

**Devens
Enterprise
Commission**

RE: Emerson Green Multi-Family Apartment Level 2 Unified Permit Amendment Request

1

Background & Overall Project Status:

The project was originally approved with 60 parking spaces for the 40 units (1.5 spaces per unit). Back in 2022, the previous owner (Devens Village Green, LLC.) received approval to add an additional 6-units to the apartments, bringing the total number of units in the apartments from 40 to 46. The applicant did not request any additional parking as part of that amendment, dropping the parking ratio to 1.3 spaces per unit, but they did propose a reserve parking area where they could provide additional parking if it ever became necessary:

Upon the transfer of the multi-family development from Devens Village Green, LLC., to 77 Grant Road, LLC., the new owner, who has constructed and managed a number of multi-family apartment projects in Massachusetts, determined that they would need to construct the planned reserve parking to make this project feasible. The Applicant worked to maximize the use of the reserve space to propose 23 additional spaces, along with a pedestrian walkway and additional Electric Vehicle-ready spaces to meet the 5% minimum TDM measure in the DEC regulations.

What the Regulations say:

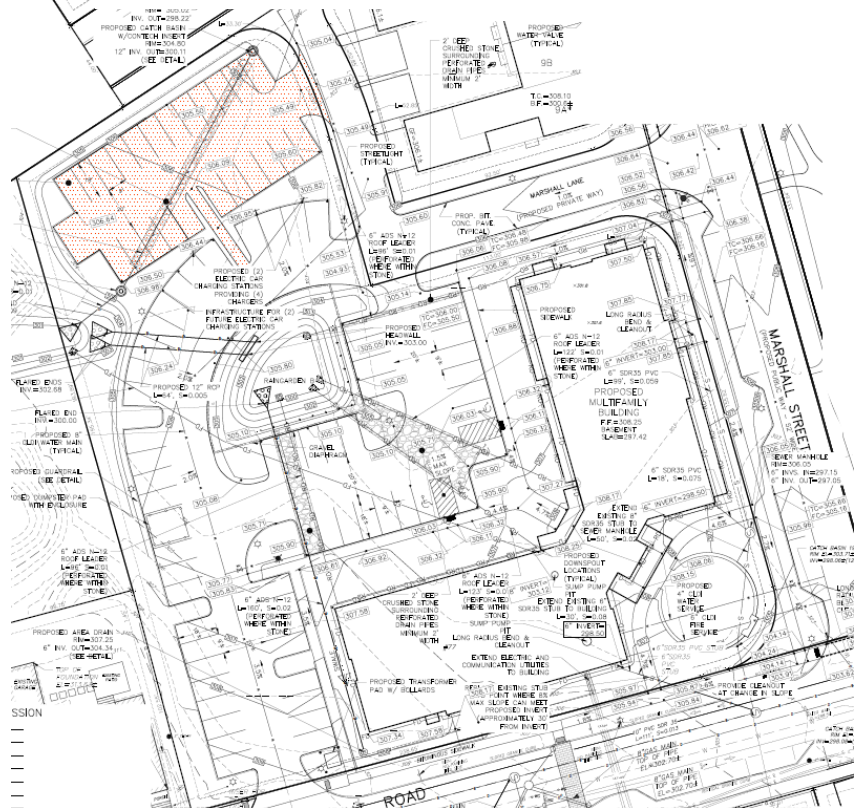
The DEC parking regulations are "maximums". We try to discourage excessive parking through shared parking and transportation demand management strategies. For residential, the DEC allows up to 2 spaces per unit. The approved plans have 60 spaces for 46 units (or 1.30 spaces/unit). The Applicant is proposing an additional 23 spaces for a total of 83 spaces for 46 units (1.8 spaces/unit). The key issue, according to the Applicant, is the number of bedrooms, not the proposed number of units. The approved unit mix is 37% 1 bedroom, 54% two bedrooms and 9% 3 bedrooms, totaling 79 bedrooms. The Applicant has prepared a report detailing their rationale as to why the number of bedrooms should drive the number of parking spaces needed. The DEC allows for parking spaces below the maximum with reasonable justification from the applicant.

While there is on-street parking, shuttle service, and nearby commuter rail, these services may not be robust enough to completely eliminate the

2022 Approved Plan with Reserve Parking (13 spaces)



2026 Proposed Parking Expansion (23 spaces)



need for an automobile at this point. Devens continues to work on enhancing commuter options to reduce reliance on cars for both businesses and residents and has joined the North Central MA Rides TMA, along with 27 other towns in the region. The Applicant is required to participate in the Devens Transportation Demand Management Program so this could help reduce single occupancy vehicle trips in Devens and future demand/need for additional parking. There are also new bike lanes and sidewalks on Grant Road that connect to Jackson Road and the neighboring residential areas, and the Applicant is still planning to include bike storage in the new building design.

From a practical standpoint the project had always anticipated apartment residents and visitors periodically utilizing the 15 on-street parking spaces on Grant Road and Marshall Street but with the additional units and number of bedrooms, the Applicant is concerned that residents might take up most of these spaces, leaving no room for visitor parking. On-street parking also becomes a challenge in the winter months.

Other Key Project issues:

ADA Parking: The project currently has 4 ADA parking spaces proposed. With the addition of 23 spaces (83 total), the project will still comply with 974 CMR 3.04(3)(a)1.c. and 521 CMR MAAB (4 required for 76-100 spaces). The existing approved parking lot has 4 ADA spaces.

Snow Storage: Snow storage is not permitted within the rain garden however there is space along the sides of the parking areas where snow for smaller storms can be stored. The Applicant would need to arrange for off-site snow removal in the event of any major snow events.

