**State of Connecticut

Environmental Review Checklist

*Last Updated 02/25/2020*

**Instructions for Use:**

The Environmental Review Checklist (ERC), as defined in Sec. 22a-1a-1(9) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies (RCSA), is intended to assist state agencies in (1) determining whether a proposed action or category of actions requires public scoping, or (2) in recording an agency’s initial assessment of the direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental effects of a proposed action at the completion of public scoping.

For the purposes of CEPA, an Action is defined in Sec 22a-1a-1(2) of the RCSA as an individual activity or a sequence of planned activities initiated or proposed to be undertaken by an agency or agencies, or funded in whole or in part by the state.

Completion of the ERC is only *required* as part of a sponsoring agency’s post-scoping notice in which the agency has determined that it will not be preparing an EIE (Sec. 22a-1a-7(d) of the RCSA).

In all other instances, the sponsoring agency has the option to use this form or portions of it, in conjunction with the applicable Environmental Classification Document (ECD), as a tool to assist it in determining whether or not scoping is required and to document the agency’s review. This can be especially useful for an agency administering a proposed action that is not specifically represented in the ECD or which may have additional factors and/or indirect or cumulative impacts requiring further consideration.

Even if an agency ultimately determines that public scoping is not necessary, as a matter of public record OPM highly recommends that the agency internally document its decision, and its justification.

In completing this form, include descriptions that are clear, concise, and understandable to the general public.

Note that prior to reviewing a proposed action under the Connecticut Environmental Policy Act (CEPA), Connecticut General Statutes (CGS), Section 16a-31 requires agencies to review any proposed actions for the acquisition, development or improvement of real properties, or the acquisition of public transportation equipment or facilities, and in excess of $200,000, for consistency with the policies of the State Plan of Conservation and Development (State C&D Plan).

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**PART I – Initial Review and Determination**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Date: | 03/06/2024 | |
| Name of Project/Action: | Ellis Street Commons | |
| Project Address(es): | 321 Ellis Street, New Britain, 06051 | |
| Affected Municipalities: | New Britain | |
|  |  |  |
| Sponsoring Agency(ies): | DOH | |
| Agency Project Number, if applicable: | FX2308902 - (Affordable Housing Program) and NHTF2308902 – National Housing Trust Funds) | |
| Project Funding Source(s)/Program(s), if known: | CHFA Tax Credits; Federal/State Historic Tax Credit Funds; Energy Rebates; CHFA Tax Exempt Bonds; CHFA Opportunity Funds; Bank of America Loan; DECD Brownfields and Local New Britain CDBG Funds. | |
|  |  | |
| Identify the Environmental Classification Document (ECD) being used in this review:  Generic, or  Agency-Specific | | |
|  | |  |
| An environmental assessment or environmental impact statement is being prepared pursuant to NEPA, and shall be circulated in accordance with CEPA requirements. | | |
|  |  |  |
| The proposed action requires a written review by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and/or Nation Tribal Historic Preservation Office (NATHPO). Include SHPO/NATHPO reviews as an attachment, or indicate the status of those reviews: The project has been reviewed by State Historic Preservation Office and have several approvals like, National Park Service (NPS) Part I Approval, National Park Service (NPS) Part II Approval, State Historic Preservation office (SHPO) PNF Sign off and Eligibility Letter, SHPO Building 831, 832, 835, 836 Part 1, Part 2 Conditional Approval, Part 3 Determination, HRTC Reservation. | | |
|  | | |

Based on the analysis documented in this Environmental Review Checklist (ERC), and in consideration of public comments, this agency has determined that the preparation of an Environmental Impact Evaluation (EIE) for the proposed action is not warranted. Publication of this document to the Environmental Monitor shall satisfy the agency’s responsibilities under [*Section 22a-1a-7 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies*](https://eregulations.ct.gov/eRegsPortal/Browse/RCSA/Title_22aSubtitle_22a-1a/) (RCSA).

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*Note**that prior to commencing a CEPA review, Connecticut General Statutes (CGS) Section 16a-31 requires state agencies to review certain actions for their consistency with the policies of the State Plan of Conservation and Development (State C&D Plan). Completion of this ERC assumes the agency has determined this proposed action to be consistent with the State C&D Plan.*

**PART II – Detailed Project Information**

**Description of the Purpose & Need of the Proposed Action:**

Adaptive Reuse of existing 200,000 SF mill structure located on 7 acre lot. The site is an existing Brownfields site that will be entered into a state Brownfields program and remediated. The 321 Ellis Street project consists of the gut rehabilitation of a six-story structure formerly used as an electric mill that was built in 1920 converting it into residential.

**Description of the Proposed Action:**

The 321 Ellis Street project is a 7-acre site is located at 321 Ellis Street in the city of New Britain, Connecticut. Ellis Street Commons will comprise a total of One Hundred Fifty-Four (154) residential units to be outfitted with a mix of 79 one-bedroom, 59 two-bedroom, and 16 three-bedroom units serving individuals at 30%, 50%, 60% and 80% area median income. The unit mix in addition to the number of one-bedroom units, will be marketed to senior households, owing to the high demand for affordable senior housing in the City. The 222,030 sq ft building will feature a leasing and management office as well as amenity spaces for residents. The site will be improved to include new open space and include 230 surface parking.

