



004

RECEIVED

August 6, 2007

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth
Massachusetts Historical Commission

AUG 9 2007

MEPA

Secretary Ian A. Bowles
Secretary of Energy and Environment
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
Attn.: Briony Angus, MEPA Unit
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114

RE: Westfield River Paper Company / Russell Biomass; 16 Station Road; Russell, Montgomery, and Westfield, MA. MHC# RC.13643. EOE #13635.

The Massachusetts Historical Commission has reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) and the Notice of Project Change (NPC) submitted by Tighe & Bond, Inc., received July 5, 2007, concerning the revised proposed project referenced above. After a review of the information submitted, MHC staff have the following comments.

The revised proposed project involves the demolition of the existing paper mill building complex, historically known as the Westfield River Paper Company, south of the intersection of Main Street and Montgomery Road, and the construction of the proposed Russell Biomass Power Plant. The MHC now understands that the site of the proposed facility was subdivided from a larger seventy-acre parcel to twenty acres. Two additional transmission-line route variations have been identified between the plant site and the Massachusetts Turnpike. Two potential switching station sites and access routes locations were identified. Minor design changes have occurred in the location and layout of the proposed power plant structures. The plant stack has been moved to the southernmost corner of the site, the fuel-storage area was reconfigured to optimize truck circulation and fuel pile management, and proposed impervious area has increased from 7.7 acres to ten acres. The proposed wastewater discharge has been relocated upstream of the bank.

As you are aware, the Westfield River Paper Company (MHC# RUS.C) is included in MHC's Inventory of Historic and Archaeological Assets of the Commonwealth. As you are also aware, in a letter dated July 19, 2006, the MHC stated that it is the opinion of MHC that the Westfield River Paper Company no longer meets the criteria of eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places due to loss of integrity resulting from deferred maintenance, structural failure, and the removal of portions of the complex (36 CFR 60). The MHC recommended that the project proponent continue to consult with the Russell Historical Commission (RHC) to identify any mitigation measures, such as photorecording, that the RHC requests.

The MHC looks forward to receiving additional project plans for the preferred transmission line and the preferred overall project when they are developed and the results of consultation to be including in the FEIR in a manner that does not visually compromise historic architectural resources or physically compromise locations of archaeological resources. The MHC looks forward to continued consultation on this project.

These comments are offered to assist in compliance with M.G.L., Chapter 9, Sections 26-27C (950 CMR 71), and MEPA (301 CMR 11). If you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact either Jonathan K. Patton, Archaeologist / Preservation Planner, or me at this office.

Sincerely,

Ryan T. Maciej
Preservation Planner
Massachusetts Historical Commission

xc: William B. Hull, Russell Biomass LLC
Rebecca L. Shearer, Tighe & Bond, Inc.
Tracy J. Adamski, AICP, Tighe & Bond, Inc.
Richard Lehan, DEP
DEP—WERO
Donna Brownell, W.E.S.T.
Russell Historical Commission
Montgomery Historical Commission

220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, Massachusetts 02125
(617) 727-8470 • Fax: (617) 727-5128
www.state.ma.us/sec/mhc