Devens Enterprise Commission (DEC)
In-Person/Remote Hybrid Public Hearing and Regular Meeting
Minutes March 18, 2025

Members (in person): Duncan Chapman, Christopher Lilly, William Marshall, Jim Pinard, Marty Poutry, Debra Rivera, Paul Routhier
Members (remote): Melissa Fetterhoff, Carl Sciple, Deborah Seeley
Members Absent: Robert Gardner
Staff (in person): Neil Angus, Dawn Babcock
Staff (remote): Beth Suedmeyer
Guests (in person): Patrick McCarty (McCarty Inc.), Alan Fluet (Mack Devens), Brian Payson (SMC)
Guests (remote): Meg Delorier (EVP MassDevelopment), Robert Jenkins (MassDevelopment Real Estate),

(6:45 PM) Chairman William Marshall called the meeting to order

Mr. Marshall read that the Devens Enterprise Commission (DEC) Regular Meeting and Public Hearing is being held remotely in accordance with the supplemental budget bill signed into law by Governor Healey, further suspending certain open meeting law requirements to March 31, 2025. Interested individuals may attend and listen in and participate by phone and/or on-line by following the link and/or phone # at the top of the agenda. Persons with disabilities or requiring interpretation wishing to listen or participate should contact 978.772.8831 x3334. In accordance with the State's Open Meeting Law, the Chair informed all attendees that this meeting is being recorded by the Devens Enterprise Commission. Persons with disabilities or requiring interpretation wishing to listen or participate should contact 978.772.8831 x3334.

(6:50 PM) Chairman Marshall noted, we will need to nominate Ms. Rivera as a voting Regional Representative for this meeting. **The motion was made by Mr. Pinard and seconded by Mr. Poutry. The nomination was approved unanimously by a roll call vote.**

(6:51 PM) Mr. Marshall reviewed the agenda of this evening's meeting.

(6:53 PM) Review Minutes:

- **February 25th Draft Minutes** were discussed. Mr. Marshall asked if there were any comments about the minutes. None were mentioned so Mr. Marshall then asked for a motion to accept the minutes as noted. **The motion was made by Mr. Routhier and seconded by Mr. Pinard. The minutes were approved by a roll call vote. Ms. Seeley abstained as she was not present for the February 25th meeting.**

Public Hearing:

- **(6:54 PM) Level 2 Unified Permit Application** by Mack Devens Development 11, LLC. for a proposed landscape screening site plan modification for a previously approved 232,320 gross square foot industrial building. Property located at **11 Grant Road (Parcel ID# 19.0-0008-0400.0)** in the innovation & Technology Business Zoning District within the Devens Regional Enterprise Zone. Mr. Angus reminded the Commissioners that the Unified Permit was approved a little over a year ago. This building takes up a large portion of the property leaving little space for plantings for screening. So, the project was approved to have 2 trellises at 21 different locations around the building to aid with the vegetation screening. Since the start of construction the contractor has been able preserve a number of original plantings on the property and they are now looking for approval not to attach the trellises to the building and were considering replacing them with Arborvitae type plantings and their landscape architect has determined that the trellises would be more like a 30-foot sail attached to the building and with this building being a FDA Certified building, boring into the building to attach the trellises could increase the risk of contaminants getting into the building. Mr. Angus did review this with the DEC landscape architect consultants and have approved replacing the trellis with arborvitae type trees. Mr. Angus then turned the floor over to Mr.

