Memo

Devens Enterprise Commission

Date: April 24, 2025

To: **Devens Enterprise Commission**

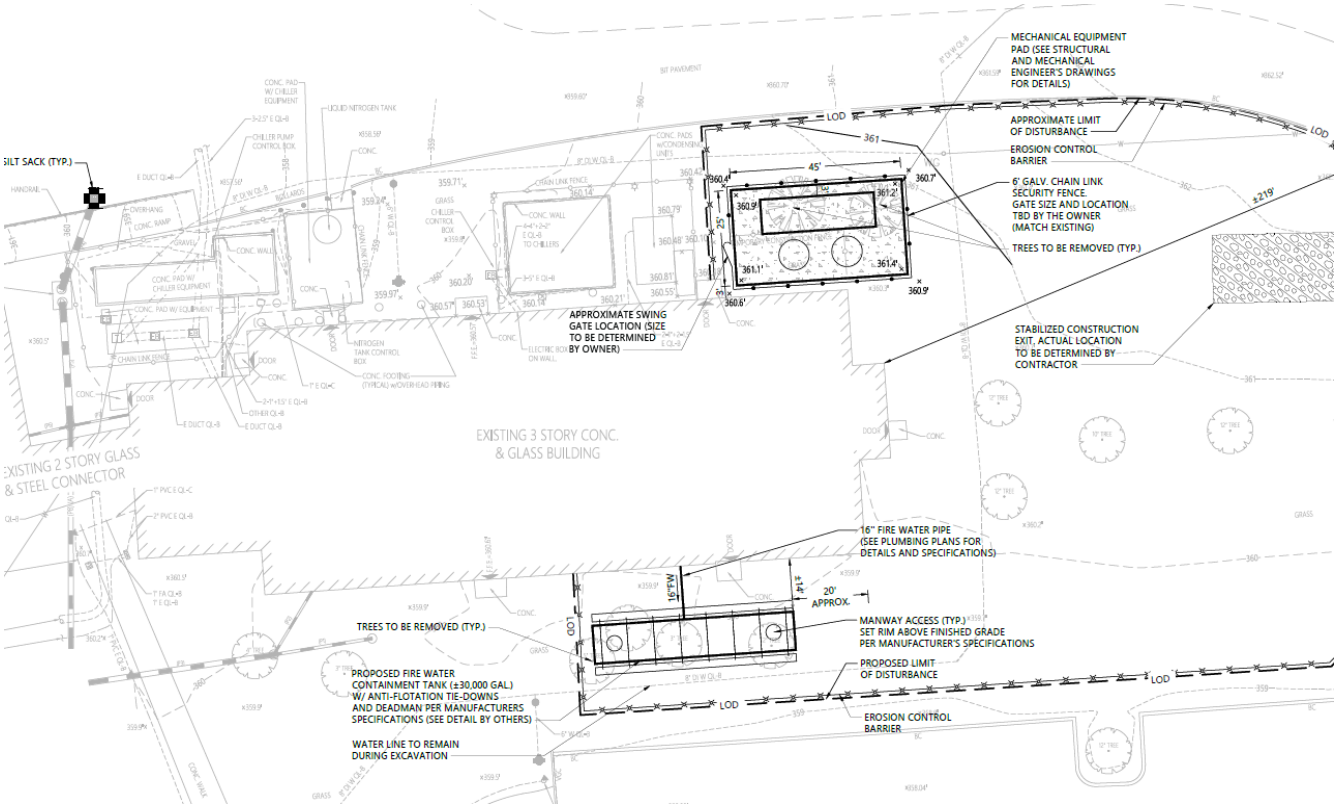
Cc: **Applicant**

From: Neil Angus, Director

RE: **Veranova Level 2 Site Plan and Request for Amendment to existing License to store flammables**

Owner/Applicant: Veranova, LP
Location: 25 Patton Road, Devens, MA (Parcel ID #009.0-0004-0500.0)
Zoning: Innovation and Technology Business Zoning District, Watershed Water Resources Protection Overlay District.

