

D-0025-070
March 3, 2023

Deerfield Conservation Commission
8 Conway Street
South Deerfield, MA 01373

Re: **Request for Determination of Applicability
Deerfield Academy
Dormitory Maintenance Access Curb Cut Project
70 Old Main Street, Deerfield, Massachusetts**

Dear Mr. Law and Members of the Commission:

On behalf of Deerfield Academy (DA) (the Applicant), Tighe & Bond respectfully submits this Request for Determination of Applicability (RDA) for a proposed dormitory maintenance access curb cut along Deerfield Academy frontage on Route 5/10 located at 70 Old Main Street in Deerfield, Massachusetts (Mile Marker 39.2 of the Route 5/10 corridor). The proposed project includes development of a new maintenance access curb cut and driveway on Route 5/10.

This RDA is being filed since a portion of the proposed work will occur within the 100-foot Buffer Zone to a Bordering Vegetated Wetland. These areas are regulated under the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act (WPA, M.G.L. c. 131 §40) and implementing regulations.

All of the proposed work will occur within previously disturbed areas and the existing grass and hedge road roadway shoulder, with no anticipated impacts to the surrounding jurisdictional resource areas. The Applicant respectfully requests that the Deerfield Conservation Commission make a Negative Determination, confirming that a Notice of Intent (NOI) will not be required for the proposed work.

This RDA application includes the following items:

- Attachment A – WPA Form 1
- Attachment B – Figures
- Attachment C – Project Drawings
- Attachment D – Site Photographs

The following text describes the jurisdictional resource areas and other existing conditions, proposed activities, and proposed protective measures.

Site Description

The Project Site consists of a paved parking lot, greenhouse, garden shed, and single-story building along Route 5/10. The property abuts campus buildings to the south and west, Route 5/10 and an agricultural field to the east, and forested land with a manmade stormwater detention basin and large wetland complex to the north. Please refer to the figures provided in Attachment B and the Project Drawings provided in Attachment C for more information on the project location.



Wetland Resource Areas

Site reconnaissance and wetland resource investigation of the project area were conducted by a Tighe & Bond wetland scientist on August 3, 2022. The resource investigation was conducted in accordance with the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) guidelines, 310 CMR 10.00. Jurisdictional resource area boundaries were surveyed using an Arrow 100® Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) sub-meter unit.

TABLE 1
Summary of MA WPA Resource Areas by Flag Series

Wetland ID Series	Flag Numbers	Resource Area Type
1	1A-1 through 1A-4	Non-Jurisdictional Drainage Basin
2	2A-1 through 2A-5	Bordering Vegetated Wetland

Bordering Vegetated Wetland

Wetland 2A can presently be characterized as a palustrine emergent (PEM) wetland within the roadside swale along the eastern shoulder of Route 5/10. The area appears to be mowed regularly but maintains characteristics of a jurisdictional vegetated wetland. Soils within the swale were reduced and 5% redoximorphic concentration in the matric above 10-inches. Dominant vegetation present includes Deer-tongue witchgrass (*Dichanthelium clandestinum*; FACW), mugwort (*Artemisia vulgaris*; UPL), low smartweed (*Persicaria longiseta*; FAC). And white oak (*Quercus bicolor*, FACW).

Bordering Land Subject to Flooding

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) flood map (Panel No. 25001C0566J, effective July 7, 2014) was consulted to evaluate the presence of Bordering Land Subject to Flooding (BLSF) at and near the project area. The project area is not located within an area subject to flooding and/or inundation by the 100-year flood, and therefore is not regulated as BLSF.

Rare Species

The Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) Atlas (15th edition, effective August 2021) and MassGIS online mapping tool were reviewed during the preparation of this RDA. According to these sources, the project area does not fall within Priority or Estimated Habitats of Rare Wildlife.

Proposed Activities

The proposed project consists of construction of a new maintenance driveway on Route 5/10, that requires a access curb cut, to improve access for maintenance vehicles to the adjacent student dormitories.

The proposed activities include preparing the site with removal of existing hedgerow, excavating to the proposed subgrade, installing road base borrow material, installing hot mix asphalt paving, and installation of an actuated sliding gate and steel backed timber guardrail. Trenching operations to install electrical conduit will be required to provide electrical service to the sliding gate. The proposed driveway surface will be graded to drain stormwater towards the existing drop inlet structures on Route 5/10 within the MassDOT State Highway Layout and the portion of the driveway on Deerfield Academy's campus will grade towards the existing parking lot and adjacent lawn area. All materials and equipment will be staged on the lot within paved and previously disturbed areas.

Protective Measures

Wetland resource areas near the proposed project area will be protected by erosion control barriers. The erosion control barriers will consist of compost filter tubes. Additionally, inlet protection will be installed at catch basins within the project area. Details of both measures are provided on Sheet C-601 of the Project Drawings. These measures will be installed prior to the commencement of work and will be maintained for the duration of construction and until disturbed areas have restored and stabilized.

Regulatory Discussion

The proposed work will result in approximately 8,500 square feet (sf) of impacts which includes 2,300 sf of new impervious services to the outer extend of the 100-foot Buffer Zone. Temporary impacts consist of repaving existing pavement and grading associated with the new access curb cut and driveway off Route 5/10. Table 2 summarizes impacts the 100-foot Buffer Zone.

TABLE 2
Summary of resource area impacts.

Resource Area	New Impervious Impact (sf)	Temporary Impact (sf)	Total (sf)
100-foot Buffer Zone	2,300	6,200	8,500

Under existing conditions, the entirety of the 100-foot Buffer Zone is previously disturbed. Given the maintained nature and existing site use of the school. The proposed work will not change the general characteristics of the area by the proposed work and the areas of impact adjacent to the proposed curb cut will be restored to extent practicable.

Summary

We look forward to having the opportunity to discuss this project with the Deerfield Conservation Commission at the next public meeting. We anticipate these materials are sufficient for the Commission to issue a Negative Determination confirming the proposed project may proceed without the filing of an NOI. Should you have any questions regarding this application or require any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me at (413) 875-1305 or at KLWilkins@tighebond.com.

Sincerely,

TIGHE & BOND, INC.

Katy Wilkins
Project Manager

Enclosures

Copy: Andrew DeMado, Deerfield Academy
Jeffery Galli, Deerfield Academy

