

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD STAFF REPORT

Project #/Name	ARB-2021-96: Umansky Subaru Building Renovation
Review Type	Final Review of a Site Plan and Architecture
Parcel Identification	04500-00-00-068D4
Location	On the west side of Routh 29 North, at the intersection of Hilton Heights Road and Route 29.
Zoned	Highway Commercial (HC), Entrance Corridor (EC)
Owner/Applicant	Umansky Properties TOC LLC/Design Develop LLC (Kevin Schafer)
Magisterial District	Rio
Proposal	The applicant proposes to renovate the Umansky Subaru showroom building by applying ACM (aluminum composite material) panels on portions of the Rt. 29 elevation and the majority of the Hilton Heights Road elevation, by painting the existing EIFS gray, and by adding elements to the south and east elevations including towers and canopy. The renovation proposal also includes leaving a portion of the existing brick unpainted and additions to the rear (west) elevation.
Context	The Umansky Subaru site is located in the heavily developed Rt. 29 commercial corridor. The Subaru building is located just south of the Umansky Auto Park (previously Brown) building. A Walmart is located directly to the south across Hilton Heights Rd. Just beyond the Walmart is the Price Chevrolet auto dealership, including the Hyundai showroom, which received ARB approval in 2011. To the west is Sam’s Club, and a Doubletree hotel is located to the north. A variety of commercial buildings stand on the opposite side of Rt. 29.
Visibility	The south elevation is readily visible from the intersection of Rt. 29 and Hilton Heights Rd. The east elevation is visible from Rt. 29. Although there is established landscaping along the Rt. 29 EC that limits some visibility, visibility increases during the fall and winter seasons when there is less foliage on the trees.
ARB Meeting Date	September 7, 2021
Staff Contact	Khris Taggart

PROJECT HISTORY

- Two Special Use Permits were approved for this site in 2003. SP-2002-64 was approved for outdoor display of vehicles and SP-2002-65 was approved for structured parking. A condition of SP2002-65 is: “The design of the Phase II building shall be compatible with the Phase I building, as determined by the ARB.” The Phase 1 building is the larger, northern building originally called the Brown Auto Park building, with the structured parking. The showroom for Subaru, the smaller, southern building, was completed as Phase II of the development. To maintain compliance with the conditions of the approved Special Use Permits, the proposed design for the renovation of the Subaru building must be compatible with the Phase I building.
- The ARB provided comments on the preliminary site plan and architecture on June 7, 2021. Comments from that review are included in the analysis section of this report. At the meeting, the ARB determined that the proposed architectural design for the Umansky Subaru building renovation is compatible with the design of the Phase I building.

CHANGES TO THE PROPOSAL SINCE THE LAST REVIEW

- The existing brick along the east elevation, north of the tower element, has been revised to remain unpainted.
- The existing brick along the east elevation, between the tower element and vehicle pick-up canopy structure, has been revised to be covered with ACM panel.
- The color of the metal coping along the top of the building elevations has been revised from blue to a metallic silver.

