

**Devens Enterprise Commission  
DEC Public Hearing & Meeting  
Minutes April 17, 2018**

**Members:** William Castro, Duncan Chapman, Melissa Fetterhoff, Christopher Lilly, William Marshall, Jim Pinard, Marty Poutry, Paul Routhier

**Staff:** Peter Lowitt, Neil Angus, Kate Clisham

**Absent:** Dix Davis, Armen Demerjian, Jim DeZutter

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W. Marshall called the meeting to order at 6:45 PM and read the agenda.

**M/S/V** M. Fetterhoff, J. Pinard to appoint D. Chapman as a voting member for this meeting; approved unanimously.

W. Marshall introduced and welcomed Robert Markley, new DEC Commissioner for the Town of Shirley.

**M/S/V** P. Routhier, M. Fetterhoff to approve the April 5, 2018 minutes as written; approved unanimously.

6:47 PM **Public Hearing:**

**Level 2 Unified Permit application submitted by Devens Village Green, LLC for amendments to their May 28, 2015 Unified Permit for the development of a 124-unit residential development on approximately 25.01 acres of land along portions of Grant Road, Birch Circle, Poplar Street and Sycamore Street (parcel ID# 24-6-100, 24-6-500 and 24-6-600). Proposed amendments include changes to the lot layouts and residential unit type/mix, open space redesign, parking lot modification, street realignment-re-configuration, new phasing plan, and subsequent drainage, grading and utility modifications. Properties located in the Residential 1 Zone within the Devens Regional Enterprise Zone.**

P. Lowitt reported when the DEC first approved the Unified Permit we required any amendments to come back for a public hearing. He introduced Dan Gainsboro from Devens Village Green and Don Powers from Union Studio Architects to present. D. Powers went over the proposed modifications:

1. Modifying existing lot layouts (sizes and boundaries);
2. Street realignment/re-configuration (shifting Powell Street to rear of homes so houses front on a public path along the Central Park);
3. Updated phasing plan (from 5 phases to 3 phases) based on utility and site work requirements.
4. Shifting the unit mix: eliminating a number of multi-family units (3-family and 4-family units) and adding additional single-family lots to maintain the 124-units originally approved;
5. Overall site grading, drainage and utility modifications to accommodate proposed design changes and make the overall project cut/fill more balanced (to reduce amount of material that needs to be taken off-site);
6. Multi-family apartment parking lot modifications;
7. Slight change to the distribution of Affordable Units (no change in # of units or level of affordability).

D. Powers indicated the quad-plexes would change to tri-plexes and duplexes. He reported the triplex units will increase in square footage but not in price point. He noted they are committed to energy efficiency and reported the phase 1 units have very low HERS ratings of 60 or less. D. Gainsboro reported he has a new engineering firm working on the design of the project. He indicated the new engineers have redesigned the overall project to better balance the site. He reported the unit count remains the same at 124-units and the project still provides a variety of housing choices. W. Castro asked about the P-lots and who makes the determination. P. Lowitt explained the developer came before the DEC previously for approval on the P-lots. N. Angus noted Goddard Street is an expanded parcel. MassDevelopment authorized the larger sized parcel, thereby spreading out the project. He indicated the applicant will need to prove the density of the project remains in line with the IRD regulations. N. Angus goes over the staff report. He indicated the first part of phase 2 will see the 2 20-unit multi-family buildings built. The number of affordable units (28) has not changed from the original approval. N. Angus indicated the shifting of Powell Street has raised concern about snow events and snow removal. The applicant has proposed adding 2' to the street width. N. Angus noted the DEC adopted new street standards in 2013, promoting walkable, safer streets. He reported staff will hold internal discussions to address all safety concerns. N. Angus reported another concern was raised regarding the shift in housing unit types and the level of diversity. He indicated market rate townhomes are a key element in housing choice as they help satisfy a missing gap in Massachusetts and across the U.S. N. Angus reported the applicant has a number of peer review comments to address and to allow time staff recommends continuing the hearing to May 3, 2018 at 7:30 AM. Questions: J. Pinard asked if they plan to change the width of Grant Road? D. Powers indicated no but traffic calming measures will be put in place at both ends to slow traffic. C. Lilly asked

about the decrease in townhome units if there's a gap in the market. D. Gainsboro indicated the price point between the two-family units and the tri-plexes and quad-plexes was not substantial so demand for the tri and quads has not been great. He indicated they have tried to cut costs but have not been able to without significantly impacting design.

