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Environmental Report

7182 & 7192 Main St, Monroe / Trumbull

Date: November 11, 2022

By: Steven Danzer Ph.D.

- Soil Scientist – Certified Nationally by the Soil Science Society of America (#353463).
  – Registered with the Society of Soil Scientists of Southern New England.
- Senior Professional Wetland Scientist - PWS #1321, Society of Wetland Scientists.
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INTRODUCTION

Regulated activities are proposed adjacent to the wetlands located at 7182 and 7192 Main Street (Route 25), Monroe and Trumbull, Connecticut. The site was previously approved in 2019 by Monroe and Trumbull for the removal of a commercial building and the subsequent excavation and filling of the site in preparation for a future development, and to resolve several inland wetland violations. Since the 2019 approvals, the site preparation processes are nearing completion and the wetland remediation plan has been implemented.

The proposed activities include the construction of a multi-story mixed use building, parking, grading, and installation of utilities including a subsurface stormwater retention system, as indicated on the plans prepared by J. Edwards & Associates LLC.

The property is 6.67 acres, of which 4.01 acres are in Monroe and 2.66 acres are in Trumbull. The proposed activities will occur entirely within upland areas that have been

previously cleared and/or disturbed as per the earlier approvals. Only a small portion of the activities will occur within the upland review areas. The proposed development will utilize the recently constructed water quality basin. There will be no significant impacts or direct impacts to the wetlands.

Landscape Context

The site is located adjacent to Route 25, a major commercial and light industrial corridor. Adjacent land-use south to the site is currently maintained as industrial/commercial. The land being prepared for a similar commercial/industrial use to the north. West (across the street) from the site there are several residences located along Old Turnpike Road as well as a residential neighborhood located on top of the hill. East of the site, across the wetlands and waterbodies, are several commercial/industrial parcels accessed by Victoria Drive. The property itself located within the watershed to the Pequonnock River, of which the river is located to the east of the site.

Wetland Resources

The wetlands were delineated by JMM Wetland Consulting Services LLC during the prior 2019 permit review process and then documented in their soil report dated 9/9/19. Three wetland areas were located. Wetland soils within these areas were characterized as Saco silt loam (108) and Aquents (308W). Saco soils are poorly drained soils formed in alluvial sediments. Aquents are disturbed wetland soils subject to cutting, filling, and moving.

The wetland resources within the property were described in full detail in a previous environmental report dated 10/11/19 by JMM Wetland Consulting Services LLC. The characterizations included the wetland types, vegetative cover, and functions and values. Three wetland areas where located.

The three wetland areas within the site include 1) a small isolated, man-made depressional wetland located at the southern property boundary which is vegetated by scrub-shrub species, 2) a larger wetland system located within the eastern and northeastern section of the site that is contiguous with off-site wetland and watercourse habitat, and which contains forested, shrub-scrub, and marsh habitats, and 3) a smaller wetland area located within the northeastern portion of the site contiguous with the wetland system 2 and with the offsite ponded section of the Pequonnock River, containing scrub-shrub and marsh habitats.

The site was visited again by Steven Danzer PhD & Associates LLC in 2022 to observe any changes to the wetlands that may have occurred since the 2019 JMM evaluation. The

baseline data within the JMM report was found to be still accurate. During these 2022 site visits, the quantity and health of the 2019 approved remediation plantings (including the native seed mix) in the wetland remediation area was also assessed. Vegetative cover within the remediation area was observed to be more than adequate. The health of the plants appeared to be sufficient to likely ensure future survivability. Invasive vegetative cover appears to be relatively minimal, with the exception of ragweed (a weedy species but not necessarily an invasive species). Overall, the site appeared to be on a positive trajectory.

Proposed Activities

The regulated activities include the construction of a 25,000 SF multi-story, mixed use building, associated parking, grading, and installation of utilities including a subsurface stormwater retention system. The vast majority of the development will outside of regulated areas, only portions of the rear slope, the northeast corner and portions of the rear parking area, and the maintenance driveway for the basin will be within the upland review area.

