RHODE ISLAND
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT
235 Promenade Street, Providence, RI 02908-5767 TDD 401-222-4462

November 30, 2015

Mr. David Bachrach
Community Development Coordinator
145 Taunton Avenue
City Hall
East Providence, RI

Re: Invasive Species Removal Plan, East Providence, RI

Dear Mr. Bachrach:

This letter shall serve to confirm the Department of Environmental Management Water Quality/ Wetland Restoration Team's review of the Invasive Species Removal Plan for properties owned by others on Abbott Street, Rockway Street, Julian Avenue, Baltic Avenue, Woodcliffe Avenue, Marsh Street, Craige Avenue, and Almeida Way in East Providence. The Invasive Species Removal Plan, including the maps and narrative initially provided and the responses to comments and map revisions provided by GZA in July 2015, were discussed at a Team meeting and in telephone conversations with you and your environmental consultant.

The primary invasive species activities reviewed by the Team are the hand-cutting, clearing, mowing, and removal by City staff of dense areas of the common reed, *Phragmites australis*, from freshwater wetland and from the channel of an unnamed tributary to the Runnins River, as depicted in Phase 1A. The physical removal of the invasive *Phragmites* and of other invasive plants is proposed in conjunction with the application of herbicides within the Phase 1A area and within other Phases described in the Plan and maps. The proposed physical plant removal and herbicide application are to be repeated in multiple consecutive years. Annual floristic monitoring and restoration seeding are also included within the Invasive Species Plan.

Based on the information provided and discussed, the Team finds that the proposed above-ground cutting, clearing, mowing, and removal of invasive plants proposed in Phase 1A may be authorized as set forth in Section 6.02 (K) of the *Rules and Regulations Governing the Administration and Enforcement of the Freshwater Wetlands Act* (2014), conditional upon your receipt of a pesticide permit from the Division of Agriculture for the application of herbicides within the entire project area and your commitment to the annual floristic monitoring for the term of the project. The cutting of the access areas, and the cutting, clearing, mowing, and removal of the Phragmites and other invasive plants are not to be undertaken until the pesticide permit and other applicable authorizations or permits are obtained by the City.

30% post-consumer fiber

Please also adhere to the following conditions of authorization associated with the physical activities, the floristic monitoring, and the restoration seeding:

- Prior to commencement, a sign will be posted in a conspicuous location at the site, that is resistant to weather and at least twelve inches wide and eighteen inches long, with the following text "DEM WQ/WR Team #15-5." The sign will be maintained until the project is completed.
- The letters of authorization from the property owners must be maintained up to date during the duration of the project, and any changes must be provided to the Team.
- An experienced wetland scientist contracted by the City will oversee the work of the City staff to ensure that the remaining native plants are identified and that measures are taken to protect the native plants from the physical activities authorized herein.
- The proposed crossing of a second unnamed channel by removable planks will not result in placement of fill within the wetland, including the channel.
- The mowers and other equipment, including gasoline cans, are to be stored outside of all freshwater wetlands.
- The removal of the *Phragmites* canes from the properties after the cutting and mowing must be thorough and complete in order to facilitate regrowth of native plants, and to prevent the spread of the plant materials after storm events. Soil excavation or disturbance is not authorized.
- Annual monitoring of the floristic quality, according to the methods described in the response to comments and along transects depicted on the maps, will be conducted by an experienced wetland scientist and reported to the Team annually. Please also describe your efforts, successes, and any problems encountered which will help to document the lessons learned on the project.

Finally, the Team recommends that, in the future, consideration be given to undertaking projects to improve the water quality in the project vicinity and to minimize the introduction of sediment into the wetland to deter continued invasions of *Phragmites* and to improve the health and sustainability of the native wetland plant community.

Please let me know if you have any questions. I can be reached at 222-4700, ext. 7208 or at carol.murphy@dem.ri.gov and Ms. Lisa McGreavy can be reached at 222-4700, ext. 7611 or at lisa.mcgreavy@dem.ri.gov.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Murphy

M. Carolyn Murphy
Water Quality/ Wetland Restoration Team

cc: Liz Lopes-Duguay, Division of Agriculture
Chuck Horbert and Martin Wencek, Wetland Program Supervisors
David Chopy, DEM Office of Compliance and Inspection
Lisa McGreavy, DEM WQ / WR Team