Horsley Witten Group Sustainable Environmental Solutions horsleywitten.com

# Hydrogeologic and Hydrologic Investigation

For the Town of Wareham Proposed Fearing Hill Solar Project Wareham, MA

## Agenda

- Overview of H&H investigation by HW
- Recommendations from H&H
- Applicant responses to Date
- Outstanding items
- Revised plans presented by Atlantic Design Engineers (Rich Tabaczynski)



## Proposed Design at Time of Study



## **Scope of Investigation**

- Groundwater & Stormwater quantity only
  - Not a formal regulatory review
  - Significant water quality impacts unlikely
- No consideration of other factors
  - Net greenhouse gas emissions
  - Impacts to habitat
  - Non-hydro impacts to neighbors



## **Investigation Overview**

- Field investigations (with Applicant):
  - Well drilling, groundwater monitoring, test pits, percolation tests
- Stormwater Modeling
  - HydroCAD pre- and post-development
- Groundwater Modeling
  - Steady state modeling in MODFLOW
  - Event-based modeling using Hantush equation
- Conservative and reasonable assumptions
  - Opposite assumptions for Groundwater vs. Stormwater



## **USGS** Geology



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## Site Locus and Neighboring Parcels

MW-3

20 Helen St.

22 Helen St.

24 Helen St.

26 Helen St.

28 Helen St.

32 Helen St.

3 Old Fearing Hill Rd.

30 Helen

121 Fearin Hill Rd

C

MW-2

MW-1

16 Fearing

Hill Rd

SC-1 112

Fearing

Hill Rd!

110

Fearing

Hill Rd.

MW-4

106

Fearing

Hill Rd!

104

Fearing

Hill Rd.

MW-5

95 Fearing

Hill Rd.

94 Fearing

Hill Rd.

Monitoring Wells Neighboring Parcels of Interest Detention Basins (approximate) Clearing Extent (approximate) Site Locus Parcel Wareham Tax Parcels

## **Eight Test Pits**



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#### **Test Pits and Borings**



Field Investigations: Groundwater Monitoring

- Boring observation, manual water level measurement, water table mapping
- Automatic long-term water level measurement
- Comparison to USGS
   reference well





## **Observed GW Levels**





February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2022

January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2022

Water Table Contours From Field Observations



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## **MODFLOW Groundwater Model**

A new model was developed by HW to evaluate the long-term, steady state impacts of the proposed development

Groundwater models represent hydraulic properties in a 3D grid, then compute the behavior of groundwater in that virtual environment





## **Existing Conditions Model**



**Boundaries**:

- Weweantic River to east
- Cranberry bog system to south/west
- Model extends 2,000 -3,000 feet from site in other directions
- Recharge from the top
- Bedrock (no-flow) at model bottom
  20 vertical layers
  50 X 50 ft cell size at Site



## **Hydraulic** Parameters

#### Hydraulic Conductivity:

- 7 ft/day surrounding area
- 8.5 ft/day southwest slope of hill
- 4 ft/day northeast slope of hill
- 1 ft/day weathered upper layer of bedrck

#### Recharge

10 in/year

Conductivity (ft/day)	Description and location
1	Weathered bedrock. Lowest active model layer
4	Glacial Till; Northeast side of Fearing Hill
7	Glacial Till; periphery of Fearing Hill
8.5	Glacial Till; Southwestern slope of Fearing Hill





## **Baseline Model** Calibration

Hydraulic conductivity values based on USGS figures, adjusted based on field observations and model results



#### Calibrated to field-We observed water levels MW MW

Table 13: MODFLOW Model calibration report

Well	Observed water table elevation January 26, 2022 (ft NAVD88)	Calculated water table elevation (ft NAVD88)	Residual (ft)
MW-1	56.80	56.32	0.48
MW-2	58.63	58.57	0.06
MW-3	68.44	68.34	0.10
MW-4	74.50	74.75	-0.25



## **Proposed Conditions Model**

#### Assumptions:

- No net change in recharge
  - Approximately balanced loss of transpiration versus increased evaporation, runoff
- Relocation of recharge from hill crest to detention basins
  - Assumed 7.5% of recharge in the previously wooded areas will become runoff and will recharge at the detention basins
  - Though not infiltration basins, infiltration will likely occur at the detention basins
  - Most rainfall occurs in storm events smaller than the 2-year storm



