



April 3, 2025

Email

Hingham Conservation Commission
Hingham Town Hall
210 Central Street
Hingham MA 02043

Re: Supplemental Information
425 Lincoln Street
Hingham, Massachusetts

[LEC File #: TGS\24-429.01]

Dear Members of the Conservation Commission:

On behalf of the Applicant, Viking Development, LLC, LEC Environmental Consultants, Inc., (LEC) is submitting Supplemental Information associated with the Notice of Intent (NOI) Application to convert the auto dealership at 425 Lincoln Street (Route 3A) to a childcare facility. This letter provides responses to review comments from the Conservation Commission Agent sent by email on March 11, 2025, and references revised Site Development Plans, dated March 26, 2025, prepared by Bohler Engineering (Attachment A) and a revised Drainage Summary, revised March 31, 2025, prepared by Bohler Engineering (Attachment B). The Agent’s comments are listed below, followed by our team’s response.

- Sheet C-201 Existing Conditions: The legend shows “area of pavement removal” as areas in grey however the entire parking lot is shaded grey making it difficult to differentiate. Please correct to clearly depict areas of pavement to be removed (as clearly shown on the Impervious Coverage Exhibit submitted as part of the Drainage Report).

Response: Sheet C-201 has been revised to clearly depict the areas of pavement to be removed. All existing pavement will be removed and replaced, where specified, which is the reason for the solid gray hatch. We have added a second crosshatch indicating impervious areas to be permanently removed.

- The top of Coastal Bank was delineated “based on topography and the flood plain elevation (12.0) in accordance with DEP Program Policy 92-1”. Please expand and clarify, per DEP’s Policy, which diagram is representative of the site as the Coastal Bank extends beyond the limits of the flood zone on the property. For future submittals, please note the Commission’s updated Resource Area Delineation Policy in regards to information needed for Coastal Bank delineations.

Response: The Coastal Bank boundary is being re-evaluated and re-delineated based on further review of DEP Program Policy 92-1 and topography. The northern portion of the boundary is based on diagram 2 and the southern portion is based on diagram 3 from the policy. Representative transects have been included to support the delineation (Attachment C).

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- The project description in the NOI includes “restoration of the previously approved 4,800 square foot mitigation planting areas...including removal of invasive species, replanting, and reseeded, and post construction monitoring”. The project plan only indicates the mitigation areas will be “planted and seeded as necessary”. As noted in the NOI, the planting area within the Riverfront Area (RA) and Coastal Bank is in very poor condition. Based on staff observations, there is also a significant amount of trash, landscape fabric, construction debris, fill piles, etc. Staff concurs with the need to restore this area and recommends the restoration plan details and specifications be added to the project plan. Staff also recommends additional native, non-cultivar shrub and tree plantings (suitable for this coastal location) be incorporated into the Landscape Plan to increase species diversity and enhance wildlife habitat and other wetland values of the resource areas.

Response: The Landscape Plan (Sheet L-101) has been revised to provide additional details and clarification regarding the scope of mitigation plantings. The restoration area activities will begin with installation of the filter sock along the limit of work, followed by hand removal of trash and debris. Removal of mulch and landscape fabric will then be completed by hand or by using a small machine. The next step will involve spreading topsoil to ensure that four to six inches of topsoil is present in the restoration areas. The proposed plantings will then be installed in areas that do not have sufficient coverage by existing shrubs, as depicted on the Landscape Plan. No cultivars will be used. After the plantings are installed, the entire restoration area will be hydroseeded with a Northeast Upland Native/Naturalized Wildflower Mix sold by Southern Tier Consulting. These activities will be performed in the spring or fall. Monitoring and reporting to the Commission will occur for two growing seasons as noted in the NOI, or as otherwise stipulated in the Order of Conditions.

- The Landscape Plan shows an additional 573 SF planting area near Lincoln St. to be cleared, seeded and planted with 3 Red maples. A 5-foot strip of this area is proposed to be hydro-seeded lawn. Staff recommends the maples be substituted for a more salt tolerant species (e.g. red oak, white oak, sassafras) and the entire area be seeded with a native seed mix.

Response: The Landscape Plan (Sheet L-101) has been revised to eliminate the grass strip and incorporate the area into the mitigation plan. The red maples have been replaced with eastern red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*) which is salt tolerant. Please note that the current plans show additional mitigation through removal of the paved area within the Route 3A MassDOT ROW at the southwest corner of the site. This area will be restored with the proposed Northeast Upland Native/Naturalized Wildflower Mix. This area is approximately 2,300 square feet and is not included in our overall reduction of impervious area total, as it has not yet been presented to or approved by MassDOT.

- Given the location and status of Weymouth Back River as a 303(d) listed waterbody with TDML, staff recommends alternative locations be considered for snow storage and trash enclosure (both within the 50-foot buffer and RA) or the location be substantiated.

Response: The trash enclosure has been moved further away from the river to the east side of the drive aisle, to gain more separation from resource areas. Alternative locations for the snow

storage area were evaluated, but found that the proposed location was optimal in terms of minimizing potential runoff into the resource area and avoiding loss of parking spaces during snow events. It is important to note that the proposed limit of pavement and snow storage area are a significant improvement over existing conditions in which pavement and snow storage is located significantly closer to the resource area (see Sheet C-201 which shows pavement to be removed). The only alternative locations for snow storage on the rear of the property would result in loss of parking spaces which would negatively affect operation of the childcare facility during snow events.

