



FEMA

DRAFT

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER FOR OUR SCHOOLS (ECOS) SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS FEMA-DR-1994-MA

As a result of damages sustained on June 1, 2011, when tornadoes struck portions of Western Massachusetts, including the City of Springfield, the President declared a major disaster for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act. This major disaster declaration, referenced as FEMA-1994-DR-MA, authorizes the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to provide Public Assistance to local governments, state agencies and eligible private non-profit organizations in Massachusetts.

The City of Springfield, Massachusetts applied to the FEMA Public Assistance (PA) program for aid as a result of damages sustained to the former Zanetti at 59 Howard Street, Springfield, Massachusetts. The City determined that the public welfare would not be best served by restoring a damaged facility or by restoring the function of a damaged facility at another location. The City determined to fund two alternative projects within the same general area as the Zanetti property to serve the population of that area. The City proposes to refurbish the police facility located on 50 East Street, which will be reviewed independently of this Environmental Assessment and to expand and enhance the Environmental Center for Our Schools (ECOS) Environmental Center which was the subject of this Environmental Assessment. The wood-framed building that abuts Porter Lake is the former skate house at the lake, and has been home for the Environmental Center for Our Schools (ECOS) program since 1970, visited by thousands of science students, teachers and parents annually. This area of Forest Park has been left largely Naturalist in style. It is home to many species of birds and wildlife. The ECOS facility provides hands on experience for students of natural history. This program is for research and study of organisms including plants or animals in their environment, leaning more towards observational than experimental methods of study. The facility is currently in need of repairs and enhancement. The renovations to the existing facility plus the increase in size by approximately one-hundred and fifty percent (150%) from approximately forty-nine hundred square feet (4,900 SF) to approximately seventy-four hundred square feet (7,400 SF), are the subject of this Environmental Assessment.

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, the President's Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations implementing NEPA (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508) and FEMA regulations for NEPA compliance (44 CFR Part 10), FEMA prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) to meet their responsibilities under NEPA to fully understand and consider the environmental consequences of actions proposed for federal funding. The purpose of the EA is to analyze potential environmental impacts from the proposed project, and

to determine whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). In the EA process, three (3) alternatives were considered: the No Action Alternative, leaving the ECOS building in its current condition; the Proposed Action Alternative, to renovate the ECOS building; and repair of the former Zanetti School to pre-disaster condition to be used as a storage facility, updating it to present codes and standards.

FEMA evaluated the proposed project for any potential significant adverse impacts to existing physical resources (noise, air quality, public services and utilities, transportation/traffic, aesthetic and visual resources, and historic and cultural resources), natural resources (geology and soils, water resources, floodplains, wild and scenic rivers, wildlife, vegetation, threatened and endangered species, and wetlands), socioeconomic resources (zoning and land use, human health and safety, and economic justice), and cumulative impacts.

These documents were made available for viewing online at <http://www3.springfield-ma.gov/cos/> and <http://www.fema.gov/resource-document-library>, and in person at the City of Springfield Office of Procurement located at Springfield City Hall, 36 Court Street Room 307, Springfield, MA 01103, Monday through Friday 8:15AM-4:30 PM.

CONDITIONS

The City of Springfield (the City) shall comply with all prescribed conditions set forth in the EA, including, but not limited to the following conditions. Failure to comply with these conditions may jeopardize the receipt of federal funding.

1. The City or its designees are responsible for obtaining and complying with all required local, state, and federal permits and approvals.
2. All asbestos abatement and disposal procedures shall be performed in compliance with the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants (NESHAP) regulations, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MADEP) asbestos regulations, and City of Springfield environmental and building codes.
3. Water, hygroscopic materials, or non-toxic chemical stabilizers will be used as treatment to reduce fugitive dust emissions during demolition as required under Clean Air Act.
4. During renovation of the building Best Management Practices to control the release of sediment shall be used.
5. The City shall hire an archaeological monitor to be present on site during construction activities to identify if any cultural resources are uncovered during construction.
6. If human remains are discovered during the course of project implementation, the City or its designee shall immediately stop construction activities in the vicinity of the discovery and take all reasonable measures to avoid or minimize harm until FEMA concludes consultation with the City, the State Historic Preservation Office, and applicable Tribal

Historic Preservation Officer. These parties shall consult to determine the appropriate course of action and disposition of remains in accordance with applicable local, state, federal and tribal regulations.

7. Hazardous materials and special wastes will be segregated and disposed of in accordance with all applicable local, state, and federal laws, regulations, and requirements.
8. The City shall manage and dispose of excavated soils and waste materials in accordance with applicable local, state, and federal regulations. If hazardous/contaminated materials are discovered during construction, the work shall cease until the City can implement appropriate procedures and secure additional permits if needed.
9. Construction will take place only during normal business hours and all equipment will meet local, state, and federal noise regulations. Idling time shall be limited onsite.
10. Construction vehicles and equipment will be stored on site during the project. All construction activities will be performed using qualified personnel and in accordance with the standards specified in Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations. Appropriate signage will be posted onsite and in the vicinity.
11. The City shall notify FEMA and MEMA should the scope of work change, including substantial design changes, additional ground disturbance, further vegetation removal, or other unanticipated changes to the physical environment.

FINDINGS

Based on input and consultation with agencies, identified sources documented in the EA, City officials, and in accordance with the FEMA regulations for environmental considerations and Executive Orders on Floodplains, Wetlands, and Environmental Justice, FEMA finds that the Proposed Alternative, as defined in the EA, will have no significant impact on the natural or human environment. As a result of this Finding of No Significant Impact, an EIS will not be prepared (44 CFR Part 10.8) and the proposed project with prescribed conditions may proceed. If a change in the scope of work occurs, MEMA and FEMA must be notified to evaluate if the proposed change would alter the potential impacts on the environment. Under most situations, however, the modification or addition of one or more elements of the construction plan will not alter the findings of this EA.

APPROVED:

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