c) *Flooding*— The northern border of the Phase 5 site is along Stony Brook. The 100-year flood elevation along this stretch ranges from 39' to 54' (NAVD88) and the 500-year flood elevation is approximately 4' above these figures. If State funding will be used in Phase 5, no new residential structures should be sited within the 500-year flood zone in order to comply with state policy regarding nonintensive floodplain development. State funding for any construction within the 100-year flood zone or any residential structures within the 500-year flood zone, which is a critical activity as defined in section 25-68b(4) of the Connecticut General Statutes (CGS), must be certified by the sponsoring agency as being in compliance with flood and stormwater management standards specified in section 25-68d of the CGS and section 25-68h-1 through 25-68h-3 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies (RCSA) and receive approval from the Department.
- 3) *Effect on natural land resources and formations, including coastal and inland wetlands, and the maintenance of in-stream flows*— The Natural Resources Conservation Service's Soil Survey depicts two lobes of Scitico, Shaker & Maybid soils, regulated wetland soils, in the areas of Phases, 2, 3 and 4. It is recommended that a certified soil scientist perform a reconnaissance of the sites in order to determine whether there are any areas which would be regulated as wetlands or watercourses as defined by section 22a-38 (15) and (16) of the CGS, respectively. If the reconnaissance identifies regulated areas, they should be delineated. Any development should avoid regulated areas to the maximum extent practicable. Any inland wetlands or watercourses at the site are regulated by the local inland wetlands agency, pursuant to section 22a-42 of the CGS. Many local agencies have established setback or buffer areas and require review and approval of activities within these upland areas adjacent to wetlands or watercourses. The local agency should be contacted regarding permit requirements. In order to protect wetlands and watercourses adjacent to the site, strict erosion and sediment controls should be employed during construction.
 - 4) *Disruption or alteration of an historic, archeological, cultural or recreational building, object, district, site or surroundings*— A Phase I Archaeological Reconnaissance Survey for the proposed Hamlet on East Street South project in Suffield was prepared in June 2015. The Survey determined the construction of the Hamlet on East Street South should not adversely impact any prehistoric or historic cultural resources within Suffield.
 - 5) *Effect on natural communities and upon critical species of animal or plant and their*

habitats: interference with the movement of any resident or migratory fish or wildlife species— The Natural Diversity Data Base had reviewed the project at the request of Fuss & O'Neill in November 2014. They identified records of the Federal and State endangered dwarf wedgemussel (*Alasmidonta heterodon*) in Stony Brook upstream of the site as well as the wood turtle (*Glyptemys insculpta*) listed by the State, pursuant to section 26-306 of the CGS as a species of special concern, in the project area. After subsequent review of a freshwater mussel biologist's report dated March 17, 2015, the NDDDB concurred with the survey methods and the assessment that the Federal and State endangered dwarf wedgemussel and State endangered brook floater do not occur in the stretch of Stony Brook adjacent and downstream of the development due to lack of appropriate habitat. They also concurred with the proposed assessment and recommendations for protection of the state species of special concern wood turtle during the construction process. If these recommendations for wood turtle protections are incorporated into project planning and BMPs for protection of wetlands and watercourses are employed and maintained during construction, potential negative impacts to state-listed species will be minimized.

DEEP recommends that any materials used for sediment and erosion control NOT contain plastic netting/mesh.

Stony Brook, downstream of its confluence with Muddy Brook, is impaired and does not meet the designated use as habitat for fish and other aquatic life.

- 6) *Use of pesticides, toxic or hazardous materials or any other substance in such quantities as to create extensive detrimental environmental impact*— N/A
- 7) *Substantial aesthetic or visual effects*— N/A
- 8) *Inconsistency with the written and/or mapped policies of the statewide Plan of Conservation and Development and such other plans and policies developed or coordinated by the Office of Policy and Management or other agency*— The proposed project is located within an area designated as Priority Funding Area and Balanced Priority Funding Area on the 2013-2018 Conservation and Development Policies Plan.
- 9) *Disruption or division of an established community or inconsistency with adopted municipal or regional plans*— N/A
- 10) *Displacement or addition of substantial numbers of people*— N/A
- 11) *Substantial increase in congestion (traffic, recreational, other)*— N/A
- 12) *A substantial increase in the type or rate of energy use as a direct or indirect result of the action*— N/A
- 13) *The creation of a hazard to human health or safety*— N/A

- 14) *Any other substantial impact on natural, cultural, recreational or scenic resources—*
N/A

Cumulative Impacts: Not aware of any at this time.

Conclusion:

Following are the issues identified by various State agencies:

DEEP:

It is recommended that a certified soil scientist perform a reconnaissance of the sites in order to determine whether there are any areas which would be regulated as wetlands or watercourses. If the reconnaissance identifies regulated areas, they should be delineated. Any development should avoid regulated areas to the maximum extent practicable. In order to protect wetlands and watercourses adjacent to the site, strict erosion and sediment controls should be employed during construction.

The Natural Diversity Data Base identified records of the Federal and State endangered dwarf wedgemussel (*Alasmidonta heterodon*) in Stony Brook upstream of the site as well as the wood turtle (*Glyptemys insculpta*) listed by the State as a species of special concern, in the project area. If recommendations for wood turtle protections are incorporated into project planning and BMPs for protection of wetlands and watercourses are employed and maintained during construction, potential negative impacts to state-listed species will be minimized.

The northern border of the Phase 5 site is along Stony Brook. The 100-year flood elevation along this stretch ranges from 39' to 54' (NAVD88) and the 500-year flood elevation is approximately 4' above these figures. If State funding will be used in Phase 5, no new residential structures should be sited within the 500-year flood zone in order to comply with state policy regarding nonintensive floodplain development.

The ability of the Connecticut Water Company to provide drinking water supply should be confirmed. The ability of the Suffield water pollution control facility to treat the proposed sanitary discharges should also be confirmed.

DPH:

The Drinking Water Section of the Department of Public Health reviewed the project for potential impacts to any sources of public drinking water supply. This project does not appear to be in a public water supply source water area.

Recommendations:

The EA for this project appears not to trigger an obligation under CEPA for an EIE.