**Alternatives Considered:**

No Action Alternative.

**Public concerns or controversy associated with the proposed action:**

None.

**PART III – Site Characteristics (Check all that apply)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| The proposed action is non-site specific, or encompasses multiple sites; |  |
|  | |
| Current site ownership: | N/A,  State; Municipal,  Private,  Other: Please Explain. |
| Anticipated ownership upon project completion: | N/A,  State; Municipal,  Private,  Other: Please Explain. |

**Locational Guide Map Criteria:**

<http://ctmaps.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=ba47efccdb304e02893b7b8e8cff556a>

Priority Funding Area factors:

Designated as a Priority Funding Area, including  Balanced, or  Village PFA;

Urban Area or Urban Cluster, as designated by the most recent US Census Data;

Public Transit, defined as being within a ½ mile buffer surrounding existing or planned mass transit;

Existing or planned sewer service from an adopted Wastewater Facility Plan;

Existing or planned water service from an adopted Public Drinking Water Supply Plan;

Existing local bus service provided 7 days a week.

Conservation Area factors:

Core Forest Area(s), defined as greater than 250 acres based on the 2006 Land Cover Dataset;

Existing or potential drinking water supply watershed(s);

Aquifer Protection Area(s);

Wetland Soils greater than 25 acres;

Undeveloped Prime, Statewide Important and/or locally important agricultural soils greater than 25 acres;

Category 1, 2, or 3 Hurricane Inundation Zone(s);

100 year Flood Zone(s);

Critical Habitat;

Locally Important Conservation Area(s),

Protected Land (list type): Enter text.

Local, State, or National Historic District(s).

