

Memo

TO: DEC
FROM: Peter Lowitt, FAICP
Date: May 4, 2021
RE: Staff Report

Staff met with the Applicant team and resolved a number of the remaining issues which are addressed below. Our Peer Review consultants provided an additional round of comments which reduced the list of outstanding items, enabling us to recommend closing the hearing and preparing a draft Record of Decision which includes conditions for those remaining issues.

Items outstanding from the last hearing and how they have been addressed.

Parking:

The Applicant explained that their parking numbers are based on existing facilities in Europe and includes visitors and some overlapping parking at shift changes. We explained and discussed the use of reserve parking and after some debate agreed that 299 parking spaces are appropriate for the proposed use. Some excess pavement has been removed as well.

Buffer:

As justification for the parking in front of the building the Applicant agreed to enhance the buffer for the parking from Bulge Road and this will provide an opportunity to use excess material to create landscape berm along all frontage. The Applicant writes revised plans include "adjustments to the landscaping and berming along Bulge Road and increasing the buffer adjacent to Bulge Road with adjustments to parking space locations. This includes replacement of some deciduous trees with evergreens."

Expansion Area Soil Stockpiles:

A compromise was reached to concentrate soil stockpiles to preserve some of the clusters of mature specimen trees in the Phase 2 expansion area while allowing an area just to the west of the proposed building to be compacted and prepared for future expansion. The Applicant writes they are providing "Construction protection of the trees within the future building footprint."

Access Service Drive width:

We also agreed to keep 20' wide travel aisles for the service drive that loops the facility.

Noise Issues:

Gas deliveries and attendant noise issues were addressed by conditioning delivery times, prepping for a ground mounted pump if deliveries increase and noise becomes an issues, and requiring the applicant to specify very silent HVAC equipment and to direct the noise towards the north. Latest model and plan revisions show the following:

- Updated building design (such as equipment layout, rooftop parapet wall - 4 ft min)
- Updated mechanical equipment information (such as quantity and sound data)
- Tech's comments (such as using residential criteria for golf course receptors even though commercial)

- Incorporated qualitative assessment for intermittent sources (such as truck activities and gas filling operations) and interior sources (such as air handling units)
- As per the current noise study submitted on 5/4/2021, the facility has not yet demonstrated that its sound sources will not be a potential nuisance to its industrial, residential, and recreational neighbors, and sufficient information was provided to understand the reasonable worst-case background sound and potential sound increases (i.e. roof-top units, air handling units, compressed gas receiving area, and other potential mobile sources on-site) that sound compliance is likely achievable with further revisions of the report and expectations. Specific issues remaining include:
 1. Selecting the proper background assumptions from the data collected,
 2. A discussion of truck traffic as continuous or intermittent,
 3. Calculations and explanation of how and where, and to what degree, the enclosed air handling units intakes and exhausts contribute to the sound off-site, and how it will be mitigated, if needed.
 4. A commitment to only monthly deliveries of gas that would be delivered during the middle of non-holiday/non-weekend workdays (10 AM to 2 PM), or the installation of ground mounted gas delivery pumps (common throughout Devens) with significantly fewer restrictions on delivery times or quantities.
 5. A mitigation plan acceptable to the DEC for RTU 4, RTU 5, and RTU 6 that includes additional screening, enclosures, or different RTUs with lower sound output to minimize the daytime sound in the direction of the golf course, especially on the weekends when the background sound is lower, and specifically at the Greens and Tees around the 10th and 18th holes and the Clubhouse.
 6. A realistic mitigation plan for meeting the sound requirements at the fenceline, if needed in the future because of the development of nearby lots and concerns expressed by those facilities.

This condition must be satisfied prior to issuance of building permit.

Public trail connections:

MassDevelopment and the Applicant are discussing a trail easement for the area adjacent to the golf course maintenance facility that connects to the hillside trail behind that property. The Applicant has proposed a 10' trail easement which will be shown on the level 1 lotting plan. MassDevelopment agreed to provide a connection to the trail on the east side of the hill that connects to Bulge Road if and when that road is improved.

Sidewalks:

The Applicant agreed to install and improve the existing sidewalks along the Bulge Road frontage. Lighting is needed to provide safe pedestrian access along the Bulge Road sidewalk and at intersections of driveways. Is there a way to utilize motion sensors or minimize nighttime illumination at the site? The Applicant writes the latest plan revisions show "Replacement of the bituminous walk west of the parking lot entrance and new trail along the western edge of the site." Plan revisions added "Striped crosswalks at the three driveways."

Peer Review comments were received on traffic (condition changes to final Traffic Impact assessment), stormwater and drainage (Conditions of approval) and landscaping (plant species, showing lighting on the landscaping plans to resolve conflicts, locations of plantings, etc were made conditions).

Process: Staff recommends closing the public hearing and voting on the draft record of decision prepared for this site.