The developmental footprint has largely already been cleared, excavated and/or filled as per previous 2019 approvals, and as such, there will be no natural or contiguous vegetative habitats disturbed. The activities will be largely within the 2019 approved limit of fill; only the corner of a 10 feet wide maintenance driveway, and the northeastern corner of the parking area and associated grading will exceed what was approved in 2019.

A storm drainage network is proposed to collect and pipe all runoff from impervious surfaces. The runoff will be directed to a hydrodynamic separator and ultimately be discharged to the existing stormwater quality basin located in the southeastern region of the site. A subsurface retention system will also be located west of the building to provide additional retention from a portion of the parking lot.

A landscape plan prepared by Environmental Land Solutions is proposed to revegetate the site. All plantings around the periphery of the site including those along the eastern slope directly above the wetlands will all be native.

Discussion/Analysis

The project was reviewed to determine if there were any significant impacts to the wetland resources, pursuant to the definition of “Significant Impact Activities” contained within Section 2.1 of the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Regulations of the Town of Monroe.

According to Section 2.1, "Significant Activity" include activities that involve (to summarize) a) deposition or removal of material; b) substantially changes the natural channel or may inhibit watercourse dynamics; c) substantially diminish the natural capacity of the wetland resources or provide other functions; d) cause or potentially cause substantial turbidity, siltation or sedimentation; e) cause substantial diminution of flow or groundwater levels to the wetland resources; f) cause or potentially cause pollution; and g) damage or destroys unique, scientifically or educationally valuable wetland areas.

The project was also reviewed to determine if there were any significant impacts to the wetland resources, pursuant to the definition of "Significant Impact Activities" contained within Section 2 of the Town of Trumbull Inland Wetland and Watercourses Regulations. According to Section 2, "Significant Impact Activities" include activities that involve 1) deposition or removal of material; 2) substantially change the natural channel or inhibit watercourse dynamics; 3) substantially diminish the natural capacity of the wetland resources; 4) cause or potentially cause substantial turbidity, siltation or sedimentation; 5) cause substantial diminution of flow or groundwater levels to the wetland resources; 6) cause or potentially cause pollution; and 7) damage or destroys unique, scientifically or educationally valuable wetland areas.

As per the above definitions, the project will not cause significant impacts to the wetlands for the following reasons:

- There is no work being proposed in the wetlands. The wetlands are located significantly lower in the landscape from the proposed activities, and will be physically buffered post-development by vegetated slopes.

- The concept for this development has already been reviewed and approved by both towns in 2019. The developmental footprint has already largely been cleared, excavated and/or filled as per previous 2019 approvals. As such, there are no natural vegetative habitats that will be disturbed.

- The vast majority of the development will occur outside of the regulated upland review areas. Only portions of the northeastern rear slope, the northeast corner region of the rear parking area, and the maintenance driveway for the basin will be located within the upland review area. These encroachments into the upland review area represent a relatively small proportion of all of the proposed activities.

- Stormwater generated from the site will be mitigated by a storm water system which is proposed to collect and treat runoff generated by the roof of the proposed building and parking areas, and which will eventually discharge the runoff into an existing water quality basin.

- Native buffer plantings are proposed along the upland slope to enhance the western edge of the wetland.

- Wetland restoration work, as per the prior 2019 approval, has been successfully implemented in advance of the work which is now proposed.

- Erosion controls are proposed to prevent erosion and sedimentation towards the wetland/watercourse.

With the above considerations in mind, it is my opinion that there will be no significant impacts to the wetland resources on the site, nor will be there any significant alteration to the existing wetland functions or values.

Summary Conclusions

The proposed activities include the construction of a 25,000 SF multi-story, mixed use building, associated parking, grading, and installation of utilities including a subsurface stormwater retention system. No work is proposed in the wetlands/watercourses.

It is my professional opinion that the proposed activities will not significantly impact, or change, diminish, or otherwise detrimentally alter the ecological communities or the functions or values of the wetland/watercourse areas located on or adjacent to the property. Impacts by the proposed activities are anticipated to be minimal or nonexistent.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Respectfully submitted,
Signed,

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CPSS
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