**PART IV - Assessment of Environmental Significance – Direct, Indirect, And Cumulative Effects**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Required Factors for Consideration (Section 22a-1a-3 of the RCSA)** | **Agency’s Assessment and Explanation** |
| Effect on water quality, including surface water and groundwater; | The proposed action will not result in any impact to groundwater and surface water quality.  DEEP comments indicated the applicability of Stormwater and Dewatering Wastewaters from Construction Activities depending on the size of the disturbance regardless of phasing. This general permit applies to discharges of stormwater and dewatering wastewater from construction activities where the activity disturbs more than an acre.  A General Permit for the Discharge of Stormwater and Dewatering Wastewaters from Construction Activities was received for this project on August 8, 2023 |
| Effect on a public water supply system; | The project will not have any impact on public water supply system. Staff from DEEP reviewed the location of this project and found that it is not in an aquifer protection area. |
| Effect on flooding, in-stream flows, erosion or sedimentation; | The project site is not located in 100- or 500-year flood zone.  DEEP’s comment on watershed management have been factored into the site planning and stormwater management, which were reviewed by New Britain DPW prior to issuance of a building permit. |
| Disruption or alteration of an historic, archeological, cultural, or recreational building, object, district, site or its surroundings; A. Alteration of an historic building, district, structure, object, or its setting; OR B. Disruption of an archeological or sacred site; | The project is an adaptive reuse of existing 200,000 SF mill structure located on 7-acre lot. The site is an existing Brownfields site that will be entered into a state Brownfields program and remediated.  The project has been reviewed by State Historic Preservation Office and have several approvals like, National Park Service (NPS) Part I Approval, National Park Service (NPS) Part II Approval, State Historic Preservation office (SHPO) PNF Sign off and Eligibility Letter, SHPO Building 831, 832, 835, 836 Part 1 Determination, SHPO Building 831, 832, 835, 836 Part 2 Conditional Approval,  SHPO Building 831, 832, 835, 836 Part 3 Determination, HRTC Reservation 831, 832, 835, 836. |
| Effect on natural communities and upon critical plant and animal species and their habitat; interference with the movement of any resident or migratory fish or wildlife species; | The project is not located in any Natural Diversity Database area. According to DEEP too it was not in a Natural Diversity Database Area. So, this project will not have any effect on natural communities of critical habitat. There is no floodzone or wetland hazard so the project will not effect any fish or aquatic animal. |
| Use of pesticides, toxic or hazardous materials or any other substance in such quantities as to cause unreasonable adverse effects on the environment; | Based on the type and the nature of the development, the use of pesticides, toxic or hazardous materials are not anticipated. Any residual impacted from fill and historic activities at the site will be address as part of the site investigation and cleanup. |
| Substantial aesthetic or visual effects; | The project is not expected to cause substantial aesthetic or visual  impacts in the area. |
| Inconsistency with: (A) the policies of the State C&D Plan, developed in accordance with section 16a-30 of the CGS; (B) other relevant state agency plans; and (C) applicable regional or municipal land use plans; | Proposed project is consistent with the State C&D Plan Growth  Management principles #1 (Redevelop and Revitalize Regional Centers and Areas with Existing or Currently Planned Physical Infrastructure); Growth Management Principle #2 (Expand Housing Opportunities and Design Choices to Accommodate a variety of  Household Types and Needs); and Growth Management Principle #3 (Concentrate Development around Transportation Nodes and Along Major Transportation Corridors to Support the Viability of Transportation Options). |
| Disruption or division of an established community or inconsistency with adopted municipal and regional plans, including impacts on existing housing where sections 22a- 1b(c) and 8-37t of the CGS require additional analysis; | Temporary disruption is expected during making the mill building to residential but the long-term affect will be positive to the site and neighborhood. |
| Displacement or addition of substantial numbers of people; | No direct, indirect or cumulative impacts. |
| Substantial increase in congestion (traffic, recreational, other); | During work there can be some temporary traffic but best management practice can be adopted to reduce the impact. |
| A substantial increase in the type or rate of energy use as a direct or indirect result of the action; | Some increase may occur as the building will be residential. |
| The creation of a hazard to human health or safety; | Redevelopment and reuse will reduce any risk associated with health and safety. |
| Effect on air quality; | During construction or reuse there can be a little air dust issue but no direct, indirect or cumulative impacts are anticipated from reuse work.  DEEP Bureau of Air Management typically recommends the use of newer off-road construction equipment that meets the latest EPA or California Air Resources Board (CARB) standards. If newer equipment cannot be used, equipment with the best available controls on diesel emissions including retrofitting with diesel oxidation catalysts or particulate filters in addition to the use of ultra-low sulfur fuel would be the second choice that can be effective in reducing exhaust emissions. The use of newer equipment that meets EPA standards would obviate the need for retrofits.  DEEP also recommends the use of newer on-road vehicles that meet either the latest EPA or California Air Resources Board (CARB) standards for construction projects. These on-road vehicles include dump trucks, fuel delivery trucks and other vehicles typically found at construction sites. On-road vehicles older than the 2007-model year typically should be retrofitted with diesel oxidation catalysts or diesel particulate filters for projects. Again, the use of newer vehicles that meet EPA standards would eliminate the need for retrofits.  DOH advised client to adopt best management practices including those from DEEP to reduce potential air quality impacts.  As per developer: The Contractor shall endeavor to ensure newer off-road construction equipment is used wherever possible to meet CARB standards. The Contractor shall be responsible for notifying subcontractors of RCSA idling regulations and shall install signage noting the 3-minute idling limitation throughout the project site to ensure trucks arriving to the site are aware of the regulation. |
| Effect on ambient noise levels; | No noise issue is anticipated from reuse work. |
| Effect on existing land resources and landscapes, including coastal and inland wetlands; | Not any adverse impact on coastal or inland wetland are anticipated. |
| Effect on agricultural resources; | Not any adverse impact on agricultural land is anticipated. |
| Adequacy of existing or proposed utilities and infrastructure; | Existing utilities are present on site and in the area. |
| Effect on greenhouse gas emissions as a direct or indirect result of the action; | Not any adverse impact is anticipated. |
| Effect of a changing climate on the action, including any resiliency measures incorporated into the action; | Not any adverse impact is anticipated. |
| Any other substantial effects on natural, cultural, recreational, or scenic resources. | Not any adverse impact is anticipated. |
| Cumulative effects. | Positive cumulative impact on reusing a previous mill structure for residential building meeting more housing needs. |

**PART V - List of Required Permits, Approvals and/or Certifications Identified at the Time of this Review**

DEEP has made recommendations in their review letter dated July 27, 2023 (attached). On request of DOH, Developer/Consultant confirmed that all comments were considered.

(1) Stormwater Management during Construction: A General Permit for the Discharge of Stormwater and Dewatering Wastewaters from Construction Activities was received on August 8, 2023.

(2) Solid Waste Disposal: The General Contractor is following a waste diversion strategy and will provide a waste diversion report at the completion of demolition to document the % of construction waste that was recycled or reused. All suitable fill will be reused on site to the extent possible.

(3) Potential for PCBs: Investigation for PCBs was conducted prior to commencing construction by Langan Engineering and Axiom Partners and no PCBs were encountered.

(4) Special Waste: All special waste is being handled according to all relevant regulations.

(5) Watershed Management: These considerations have been factored into the site planning and stormwater management, which were reviewed by New Britain DPW prior to issuance of a building permit.

(6) Air Management: The Contractor shall endeavor to ensure newer off-road construction equipment is used wherever possible to meet CARB standards. The Contractor shall be responsible for notifying subcontractors of RCSA idling regulations and shall install signage noting the 3-minute idling limitation throughout the project site to ensure trucks arriving to the site are aware of the regulation.

**PART VI – Sponsoring Agency Comments and Recommendations**

Based on the environmental assessment of the proposed project, DOH recommends that the project proceed as proposed and preparation of and Environmental Impact Evaluation (EIE) is not warranted.

**PART VII - Public Comments and Sponsoring Agency Responses:**

No public comments provided during scoping notice period.