ANALYSIS

REF	GUIDELINE	RECOMMENDATION from 6/7/2021 meeting	CURRENT ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION
	GENERAL GUIDELINES			
	<i>Purpose, Compatibility with the character of the Entrance Corridor, Compatibility with significant historic sites</i>			
1	The goal of the regulation of the design of development within the designated Entrance Corridors is to ensure that new development within the corridors reflects the traditional architecture of the area. Therefore, it is the purpose of ARB review and of these Guidelines, that proposed development within the designated Entrance Corridors reflect elements of design characteristic of the significant historical landmarks, buildings, and structures of the Charlottesville and Albemarle area, and to promote orderly and attractive development within these corridors. Applicants should note that replication of historic structures is neither required nor desired.	Consider reducing the amount of ACM panel used in the design, increasing the use of warmer colors, and increasing materials with greater texture. Changes to coping color and sign colors could help reduce the trademark impact.	Few changes have been made to the design from the previous submittal. Along the east elevation, the architectural design has been revised to leave the existing brick north of the tower element unpainted, clad the existing brick south of the tower with ACM panel, and change the color of the metal coping from blue to silver. The color change of the coping and leaving portions of the existing brick unpainted does help to reduce the trademark impact and introduce a warmer color into the building renovation. However, covering the existing brick between the canopy structure and the tower element increases the amount of ACM panel used in the design. This results in the east elevation north of the tower appearing disconnected from the rest of the building design. Revising the design to maintain the existing brick along the east elevation between the canopy structure and tower element may help to connect to the base-middle-top wall pattern seen in the northern portion of the east elevation, resulting in a more unified building design.	Revise the architectural design to provide a more coordinated overall appearance. Retaining the existing brick between the canopy structure and tower element is one possible option.
2	Visitors to the significant historical sites in the Charlottesville and Albemarle area experience these sites as ensembles of buildings, land, and vegetation. In order to accomplish the integration of buildings, land, and vegetation characteristic of these sites, the Guidelines require attention to four primary factors: compatibility with significant historic sites in the area; the character of the Entrance Corridor; site development and layout; and landscaping.			
3	New structures and substantial additions to existing structures should respect the traditions of the architecture of historically significant buildings in the Charlottesville and Albemarle area. Photographs of historic buildings in the area, as well as drawings of architectural features, which provide important examples of this tradition are contained in Appendix A.			
4	The examples contained in Appendix A should be used as a guide for building design: the standard of compatibility with the area’s historic structures is not intended to impose a rigid design solution for new development. Replication of the design of the important historic sites			

	in the area is neither intended nor desired. The Guideline’s standard of compatibility can be met through building scale, materials, and forms which may be embodied in architecture which is contemporary as well as traditional. The Guidelines allow individuality in design to accommodate varying tastes as well as special functional requirements.			
5	It is also an important objective of the Guidelines to establish a pattern of compatible architectural characteristics throughout the Entrance Corridor in order to achieve unity and coherence. Building designs should demonstrate sensitivity to other nearby structures within the Entrance Corridor. Where a designated corridor is substantially developed, these Guidelines require striking a careful balance between harmonizing new development with the existing character of the corridor and achieving compatibility with the significant historic sites in the area.			
9	Building forms and features, including roofs, windows, doors, materials, colors and textures should be compatible with the forms and features of the significant historic buildings in the area, exemplified by (but not limited to) the buildings described in Appendix A [of the design guidelines]. The standard of compatibility can be met through scale, materials, and forms which may be embodied in architecture which is contemporary as well as traditional. The replication of important historic sites in Albemarle County is not the objective of these guidelines.			
10	Buildings should relate to their site and the surrounding context of buildings.			
12	Architecture proposed within the Entrance Corridor should use forms, shapes, scale, and materials to create a cohesive whole.			
15	Trademark buildings and related features should be modified to meet the requirements of the Guidelines.			
	Structure design			
11	The overall design of buildings should have human scale. Scale should be integral to the building and site design.	See recommendation #1	The addition of the tower element and windows along the east elevation help to enhance human scale and the addition of the canopy structure helps to break up the length of the building. The previous staff report noted that covering the tower element in slate emphasized the trademark appearance of the building and the size, position and general character of the canopy structure resulted in an element that had monumental appearance. However, at the June 2 nd meeting, the ARB was satisfied with the	See recommendation #1

