



**FEMA**

## **FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

### **CATHEDRAL HIGH SCHOOL 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 Roman Catholic Bishop of Springfield, a Corporation Sole (the Diocese) has applied through the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) to FEMA Public Assistance (PA) for funding assistance. Cathedral High School, operated by the Diocese, is a private non-profit high school serving students from Grade 9 through 12. The school building sustained a direct hit by the June 1, 2011 tornado and was declared a total loss. The building has remained vacant and uninhabitable since the tornado.

The Cathedral High School building is located on the northeast corner of the intersection of Surrey and Wendover Roads in the East Forest Park neighborhood of Springfield, Massachusetts. The building was constructed in 1959 and is approximately 300,000 square feet in size. Since 2009, a portion of the Cathedral High School building has been shared with St. Michael's Academy Middle School serving children from Grades 6 to 8. The combined enrollment of Cathedral High School and St. Michael's Academy was approximately 700 students at the time of the tornado (nearing the end of the 2010-2011 school year). Since the beginning of the 2011-2012 school year, Cathedral High School has been operating at the former Memorial Elementary School on Main Street in Wilbraham, MA. St. Michael's Academy Middle School currently operates within St. Michael's Academy Elementary School on Eddywood Street in Springfield.

The Diocese proposes to demolish the current Cathedral High School building in accordance with Federal, state and local requirements, and to construct a new school building in its place. Currently, the proposed school building is expected to be approximately 300,000 square feet in size, and in the same approximate location as the current school building. The footprint of the new structure has not been determined. Present codes may require the new structure to extend outside the current building footprint.

In accordance with 44 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) for FEMA, Subpart B, Agency Implementing Procedures, Part 10.9, this Environmental Assessment (EA) is being prepared pursuant to Section 102 of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as

implemented by the regulations promulgated by the President's Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ); 40 CFR Parts 1500-1508. The purpose of an environmental assessment (EA) is to determine whether a federally proposed action could have significant environmental impacts. If the EA concludes that the environmental impacts of the proposal could be significant, then the agency is required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). If, however, the agency concludes on the basis of the EA that the impacts would not be significant, then the agency may issue a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) and proceed with the action. In the EA process, two (2) alternatives were considered: the No Action Alternative, and the Proposed Alternative- demolition of the existing structure and construction of a new school at the cathedral high school property. Two (2) additional alternatives were considered but eliminated; repairing the current Cathedral High School building and permanently relocating the school to another area.

FEMA evaluated the proposed project for any potential significant adverse impacts to existing physical resources (air quality, transportation/traffic, and historic and cultural resources), natural resources (geology and soils, water resources, floodplains, wildlife, vegetation, threatened and endangered species, and wetlands), socioeconomic resources (human health & safety and environmental justice), and cumulative impacts.

These documents were made available for viewing online at [www.diospringfield.org](http://www.diospringfield.org) and <http://www.fema.gov/resource-document-library>, and at the City of Springfield Central Library located at 220 State Street, Springfield, MA 01103, Monday and Wednesday 12:00 PM-8:00, Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday 9:00 AM-5:00 PM, Sunday 12:00 PM-5:00 PM.

## **CONDITIONS**

The Roman Catholic Bishop of Springfield, a Corporation Sole (the Diocese) 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 Diocese or its designees are responsible for obtaining and complying with all required local, state, and federal permits and approvals.
2. 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 on site and in the vicinity.
3. 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 on site.
4. The Diocese or its designees 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 Diocese can implement appropriate procedures and secure additional permits if needed.

5. 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.
6. 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.
7. Hay bales and silt fencing will be used around demolition and construction areas to mitigate impacts to adjacent wetlands and catchbasins. During demolition and construction, catchbasins will be protected with filters, silt fencing, hay bales, or other methods.
8. Prior to demolition, hazardous materials and special wastes will be segregated and disposed of in accordance with all applicable local, state, and federal laws, regulations, and requirements. Following demolition of the school building, construction and demolition debris will be segregated and disposed of in accordance with all applicable local, state, and federal laws, regulations, and requirements.
9. If human remains are discovered during the course of project implementation, the Diocese 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 Diocese, 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.
10. The Diocese 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 from and consultation with agencies, identified sources documented in the EA, the Diocese, 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,