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McCarty of McCarty Associates, gave a brief summary of the project and noted that the façade of the building, all though it doesn't have any windows on three sides, does have a refreshing design to it, so it is not just all grey walls. So, Mr. McCarty is looking to remove the trellises and arborvitae plantings all together if possible or something more suitable for all sides. Mr. McCarty did note that there is a letter in the file from MassDevelopment who is in agreement with his request. Mr. Angus noted the Certificate of Occupancy has been issued as McCarty Associates has secured a bond to cover the minor punch list items remaining on this project, including the landscape screening. Mr. Angus also noted that he is in agreement to decrease the number of plantings but does not agree with the complete removal of this requirement. He then shared the photos from the Staff Report showing the locations of the trellis/tree plantings. With this building being surrounded by roads on all four sides makes it difficult for them to fully screen. Now Mr. McCarty is looking for the Commissioners recommendation for the request to decreased of plantings. Mr. McCarty did note that he would recommend not planting at the corner of Grant and Jackson Roads because of the number of conduits that are in that area will make it difficult to plant anything there. Mr. Marshal noted that every building stands on its own and we are only looking at your building at this discussion. We are now looking at alternatives for the needed screening. Mr. Angus is following the regulations and the approval that has already been granted. Mr. Marshall asked if there were any questions. Mr. Lilly asked to understand the controversy is as it seems a compromise has already been found and Mr. Marshall noted that we have come up with a compromise, but McCarty Associates doesn't want to do that. Mr. McCarty noted they are asking if the commission, based on their input and the letter from MassDevelopment, as well as the modifications made to the façade, if everyone is happy with the way the building looks, would you consider voting to amend the permit to eliminate the planting all together. If the answer is no, then can we come up with another solution. Mr. Pinard noted that the situation is that they have roads on all 4 sides, and it will take years before the building is hidden. Mr. Lilly noted that they are not looking to hide the building just to soften the view. Mr. Routhier asked why there are no windows and Mr. Payson noted that they have the building leased to a company that requires no window access for the materials they are manufacturing. Mr. Marshall gave a quick summary: big building with no windows on 3 sides and nothing to break it up - that is why the trellises were added. As Mr. McCarty noted the trellises aren't going to work. So, we are now here to look at another option. There seems to be enough vegetation on 3 sides, so we are now down to 1 side in question. So, the question becomes is the long side on Grant does it require landscaping based on our regs? Can we vote to eliminate planting all together? Mr. Routhier asked if there was a photo that shows the side in question and Mr. Angus shared the photo that showed the Grant Road area in question and noted that MassDevelopment has rescinded their requirement for the trellises and noted that the building looks fine as is, but this is a design review issue. We deal with the Landscape screening requirements and that is the reason for being here tonight. Mr. Lilly noted that he is impressed with all the work that has gone on to retain the existing plantings on the other three sides, but he is hesitant to say to do away with the requirement all together. There were other questions about the Grant Road side of the building, Ms. Seeley noted that based on the photos shared there is a need for the screening but maybe not all 21 areas. Mr. Angus would suggest to decrease the number to 9 areas, which will be 18 trees mainly on Grant Road. Ms. Fetterhoff would go with 8 (16 trees). Mr. Angus noted that if the commission is fine with reducing the number to 8. Mr. Marshall asked if there were any questions from the Public and none were asked. Mr. Marshall asked for a motion to close the hearing, **Mr. Pinard made the motion, and Ms. Fetterhoff seconded the motion. The motion to close the hearing was approved unanimously by roll call vote.** The question is to amend the unified permit to landscape screening from 21 sets of façade plantings to 8 sets of plantings. Mr. Marshall asked for a motion to decrease the planting requirement to 8 sets. **The motion was made by Mr. Lilly, seconded by Mr. Chapman. The motion to decrease the planting to 8 sets of two was approved by a unanimous roll call vote**.

New Business:

- **(7:52 PM) FY2026 Revenue Projection Discussion with MassDevelopment Real Estate:** Mr. Angus reviewed the revenue plans for next year 2026. Mr. Angus then asked Mr. Jenkins from MassDevelopment Real Estate if he has any revenue items that he missed. Mr. Jenkins confirmed that Mr. Angus has covered all the projects that he has listed. Mr. Angus noted that he will review the Expense items for FY'26 at a future meeting. Mr. Marshall asked if

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the housing projects could increase as well. Mr. Angus noted that it is possible for Phase 3 of Emerson Green – Grant Road project could start. Mr. Marshall then asked if there were any questions, none were asked.

- **(8:01 PM) Administrative Sign Approval for 75 Jackson Road:** Mr. Angus noted that since King Street Properties has already come before the Commission for two other facilities on Jackson Road and with this being exactly like the prior sign requests Mr. Angus has approved the sign request through the administrative process. Mr. Marshall asked if there were any questions/concerns non were asked.

- **(8:02 PM) Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) 2.0 Grant Award:** Ms. Suedmeyer noted that the original MVP planning meeting was held May 2018 and since then we have received four or five action grants through MVP program. The next phase will be focused on Community Engagement looking at social equity and community resiliency, for which we were awarded a $100K grant. The first $50K will be split to go towards hiring a consultant to facilitate the process for updating the vulnerabilities associated with climate change in Devens and will also go toward a special social community engagement vendor that is selected by the state. There is also some funding within this grant that will pay community members who take lead roles within this program. After about a year there will be a $50K payment to implement a seed action project based on the findings of the community engagement piece. One other item to announce is Devens is in the process of updating their Hazard Mitigation Plan, this is a project that MassDevelopment public safety and engineering departments are leading. DEC Staff will be participating and coordinating and combining efforts where feasible.