			appearance of the tower element and scale of the canopy structure.	
13	Any appearance of “blankness” resulting from building design should be relieved using design detail or vegetation, or both.	None.	The tower element, canopy structure, and additional windows shown along the east elevation, as well as the existing landscaping along the building, help to relieve the blankness that exists in the current building design.	None.
14	Arcades, colonnades, or other architectural connecting devices should be used to unify groups of buildings within a development.	None.	No connecting devices are proposed.	None.
16	Window glass in the Entrance Corridors should not be highly tinted or highly reflective. Window glass in the Entrance Corridors should meet the following criteria: <i>Visible light transmittance (VLT) shall not drop below 40%. Visible light reflectance (VLR) shall not exceed 30%. Specifications on the proposed window glass should be submitted with the application for final review.</i>	Revise the plans to include the standard window glass note.	The plans have been revised to include the standard window glass note.	None.
	Accessory structures and equipment			
17	Accessory structures and equipment should be integrated into the overall plan of development and shall, to the extent possible, be compatible with the building designs used on the site.	None.	There are no separate accessory structures proposed, but canopy structures are shown at the south end of the east elevation and along the west elevation. Changes along the west elevation are not expected to have a visual impact on the EC.	None.
18	The following should be located to eliminate visibility from the Entrance Corridor street. If, after appropriate siting, these features will still have a negative visual impact on the Entrance Corridor street, screening should be provided to eliminate visibility. a. Loading areas, b. Service areas, c. Refuse areas, d. Storage areas, e. Mechanical equipment, f. Above-ground utilities, and g. Chain link fence, barbed wire, razor wire, and similar security fencing devices.	Indicate if any roof or ground-mounted equipment is proposed with the renovations to the building. If new equipment is proposed, show locations and show how that equipment will be screened from the EC.	The plans have been revised to include a note that the existing roof-mounted mechanical equipment and screening are to remain. No new mechanical equipment is proposed with this building renovation.	None.
19	Screening devices should be compatible with the design of the buildings and surrounding natural vegetation and may consist of: a. Walls, b. Plantings, and c. Fencing.	None.		
20	Surface runoff structures and detention ponds should be designed to fit into the natural topography to avoid the need for screening. When visible from the Entrance Corridor street, these features must be fully integrated into the landscape. They should not have the appearance of engineered features.	None.	No new stormwater facilities are proposed.	None.
21	The following note should be added to the site plan and the architectural plan: “Visibility of all mechanical equipment from the Entrance Corridor shall be eliminated.”	None.	The note is present on the plans.	None.
	Lighting			
	<i>General Guidelines</i>			

22	Light should be contained on the site and not spill over onto adjacent properties or streets;	Indicate if any site or building-mounted lighting is proposed with the renovations to the building. If new lighting is proposed, provide complete details.	A lighting plan has been provided with this submission. The new lighting does not exceed .5 footcandles over any public roadways or adjacent properties.	None.	
23	Light should be shielded, recessed or flush-mounted to eliminate glare. All fixtures with lamps emitting 3000 lumens or more must be full cutoff fixtures.		The photometric plan shows maximum lighting levels (18.8 fc) for new fixtures that are below the Guideline's maximum. The plan also shows illumination levels for existing site lights that are not changing. These levels do not match the previous approval and exceed Guidelines limits. The applicant has clarified that the illumination levels for these fixtures do not represent actual conditions; they are estimates based on manufacturer's information on similar fixtures. Consequently, this photometric plan should be limited to the new fixtures, which are all building-mounted.	Revise the lighting plan to show illumination levels only for new fixtures. Add a note clearly stating that no changes to existing site lighting are proposed and site lighting remains as was approved with SDP-2003-67.	
24	Light levels exceeding 30 footcandles are not appropriate for display lots in the Entrance Corridors. Lower light levels will apply to most other uses in the Entrance Corridors.				
25	Light should have the appearance of white light with a warm soft glow; however, a consistent appearance throughout a site or development is required. Consequently, if existing lamps that emit non-white light are to remain, new lamps may be required to match them.			The plan notes that the new lighting will have a color temperature approximating warm white (3000K).	None.
26	Dark brown, dark bronze, or black are appropriate colors for free-standing pole mounted light fixtures in the Entrance Corridors.			The color of the wall mounted lighting has been indicated as satin silver on the cutsheets. While typically not an appropriate color for light fixtures in the EC, these fixtures are not expected to be visible from the EC.	None.
27	The height and scale of freestanding, pole-mounted light fixtures should be compatible with the height and scale of the buildings and the sites they are illuminating, and with the use of the site. Typically, the height of freestanding pole-mounted light fixtures in the Entrance Corridors should not exceed 20 feet, including the base. Fixtures that exceed 20 feet in height will typically require additional screening to achieve an appropriate appearance from the Entrance Corridor.			No new pole-mounted fixtures are proposed.	None.
28	In determining the appropriateness of lighting fixtures for the Entrance Corridors, the individual context of the site will be taken into consideration on a case-by-case basis.				
29	The following note should be included on the lighting plan: "Each outdoor luminaire equipped with a lamp that emits 3,000 or more initial lumens shall be a full cutoff luminaire and shall be arranged or shielded to reflect light away from adjoining residential districts and away from adjacent roads. The spillover of lighting from luminaires onto public roads and property in residential or rural areas zoning districts shall not exceed one half footcandle."			The note is present on the site plan.	None.

