

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
DIVISION OF WATERSHED MANAGEMENT

ADOPTED AMENDMENT TO THE UPPER RARITAN WATER QUALITY
MANAGEMENT PLAN

Public Notice

Take notice that on **MAY 12 2010**, pursuant to the provisions of the New Jersey Water Quality Planning Act, N.J.S.A. 58:11A-1 et seq., and the Statewide Water Quality Management Planning rules (N.J.A.C. 7:15-3.4), an amendment to the Upper Raritan Water Quality Management Plan was adopted by the Department of Environmental Protection (Department). This amendment modifies the Somerset County/Upper Raritan Watershed Wastewater Management Plan to provide for the expansion of the Hamilton Farms Golf Club (HFGC) to include additional guest suites, expansion of the member's clubhouse, as well as expansion of restaurant seating and amenities. The existing HFGC is located on Block 9, Lot 1, situated at the intersection of Flower Road and Pottersville Road in Bedminster Township, Somerset County. The total property size is approximately 438 acres. This site is also the location of the United States Equestrian Team (USET) Training Center Headquarters. As part of this amendment, HFGC has included a request for reclaimed water for beneficial reuse of all treated wastewater from the on-site discharge to groundwater (DGW) sewage treatment plant (STP) to be used for the purpose of golf course spray irrigation.

At present, the HFGC STP, which provides service to both the golf course complex and the USET Training Center, is permitted (NJ#0087343) to discharge to groundwater 6,696 gallons per day (gpd).

Currently, wastewater conveyed from the HFGC to the STP includes wastewater from the clubhouse, a Mansion containing apartments and guest suites, a Lodge House, a residential dwelling, a pro shop, administrative offices, maintenance buildings and a barn/comfort station. The existing Mansion contains a 2-bedroom apartment, a 3-bedroom apartment and ten guestrooms. The Lodge House contains 4-bedrooms. The residential dwelling is a 4-bedroom unit. The storage/caddy building and maintenance/grounds-keeping building currently employ a staff of 20. Furthermore, HFGC includes a 3-bedroom dwelling and a 1-bedroom dwelling that are each currently served by an individual septic system. Provided for golfers is a barn with a comfort station.

The portion of the current permitted wastewater flow calculated for the existing golf course is based on a WQM Plan revision adopted by the Department on September 9, 1999. This revision approved this facility to be a golf course with exclusive use by only 18 corporate members. At the time, the Department assumed each corporate member may host a foursome which resulted in the approximation of 70 persons each day playing one round of golf per day with each person generating a projected wastewater flow of 15 gpd per round. The 15 gpd was based on wastewater flow listed in N.J.A.C 7:14A-23.3 for picnic parks with showers.

Presently, wastewater conveyed from the USET Training Center to the STP includes wastewater generated by an indoor training arena with stables, several maintenance buildings, dwellings, garage and administrative offices. The Training Center Headquarters includes office space and nine guestrooms. A carriage house/residence consists of two, 2-bedroom apartments and a 4-bedroom

apartment. In addition, the training team utilizes a 3-bedroom residential dwelling and a residence converted into two, 2-bedroom apartments.

As originally proposed and noticed in the New Jersey Register on July 7, 2008 at 40 N.J.R. 4243(b), the proposed amendment project scope consisted of the renovation of the existing Mansion to include the addition of two, 2-bedroom apartments and a dining area with 40 seats. An expansion to the existing clubhouse was proposed to accommodate a new restaurant with seating for 160 diners, a 2,000 square feet office space addition and two attached 3-bedroom suites. In addition, included in the original proposal was the construction of 23-apartment suites within seven new buildings. One building was to consist of five, 3-bedroom apartment units. An additional six free-standing units were proposed, each of which would contain three, 3-bedroom units. The construction of a new swimming pool area, pool hut and tennis courts was proposed along with the renovation of the existing storage/caddy building and golf maintenance building to allow it to accommodate an additional 12 employees. Furthermore, as part of the proposed amendment, two residential dwellings currently served by individual septic systems would be connected to the on-site DGW STP. No change to the USET Training Center had been proposed.

