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May 2, 2022

Mr. Neil Angus  
 Devens Enterprise Commission  
 33 Andrews Parkway  
 Devens, MA 01434

Re: 35 Saratoga Blvd

Dear Neil,

IBI Placemaking has reviewed the submitted landscape and lighting plans for the 35 Saratoga Blvd Unified Permit Application. The following comments are offered.

### **3.0: SITE PLAN**

#### **3.02: REQUIREMENTS**

1. **3.02 3 (b) 6 a states that “All existing landscape features, especially existing trees and woodland to remain, shall be shown on ALL site plan sheets.**  
 Trees to remain are shown on all site drawings, but are not identified as remaining on C2, C3 and L1. (See item 8)
2. **3.02 3 (b) 6 b requires planting plans to indicate the locations of all proposed lighting and the dimension, materials and finishes of all walks, walls and fences.**
  - The selected bike rack lacks two points of contact and results in less effective use. It is recommended that another fixture with two points of contact with the bicycle is selected.
  - The proximity of the drop-off at the retaining wall to the sidewalk on the east side of the large parking area creates an unsafe condition for pedestrians as well as vehicles. The addition of a pedestrian guardrail is recommended.

#### **3.04: DESIGN STANDARDS**

1. **3.04 (6) (a) 1 d describes the required SRI index.**  
 Confirm that colorants are not being added to the concrete pavement that would affect its SRI value.
2. **3.04 (6) (a) 3 describes the requirements for site lighting levels and fixtures.**
  - Light levels at the base of proposed fixtures are excessive. Modify the light fixtures/fixture spacing to reduce the maximum light levels to around 2.0 -2.5 fc.
  - Confirm fixture colors.
  - Light trespass beyond the property lines occurs at some portions of the site edges. Provide light fixture cutoffs to address this.
  - Two internal islands lack the required shade tree. Inclusion of the tree will require an adjustment to the light fixtures. (See item 16)

3. **3.04 (8) (c) 2 calls for native plants.**
  - *Calamagrostis* is a non-native hybrid; replace it with an ornamental native grass.
  - Given the genetic diversity and associated resilience that the straight species bring to the species and ecosystem, cultivars and hybrids should be avoided where possible, especially where the cultivar has dark pigmented leaves, such as the *Physocarpus* cultivar. Replace *Platanus x acerifolia* with the native *Platanus occidentalis*. (See item 6)
  - *Picea glauca*'s native range is northern New Hampshire and Vermont. Select an evergreen species for this horticultural zone.
  - See item 9
4. **3.04 (8) (c) 5 describes the required sizes for plant materials.**
  - Increase the size of all deciduous shade trees to 3" caliper.
  - Confirm all shrubs meet the height requirements.
5. **3.04 (8) (c) 6 calls for planting to be laid out in informal drifts.**

The arborvitae proposed for the eastern edge of the property line are planted in a single straight line, rather than a naturalistic informal drift as required. This linear arrangement is due to the insufficient space provided for planting at the property line. (See Item 14)
6. **3.04 (8) (c) 8 call for plants within 20' of a paved area to be tolerant of de-icing salts.**
  - Bayberry is tolerant of coastal salt spray but may not be tolerant of road salt; use only adjacent to areas not to be treated with road salt.
  - *Tilia americana* and *Acer rubrum* are sensitive to road salt and should not be used within the parking areas.
  - *Platanus x acerifolia* is sensitive to road salt, however, the native *Platanus occidentalis* is tolerant. (See item 3)
  - *Amelanchier* is sensitive to road salt. (See item 16)
7. **3.04 (8) (c) 11 calls for disturbed areas intended for natural re-growth to be, at a minimum, graded, loamed and seeded.**

Numerous areas on the site lack any indication of proposed planting or seeding. Indicate on the planting plan the extent of seeding and the proposed seed mix for all disturbed areas on the site. (See item 10)
8. **3.04 (8) (d) 4-7 describes in depth the care to be taken to ensure the survival of existing trees.**
  - Call for tree protection of all existing trees to remain on all plans with keyed symbols tied to a tree protection detail.
  - Provide a tree protection detail, calling for the placement of tree protection fencing a minimum of 12" beyond the dripline of trees
  - Revise the tree protection note on EC1 to call for the placement of tree protection fencing a minimum of 12" beyond the dripline of trees.
  - Call for tree protection on the notes and detail to remain in place for the duration of all construction activities.
  - The proposed grading between the fire lane and the building result in the loss of the three oaks to remain. Adjust the 264 through 268 contours to save the trees.
  - The grading of the top of the slope to the right of the entry drive from Barnum Road is incomplete with the 286, 287 and 288 contours unresolved. The resolution of those contours results in the loss of another existing 18" oak.
  - The remaining oaks between the fire lane and Barnum Road would be lost with any flattening of the proposed 1:1 slope. Provide the required slope stabilization required for a 1:1 slope (see item 12) or provide a retaining wall.
  - The edges of the disturbed woodland surrounding the oaks to remain between Barnum

Road and the fire lane shall be replanted with native woodland species.