	<i>Guidelines for the Use of Decorative Landscape Lighting</i>			
30	Light used for decorative effect shall: a. be compatible with the character of the Entrance Corridor. Compatibility of exterior lighting and lighting fixtures is assessed in terms of design, use, size, scale, color, and brightness. b. impact only the immediate site. The effect of the illumination should not be discernible from distances along the Entrance Corridor.	Indicate if any site or building-mounted lighting is proposed with the renovations to the building. If new lighting is proposed, provide complete details.	No decorative landscape lighting is proposed.	None.
31	Where used for decorative effect, outdoor light fixtures shall: a. be equipped with automatic timing devices and shall be extinguished between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and dawn. b. be shielded and focused to eliminate glare. Glare control shall be achieved primarily through the use of such means as cutoff fixtures, shields and baffles, and appropriate application of mounting height, wattage, aiming angle, fixture placement, etc. c. be cutoff luminaires, aimed so as not to project their output beyond the objects intended to be illuminated; or non-cutoff luminaires, equipped with glare shields, visors, barn doors, and/or other similar shielding accessories as required to meet the following criteria: Light distribution from all lighting installations shall be cut-off at all angles beyond those required to restrict direct illumination to within the perimeter of the landscape feature being illuminated. d. never exceed 3,000 lumens. Further restrictions on lumens may be imposed by the ARB. e. not be modified to reflect seasonal colors. f. be of a number that is compatible with the scale of the object and the development to be illuminated, such that the light emitted will not over-illuminate or overpower the site, as determined by the ARB.			
	Landscaping	Revise the landscape plan to show all previously approved landscaping, and further clarify the proposal to identify plants to remain, plants to be removed, and plants to be added.	The landscape plan proposes a few changes to existing landscaping, and shows some, but not all, of the previously approved landscaping.	See landscaping recommendations below.
7	The requirements of the Guidelines regarding landscaping are intended to reflect the landscaping characteristic of many of the area's significant historic sites which is characterized by large shade trees and lawns. Landscaping should promote visual order within the Entrance Corridor and help to integrate buildings into the existing environment of the corridor.	None.	Established frontage trees exist on both Rt. 29 and Hilton Heights Rd. The trees are to remain, and they meet quantity requirements. The landscape plan shows existing landscaping, but not all the previously approved landscaping is in place (Fig. 1). Shrubs along the perimeter of the parking lots fronting Rt.	Revise the landscape plan to provide the previously approved row of shrubs along the parking area adjacent to Rt. 29, and along the parking area adjacent to Hilton Heights
8	Continuity within the Entrance Corridor should be obtained by			

