



June 17, 2024

Reading Conservation Commission
c/o Charles Tirone, Conservation Administrator
16 Lowell Street
Reading, MA 01867

Re: Request to Extend Order of Conditions – Maillet, Sommes and Morgan Land
0 Lowell Street and 0 Willow Street, Reading, Massachusetts
Mass DEP File No. 270-0747

Dear Mr. Tirone and Members of the Reading Conservation Commission:

On behalf of the Applicant, the Town of Reading (the Town), Horsley Witten Group, Inc. (HW) is respectfully requesting to extend the Order of Conditions (OOC) issued on August 3, 2021 for open space and stormwater improvements at the Maillet, Sommes and Morgan Conservation Area. The existing OOC is due to expire on August 3, 2024.

The approved project involves the installation of a constructed stormwater wetland system to address local and regional flooding and improve water quality within the Aberjona River. The project also seeks to enhance existing resource areas through native plantings and invasive species control, as well as improve the existing trail system onsite with development of accessible trails, formalized trail markers, educational signage, and seating areas.

Please recall that the proposed project is part of a larger, grant-funded effort through the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness grant program (MVP) designed to address current and future flooding within the Mystic River Watershed and improve climate change resiliency and water quality while advancing environmental justice and open space connectivity. The Maillet, Sommes and Morgan Conservation land was one of the priority sites originally identified to address the program goals. Additionally, the open space improvements support the recreational goals of the Reading Trail Committee and the Town's Open Space and Recreation Plan.

Per the OOC, project/activities occur within the buffer zone to Bordering Vegetated Wetland (BVW) that also involve a small BVW crossing to connect constructed stormwater wetland cells and the trail systems. These jurisdictional areas are regulated under the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act (M.G.L. Ch. 131 § 40) and the Town of Reading General Bylaw (Section 7.1) and associated Wetlands Protection Regulations. Proposed mitigation includes local flooding and water quality improvements, wetland replacement and restoration, invasive species management, and restoration of native plant communities. It is anticipated that the entire project will result in an overall improvement to the interests protected by these resource areas.

The project has been under construction since July 2023 and is anticipated to be substantially complete by September 2024. The project was initially anticipated to be completed in June

2024, but the identification of contaminated sediments and resulting remediation in coordination with the completed Remediation Abatement Measure (RAM) Plan as well as significant wet weather events in the December 2023 and early 2024 created minor construction delays. While the aforementioned events have been addressed, additional time is necessary to ensure landscape planting and establishment can occur prior to granting public access.

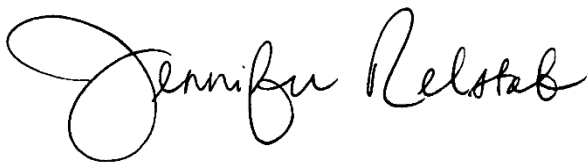
In addition to extending the OOC to achieve substantial completion, the Town seeks to extend the OOC to continue the ability of the contractor (under their contractual requirements) and the Town to maintain the constructed wetlands and surrounding landscape, including the management of invasive species for additional growing seasons (through 2027) to ensure full establishment of the plantings and the goal of restoring a substantially native plant community within the project site such that the project will serve the ecological functions as proposed. We request that the Commission extend the OOC to August 3, 2027 (a 3-year extension).

We request that this matter be added to the Commission's June 26, 2024 hearing agenda. We further understand that the Commission would like to conduct a site visit prior to the hearing on June 24, 2024 beginning at 9:00 am. HW is prepared to attend this meeting.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. We look forward to meeting with the Commission later this month to review site conditions and discuss the project. Please feel free to contact me with any questions you might have regarding this request at (508) 833-6600 or at jrelstab@horsleywitten.com.

Sincerely,

Horsley Witten Group, Inc.



Jennifer R. Relstab, P.E.

Project Manager

Enclosures

cc: MassDEP, Northeast Regional Office
Alex Rozycki, P.E., Town of Reading
Ryan Percival, P.E., Town of Reading
Catherine Pedemonti, Mystic River Watershed Association
Patrick Herron, Mystic River Watershed Association