September 21, 2006

Mr. William F. Welch, Clerk
Massachusetts State Senate
State House – Room 335
Boston, Massachusetts 02133

Mr. Steven J. James, Clerk
Massachusetts House of Representatives
State House – Room 145
Boston, Massachusetts 02133

Dear Messrs. Welch and James:

I am pleased to present the Department of Conservation and Recreation’s (DCR’s) Neponset River Master Plan, Phase II, which encompasses a major section of the Neponset River Reservation, including approximately 125 acres of parkland and over 11 miles of riverbank extending from Central Avenue on the Milton-Boston line to Paul’s Bridge in Hyde Park and Milton.

This Master Plan seeks to protect and enhance the ecological health of the Neponset River system, while providing for expanded recreational opportunities in the Reservation. The Plan will serve as a guide for the stewardship, management, maintenance, and operation of the parkland, the parkway, and the watershed, and enable DCR to more effectively contribute to development decisions on adjacent properties. It also identifies partnership opportunities with businesses, community groups, and landowners along the river.

Phase I of the Master Plan, covering the Lower Estuary of the Neponset River Reservation, was completed in 1998. Much of that Plan has been implemented in the area extending to Central Avenue. This new Plan builds upon the success of the Phase I Plan by facilitating access to the river and providing a wide range of recreational opportunities for the adjacent neighborhoods and region. The Lower Neponset Trail, constructed as part of Phase I, runs from Central Avenue to the Port Norfolk Neighborhood in Dorchester, where connecting roads and trails lead to the mouth of the river at Dorchester Bay. Pope John Paul II Park and the Neponset Park have been beautiful and popular additions to the regional network. It is our hope that some elements of Phase II of the Master Plan, which is slated to be implemented over a ten- to fifteen-year period, will commence immediately.

The Phase I Master Plan was made possible through the thoughtful participation of numerous individuals and organizations. The continued involvement of the public is critical to this Plan’s success, and we will continue the open and thorough public process associated with this project.

Sincerely,

Stephen H. Burrington
Commissioner
Acknowledgements

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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Robert Golledge, Secretary, EOGA
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