7:26 PM Public Comment: Clayton Hobart from Chance St asked about the increase in square footage on the duplexes for the next phase without a price increase. D. Powers explained it represents a bump out on the first floor. D. Gainsboro indicated they had some buyers who thought the bedrooms were a bit small. Richard Enright from Chance St asked about the agreement with the Town of Harvard. N. Angus explained the developer and the Town of Harvard worked out an agreement to buy down 10 of the 100% AMI affordable rental units (25% of the total rental units) to 80% AMI so that all 40 rental units would count toward the affordable housing stock in Harvard. R. Enright asked what the AMI was currently. P. Lowitt indicated DHCD uses Boston numbers for Devens. George Markt asked about the site drainage. D. Gainsboro indicated they decided to reduce the slope and will have to cut in a drainage swale as there will not be enough pitch to for the stormwater. Bill Duston from Chance St asked if it will be an underground swale? D. Gainsboro indicated yes it will be underground, an LID technique to reduce the rate of run-off. W. Castro asked if the affordable units were by lottery. D. Gainsboro indicated yes. Sharon Braithwaite from Chance St asked how the garbage truck will access the next phase because currently the truck can't access their service road during the winter. D. Gainsboro indicated Grant Road will not be like Chance St and access will be off the front, garbage will have to come to the front of the units. He reported phase 1 is a plowing issue and the drivers don't realize it's reinforced turf that can be accessed. He indicated all turning radius' have been designed to allow for emergency and box/trash truck access. N. Angus reported the issue has been raised and discussed with Dan. It's a learning curve for the drivers to understand they can drive on the turf. Jeff Demers from Groton asked if emergency vehicles can access. D. Gainsboro reported they can and have not had an issue. The plow drivers are being cautious and don't want to plow to the edges. J. Demers indicated the AMI is \$65,000 for Worcester and \$76,000 for Boston. D. Powers indicated it varies relative to the size of the household. Regina Kim from Walnut St asked about including luxury homes in the mix to offset the affordable units and bring in more revenue. D. Gainsboro indicated it's hard to predict but the single family homes should start to increase to the mid 500's to low 600's. N. Angus noted from a tax perspective the commercial properties off-set the residential tax base at Devens. P. Lowitt reported that's good news at Devens with about 85% of the tax base being commercial. R. Kim asked about the construction traffic using El Caney the private alley behind the homes on Walnut St. D. Gainsboro indicated all traffic will come from the front to Grant Road. Anthony Kim noted the solar installation companies used El Caney during phase 1 and they should not be using a private road.

R. Kim asked about the encroachment letter she received. P. Lowitt indicated residents had been using part of the open space for parking and a garden and should not have been. He told R. Kim to call and make an appointment to discuss.

**M/S/V** C. Lilly, M. Fetterhoff to continue the public hearing to May 3, 2018 at 7:30 AM; approved unanimously.

7:55 PM **New Business:** P. Lowitt reminded the Commission to review the ethics and conflict of interest training and print their certificates upon completion and send to Kate.

7:56 PM **Old Business:**

**DEC Annual Report**

P. Lowitt reviewed the report with the Commission and indicated the major focus this past year was the STAR Certification. He noted the DEC had 4 Unified Permits last year with an average of 55 days to finalize the Record of Decisions (RODs). P. Lowitt reported the shuttle bus service launched in the spring of 2017 and started with about 30 daily riders and this week there were over 130 daily riders. He reported the DEEC also had a busy year with increased activities and TGE events as well as receiving a grant award from the DEP. W. Marshall noted the DEC has continued its mission at Devens throughout the last 20 years.

**M/S/V** P. Routhier, M. Fetterhoff to approve the 2017 DEC Annual Report; approved unanimously.

8:09 PM **Public Comment:** None

W. Marshall reminded all the next meeting is Thursday May 3, 2018 at 7:30 AM for the continued public hearing.

8:10 PM **M/S/V** C. Lilly, M. Fetterhoff to adjourn; approved unanimously.

**List of Exhibits – April 17, 2018**

- Agenda, draft Minutes 4/5/18
- Devens Village Green – Staff Report 4/16/18
- Devens Village Green – Phasing Plan
- Devens Village Green – Waiver request letter
- Devens Village Green – Illustrative plan of homes along Central Park (quad duplex comparison)