

PUBLIC NOTICE

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

WATERSHED AND LAND MANAGEMENT

DIVISION OF WATERSHED PROTECTION AND RESTORATION

Revision to the Upper Delaware Water Quality Management Plan

Take notice that on September 22, 2023, pursuant to the provisions of the 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, the Department adopted a revision known as “Alpha Evergreen Pastures” (Program Interest No. PI 435437 Activity No. REV210001) to the Upper Delaware Water Quality Management Plan for Block 100.01/ Lot 10 in the Borough of Alpha, Warren County.

N.J.A.C. 7:15-3.4(a)3 allows the Department to adopt a revision to the areawide WQMP to reflect a Highlands Regional Master Plan (RMP) map adjustment, Highlands Center, or Highlands redevelopment area designated by the Highlands Council in a Highlands conforming municipality if the notice of the proposed map adjustment provided that, if approved, such action could also modify the sewer service area in the areawide WQMP. On August 3, 2011, the Highlands Council approved Alpha Borough’s Petition for Plan Conformance and request for a Highlands Center Designation, with the conditions, as set forth in Resolution 2011-26. In early 2021, Alpha Borough conducted a Feasibility Study to consider whether an adjustment of Center Boundaries of the existing center designation would be feasible and could be supported by available infrastructure. Alpha Borough subsequently developed an amended Highlands Center Designation Plan. On January 12, 2023, the Highlands Council posted on their website for public

review and comment the proposed Amended Petition and a revised Final Consistency Review and Recommendations Report and Highlands Implementation Plan. On April 20, 2023, the Highlands Council approved Alpha Borough's Amended Petition for Plan Conformance with conditions and adopted the Revised Consistency Review and Recommendations Report and Revised Highlands Implementation Plan for Fiscal Year 2023, as memorialized in Resolution 2023-08.

The Amended Petition includes the expansion of the Center to include most of the Borough parcels except for a few farmland parcels to the southwest within the R-1A Zone. Based upon the recently adopted Highlands Center, this revision adds Block 100.01, Lot 10 in Alpha Borough, Warren County to the sewer service area (SSA) of the Phillipsburg Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) (NJPDES number NJ0024716). The approximately 37-acre site was located in a RMP Conservation Zone and Conservation – Environmentally Constrained Subzone and in an Agricultural Resource Area. The property contains Important Farmland soils and is currently an agricultural use, but is located in the Industrial Zone. The Highlands Council Center Designation contains several conditions which must be met. Conditions relevant to the site include, but are not limited to: Any land within an approved Highlands Center which upon development would result in the loss of agricultural lands in an Agricultural Resource Area must provide for mitigation or an offset through the purchase of equivalent Highlands Development Credits (HDCs) or preservation of comparable farmland, the specifics of which will be entered into as a mitigation agreement between the Borough of Alpha, the Highlands Council and the owner/developer of the property prior to the issuance of building permits, and; any new warehouse development consisting of 100,000 square feet or larger and occurring on former farmlands shall devote the

portion of the site that is to remain undeveloped for farmland if feasible, and if not feasible, the remaining lands shall be devoted to meadow, forest, habitat restoration or another use that supports water resource protection. The Highlands Council identified no other environmental resources on the property.

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 7:15-3.4(a)3, the SSA of the Phillipsburg STP is expanded to include Block 100.01, Lot 10 in Alpha Borough, Warren County.

9/22/2023

Date



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