

June 24, 2024

Re: Wetland Permitting Process
827 Green Street (Map/Parcel: R42-21-1)
Gardner, Massachusetts, 01440

To Whom it May Concern,

On behalf of Baystate Racing LLC (the Applicant), Goddard Consulting, LLC (Goddard) is pleased to provide this informational narrative surrounding the proposed project involving the construction of a horse racing track located at 827 Green Street in Gardner, MA (the Project Site). This narrative is intended to provide additional details pertaining to the wetlands permitting process, the work performed to date, and the level of review and project minimization required to meet the performance standards for work adjacent to wetland resource areas.

The proposed project site is located at 827 Green Street in Gardner, MA (Map/Parcel: R42-21-1). The site has been in a similar agricultural use to the present for over 100 years. The site is currently known for the Carl E. Dahl House, a therapeutic farming community that tends to the existing livestock. The goal of the newly proposed project is to remain in line with the historic uses of the site, keeping the area as an agricultural community. Outside of race weekends, the census of horses on-site is anticipated to be similar to the present day. Although in early, design level phases, the project is anticipated to consist of a one-mile looped racing track, associated stadium seating, pedestrian walking paths, pastures, and limited on-site parking. As race weekends are scheduled only a few weekends out of the year, the majority of event parking will be utilized off-site in order to remediate traffic concerns on-site. The remainder of structures used on race weekends (paddocks, tents, barns, offices) will be temporary in nature, intended to be set up and broken down following scheduled race weekends.

1.0 THE WETLANDS PERMITTING PROCESS

1.1 GENERAL OVERVIEW

The wetlands permitting process is an iterative and detailed process, reviewed by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, and the City of Gardner Conservation Commission. The wetlands permitting process begins following a review of the intended project through the city council. When the project, at a large scale, receives an authorization to proceed with the design, proposals, and permitting processes, the wetlands permitting phase begins swiftly, as the strict land use performance standards for proposed work adjacent to wetland resource areas are frequently the most limiting factors on project design and layout.

The wetlands permitting process begins with a wetland delineation conducted for the site by a qualified wetland scientist to define the resource areas within the property. The wetland scientist delineates all wetland resource areas within the project limits, guiding the landowners and applicants through the performance standards associated with each. Goddard Consulting LLC, the wetland scientist team for the proposed project at 827 Green Street, conducted a full wetland delineation of the site, culminating at the end of May 2024. The wetland delineation is included in a full site survey, currently underway in June of 2024, that will produce the final proposed site plan used for all site permits. All concept plans shown to date have been utilizing approximate wetland data from the site delineation and are an excellent representation of the resource areas that will affect the project for planning purposes.

After the proposed project at 827 Green Street in Gardner, MA receives an authorization to proceed from city council, the wetland delineation and site survey will be utilized to lay out a final proposed design that meets all regulatory

compliance under the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act and the City of Gardner Wetlands Protection Ordinance, at the assistance of the project wetland scientists, engineers, and architects. Once a design of the proposed project is finalized, a Notice of Intent will be filed with the Gardner Conservation Commission and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection. Under the Notice of Intent procedure, the project team will be required to evaluate all alternatives for the site to determine the least impactful alternative for the project. The project will be analyzed under both the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act and the City of Gardner Wetlands Protection Ordinance for compliance with all performance standards set at the state and local level. The Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act (310 CMR 10.00) serves at the state level to define the various wetland resource areas and outline applicable performance standards for each. The City of Gardner Wetlands Protection Ordinance [Chapter 650] further expands upon the provisions of the Wetlands Protection Act by defining and maintaining additional performance standards not set at the state level. These may include, but are not limited to, the jurisdiction over additional types of resource areas, and the permissible setbacks for limits of work and structures from wetland resource areas.

Under a submitted Notice of Intent, all aspects of the proposed project will be reviewed for compliance with the aforementioned state and local regulations. The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection does not issue the project a file number until the project meets all criteria outlined at the state level. Once a final number is issued by the state, the review at the local level will continue until the Gardner Conservation Commission deems that the project has met all additional performance standards outlined under the local bylaw. As a full wetland delineation has been completed for the site, the applicant team is in the process of mapping out the locations of all wetland resource areas on the property. The project will be bound to review standards for Bordering Vegetated Wetlands, Intermittent Streams, Perennial Streams, and Bordering Land Subject to Flooding (BLSF). All aspects of the project will be reviewed for compliance, including but not limited to, the limits of work from said resource areas, total areas of clearing required, the design of any stream crossings, and the site's stormwater management design. In addition, the site is mapped within an Outstanding Resource Waters (ORW) Area, meaning that the area is an important recharge area for a public water supply. The project will be required to adhere to strict stormwater management standards to ensure the protection of surface water quality. Such a designation presents opportunities for site improvement. For example, the site is currently in agricultural use, with a similar census of horses at present day compared to the proposed conditions. A new project set forth on-site will present the opportunity to improve manure management, stormwater runoff, and water treatment than current conditions allow. Both the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act and the City of Gardner Wetlands Protection Ordinance require minimization and avoidance, where all alternatives for the site will be reviewed, ensuring the project as proposed reflects the least impactful and most beneficial alternative to the site.

As the project wetland scientist, Goddard has performed the entirety of the site's wetland delineation and will provide assistance in the design of a final project layout. Based on the preliminary findings of the wetland delineation, it is the opinion of Goddard that the available land area presents the ability to achieve the project's goal through minimization practices, while providing net benefits to the property as a whole.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to us with questions.

Sincerely,

Goddard Consulting, LLC

Andrew Thibault

Andrew Thibault, WPIT, WSA

Environmental Scientist