## **Proposed Conditions Results**



Green cells (clearing area) have 7.5% reduced recharge

Blue cells (detention basins) have increased recharge equal to the volume reduced

Maximum mounding at 32 Helen St. of 0.06 feet (approximately <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> inch) is unlikely to cause detrimental impacts

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## Hantush Groundwater Modeling

Calculates groundwater mound from infiltration at a basin over shorter time

One dimensional - distance from the basin - Effects from multiple basins must be superimposed

Mound for a single storm event



## Stormwater Event Mounding (Hantush Method)

Simulation of Groundwater Mounding Beneath Hypothetical Stormwater Infiltration Basins



- Size of infiltration area (feet<sup>2</sup>)
  - Hydraulic
     Conductivity (K)
- Aquifer Thickness (feet)
- Specific Yield (Sy)
- Recharge (R)
- Time (days)



Scientific Investigations Report 2010-5102

## Hantush Modeling Result (100-year storm)

Address	From Center of Stormwater Basin 1 (ft)	From Center of Stormwater Basin 2 (ft)	Basin 1 Mound Height (ft)	Basin 2 Mound Height (ft)	Height at Property (ft)
20 Helen Street	1096	1098	0.011	0.009	0.02
22 Helen Street	1012	936	0.011	0.009	0.02
24 Helen Street	952	782	0.011	0.009	0.02
26 Helen Street	917	623	0.011	0.009	0.02
28 Helen Street	917	245	0.011	0.059	0.07
32 Helen Street	974	245	0.011	0.059	0.07
3 Old Fearing Hill Road	1108	372	0.011	0.009	0.02
121 Fearing Hill Road	1003	249	0.011	0.052	0.063
116 Fearing Hill Road	1112	465	0.011	0.009	0.02
114 Fearing Hill Road	1071	465	0.011	0.009	0.02
112 Fearing Hill Road	997	497	0.011	0.009	0.02
110 Fearing Hill Road	970	531	0.011	0.009	0.02
106 Fearing Hill Road	940	577	0.011	0.009	0.02
104 Fearing Hill Road	940	690	0.011	0.009	0.02
102 Fearing Hill Road	941	744	0.011	0.009	0.02
94 Fearing Hill Road	995	975	0.011	0.009	0.02
95 Fearing Hill Road	903	888	0.011	0.009	0.02

## Total Combined 100-yr Event GW Mounding

Address	Distance From Center of Stormwater Basin 1 (ft)	Distance From Center of Stormwater Basin 2 (ft)	Steady State Mound Height (ft)	100-Year Mound Height at Property (ft)	Total Mound Height at Property (ft)
20 Helen Street	1096	1098	0.030	0.02	0.057
22 Helen Street	1012	936	0.037	0.02	0.054
24 Helen Street	952	782	0.034	0.02	0.051
26 Helen Street	917	623	0.031	0.02	0.085
28 Helen Street	917	245	0.015	0.07	0.125
32 Helen Street	974	245	0.055	0.07	0.08
3 Old Fearing Hill Road	1108	372	0.060	0.02	0.105
121 Fearing Hill Road	1003	249	0.042	0.063	0.08
116 Fearing Hill Road	1112	465	0.060	0.02	0.056
114 Fearing Hill Road	1071	465	0.036	0.02	0.049
112 Fearing Hill Road	997	497	0.029	0.02	0.037
110 Fearing Hill Road	970	531	0.017	0.02	0.029
106 Fearing Hill Road	940	577	0.009	0.02	0.02
104 Fearing Hill Road	940	690	0.000	0.02	0.057

## **Stormwater Runoff Assessment**

Event-based HydroCAD modeling of stormwater runoff impacts (e.g. peak discharge and flooding management) 2-, 10-, 25-, 100-year storm events Conservative modifications to HydroCAD models provided by Atlantic

- Increased precipitation overall
- decreased pre-development runoff
- increased post-development runoff



## Recommended Changes to Stormwater Model

#### **Pre-Development**

- <u>Decreased runoff</u> due to increased time of concentration
  - Surface updated from "light underbrush" to "dense underbrush"
  - Increased flow path as needed

**Post-Development** 

- Increased runoff due to increased curve number for grass area
  - Grass areas updated to "fair" condition instead of "good" condition, based on RI DEM guidance for solar facilities

 Both scenarios: NOAA+ rainfall estimates instead of older values used by Atlantic



## **Stormwater Model Results**

"Change" is change in flow or volume for post- vs pre- development scenarios, <u>not</u> HW versus Atlantic modeling.