Request: Veranova is seeking a Level 2 Unified Permit for LP for minor exterior modifications, interior fit-up, and amendment to their existing License for the Storage of Flammables, Combustibles and Explosives. In accordance with 974 CMR 4.09(6) and as per MGL 148 c.148s.13, storage of flammable liquids in excess of 10,000 gallons, flammable gases in excess of 3000 cu.ft. and flammable solids in excess of 100lbs., requires a license from the DEC. Back in 2015, the DEC issued an amended license to store up to 36,000 gallons of flammable liquids, 3000 cu.ft. of gases and 1000 lbs. of solid flammable materials (original permit was for 15,000 gallons of flammables back in 2010). The proposed building modifications will result in the need to utilize and store flammables and combustibles in the amount of 42,000 gallons of flammable liquids, 3000 cu.ft. of gases and 1000 lbs. of solid flammable materials.



The proposed interior work in Building 1 and Building 3 includes renovating existing office space to a new Research and Development laboratory in Building 1. Building 3 will be converting existing shell spaces (unused areas) into two production spaces with mechanical and electrical support spaces for the new manufacturing area. The work areas

in Building 1 are approximately 1800 sf. and the work area in Building 3 will be approximately 7,500 s.f.. Building 3 will require the installation of an exterior underground storage vessel for emergency release of fire fighting foam in the event of a fire. This is a similar system that BMS installed a few years ago. Building 3 also provides a new exterior slab on grade for Hot Water and Chilled Water mechanical equipment. Work also involves the addition of some new Air Handling equipment on the roof of Building 3. Veranova has stated that this project does not require any DEP Air Quality permitting.

The existing flammable materials are stored within a warehouse that is properly designed to accommodate such materials (smoke and heat detection as well as water/aqueous film forming foam fire suppression systems). The proposed increase includes a Class II flammable liquid (dimethylformamide) that has been in use since the 2015. Veranova estimates a maximum of twenty 55-gallon drums of dimethylformamide throughout the buildings (all interior). They are also proposing to increase storage of a number of Class 1B flammable solvents. The amounts of each chemical stored onsite will vary but the total amount of flammable liquids is estimated to increase based on:

1) the assumption that there will be up to two pallets of drums (four 55-gallon drums per pallet) for staging and loading/unloading;
2) full equipment loaded (approximately 200 liters), plus one 55-gallon drum for delivery and two 55-gallon drums for waste flammable liquids in each of the two new labs; and
3) an additional 2,000 gallons to provide operational flexibility.

That rounds to roughly 32,900 gallons of Class 1B flammable liquids, in addition to the 1,100 gallons of Class II, and the remaining amounts of Class 1A (3,000 gallons) and Class 1C (5,000 gallons) that are expected to remain the same – for a total of 42,000 gallons. The 3000 cu.ft. of flammable gases and 1000 lbs. of solid flammable materials that was part of the 2015 license will not change.

Project Issues at a Glance:

Safety:
The new proposed build-out is currently under review by the Devens Fire Department and DEC Building Commissioner. As part of this license application, Veranova submitted an updated list of their chemical inventory. The Devens Fire Department has reviewed this list and the proposed increase in quantities of flammable materials and has no immediate concerns with this license application. The additional storage of flammable materials over the existing license will not occur until the new build-out is completed and the Applicant obtains new permits for increased storage of flammables from the Devens Fire Department. The Applicant has submitted their most recent emergency spill response plan and Integrated Contingency Plan. These plans will need to be updated as a condition of this approval.

Minor Site Modifications:
The exterior work proposed includes a utility yard and underground storage vessel for fire fighting foam/liquid should there ever be an incident that triggers the emergency system. These vessels are designed to retain any release and keep contamination from ground exposure and from entering the stormwater management system on-site. There will be a minor increase in impervious surface from the utility pad but nothing significant that would cause the need for additional stormwater management measures.