**9. 3.04 (8) (e) describes the soil testing requirements.**

The soil test results included in the Stormwater report identify the soils as sands. Additional information regarding the onsite soils' suitability as a growing medium is required, and any limitations suggested by the soils need to be reflected in the plant list.

**10. 3.04 (8) (f) 2 requires the planting of lawn as a minimum and encourages the limiting of manicured lawn areas.**

- Indicate the planting of the ground plane for all unpaved areas, including the strip between the parking edge and the retaining wall where the guardrail is sited.
- Consider the replacement of turf grass with low-mow fescue for ease of maintenance and the incorporation of more sustainable landscape practices in the narrow/treed turf areas proposed for the site.

**11. 3.04 (8) (f) 3 requires slopes steeper than 3:1 to be planted with shrubs or trees for stabilization.**

Proposed slopes on the west, east and south sides of the site exceed 3:1 and are either underplanted to ensure stabilization or not planted at all. Massive slopes on the south side of the site are graded at 1:1.

**12. 3.04 (8) (f) 4 stipulates the treatment of 1:1 slopes for stabilization.**

- Identify the slope stabilization for the extensive 1:1 slopes on the south end of the site.
- The 1:1 slopes at the south edge of the site flanking the entry drive must be stabilized with bioengineering methods of erosion control and 100% plant cover.

**13. 3.04 (8) (f) 6 stipulates the treatment of proposed landscaped areas to ensure that the soils are not compacted.**

Indicate the location of construction laydown areas. Confirm that the areas not covered by building or pavement will not be used for laydown or provide direction for the decompaction of these areas.

**14. 3.04 (8) (g) describes screening requirements for buildings, vehicular zones, and unsightly areas viewed from public ways and the Open Space and Recreation Zoning District.**

- The three existing oaks (see item 8 for the regrading required to save them) provide only partial screening of the southeast corner of the building. Provide the required 6' high minimum year-round screening that is visually impermeable within 3 years' time to flank the fire lane's intersection with Barnum Road.
- The parking lot is visible from the entry drive on Barnum Road. Provide the required 6' high minimum year-round screening that is visually impermeable within 3 years' time flanking the drive entry and on the large 3:1 slope flanking the drive.
- The parking lot is unscreened from Saratoga Blvd. Provide the required 6' high minimum year-round screening that is visually impermeable within 3 years' time.
- The parking lot on the north side of the building is visible from the entry to the existing Avantar building and lacks the required 6' minimum depth year-round screening that is visually impermeable within 3 years' time. The proposed slope of the narrow planting strip is too steep for the planting of the proposed arborvitae. (See item 5)

**15. 3.04 (8) (h) 2 requires one tree per 25 lineal feet of parking perimeter plus one tree per 50 feet in areas where screening is required.**

- No trees are currently called for the edges of parking for the majority of the site due to the parking edges being too close to the property line. Pull the parking further from the property line and provide the required number of trees, arranged informally rather than aligned with the edge of the parking lots.
- The 150' length of the north edge of the parking lot requires nine shade trees. Only five

are provided.

**16. 3.04 (8) (h) 3 and 4 describe the planting requirements for parking islands.**

- Four areas of the parking areas lack the required internal islands containing one deciduous shade tree—the front of the building, the west face of the building, and two sections along the west property line. Provide the additional four islands.
- Some of the internal islands lack trees. Add a deciduous shade tree to each island. (See item 2 under 3.04)
- The trees within the internal islands that include walkways are located too close to the curb. Shift the walkway to provide the required distance to the curb and an adequate distance to the walkway.
- The *Amelanchier* proposed for five of the internal islands are not deciduous shade trees. Provide a larger canopied tree to provide the desired shade for the parking area. (See item 6)
- The large linear divider island and the terminal island at its northern end lack the required shrub planting. Provide the shrubs as required.

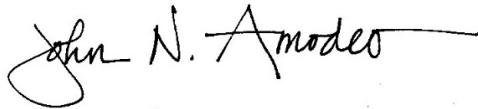
**17. 3.04 (8) (k) requires the planting of street trees.**

No street trees have been proposed for Barnum Road. Provide the required street trees.

**18. 3.04 (8) (l) describes the landscape treatment for building facades**

The south face of the building, visible from Barnum Road lacks the required continuous landscape treatment. Add the required landscape elements in an informal manner.

Sincerely,




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John N. Amodeo, ASLA, LEED AP B+C