Staff Report

Devens Enterprise Commission

Date: May 21, 2021

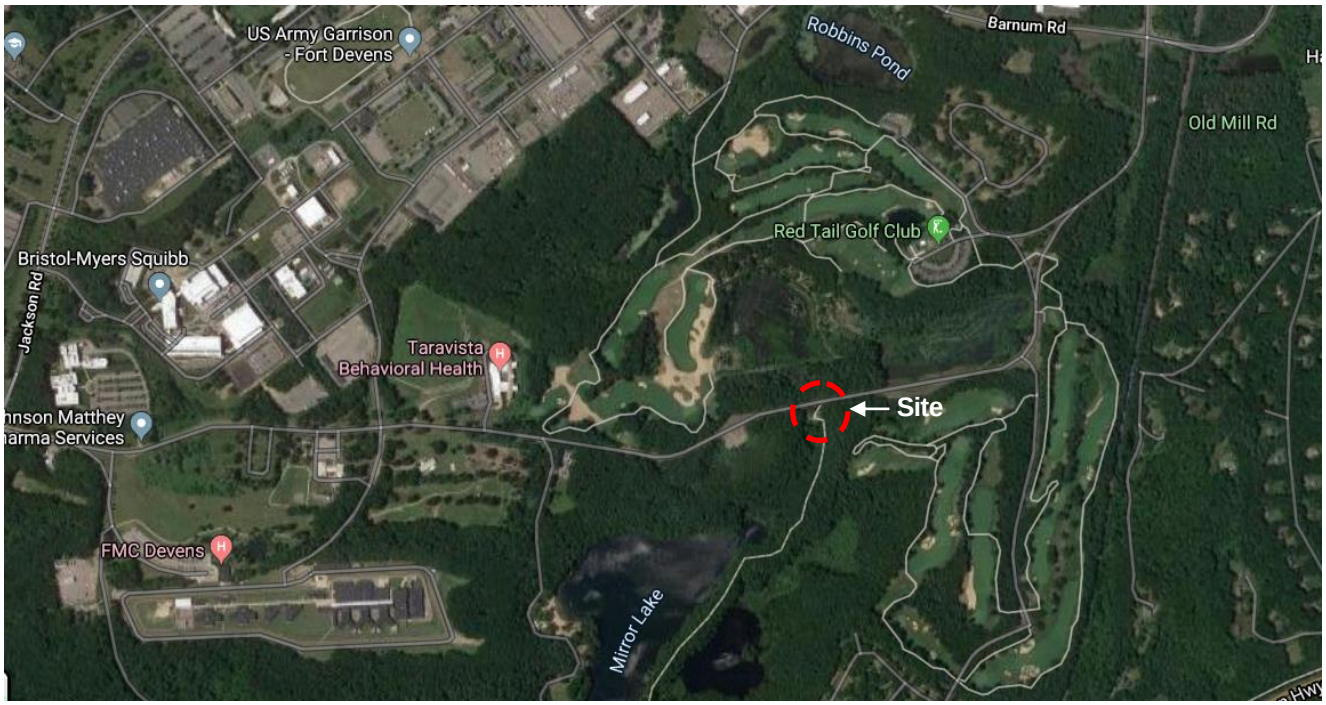
To: **Devens Enterprise Commission**

From: Neil Angus, Environmental Planner

RE: **Patton Well Pilot PFAS Treatment System Improvements**

Owner: MassDevelopment
Applicant: MassDevelopment/Devens Utilities
Location: 168 Patton Road, Devens, MA (Parcel ID 11-99-204)
Zoning: Open Space Recreation, Zone I Water Resources Protection Overlay District (and well head)

