

Staff Report

Devens
Enterprise
Commission

Date: October 21, 2022

To: Devens Enterprise Commission

From: Peter Lowitt, FAICP DEC Director, Neil Angus, FAICP Environmental Planner, and Beth Suedmeyer, Associate Planner

RE: CFS-2 – 111 Hospital Road Site Plan Amendment Level 2 Unified Permit

Applicant/ Owner: Commonwealth Fusion Systems, LLC (CFS)
Engineer: VHB Engineering
Location: 111 Hospital Road, Devens, MA
Zoning: Innovation & Technology Business District, Watershed & Aquifer Water Resources Protection Overlay District

Project Recap:

The DEC issued a Record of Decision (ROD) on January 19, 2021 for a Level 2 Unified Permit for the development of a fusion energy research and development facility (CFS-2), associated site improvements, and the conceptual master plan to Commonwealth Fusion Systems (CFS). CFS- 2 will be home to a compact fusion device (SPARC) that is intended to demonstrate the use of fusion as a clean, reliable power source. CFS-1 involved a manufacturing building and was also previously permitted by DEC. Construction of the sites CFS-1 and CFS-2 is underway and anticipated to be completed in 2025.

CFS 2 Site Plan Amendment:

The Applicant is seeking a Level 2 Unified Permit for modification to the originally permitted site plan. In late June VHB on behalf of CFS approached staff to discuss submitting a site plan amendment to reflect the design changes made during construction of the CFS-2 project. Staff felt that the number of changes warranted a Level 2 Site Plan amendment, and the applicant prepared the application package. Additional Unified permit(s) will be required for subsequent phases of development including CFS-2 expansion, CFS-3, 4, and 5, as well as any parking expansion.

Staff is pleased with the Applicant's efforts to reduce the size of the project and to reduce impervious surface area on the project site. The focus of staff and peer review efforts are ensuring the modifications are compliant with stormwater management requirements and the landscaping modifications meet all perimeter parking and interior planting requirements. In general, the proposed changes to the site plan are considered improvements since the overall footprint will be reduced and there will be fewer retaining walls and more room for perimeter landscaping.

Waivers:

No waivers are currently proposed.

Process:

VHB, on behalf of Commonwealth Fusion Systems, LLC., submitted the Level 2 Unified Permit Application on August 29, 2022, and the Determination of Completeness was issued on September 2, 2022. Copies of the application were received by the surrounding Towns on September 2, 2022. Legal notices were placed in Nashoba Publications on September 9, 2022 and September 16, 2022. All abutting property owners were duly notified by certified mail on September 6, 2022. The 30-day Town comment period expires on October 7, 2022. No public comments were received. The complete application was circulated to MassDevelopment and the relevant DEC peer review team: Nitsch Engineering (site plan and stormwater) and IBI Group (landscaping). Peer review from the DEC consultants has been conducted. The 75-day review period for the DEC to act on this application ends on November 16, 2022.

Recommended Action:

The Applicant has satisfactorily addressed the peer review and staff comments. Staff recommends that the hearing be closed and has provided a draft Record of Decision for the Commission to review. Approval with conditions is recommended.

Attachments:

- Draft Record of Decision