



October 9, 2015

Mr. Frank Taormina
Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection
Waterways Regulation Program
One Winter Street, 5th Floor
Boston, MA 02108

Re: Waterways License Application Number W15-4480-N, Wynn MA LLC

Dear Mr. Taormina,

The Mystic River Watershed Association, known as MyRWA, is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded in 1972 by a group of concerned citizens. Our mission is to protect and restore clean water and related natural resources within the basin's 22 communities and to promote responsible use and stewardship of Mystic River natural resources through educational initiatives and science-based advocacy.

As an environmental organization, MyRWA is particularly attuned to the way development projects improve existing conditions within the highly urbanized communities of the Mystic River Watershed. Given the scope and scale of the project, the proposed Wynn Everett Resort Casino represents an extraordinary opportunity for the proponents to make substantial and long lasting positive change in the Mystic River watershed. This project can support development of the Mystic River waterfront into the valuable, accessible and popular natural resource it has the potential to become.

Early on in the now completed MEPA review process, MyRWA recommended several important changes to the Wynn site plan that we thought could significantly improve access to and engagement with the tideland areas and the local natural environment. In response to our and others advocacy, Wynn MA embraced these recommendations and committed to restore adjacent Mystic River tideland areas, increase the size of public open space and improve connectivity from the site to surrounding multi use pathways and parks. Wynn MA's plans to restore tidelands along the proposed resort's shoreline are of particular interest to MyRWA. Creation of restored tidelands and a new salt marsh on site will promote similar projects and provide a model of tideland restoration throughout the watershed. More importantly it will change public perception of the Mystic River and invite deeper engagement in the river's life and waterfront. All of this is in the public interest.

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We applaud these efforts by the proponent to respond to community and environmental interests. Building footprints and size were modified in order to create more outdoor public open space with access to the riverfront. Designed connections to and improvements along area bicycle and pedestrian pathways will help connect visitors to the Mystic River and support advocacy for local natural habitat and river ecology. These design changes are appreciated and sorely needed in our densely developed urban river environment. It is important to note also that the project will undertake remediation of a contaminated hazardous waste site that has until now remained a blighted and unused parcel that prevented access to the waterfront. Restoration of this Brownfield to productive use will provide substantial benefit to Mystic River communities and to the river itself.

Two final other notes with regard to Chapter 91 Permitting:

Public Parking Additional clarification with regard to the location and cost of on-site public parking is required. It is not clear that peak demand will not interfere with short term open-space visits. MyRWA believes that a robust number of free public parking spaces designated for open space visitors will be a key component of a successful project approach. It is important that free parking for short term visitors is explicitly included as a condition of the permit.

Building Height While the proposed project complies with the height limits established by the approved Everett MHP, building heights vary significantly from the baseline regulatory height standards established under 310 CMR 9.51(3)(e). We believe it is appropriate to request additional mitigation in support of this variance. Additional mitigation that improves local environmental conditions and supports safe public access is reasonable consideration for the height substitutions provided.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on this important project. MyRWA will continue to monitor the proposal as it moves forward through the permit process. If you have any questions or require additional information please contact me at (781) 316-3438 or at EK@mysticriver.org.

Sincerely,



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
Environmental League Massachusetts