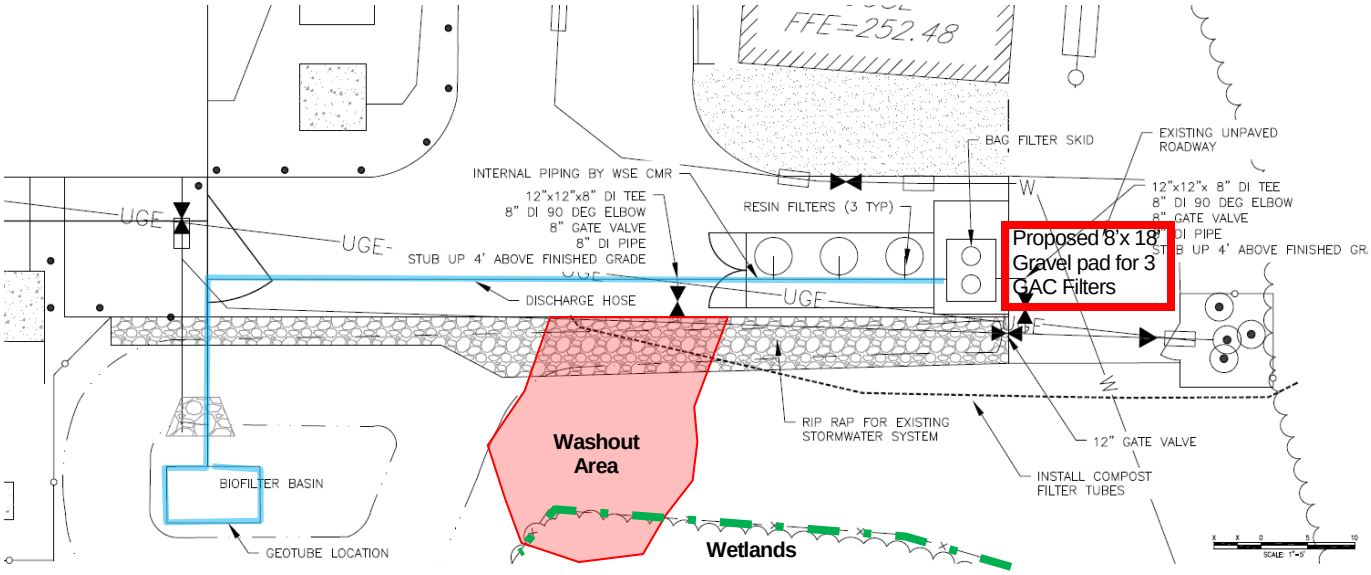
1. **Premises and Proposed Project:** Devens Utilities is seeking a Wetland Request for Determination of Applicability in order to expand their existing temporary PFAS treatment system that was previously approved by the DEC back in 2020. The new system will add three (3) granular activated carbon (GAC) filtration to the existing resin filter (ion exchange) system to aid in removing excess iron from the drinking water and help ensure Devens has sufficient water to meet summer peak demand. The existing pilot resin system was successful in removing PFAS but the excess iron is fouling up the filters so additional filtration is necessary.



The filters would be located on a small 8'x 18' gravel pad adjacent to the existing paved area where the resin filters are located and next to the existing wells (see next page). This pad would be underlain with fabric so that the ground can be easily restored once the filters are removed. The filters are expected to remain in place for approximately 14 months while the permanent Patton Well Treatment facility is constructed on adjacent land (previously permitted by the DEC back in February 2021).

To operate the filters, they first need to be conditioned. This involves running clean, potable water through the filters for 60 minutes once every three months. This would be in addition to the resin filter conditioning. The Applicant indicated that they will be able to condition both on-site using filter bags that will capture any residue

and slow the discharge into the existing on-site micro-bioretetnion basin before eventually flowing into the ground and/or adjacent wetland area.



2. **Application and Process:** Weston and Sampson, on behalf of MassDevelopment Utilities Department, submitted a Level I Permit application package, including the application, Request for Determination of Applicability, project Description and Plans on May 21, 2021. The DEC Director reviewed the submittal and made a preliminary negative determination subject to the four conditions listed in Section 3 of this report. In accordance with 974 CMR 4.06(6)(c), any determination by the Director is valid only upon ratification by the DEC at a public meeting.

3. **Recommended Action:** Once all issues have been discussed by the applicant, commission members, staff and the public, if the Commission agrees with the Director's determination that the proposed activities are minor in nature and will not negatively impact the adjacent wetland resource areas, the Commission should ratify the DEC Director's decision to issue a Negative Determination of Applicability subject to the following conditions:

    1. All GAC and resin filter flushing discharge activities shall be directed to a filter bag that discharges to the existing biofiltration basin. No discharges to the swale or wetlands are permitted.
    2. Prior to commencement of operations, Devens Utilities shall prepare and submit a Stormwater Operations and Maintenance Plan to the DEC in accordance with 974 CMR 4.08(7) for this well site.
    3. Prior to commencement of construction, the Applicant shall provide proof that Natural Heritage Endangered Species Program (NHESP) has reviewed and authorized this project as an exempt activity.
    4. Once the permanent Patton Well treatment plant is operational, these temporary filters and associated equipment shall be removed and all disturbed areas stabilized and restored to their natural condition.

These conditions will help protect the wetland resource areas and allow for the additional GAC treatment system to be installed and operate with minimal or no impact to adjacent wetland resource areas.

NJA