Industrial Performance Standards for Noise:
The project includes a small number of rooftop mechanical units and air handling units that have the potential to increase facility sound. The Applicant completed the Industrial Performance Standards Checklist as part of their application submittal but indicated that there would be no noise impacts associated with this project. Staff has reviewed the proposed rooftop mechanicals and while they are minimal for this project, there are a number of existing pieces of equipment on the building already. The applicant is also planning a future addition to the facility (not part of this permit). As the incremental addition of rooftop mechanical equipment can have cumulative impacts to the facility sound profile, it is important that Veranova conduct a comprehensive noise analysis for the future building addition that includes the entire campus and this project. Staff would recommend this be a condition of this Unified Permit (prior to the addition of any further rooftop mechanicals beyond this permit).

Viewshed Impacts:
The property is within the Viewshed Overlay District. While the existing buildings are surrounded by quite large existing trees, are set back from Jackson and Patton Roads, and have not had any visibility issues in the past, it is important to ensure that any new development does not negatively impact the viewshed sensitive receptors. All rooftop mechanical units should be screened from view from the sensitive receptors and rooftop equipment and building materials should not have any reflective surfaces/finishes. This can be a condition of any approval as well for this project, but like the noise study, any future building addition would require a full viewshed analysis to be performed from the viewshed sensitive receptors, as well as from any visible areas along Patton and Jackson Roads, to determine if additional screening is required.

Process: The application was submitted on March 10, 2025. A Determination of Completeness was issued on March 20, 2025. Copies of the application were received by the surrounding Towns on March 20, 2025. Legal notices were placed in Nashoba Publications on March 27 and April 4, 2025. Certified Mail notice was sent to all abutters on March 20, 2025. The 30-day Town comment period expired on April 21, 2025. No comments were received.

Recommended Action: As per the Massachusetts Fire Prevention Regulations, this license amendment would run with the land and be valid for 1 year and can be renewed annually through an administrative registration process as per the DEC Flammables Licensing Policy. Staff would recommend the DEC approve the Level 2 Unified Permit for minor site plan modifications and the amended license with five standard conditions and the following additional conditions:

6. The existing license for storage of flammables and combustibles (#D10-071) is hereby amended to allow the storage of 42,000 gallons of flammable liquids, 3000 cu.ft. of gases and 1000 lbs. of solid flammable materials. All original license conditions still apply. If the conditions, capacities or restrictions of the license change, the Applicant is required to come back before the DEC to amend the license.
7. The Applicant shall obtain permits from the Devens Fire Department prior to the storage of additional flammables allowed under this amended license. All materials shall be stored in accordance with NFPA 1 (National Fire Protection Association), NFPA 30 (Flammables and Combustibles liquids code), NFPA 55 (Compressed Gases and Cryogenic Fluids Code), NFPA 400 (Hazardous Materials Code) and 527 CMR14.00 (MA Board of Fire Prevention Regulations - Flammable and Combustible liquids, Flammable solids or flammable gases).
8. The Applicant shall update their existing SPCC Plan and Integrated Contingency Plan. Copies of these updated plans shall be provided to the DEC and the Devens Fire Department prior to the storage of additional flammables allowed under this amended license.
9. Ultra-low-noise fans shall be specified for all new rooftop mechanicals. Exhaust fans shall be directed into the campus and away from perimeter property boundaries. A comprehensive noise analysis is required for any future building addition that includes the entire campus and any future planned additions.
10. All rooftop mechanical units shall be screened from view from the sensitive receptors and rooftop equipment and building materials shall not have any reflective surfaces/finishes. The proposed utility yard shall be screened from Jackson Road. Privacy screening shall be added to the proposed 6' utility yard fence if required by the DEC. A full viewshed analysis from the viewshed sensitive receptors, as well as from any visible areas along Patton and Jackson Roads, shall be required for any future building addition.
11. Any additional site lighting shall comply with 974 CMR 3.04 (down-lit, fully shielded, and no greater than 3000K);
12. A building permit shall be obtained for all interior work proposed in Buildings 1 and 3.