



July 12, 2013

Secretary Richard K. Sullivan, Jr.
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA)
Attn: Anne Canaday
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston MA 02114

RE: Comments on the EENF for Wynn Everett, MEPA #15060

Dear Secretary Sullivan:

WalkBoston has reviewed the Expanded Environmental Notification Form for Wynn Everett, a resort proposed to include 2.9 million square feet of development along the west side of Lower Broadway (Route 99) in Everett, with frontage on the commuter rail line and an existing embayment of the tidal Mystic River. The proposal includes 3,490 structured parking spaces, and waterfront features that include a harbor walk and water transportation docking facilities. Principal access to the site is from two proposed intersections with Lower Broadway.

The projected traffic to be generated by the resort is significant: there will be an additional 29,384 new vehicles trips on a Friday, and 35,754 new vehicle trips on a Saturday, with the largest peak-hour volumes occurring on Friday and Saturday evenings. To accommodate this traffic, a new signalized intersection with Lower Broadway is to be constructed, connecting with an on-site boulevard. Lower Broadway is to be widened to allow two southbound right turns into the boulevard. Northbound left turns will be handled by a widening of Lower Broadway or a jug-handle using Bow Street that would allow vehicles to turn to the south and enter the site.

A secondary service drive is contemplated that will intersect Lower Broadway north of the site. It is anticipated that the intersection of this drive with Lower Broadway would also be signalized.

Transit access will be provided at the Sullivan Square MBTA Station, 1.2 miles from the site. Transit stations at Wellington and Assembly Square are each 0.8 miles from the site, but currently have indirect pedestrian routings to the proposed resort. Shuttle buses to all subway stations have been proposed.

Regional Perspective

WalkBoston's comments focus primarily of the immediate walking environment. However, from a regional perspective, we are concerned that, while the site is at the heart of the metro area, it is located at a considerable distance from centers of population and regional transit stations. As a result, driving trips will provide the vast majority of access to the site, and the potential for creating an urban casino project that is less auto-dependent will not be realized.

Local walking environment, off-site access to and from the proposed resort

- Lower Broadway was recently reconstructed by the state as part of its enhancements to State Route 99. The reconstruction included the addition of new bicycle lanes in both directions and the narrowing of existing sidewalks to permit expansion for other transportation modes. The proponent should detail the ways in which sidewalks will be upgraded for pedestrian access into the site. Sidewalk access should extend at least as far as the MBTA Sullivan Square Station, which will require the proponent to deal with that portion of the sidewalk within the City of Boston.
- A new commuter rail station being investigated by the City of Everett on the commuter rail line that is adjacent to the site. To make this proposal a realistic option, the proponent should detail the ways in which rail connections to the site will be integrated with the resort, including major pedestrian routes into the heart of the site. A brief mention was made of an existing underpass. This should be upgraded, or an elevated station will need to be provided to create a connection to both sides of the track.
- The new intersections with Lower Broadway, for both the major boulevard access and the service access, should be carefully designed to include safe pedestrian crossings. Up-to-date pedestrian signal phase timing, including leading pedestrian indicators and count down signals should be provided at these and other signalized intersections constructed or modified as part of the proposal.
- A connection between the site and the City of Somerville could be provided by access over the Amelia Earhart Dam. This connection would lead to both the new Assembly Square MBTA Station and to the Somerville/Charlestown Mystic River path network. The proponent should work with the two cities and DCR to see whether this long sought pedestrian amenity that would link the extensive riverfront path networks on the two sides of the river, could be provided by the project.

Riverfront access

- The proposal envisions an extension of the Mystic River trail system from this site to the west. This extension involves going under the elevated commuter rail line along the River to reach Gateway Park and other open spaces planned for the banks of the Malden River. This investment will extend parks in appropriate riverside locations and in accordance with local and regional park planning.
- One of the proposed uses of the trail system to the west of the site is a connection to allow access to and from the MBTA Wellington Station. This station is nearly a mile away, and it may be difficult to attract transit riders to use the trail, as access to it involves walking in open spaces where walkways are not readily visible from the street. The proponent should investigate making this walkway safe for access to its site with improved signage and lighting.
- As shown on the conceptual sketches provided in the document, the ground floor of the large retail and public spaces that front on the proposed waterfront park should be

designed to provide a lively ground floor environment that allows a flow of pedestrians into and out of the building in multiple locations. This will help to create an activated waterfront space and may help to draw users to the waterfront trail.

- A portion of the embayment along the Mystic River is located inside the City of Boston and is occupied in part by public agencies. The proponent should explore with these agencies the potential for riverside access for pedestrians, in effect extending the Mystic River pathway network closer to Sullivan Square.

We look forward to the details of these and other elements of the plan. We appreciate your consideration of our comments and look forward to your responses to them. Please feel free to contact WalkBoston with questions you may have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Sloane". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Robert" and last name "Sloane" clearly distinguishable.

Robert Sloane
Senior Project Manager