

Decision delayed on Easton project

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EASTON — At the request of the Turner brothers, the state has agreed to delay until early January a decision about whether to order an environmental impact review of the Ames shovel shop redevelopment project.

Lisa Capone, a spokesman for Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Ian A. Bowles, said the developers, George and Robert Turner of Easton, made the request in a telephone call to the state office and it was granted.

As a result, the public comment period on the project will be extended until Dec. 30, Capone said.

Bowles is expected to issue his decision on Jan. 9. The decision had been expected on Friday.

Capone said the Turners' request to delay the decision was "not that common, but not that unusual."

The developers are proposing to build 182 apartments at Shovel Shop Square, the original home of the Ames Shovel Co. in North Easton village.

Their project, which must be approved by the town's Zoning Board of Appeals, would result in the complete or partial demolition of seven factory buildings.

Town officials are asking Bowles to order an environmental impact review to determine the project's impact on historic preservation and the environment.

They argue that the Turners have not considered alternative plans that would allow them to build the apartments with less of an impact on historic preservation and the environment.

Such an alternative has been developed by consultants working for the Friends of the Ames Shovel Works, a group formed by Ames family members and local residents. It would reduce the number of apartments and require the developers to use tax credits for historic preservation.

Those wishing to comment on the project's potential impact on the environment and historic preservation can write to: MEPA Office, Secretary of Environmental Affairs, 100 Cambridge St., Suite 900, Boston, MA 02114.

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