As part of this amendment, the projected wastewater flow from the existing golf course is to be re-calculated from 70 rounds of golf to 350 members with a peak wastewater projection assuming all members golfed on the same day or 350 rounds of golf. In addition to increasing the number of rounds used to calculate projected flow, the flow projected to be generated by each round is increased from 15 gpd per round to 35 gpd per member (round) based on flow projections in accordance with N.J.A.C 7:14A-23.3 for clubhouses. Therefore, the 350 golf

members/rounds combined with existing facilities and all site improvements as initially proposed and described in the New Jersey Register notice would have increased the wastewater flow to the on-site STP by a total of 25,825 gpd, to 32,521 gpd, calculated in accordance with N.J.A.C. 7:14A-23.3.

While the initially proposed project would have resulted in increased sewage flow as a result of the proposed new facilities, the proposal included the re-delineation of the approved HFGC sewer service area of approximately 67 acres to include only the area on which structures generating sewage were to be located, which would result in a new reduced service area of approximately 28 acres; a 39 acre reduction in the approved sewer service area.

Subsequent to the publication of the amendment proposal in the New Jersey Register, the Bedminster Township Engineer met with the HFGC to discuss inconsistencies between the proposed project disturbance as described in the amendment notice and Bedminster Township Ordinance No. 2008-07, which had been recently adopted. This ordinance, adopted on June 2, 2008, affected development on Golf Courses within the Township by restricting the construction of new free-standing dwellings. At this meeting, HFGC agreed to modify the project in order to comply with this ordinance. In accordance with the Township ordinance, the applicant submitted to the Department a revised site plan proposal which significantly reduced the project scope.

The revised proposed project consists of the renovation of the existing Mansion to include four additional, 2-bedroom suites and a dining area with 40 seats and a spa/exercise room. The existing clubhouse is to be expanded to accommodate a 160 seat restaurant, a 2,000 square feet office space addition and an extended pro

shop and locker room to serve members. The construction of a new swimming pool area, pool hut and tennis courts are proposed. The renovation of the existing storage/caddy building and golf maintenance building will accommodate an additional twelve employees. Still included as part of this proposed amendment are the two residential dwellings currently served by individual septic systems to be connected to the on-site DGW STP with no change to the USET Training Center proposed. Consequently, the number of new dwelling units for the revised project consists only of the renovation of the existing Mansion to include four additional, 2-bedroom suites.

As a result of the reduction in scope of the proposed project to comply with the local requirements, as reflected in the revised project design, the total projected wastewater flow to the on-site STP, calculated in accordance with N.J.A.C. 7:14A-23.3, has decreased from 32,521 gpd to 28,146 gpd. As a result of the revised project scope, the proposed new delineated sewer service area is further reduced to encompass the smaller area containing existing and proposed structures to be served by the HFGC STP. Accordingly, rather than a reduction in the sewer service area from the previous area of approximately 67 acres to approximately 28 acres as originally proposed, the revised project design will result in the sewer service area being further reduced to approximately 10 acres.

The project as originally proposed was evaluated by the Department in accordance with Executive Order 109 (2000) (EO 109) and the requirements of N.J.A.C. 7:15-5.18 in effect at that time. This evaluation determined that the proposed project triggered the requirement for additional environmental alternative analyses.

To address non-point source pollutant loading from the proposed golf club expansion, the proposed project was designed in accordance with the Stormwater Management rules, N.J.A.C. 7:8. Based on a review of the initially proposed site design and existing and proposed site land use conditions, the Department determined that the proposed project met the Stormwater Management rule requirements.

The Riparian Corridor Analysis determined no riparian corridors are to be impacted by the project proposal. The Endangered and Threatened Species Habitat Analysis indicated mapped endangered and/or threatened species habitat areas located on portions of the project property. However, no sewer service area has been proposed in areas delineated as potential threatened or endangered species habitat. The proposal included re-delineation of the sewer service area to remove Endangered and Threatened Species habitat currently within the sewer service area. As a result, the Endangered and Threatened Species Habitat Analysis was satisfied.

The revised site design reduces the projected sewage flow as well as the area of impact as compared to the design analyzed under EO 109 and the rules. Projected development under the revised design was all included as part of the originally reviewed design; the revised project scope does not impact any areas not included in the initial, more expansive proposed development. Accordingly, the revised reduced scope of the project proposal continues to satisfy these environmental alternative analyses.