Stormwater Management: Staff worked with the Applicant to upgrade the approved drainage system for the existing parking lot to provide direct decentralized infiltration below the approved parking lot for the roof runoff as well as the proposed parking spaces, eliminating the need to expand the size of the rain garden. The DEC's peer review consultants noted a few revisions needed for the plans to comply with the DEC regulations and the Applicant has revised the plans to include address these deficiencies. The 'dead' storage below the pipe still needs to be modified to meet the 1-inch required volume for the additional impervious (558 cf). This is included as a condition.

Landscaping and Open Space: The proposed parking area was previously disturbed (former military housing and utilities). There are two large trees within the proposed expanded parking area. One is completely dead and the other is partially dead. The proposed landscape plan was modified from the original design to include a mix of 10 deciduous shade trees and 37 understory plantings to provide visual screening and climatic relief from the additional pavement. The property abuts permanently protected open space and is across the street from Central Park and the Village Green, which will offer both passive and active recreation opportunities for all residents of Emerson Green (more opportunities for social interaction between residents, community members, and visitors).

Lighting: The Applicant's original design for the expanded parking area lighting levels that exceeded the DEC requirements. A revised photometric plan was submitted with reduced lighting levels that are more in-line with the DEC's requirements for reduced light pollution (14' poles, dark, earth-tone color, 3000K temp. and fully shielded). The fixtures will match the style of the rest of the development (pedestrian-scale lighting).

Emergency Egress: The Devens Fire Department has reviewed the proposed plans and indicated there is enough space for emergency access to and from this proposed expanded parking area.

Overall project vision: This development remains highly accessible by multiple modes of transportation and although this is a proposed expansion for cars, the development still remains below the maximum of 2 parking spaces per unit. This additional parking area, if not necessary in the future, could provide future active recreational space. The enhanced drainage design and landscaping will help mitigate climate change impacts by decentralizing stormwater and providing more shade through a robust landscape design around the new parking. These elements help reinforce the developers' vision that this project is still more about people than cars.

Proposed Conditions:

The proposed parking expansion keeps the parking ratio under the maximum of 2 spaces per unit, therefore the proposed amendment technically complies with the DEC's parking standards. As Devens continues to grow its

transportation management association and improve shuttle service and accessibility, there may be opportunities to reduce the parking in the future. In addition to 5 standard conditions, staff would recommend including the following:

- 6) The clearing limits for the drainage outlet shall be marked in the field and inspected by DEC staff prior to any tree removal. Erosion controls shall be maintained at all times in accordance with the active SWPPP for this project. DEC staff may require additional controls if site conditions warrant.
- 7) Landscaping shall be maintained in good condition in accordance with the approved landscape plan and 974 CMR 3.04(8). The applicant is required to submit a letter confirming a one-year guarantee of all approved landscaping once installed. Any dead or damaged landscaping must be replaced promptly. An Irrigation system is not part of this approval. The Applicant is required to obtain administrative approval for any future proposed irrigation. Such system must comply with 974 CMR 4.08 and 8.09.
- 8) To help reduce single occupancy vehicle use and greenhouse gas emissions from transportation, the Applicant shall join the North Central MA Rides Transportation Management Association [TMA] and participate in trip reduction strategies where feasible.
- 9) An updated Long-Term Operations and Maintenance Plan for the property shall be provided to include stormwater operations and maintenance plan for the new parking area, stormwater management features, and new landscaping. Snow removal shall also be addressed in this document (prohibition of 100% salt applications, no stockpiling within the rain garden, no blocking of sight lines, and any excess to be hauled off-site and disposed of in accordance with applicable DEC and state standards).
- 10) Prior to commencing construction of the additional parking, the Record of Decision and final plans shall be recorded at the Worcester Registry of Deeds. Prior to final endorsement and recording, the following changes shall be made to the plans:
 - (a) A note shall be included on the lighting plan indicating the requirement for full shielding/recessed lighting source.
 - (b) A note shall be included on the site plan verifying that no outdoor storage of equipment or materials within the parking area is allowed.
 - (c) The 'dead' storage below the pipe shall be modified to meet the 1-inch required volume for the additional impervious area.
- 11) Should the additional 23 parking spaces or any portion of them become obsolete the future, the Applicant shall explore options for eliminating pavement or repurposing the space for outdoor recreational use.
- 12) All applicable conditions related to the Phase 2A portion of the Devens Village Green, LLC. Unified Permit #D15-012, dated May 28, 2015 (with amendments #D18-017, dated May 22, 2018, and #D22-014, dated March 29, 2022) remain in full force and effect.

Application and Process: 77 Grant Rd. LLC., submitted the Unified Permit Application on September 21, 2026 and the Determination of Completeness was issued on September 23, 2026. Copies of the application were received by the surrounding Towns on September 23, 2026. Legal notices were placed in Nashoba Publications on October 10 and 14, 2026. All abutting property owners were duly notified by certified mail. The 30-day Town comment period expires on October 24, 2026. To date, no comments have been received. The 75 day review period for the DEC to act on this application ends on December 9, 2026.

Recommended Action: The 30-day town comment has expired. Once the Commission and public have had an opportunity to ask any questions and comments, the DEC may choose to either close the hearing or, if there are any outstanding items, continue it to the November 5, 2026 meeting at 7:30AM. Staff has drafted a Record of Decision for the Commission's consideration, should the DEC decide to close the hearing and vote.

Attachments*: - Application
 - Plans
 - Stormwater Report
 - Determination of Completeness
 - Public Notice
 - Parking Analysis
 - Revised Plans
 - Revised Stormwater Report
 - Response letter

* All attachments posted on-line at: <https://devensec.com/level2hearings27OCT2026.html>