



March 27, 2015

Matthew A. Beaton, Secretary
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
Attn: MEPA Office, Anne Canaday, EEA No. 15060
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston MA 02114
Re: EEA 15060, Wynn Everett FEIR

Dear Secretary Beaton:

The Mystic River Watershed Association (MyRWA) appreciates this opportunity to comment on the Supplemental Final Environmental Impact Report EOEEA # 15060 (SFEIR) filed for the proposed Wynn Resort Casino in Everett Massachusetts. This report was submitted to the Secretary February 17, 2015 by Wynn MA, LLC.

The Mystic River Watershed Association is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded in 1972 by a group of concerned citizens. MyRWA's mission is to protect and restore clean water and the natural environment to a healthy state in the basin's 22 communities and to promote responsible stewardship of our natural resources through educational initiatives. A small organization, MyRWA accomplishes its mission by forging links with citizens' groups, universities, businesses and government agencies. As an environmental organization, MyRWA is particularly attuned to how proposed projects will improve existing conditions within highly urbanized areas of the Mystic River Watershed.

The Mystic River Watershed Association has, throughout the MEPA process, encouraged that, given the scale and scope of the proposed Resort Casino and its location on the banks of the Mystic River, Wynn Resorts and now Wynn MA LLC has an extraordinary opportunity to make a significant contribution to the revitalization of the Mystic River waterfront and to restoration of natural habitat and water quality conditions in the river. We are happy to see, based upon the plans for the development provided to date, that Wynn Resorts has embraced this opportunity.

MyRWA acknowledges and appreciates that the proposed project will accelerate the cleanup of a significantly damaged ecosystem including restoration of a heavily contaminated site with significant waterfront on the main stem of the Mystic River. Such restoration of a keystone parcel in the Mystic River watershed has the potential to make a significant difference to water quality and natural life in the watershed and in the life of watershed communities.

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We hope the proponent will continue to provide innovative leadership to promote restoration of the natural environment and open spaces of the Mystic River watershed. In support of those efforts, MyRWA offers the following comments.

Section 1.2.4 OPEN SPACE

Regarding this section of the SFEIR, the Mystic River Watershed Association recognizes the intent to provide extensive and well maintained open space for public use. We are pleased to see project plans for pathways with connection to other riverfront trail ways as well as a variety of public amenities to be built on and offsite. We agree that project plans to create public space along the waterfront will restore access to the riverfront and can add significantly to the lives of nearby residents and visitors. In addition plans to restore tidelands and to re-create salt marsh habitat will provide an opportunity for healthy outdoor recreation and education that is in short supply in this area.

We are concerned however that ample dedicated parking be created for users of these public areas to ensure that access, as required under Chapter 91, is provided to these kinds of visitors.

This class of visitor is not included in the parking analysis nor is it clear in the SFEIR how this issue will be addressed. We recommend that an analysis of the visitor parking issue be completed and, based upon this analysis, a sufficient number of parking spaces be made available at no cost to short term visitors to the site whose purpose is to enjoy the public open space and pathways. This we believe will help fulfill the proponents stated intent “to encourage the public to visit the site and experience the ecological restoration of the project’s living shoreline.”

We remain in strong support of the proponent’s intention to connect the harbor walk on their site with the nearby DCR Gateway Park and hope that this connection through land owned by others can be facilitated.

1.2.6.2 SHORELINE AND SHELLFISH RESTORATION

The Mystic River Watershed Association remains in strong support of plans to “enhance and restore the degraded coastal bank and recreate a salt marsh on the Project Site.” We applaud the proponent’s efforts to undertake these restorations and encourage all efforts to improve water quality in the Mystic River. Although the clam and oyster seeding activities proposed have been eliminated from the project, the Mystic River Watershed Association looks forward to working with the proponent and other interested parties to advance the restoration of natural resources in the Mystic River and, specifically, aquatic resources in the immediate vicinity of the Project Site.

Summary

The Mystic River Watershed Association will continue to monitor the proposed project as it moves forward and will remain in contact with the proponent and relevant authorities during preparation and review of all other Federal, State and local permit applications.

Broadly we are encouraged by the proponent’s approach to site remediation, planning and design taken to date and by the stated commitment of the Wynn Resort development team to set high standards of excellence with regard to environmental protection and restoration.

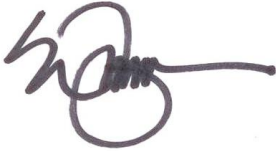
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Thank you for this opportunity to comment on this significant project proposal. If you have any questions or require additional information please contact me at (781) 316-3438 or at EK@mysticriver.org

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'EkOngKar Singh Khalsa', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

EkOngKar Singh Khalsa, Executive Director
Mystic River Watershed Association

cc: Jamie Fay, Fort Point Associates
Massachusetts Gaming Commission
Mayor Carlo DeMaria, Jr.
Everett Planning Board
Everett Conservation Commission
Mass Audubon

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