As indicated, this amendment proposal was noticed in the New Jersey Register on July 7, 2008 at 40 N.J.R. 4243(b). As this proposed project site is located within

the Highlands Planning Area, in accordance with the Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act Rules, N.J.A.C. 7:38-1.1, the Department shall not approve a Water Quality Management Plan amendment for a project proposed in the Planning area without first obtaining a recommendation from the Highlands Council (Council). Comments containing recommendations were received from the Council on November 21, 2008. The Council's comments and the Department's responses follow.

Comment: The amendment application reviewed by the commenter indicates that small portions of the proposed development encroach upon Forest Resources Areas and constrained steep slopes. In addition, it appears that Highlands Open Water Buffers for streams, wetlands, ponds and potential critical wildlife habitat could be impacted if the Department adopts the sewer service area limits as designated in the proposed amendment application submitted to the Council.

Response: The original information provided by the applicant to the Council was that of the proposed limit of disturbance resulting for the site design plans prior to the project being revised to conform to the then newly adopted Bedminster Township Ordinance No. 2008-07 restricting new development on Golf Courses. As indicated above, subsequent to the initial application to which the commenter refers, the project that is the subject of this amendment was reduced in scope.

The revised reduced boundaries of the limits of disturbance eliminated the encroachments identified by the Council in the initial plans. As a result, the revised limits of disturbance will not encroach upon forest resources or steep slopes and no new disturbance is proposed in any areas identified in the

Highlands Regional Master Plan (HRMP) as Highlands Open Water Buffers for streams, wetlands and ponds and potential critical wildlife habitat.

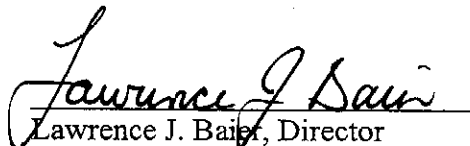
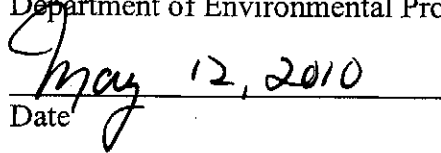
Comment: The Council has determined that a portion of the proposed development is located within an area identified in the HRMP as a “prime ground water recharge area”. It is recommended that the development be required to recharge 125 percent of pre-development site recharge volume consistent with the HRMP.

Response: The modified site design plans and supporting documentation provided by the applicant indicate that the revised project scope will increase impervious surface within the onsite prime ground water recharge area by 5,913 square feet. An analysis of the hydrogeology of the project site and the HRMP prime ground water recharge area requirements indicates that onsite pre-development recharge for the location of the proposed 5,913 square feet impervious surface equals approximately 72,912.6 gallons per year (gpy). Accordingly, in order to satisfy the requirement that recharge post-construction be 125 percent of the pre-development recharge, mitigation must be performed that can be demonstrated to result in recharge of 91,140.8 gpy.

In an effort to mitigate the disturbance to the prime ground water recharge area, HFGC has proposed installation of dry wells that would infiltrate all runoff from the proposed new pool hut and from the proposed new roof as a result of the clubhouse expansion. The Department has reviewed the supporting calculations which indicate that the total proposed new roof area for the pool hut and the expanded clubhouse could yield approximately 170,282 gpy available for ground water recharge through the two dry wells. As this volume is in excess of the

125% mitigation requirement, HFGC has demonstrated compliance with this requirement of the HRMP.

This amendment represents only one part of the permit process and other issues may need to be addressed prior to final permit issuance. Additional issues which may need to be addressed may include, but are not limited to, the following: antidegradation; effluent limitations; water quality analysis; stormwater management; exact locations and designs of future treatment works (pump stations, interceptors, sewers, outfalls, wastewater treatment plants); and development in wetlands, flood prone areas, designated Wild and Scenic River areas, or other environmentally sensitive areas which are subject to regulation under Federal or State statutes or rules.


Lawrence J. Baird, Director
Division of Watershed Management
Department of Environmental Protection

Date