	planting different types of plant materials that share similar characteristics. Such common elements allow for more flexibility in the design of structures because common landscape features will help to harmonize the appearance of development as seen from the street upon which the Corridor is centered.		29 and Hilton Heights Road are missing but are standard requirements. Several previously approved trees (large shade and ornamental) are missing from the Hilton Heights frontage, leaving two obvious gaps in the planting area (presumably for greater visibility of the building and signage). Adding two large shade trees, one to the east and one to the west of the existing tree labeled “6HOL30”, would provide for a more consistent landscape. One tree and several shrubs are missing from the slope adjacent to the east side of the building. These supplemental plants would no longer be needed to soften blank walls if the proposed renovation is undertaken, but they could help balance the extent of ACM panels used and help establish a more consistent landscape throughout the site.	Road. Revise the landscape plan to provide two large shade trees east and west of the existing tree labeled “6HOL30”.
32	<p>Landscaping along the frontage of Entrance Corridor streets should include the following:</p> <p>a. Large shade trees should be planted parallel to the Entrance Corridor Street. Such trees should be at least 3½ inches caliper (measured 6 inches above the ground) and should be of a plant species common to the area. Such trees should be located at least every 35 feet on center.</p> <p>b. Flowering ornamental trees of a species common to the area should be interspersed among the trees required by the preceding paragraph. The ornamental trees need not alternate one for one with the large shade trees. They may be planted among the large shade trees in a less regular spacing pattern.</p> <p>c. In situations where appropriate, a three or four board fence or low stone wall, typical of the area, should align the frontage of the Entrance Corridor street.</p> <p>d. An area of sufficient width to accommodate the foregoing plantings and fencing should be reserved parallel to the Entrance Corridor street, and exclusive of road right-of-way and utility easements.</p>		<p>New shrubs are proposed along the base of the proposed canopy at the southeast corner of the building. Planting size is mistakenly noted as 7” tall.</p>	<p>Correct the proposed planting height of the arborvitae in the plant schedule. (Change inches to feet.)</p> <p>Consider revising the landscape plan to show shrubs along the eastern side of the building consistent with the character of the previously approved plan.</p>
33	<p>Landscaping along interior roads:</p> <p>a. Large trees should be planted parallel to all interior roads. Such trees should be at least 2½ inches caliper (measured six inches above the ground) and should be of a plant species common to the area. Such trees should be located at least every 40 feet on center.</p>	Revise the landscape plan to provide show the correct quantity of shade trees along the parking area adjacent to Hilton Heights Rd.		
35	<p>Landscaping of parking areas:</p> <p>a. Large trees should align the perimeter of parking areas, located 40 feet on center. Trees should be planted in the interior of parking areas at the rate of one tree for every 10 parking spaces provided and should be evenly distributed throughout the interior of the parking area.</p> <p>b. Trees required by the preceding paragraph should measure 2½ inches caliper (measured six inches above the ground); should be evenly spaced; and should be of a species common to the area. Such trees should be planted in planters or medians sufficiently large to maintain the health of the tree and shall be protected by curbing.</p> <p>c. Shrubs should be provided as necessary to minimize the parking area’s impact on Entrance Corridor streets. Shrubs should measure 24</p>			

	inches in height.			
36	Landscaping of buildings and other structures: a. Trees or other vegetation should be planted along the front of long buildings as necessary to soften the appearance of exterior walls. The spacing, size, and type of such trees or vegetation should be determined by the length, height, and blankness of such walls. b. Shrubs should be used to integrate the site, buildings, and other structures; dumpsters, accessory buildings and structures; “drive thru” windows; service areas; and signs. Shrubs should measure at least 24 inches in height.	Revise the landscape plan to show all approved landscaping along the eastern end of the building.		
34	Landscaping along interior pedestrian ways: a. Medium trees should be planted parallel to all interior pedestrian ways. Such trees should be at least 2½ inches caliper (measured six inches above the ground) and should be of a species common to the area. Such trees should be located at least every 25 feet on center.	None.	Other than the existing walkways along the east and south ends of the building, no interior pedestrian ways are proposed.	None.
37	Plant species: a. Plant species required should be as approved by the Staff based upon but not limited to the <i>Generic Landscape Plan Recommended Species List</i> and <i>Native Plants for Virginia Landscapes (Appendix D)</i> .	Revise the landscape plan to include plant species.	The landscape plan has been revised to include plant species. The proposed plants are on the recommended species lists.	None.
38	Plant health: The following note should be added to the landscape plan: “All site plantings of trees and shrubs shall be allowed to reach, and be maintained at, mature height; the topping of trees is prohibited. Shrubs and trees shall be pruned minimally and only to support the overall health of the plant.”	None.	The standard plant health note is on the plans.	None.
	<i>Site Development and layout</i>			
	Development pattern			
39	The relationship of buildings and other structures to the Entrance Corridor street and to other development within the corridor should be as follows: a. An organized pattern of roads, service lanes, bike paths, and pedestrian walks should guide the layout of the site. b. In general, buildings fronting the Entrance Corridor street should be parallel to the street. Building groupings should be arranged to parallel the Entrance Corridor street. c. Provisions should be made for connections to adjacent pedestrian and vehicular circulation systems. d. Open spaces should be tied into surrounding areas to provide continuity within the Entrance Corridor. e. If significant natural features exist on the site (including creek	None.	No changes are being made to the existing access to the site. The existing building is to remain parallel to the EC and the alterations to the existing on-site circulation patterns remain organized. The site has been previously developed. Some existing interior landscaping is proposed to be removed and replaced to accommodate the changes to the site. Views around the site are not expected to be negatively impacted.	None.

