

April 11, 2019

Lancaster Zoning Board of Appeals
Lancaster Town Hall
701 Main Street, Suite 4
Lancaster, MA 01523

Re: Supplement to Environmental Analysis for Goodridge Brook Estates, Lancaster, MA

1. INTRODUCTION

On behalf of Crescent Builders, Inc., Goddard Consulting, LLC (GC) is pleased to submit an Supplement to the Environmental Analysis for the Goodridge Brook Estates residential development project off Sterling Road in Lancaster, MA. The original Analysis was submitted on March 22, 2019. The following is supplement to that letter further clarifying findings.

The Analysis was performed in accordance with Chapter 301-8, Sections D(2) to D(4) of the Lancaster Subdivision Rules and Regulations. The three sections from 301-8.D. to be analyzed are as follows:

(2) Material effects upon important wildlife habitats, outstanding botanical features, and outstanding landscape features or historic environs; [Amended 6-13-2011]

(3) Capability of soils, vegetative cover, and proposed erosion control efforts to support proposed development without danger of erosion, silting, or other instability;

(4) Relationship to the requirements of MGL c. 131, §§ 40 and 40A (the Wetlands Protection Act) and to the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA); [Amended 6-13-2011]

2. ANALYSIS OF SECTION 301-8.D(2)

GC biologist Dan Wells conducted additional Wildlife Habitat Evaluation on April 2 and April 9 of 2019. The evaluation consisted of a survey for vernal pool habitat within the project site. The survey was timed to coincide with the peak of vernal pool amphibian breeding activity, based on observations made by GC at numerous vernal pools in eastern Massachusetts.

2.1 Existing Important Wildlife Habitats

2.1.1 Vernal Pools

There were no suitable conditions observed within any of the onsite wetlands that could support the breeding by vernal pool indicator species. The following photos show the four onsite wetlands surveyed. A yellow flag was tied in the approximate deepest part of the wetland for reference in the

photos. These areas were either completely dry or else contained a few small pockets or puddles of standing water, one or two inches deep.

500-series IVW



Photo 1 - 500-series IVW on 4/2/19.



Photo 2 - 500-series IVW on 4/2/19.



Photo 3 - 500-series IVW on 4/2/19.



Photo 4 - 500-series IVW on 4/9/19.



Photo 5 - 500-series IVW on 4/9/19.

700-series IVW



Photo 6 - 700-series IVW on 4/2/19.



Photo 7 - 700-series IVW on 4/2/19.



Photo 8 - 700-series IVW on 4/9/19.



Photo 9 - 700-series IVW on 4/9/19.

300-series wetland



Photo 10 - 300-series BVW on 4/2/19.



Photo 11 - 300-series BVW on 4/2/19.



Photo 12 - 300-sereis BVW on 4/9/19.



Photo 13 - 300-series BVW on 4/9/19.

200-series wetland



Photo 14 - 200-series wetland on 4/2/19.



Photo 15 - 200-series wetland on 4/9/19.

2.1.2 Endangered Species

No endangered species were observed during the vernal pool surveys on 4/2 and 4/9. The site does not contain suitable breeding habitat for any State-listed amphibians.

2.1.3 Intermittent Stream

An onsite stream system begins in the geographic center of the property and flows southward offsite. The stream is unmapped by the current USGS Maps, the stream also doesn't meet the criteria for perennial stream under the WPA. The stream according to USGS stream stats only has a water shed of 0.13 square miles, which is well below the 0.5 square mile criteria under the WPA (310 CMR (2)(a)1.a.i-ii). In addition the Order of Resource Area Delineation (ORAD, Mass DEP File #193-0550) issued by the Lancaster Conservation Commission does not list any riverfront as resource area in their ORAD. The project has been reviewed by the towns stormwater reviewer and found to be in compliance with the Massachusetts Stormwater Handbook. The project therefore meets the wetlands protection act standards for stormwater impacts to any wetlands or streams under the WPA.

Cold water fisheries

Due to the small watershed the stream is highly unlikely to flow year round, but will dry up in the early summer. Site observations of the stream show that due to the small size of the channel and the nature of the site the stream will most likely dry up in the summer. In addition the stream has an impediment of any potential movement by a downstream culvert that prevents the likelihood of any fish movement within the stream

It should be also noted that the stream has never been classified as a cold water fishery, including under the recent Jones Crossing (DEP File #193-393, 436) project which is directly downstream of the proposed project and directly abuts the stream in question. Mass DEP approved the project only within the riverfront area of the Goodridge Brook and not the unnamed stream adjacent to this site which starts on the proposed project site (Worcester Registry of Deeds, book 45312, page 124 & book 45312, page 110).

2.1.4 Snags

Although a large amount of snags will be removed as part of the project. The substantial amount of snags within the wetland is still a very large and robust quality of wildlife habitat which is far above other wetland snag densities.

2.1.5 Breeding Birds

A barred owl was observed onsite on 4/2. No breeding bird survey has been conducted due to the time of year.

2.1.6 Turtles

No turtles were observed during the vernal pool survey on 4/2 and 4/9.

2.1.7 Mammals

No new mammal species were observed during the 4/2 and 4/9 vernal pool surveys.

2.2 Existing Outstanding Botanical Features

No Outstanding Botanical Features were observed on 4/2 or 4/9.

2.3 Existing Outstanding Landscape Features or Historic Environs

No additional comments at this time

2.4 Material Effects Upon Important Wildlife Habitats

Since the onsite wetlands were confirmed not to contain vernal pool habitat, we conclude that the project will not have a material effect upon vernal pool-breeding amphibians.

4. ANALYSIS OF SECTION 301-8.D(4)

4.1 Relationship to the requirements of the Wetlands Protection Act

4.2 Relationship to the requirements of the Mass. Environmental Policy Act (MEPA)

Comments have arisen which imply that the MEPA process is required for this project since MASS DEP would provide comments under the forthcoming Notice of Intent that will be filed after the ZBA decision is reached. Under the MEPA process any comments or a review provided by a state agency for a project are not a state action under MEPA. No state action (issuance of a permit by a state agency) is required for the proposed project, therefore no MEPA review is required. Goddard has field with MEPA for many projects and MEPA never is involved with projects where Mass DEP comments on a Notice of Intent filed before a local commission.

by 

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By: 

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