



Ecosystem Solutions, Inc.

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June 6, 2022

Project no. W22-1648

William Batchelor, Chair
Franklin Conservation Commission
355 E. Central St.
Franklin, MA 02038

RE: MBZA APPLICATION NARRATIVE
8 Hemlock Lane
Map 226, Lot 90
Franklin, Massachusetts

Chair Batchelor,

At your request, Ecosystem Solutions, Inc. (ESI) has completed a site investigation for wetlands and wetland jurisdictional areas on and in the close vicinity of the above referenced property ("Property"), and presents this Findings Report in preparation for submission of a Minor Buffer Zone Application (MBZA) for the Property owner and applicant (Applicant) for the purpose of building a small shed (Project). The investigation of wetlands and other resource areas on the site was conducted on April 12, 2022 in accordance with the Town of Franklin Chapter 181 Wetlands Protection Bylaw (Franklin Wetlands Bylaw), Town of Franklin Conservation Commission Regulations (Franklin Rules), Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act (M.G.L. c. 131, §40) (WPA), the Massachusetts Wetlands Regulations (310CMR 10.00), the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Policy 95-1, the US Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) 1987 Wetland Delineation Manual, and its 2009 Supplement for the Northeast Region, as amended, and the NEIWPCC Field Indicators for Identifying Hydric Soils in New England, Version 4. Policy 95-1 specifically outlines the current DEP criteria and methodology for defining BVW's in Massachusetts. Both the ACOE Manual and Policy 95-1 allow for the use of the environmental characteristics of hydrophytic vegetation, hydric soils and hydrology in order to identify wetland areas.

Property Description

The Property is located on the north side of Hemlock Lane, beginning at the intersection of Hemlock Ln. and Maple St., although the lot is quite shallow until approximately 250' east of the intersection of Hemlock Ln. and Maple St., where the bulk of the Property is located. A single family home is located in the larger portion of the lot to the east. The area immediately adjacent to the house consists of maintained lawn, while the rest of the Property to the north and west is forested. The Property is 1.32 acres in size. To the east, west, and south are single family dwellings along Hemlock Ln. and Maple St. The lot to the north is predominantly forested. This site investigation reviewed all wetland resource areas found on the Property, which is located in the previously mentioned forested area.

Project Description

The purpose of the MBZA application is to allow the construction of a small shed, 18'x23' in size (414 sq ft). The proposed location for this shed is approximately half way between the north and south Property lines adjacent to the western Property line. This places the shed between the 50' and 100' foot buffer zones, approximately 2 feet beyond the 50' "no build" line. Erosion controls will be placed between the construction area and the 50' Buffer line on the downgradient side of the Project area. Work will take place from the upland side of the Project. The shed itself will be built on a concrete pad. The shed will have electricity, but will not have running water. The work is to be conducted over the summer of 2022.

The area where the proposed shed is to be located is currently forested with vegetation dominated by: American witch-hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana* – FAC-) in the shrub layer; and Eastern white pine (*Pinus strobus* – FACU) and Red maple (*Acer rubrum* – FAC) in the tree layer. Coast pepper-bush (*Clethra alnifolia* – FAC+) and White oak (*Quercus alba* – FACU-) were also present as non dominant vegetation. A picture of the area is below. The Applicant has had the Project designed to minimize the number of trees and vegetation that needs to be removed. Some trees will have to be cut from the footprint of the shed, and there will be some landscaping on the upland side around the path to the entrance of the shed. The Applicant plans to keep existing trees between the southern side of the shed and the existing lawn. The maximum expected area of vegetative disturbance expected during the construction phase is ±906 sq ft. This will be temporary in nature, and following completion of construction and associated landscaping leading to the shed entrance, the total disturbed area is expected to be ±560 sq ft, or just over half the 1000 sq ft of disturbance allowed as part of a MBZA application.

Topography in this area slopes down grade towards the wetland in a generally northly direction. With the proposed erosion and sediment controls, and where the vegetation between the Project and the wetland will remain intact, we do not feel sediment transport into resource area will be a risk.

Where this Project will not negatively impact; flood control, pollution and storm damage, public and private water supplies, groundwater supplies, fisheries, land containing shellfish, and wildlife habitat, we feel it is not counter to the interests of the WPA.

Pictures of the Project area are located on the following page.

Picture 1



Looking north from near the edge of existing lawn into the Project area.

Picture 2



Looking southwest from the eastern side of the Property into the southern end of the Project area.

Wetlands

A single resource area, a Bordering Vegetated Wetland (BVW), exists on the Property. The BVW consists of forested swamp, and contains the dominant wetland herbaceous species: Cinnamon fern (*Osmunda cinnamomea*); Skunk cabbage (*Symplocarpus foetidus*); shrub species: Coast pepper-bush (*Clethra alnifolia*); and tree species Red maple (*Acer rubrum*). This BVW exists in the northern portion of the Property. The upland area is dominated by Oak/Pine forest complex. Wetland soils on Property consist of till derived fine sandy loams that are found on hills and ridges with slopes ranging from 3 to 8 percent as well as aeolian derived sandy loams. Upland soils onsite are of the same nature. Both wetland and upland soils are quite stony.

A table summary of wetland areas on or near site is below:

Table 1. Wetland types & locations

Flag Series	Classification / Protection	Approx. Location
A1 – A10 (pink flags)	Bordering Vegetated Wetland w/ 100' Buffer Zone under 310 CMR 10.00 and the Franklin Rules, a 25' No Disturb Buffer Zone Resource Area (25' no touch) under the Franklin Rules, and a 25'-50' Buffer Zone Resource Area (50' no build) under the Franklin Rules.	Flags begin at the western Property line, and continue approximately east towards the eastern Property line, taking an abrupt turn to the south at flag A6, turning east again at flag A8, turning north at flag A9, and ending at a fence just short of the east Property line.

Other Resources

A search of other critical resources within the Project area was conducted using GIS software and data available through various governmental agencies (FEMA, NHESP, DEP and others). The results of our search are listed in Table 2 below:

Table 2. Other Resources

Mapped Resource On or Within Proximity to Site	Yes	No
Area of Critical Environmental Concern		✓
NHESP Certified Vernal Pool		✓
NHESP Potential Vernal Pool		✓
NHESP Estimated Habitat of Rare Wildlife		✓
NHESP Priority Habitat of Rare species		✓
DFW Cold Water Fisheries Resources		✓
Outstanding Resource Waters		✓
FEMA Flood Zones		✓
Surface Water Protection Area		✓
Interim Wellhead Protection Area		✓
Zone I Wellhead Protection Area		✓
Zone II Wellhead Protection Area		✓

FEMA

No part of the Property is located within a FEMA Regulatory Flood Zone.

Conclusion

Where this is a small Project to build a modest shed directly adjacent to the existing lawn on site which is not counter to the interests of Wetlands Protection Act, we hope the commission agrees and will approve this Project as a Minor Buffer Zone Application.

Sincerely,

Ecosystem Solutions, Inc.

Brandon B. Faneuf, M.S.

PWS, RPSS, CWB, CPESC

BF/bw