	valleys, steep slopes, significant trees or rock outcroppings), to the extent practical, then such natural features should be reflected in the site layout. If the provisions of Section 32.5.2.n of the <i>Albemarle County Zoning Ordinance</i> apply, then improvements required by that section should be located so as to maximize the use of existing features in screening such improvements from Entrance Corridor streets. f. The placement of structures on the site should respect existing views and vistas on and around the site.			
	Site Grading			
6	Site development should be sensitive to the existing natural landscape and should contribute to the creation of an organized development plan. This may be accomplished, to the extent practical, by preserving the trees and rolling terrain typical of the area; planting new trees along streets and pedestrian ways and choosing species that reflect native forest elements; insuring that any grading will blend into the surrounding topography thereby creating a continuous landscape; preserving, to the extent practical, existing significant river and stream valleys which may be located on the site and integrating these features into the design of surrounding development; and limiting the building mass and height to a scale that does not overpower the natural settings of the site, or the Entrance Corridor.	None.	The site has been previously developed. Grading and retaining walls are proposed to establish the vehicle pick-up canopy.	None.
40	Site grading should maintain the basic relationship of the site to surrounding conditions by limiting the use of retaining walls and by shaping the terrain through the use of smooth, rounded landforms that blend with the existing terrain. Steep cut or fill sections are generally unacceptable. Proposed contours on the grading plan shall be rounded with a ten-foot minimum radius where they meet the adjacent condition. Final grading should achieve a natural, rather than engineered, appearance. Retaining walls 6 feet in height and taller, when necessary, shall be terraced and planted to blend with the landscape.			
41	No grading, trenching, or tunneling should occur within the drip line of any trees or other existing features designated for preservation in the final Certificate of Appropriateness. Adequate tree protection fencing should be shown on, and coordinated throughout, the grading, landscaping and erosion and sediment control plans.	None.	No grading appears to be proposed within the drip line of any existing trees or other existing features.	None.
42	Areas designated for preservation in the final Certificate of Appropriateness should be clearly delineated and protected on the site prior to any grading activity on the site. This protection should remain in place until completion of the development of the site.			

43	Preservation areas should be protected from storage or movement of heavy equipment within this area.			
44	Natural drainage patterns (or to the extent required, new drainage patterns) should be incorporated into the finished site to the extent possible.	None.	The site has been previously graded. Drainage patterns are not changing.	None.
	Signs	Sign applications are required for all proposed signs.	Signage is reviewed and approved by separate submission. However, the following comment is provided. If internally illuminated, the backgrounds of the Subaru “Star Cluster” logos must be opaque.	Sign applications are required for all proposed signs. Note that if internally illuminated, the backgrounds of the Subaru “Star Cluster” logos must be opaque.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends the following as the primary points of discussion:

1. The design of the Subaru renovation: the increased use of ACM panels, overall coordination of the design.
2. The quantity of shade trees along Hilton Heights Rd.
3. Shrubs along the parking areas fronting Rt. 29 and Hilton Heights Rd.
4. Landscaping on the slope adjacent to the east elevation.

Staff offers the following recommendations on the proposal:

1. Revise the architectural design to provide a more coordinated overall appearance. Retaining the existing brick between the canopy structure and tower element is one possible option.
2. Revise the lighting plan to show illumination levels only for new fixtures. Add a note clearly stating that no changes to existing site lighting are proposed and site lighting remains as was approved with SDP-2003-67.
3. Revise the landscape plan to provide the previously approved row of shrubs along the parking area adjacent to Rt. 29, and along the parking area adjacent to Hilton Heights Road.
4. Revise the landscape plan to provide two large shade trees east and west of the existing tree labeled “6HOL30”.
5. Correct the proposed planting height of the arborvitae in the plant schedule. (Change inches to feet.)
6. Consider revising the landscape plan to show shrubs along the eastern side of the building consistent with the character of the previously approved plan.
7. Sign applications are required for all proposed signs. Note that if internally illuminated, the backgrounds of the Subaru “Star Cluster” logos must be opaque.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attach. 1:** ARB2021-96: [Umansky Subaru Building Renovation Site Plan](#)
Attach. 2: ARB2021-96: [Umansky Subaru Building Renovation Architectural Drawings](#)