- The narrative includes a performance standards analysis for impacts to RA under the WPA, however compliance with the applicable sections of the Hingham Wetland Regulations (HWR) is not included. Please add a discussion of compliance with HWR Sections 21.1 and 22.0 for work in the RA and Buffer Zone.

Response: The project complies with the performance standards of HWR 21.1 and 22.0 as follows:

The standard of HWR 21.1 (1) stipulates incorporation of the WPA performance standards for Riverfront Area under 310 CMR 10.58, which are addressed in the NOI. Standards (2)-(4) are specific to the definition and delineation criteria for perennial streams. As noted in the NOI, Weymouth Back River is a tidal perennial stream with the inner boundary of Riverfront Area based on the Mean High-Water (MHW) elevation which has been determined to be elevation 4.0 as depicted on the *Plans*. HWR 21.1 (5) refers to an alternatives analysis criteria related to analysis of lots in close proximity to the site. Given the specific building size requirements and parking requirements associated with the proposed conversion to a child-care facility, there are no off-site parcels that are suitable for the project. The site was specifically selected by the Applicant because the existing building size, available parking spaces, and location are suitable for the operations (with the building renovations and minor site reconfigurations proposed). As noted in the NOI, the project does not expand on the existing development in the Riverfront Area, and in fact will result in a significant reduction in impervious area and an increase in mitigation area between the development and river. HWR 21.1 (6) does not apply as the site is not mapped as rare species habitat. HWR 21.1 (7) is applicable to the Commission. HWR 21.1 (8) refers to HWR 23.0 Project Specific Performance Standards. The only potentially applicable under 23.3 Landscaping and 23.7 Structures is related to new construction in the Buffer Zone. The project generally complies with these standards since there is no new construction in the undeveloped Buffer Zone and all activities are within the existing development footprint that predates the Bylaw.

HWR 22.0 provides Performance Standards for work in the Buffer Zone. The project generally complies with these standards, with HWR 22.0 (3) being most relevant to the project as it allows the Commission to require previously altered Buffer Zone to be restored to protect or improve resource area values. As described in the NOI, the project will restore and improve upon previously permitted Buffer Zone restoration measures and includes a net reduction in impervious

surfaces and drainage improvements. With these features, the project will enhance the capacity of the Buffer Zone to protect resource area values.

- As the LOW is within the limits of Coastal Bank and there will be temporary impacts to this resource area, please quantify in section B.3 of the NOI and include performance standards analysis.

Response: Further evaluation of the Coastal Bank boundary and activities on the Coastal Bank revealed a discrepancy between field conditions and the site plan topography. Our team is in the process of refining this boundary and quantifying any impacts. Based on field conditions, the proposed mitigation areas are located on a flat area located immediately adjacent to the Coastal Bank; therefore, we don't anticipate any significant impacts to Coastal Bank. The key performance standard for Coastal Banks is 310 CMR 10.30 (6) which requires that projects on a Coastal Bank or within 100 feet have no effects on the stability of the Coastal Bank. The proposed landscaping activities will result in an overall improvement to the stability of the Coastal Bank by increasing vegetation coverage. Erosion controls are proposed at the limit of work to prevent any erosion during the time when soil will not be stable. Once the seed mix germinates, the mitigation area will be stabilized. The project will not adversely affect the stability of the Coastal Bank.

- The Drainage Summary/Stormwater Report will require peer review which staff understands is being conducted by the Planning Board's review engineer. Please provide a copy of the peer review letter and any responses when completed. To note, for preliminary consideration: the Drainage Summary does not refer to the project watershed or impaired receiving waterbody; the checklist indicates the project is not within a Critical Area however Back River Cove is mapped shellfish habitat; and the Illicit Discharge Statement is not signed.

Response: The revised Drainage Summary, dated March 31, 2025 (Attachment B), contains a revised stormwater checklist and a signed Illicit Discharge Statement. The Drainage Summary text has been revised to mention Back River Cove, specifically in the first paragraph, and stormwater standards 4 and 6. The stormwater system was peer reviewed by PGB Engineering, LLC in a letter dated March 21, 2025, and was found to be compliant with current DEP standards. There was one comment about adding filter fabric to the crushed stone on the sides of the drywell, which is shown on the drywell detail on plan sheet C-901.

- The project includes work on the adjacent property (433 Lincoln St) to "repair riprap apron" and "uncover end of pipe" however the LOW does not incorporate this area. Also proposed on the adjacent property (and within the LOW) is removal of existing light fixture. Please provide signature or written permission from the property owner. Please also clarify if maintenance of this stormwater measure is included in the O&M Plan for the subject property.

Response: The activities associated with the riprap apron repair are within a 20-foot wide drainage easement which is referenced on the plans. Maintenance of the structure is allowed under the easement without authorization from the property owner. The offsite light fixture and



the associated activities have been removed from the project. The limit of work has been revised accordingly in this area.

We look forward to discussing the project at the April 14, 2025 Public Hearing. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 508-746-9491 or at mmaganello@lecenvironmental.com.

Sincerely,

LEC Environmental Consultants, Inc.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark L. Manganello".

Mark L. Manganello
Assistant Director of Ecological Services

Attachments

cc: DEP; Chris Fazendin; Bohler Engineering