As proposed, the stormwater basins are undersized to manage this amount of runoff.

DP1	East Wetland					
Event	Pre-develo	opment (HW)	Post-development (SW)		Change	
	Flow, cfs	Volume, a-f	Flow, cfs	Volume, a-f	Flow	Volume
2-yr	14.02	1.800	20.89	2.600	49%	44%
10-yr	30.64	3.800	41.04	4.800	34%	26%
25-yr	43.84	5.400	55.36	6.600	26%	22%
100-yr	66.37	8.200	79.20	9.500	19%	16%

Table 11: Pre- and post-development flows for HW Models

DP2			West West	tland		
Event	Pre-devel	opment (HW)	Post-development (SW)		Change	
	Flow, cfs	Volume, a-f	Flow, cfs	Volume, a-f	Flow	Volume
2-yr	7.82	1.200	12.21	1.800	56%	50%
10-yr	20.76	2.800	30,10	3.600	45%	29%
25-yr	31.67	4.100	43.24	5.100	37%	24%
100-yr	51.03	6.500	65.83	7.700	29%	18%

ALL	ALL COMBINED						
Event	Pre-develo	opment (HW)	Post-development (SW)		Change		
	Flow, cfs	Volume, a-f	Flow, cfs	Volume, a-f	Flow	Volume	
2-yr	21.84	3.000	33.10	4.400	52%	47%	
10-yr	51.40	6.600	71,14	8.400	38%	27%	
25-yr	75.51	9.500	98.60	11.700	31%	23%	
100-yr	117.40	14.700	145.03	17.200	24%	17%	

## Fate of Stormwater



## Abandoned Rail Grade West of Project Site

#### Fearing Hill Road

Project site

Culverts? Unknown condition

> Drainage ditches

## **Stormwater Conclusions**

- The detention basins appear undersized and will not meet state stormwater standards as proposed.
- Stormwater draining to the north flows to the Weweantic River with no negative impacts anticipated.
- Stormwater draining to the south flows to drainage ditches along an abandoned railroad bed, which pass under Fearing Hill Road.
- Further evaluation is needed to assess the impacts to the drainage ditches, railroad bed, and Fearing Hill Road, culvert(s)



Massachusetts has basic guidance for ground-mounted solar facilities. Rhode Island has more updated guidance. The proposed facility does not meet Rhode Island's guidance regarding minimum panel spacing, which improve the health of meadow plants surrounding the panels, decreasing stormwater impacts.

Atlantic has provided greater than 50% grass cover inside the limit of work & also increased depth of topsoil and improved seeding mix to be eligible for "good" conditions land cover.

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The HydroCAD pre- and post-development models should be updated with the NOAA+ rainfall amounts, and more accurate and conservative Time of Concentration and Ground Cover. These changes will necessitate larger detention basins.

Atlantic has updated the rainfall amounts and TC and GC values. The two basins were expanded and a third basin was added.



Offsite impacts of the basin overflows should be assessed to ensure no negative downstream impacts, including erosion.

The basins are designed with level spreaders and rip rap aprons to prevent erosion. Atlantic will provide sizing information for those erosion control measures.



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## Recommendations (con't)

To the extent practical, stormwater runoff and infiltration should be minimized along the southwestern edge of the site to avoid potential impacts to the railroad grade, Fearing Hill Road, and neighbors in this area.

Atlantic has added a trench to divert stormwater from the west side of the hill to the wetland on the east side, where there is less groundwater impact.



## Recommendations (con't)

The Applicant should undertake additional field survey and HydroCAD assessment of the drainage ditch and culvert system. The assessment should include a quantification of excess volume as well as peak runoff rates.

Atlantic further surveyed the culvert under Fearing Hill Road and has incorporated it in the HydroCAD modeling.



This railroad grade has been identified by the Town as a potential rail trail and impacts to this potential use should be evaluated.

Issue for Town evaluation. Revised design and analyses by Atlantic indicate no to minimal H&H impacts



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## **Updated Project Design**

- Presentation by Rich Tabaczynski from Atlantic.
- HW & Atlantic have been in communication on revised design.
- Few minor details on diversion trench and outfalls to work through.
- Overall revised design appears to address all H&H concerns.
- This evening ends HW's Scope of Work