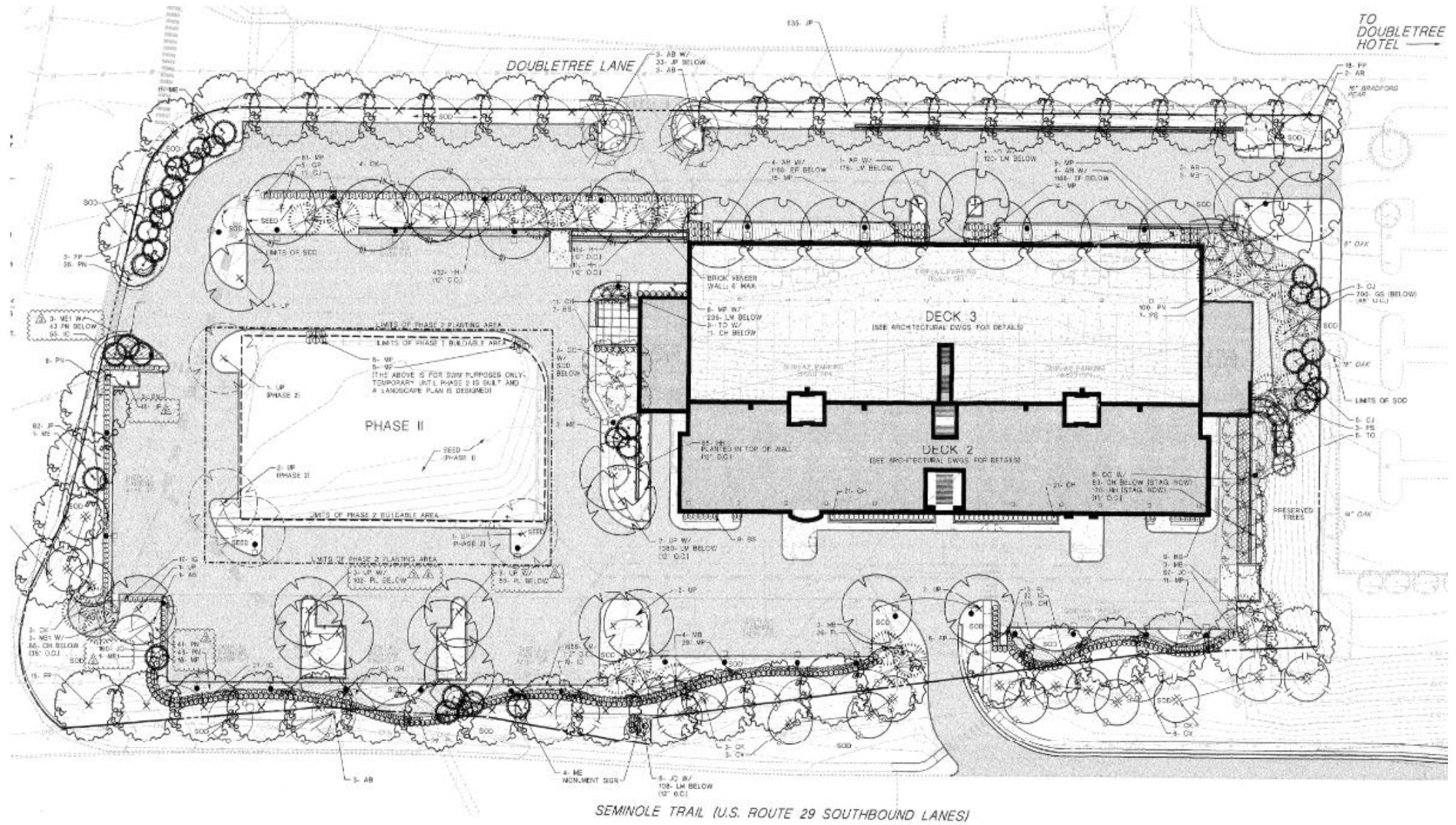


Figure 1: SDP2003-67 Approved Landscape Plan (Phase I)