- **(8:06 PM) Sponsorship Requests for the Armed Forces Day and Devens Museum:** Mr. Angus noted that the Devens Museum has reached out asking for a yearly sponsorship of $2K, as well as a $500 donation for the WWII Victory Dance. Mr. Marshall asked for a motion to approve the sponsorship and donation to the Devens Museum. Mr. Seeley asked if this is an unbudgeted request and Mr. Angus confirmed that it is an unbudgeted request currently, but it can be put in the budget for FY26 and going forward as they are looking for the sponsorship in FY26. **The motion was made by Mr. Routhier and seconded by Mr. Pinard. The motion as amended to approve the sponsorship, and donation was unanimously approved by a roll call vote.** Mr. Angus then noted that he would like to see if the commissioners would also be interested in becoming a sponsor for the Armed Forces Day, scheduled on May 17th Mr. Angus would recommend the Gold Star Sponsorship ($1000), and is looking for the Commissioner's approval to donate. Ms. Seeley recommended increasing the sponsorship to the Patriot level ($2,500) and Mr. Routhier seconded the increase. Mr. Marshall asked for a motion to increase the donation to Patriot Level ($2,500). **The motion to sponsor the Armed Forces Day at Patriot Level was made by Ms. Seeley and seconded by Mr. Routhier. The motion was approved by a roll call vote. Ms. Fetterhoff abstained from voting as the Nashoba Valley Chamber of Commerce is working with MassDevelopment on the event.**

- **(8:17 PM) Former Fort Devens Army Installation Five Year Review General Public Questionnaire:** Mr. Angus noted that Fort Devens has sent out their five-year questionnaire regarding the remediation work they have been doing asking for public input on the work they have been doing. Mr. Angus shared the responses he entered on behalf of DEC as well as DEEC, noting that there is still some work to be done but they have made great progress to date. Mr. Marshall acknowledged the cleanup that has been done over the past 30 years and asked how much longer do they have? Mr. Angus noted that he can't answer that because there are still a number of areas that need to be cleaned. He turned the question over to Ms. Delorier and she also said they don't see an end date but there is a 4-year pilot program for Airfield to deal with the PFAS which is one contaminant.

- **(8:24 PM) MEES Conference USGBC Green Schools Conference Updates:** Ms. Suedmeyer updated the commissioners on the presentations she gave at two conferences, US Green Building Council's Green Schools Conference in Florida which had great attendance as well as feedback. She also presented the Pocket Forests and Rewilding projects to the Massachusetts Environmental Education Society at their annual conference in Worcester . Ms. Suedmeyer noted that 10 towns attending the conference also have created pocket forests in their town.

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- **(8:27 PM) Read File:** Mr. Angus noted that there are a few articles in the file for the commissioners to read. Veranova has announced that they are planning to move their headquarters from Pennsylvania to Devens. Boston Globe had an article on the Housing, Women's History Month – and Governor Healey Unveiled an exhibit of Edith Nourse Rogers. Ms. Suedmeyer also noted the "350 Girls" display currently at the Devens Museum.

(8:32 PM) Old Business:

- Devens Jurisdiction Framework Committee (DJFC) – Voting Issues: Mr. Angus reviewed the current voting processes in Devens and noted that he will be sharing the Status Quo during the next DJFC Meeting.

(8:33 PM) Public Comment:

- Mr. Marshall asked if there were any questions/comments from the Public, none were asked.

(8:34 PM) Mr. Marshall noted the next scheduled meetings are April 3rd at 7:30 AM, and March 29th at 6:45 PM, will be in person for the Commissioners as the remote meeting legislation signed into law by Governor Healey is set to expire March 31st.

(8:35 PM) Mr. Marshall asked for a motion to adjourn. The motion was made by Mr. Lilly and seconded by Mr. Poutry. The motion to adjourn was unanimously approved by a roll call vote.

List of Exhibits

- Agenda
- February 25th Draft Minutes
- Public Hearing
  - 11 Grant Road Letter to DEC
  - ROD Modification
  - Staff Report
  - Trellis Locations
- New Business
  - 75 Jackson Level One Sign Approval 3-3-25
  - Armed Forces Day Sponsorship 2025
  - Devens Museum DEC Proposal
  - DJFC Matric – Voting Issues
  - FYR Review Interview Public DEC Response
  - MVP 2.0 Two Pager Feb 2025
  - Read File

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