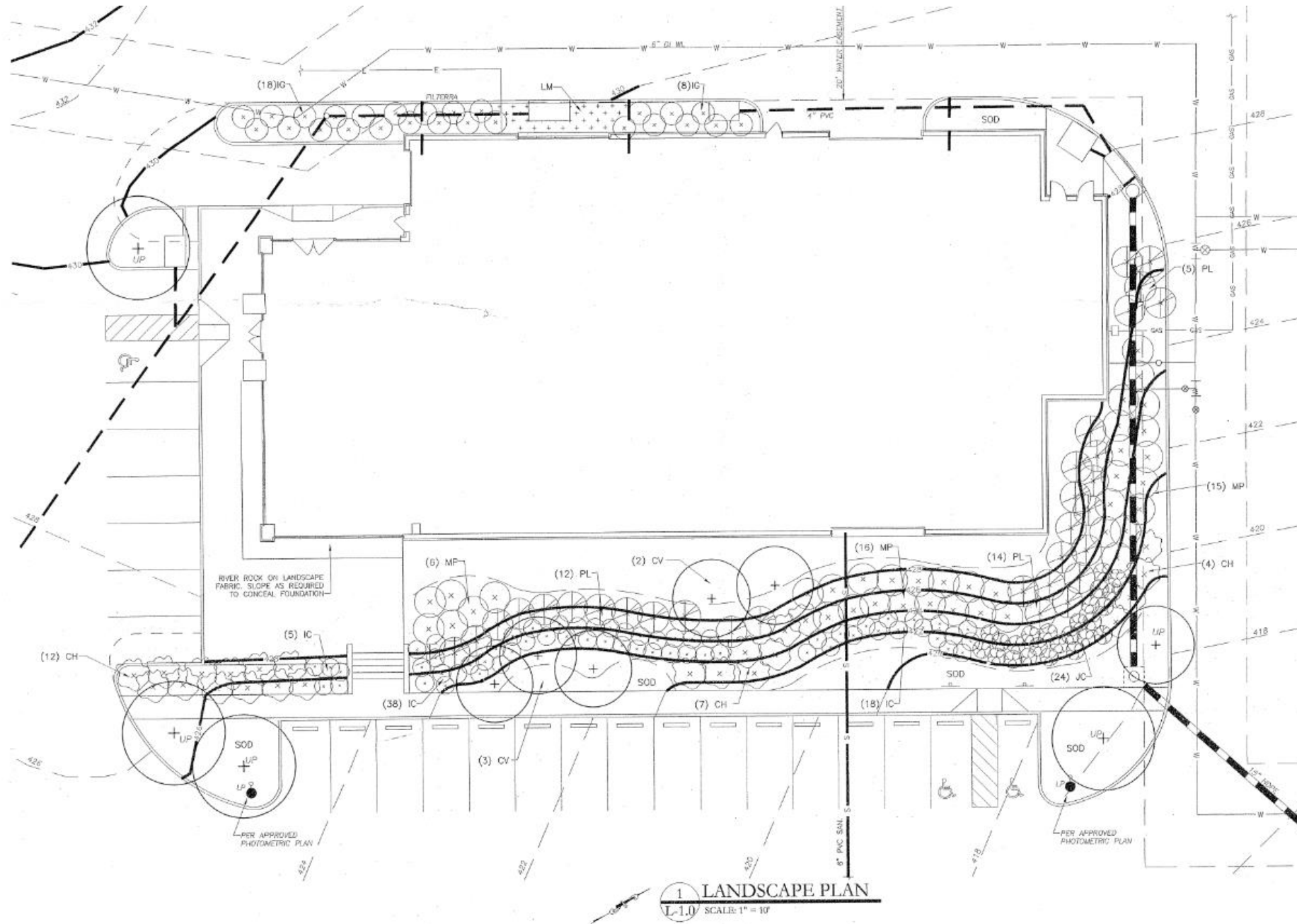


Figure 2: SDP2005-45 Approved Landscape Plan (Phase II)