ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD STAFF REPORT

Project #/Name	ARB-2024-24: Flow Honda Final
Review Type	Review of a final design
Parcel Identification	04500-00-068D4
Location	960-A Hilton Heights Road, on the west side of Routh 29 North, at the intersection of Hilton Heights Road and Route 29. (Fig. 1)
Zoned	Highway Commercial (HC), Entrance Corridor (EC)
Owner/Applicant	Flow 960 Hilton LLC / Design Develop LLC (Kevin Schafer)
Magisterial District	Rio
Proposal	The applicant proposes to renovate the Flow Honda showroom building by removing the existing entrance tower and canopy, adding a layered frame around new storefront windows, and adding a new canopy over the service vehicle entrance.
Context	The Flow Honda site is located in the heavily developed Rt. 29 commercial corridor. The Honda building is located just north of the Flow Subaru (previously Umansky) building. The showroom and service for Honda is part of a larger building that also houses the Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep, Ram showroom. A Walmart is located to the south across Hilton Heights Rd. Just beyond Walmart is the Malloy (previously Price) Chevrolet auto dealership. 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	Heading southbound along Rt. 29, the building is not visible from a distance due to trees and a steep berm located very close to the street on the adjacent parcel to the north. Within the site, there is established landscaping along the Rt. 29 EC that filters views of the southern half of the east elevation. However, directly in front of the Honda showroom there is a large gap in landscaping that allows direct views of the site and building, and increased visibility is expected during the fall and winter seasons when there is less foliage on the trees.
ARB Meeting Date	April 15, 2024
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 I building is the larger, northern building originally called the Brown Auto Park building, with 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.
- ARB-2003-116 received a Certificate of Appropriateness on December 18, 2003, and approved the original design of the Brown Auto Park building (the Phase I building at the north).
- ARB-2005-71 received a Certificate of Appropriateness on December 20, 2005, and approved the original design of the Brown Subaru building (the Phase II building at the south).

- Several sign applications have been approved for this development since 2005.
- In 2013, ARB-2013-139 was received as a proposal to renovate the Subaru building. The proposal included the removal of the stone entrance surround, the addition of a slate icon tower, and the addition of ACM panels over the stucco fascia at the south end of the building. The ARB did not approve this proposal. A Certificate of Appropriateness was issued for a revised design on November 19, 2013, allowing only the replacement of the fieldstone at the entry portal with slate veneer, and a narrow ACM panel and metal cap molding added at the top of the portal.
- In 2022, a Certificate of Appropriateness was issued for ARB-2021-96, a renovation to the Umansky (now Flow) Subaru showroom building which included applying ACM panels on portions of the Rt. 29 elevation and the majority of the Hilton Heights Road elevation and adding elements to the south and east elevations including towers and canopy. The renovation also included additions to the rear (west) elevation.
- In 2023, a Certificate of Appropriateness was issued for ARB-2023-64, a renovation to the Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep, Ram showroom building which included applying ACM panels on the existing entrance tower element, painting the existing brick and EIFS gray, and refinishing the existing blue storefront framing to silver.
- In February 2024, the ARB provided comments on the preliminary architectural design submitted for Flow Honda. ARB comments made at that meeting are included in the Analysis section of this report.



Figure 1: Aerial view highlighting the subject building.

ANALYSIS

REF	GUIDELINE	ISSUE 02/05/2024	RECOMMENDATION 02/05/2024	ISSUE 04/15/2024	RECOMMENDATION 04/15/2024
	GENERAL GUIDELINES				
	Purpose, Compatibility with the character of the Entrance Corridor, Compatibility with significant historic sites				
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.	This portion of the Rt. 29 Entrance Corridor includes a mixture of small- and large-scale commercial buildings of varying styles and forms. The existing Honda building, much like the immediate surrounding area, achieves a level of compatibility through the use of brick as the primary material. The existing entrance tower, canopy, and two bays of the elevation which include storefront windows, brick piers, and a sign band are to be removed. The new construction maintains the contemporary style. It includes 3 bays of	Revise the building design to maintain the red brick on the service portion of the Honda building. Provide material samples with the next submittal. Clarify if the blue band at the top of the parapet wall will be retained or removed. Provide details on how the	The building design has been revised to maintain the existing red brick. The revised renderings show a much more cohesive appearance for the overall building and site. Additional changes include revising the paint color for the existing roof and trim above the pedestrian and vehicle entrances on the service portion of the Honda building to gray and the	None.
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 characteristics 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.	double-height storefront windows framed at the top and sides by blue ACM panels. A series of white ACM panels extend outward from the top of the blue frame. Removal of the existing blue entrance element eliminates a top-heavy, exaggerated version of a traditional form from the building. However, the scale and amount of glass in the new design do not coordinate with what was approved for the northern portion of	white ACM panels are constructed, arranged, and attached to the blue frame.	addition of an EIFS panel at the top of the storefront windows. While the overall proposal remains an adaptation of Honda's current national design, the changes to the brick, roof, and trim help de-emphasize some of the corporate branding and increase the level of coordination	
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. The examples contained in Appendix A should be	the building (Fig. 2), the design approved for the Subaru building, or the immediate surrounding context. The use of ACM panels, while not reflective of historic building materials, is a material that can be found in the approved designs for CDJR and Subaru. However, samples have not been provided to confirm that the finish of the panels is		with the CDJR and Subaru buildings. Material samples have been provided with this submittal. The ACM panels have a matte finish which is compatible with the panels approved for the Subaru and CDJR buildings.	
-T	used as a guide for building design: the standard of				

	compatibility with the area's historic structures is not	compatible with those approved for the Subaru	The drawings have been revised	
	intended to impose a rigid design solution for new	and CDJR buildings.	to show that the blue band at the	
	development. Replication of the design of the	8	top of the parapet is to remain.	
	important historic sites in the area is neither intended	The renovation proposal also calls for painting	Details on how the white canopy	
	nor desired. The Guideline's standard of	the existing brick and EIFS white. Painting the	is constructed have been provided	
	compatibility can be met through building scale,	red brick white will reduce the connection	with this submittal. The drawings	
	materials, and forms which may be embodied in	between the southern and northern portions of	show three panels extending out	
	architecture which is contemporary as well as	the Phase I building and to the historic	from the blue frame creating a	
	traditional. The Guidelines allow individuality in	architecture of the County. In both the Subaru	layered appearance. While it is a	
	design to accommodate varying tastes as well as	and CDJR proposals the original renovation	contemporary version of a	
	special functional requirements.	designs called for painting or covering all the	traditional building feature, the	
5	It is also an important objective of the Guidelines to	existing brick; however, the ARB ultimately	element adds depth and is	
	establish a pattern of compatible architectural	required that portions of the existing brick	compatible with the architecture	
	characteristics throughout the Entrance Corridor in	remain unchanged. Revising the Honda design	found in the Subaru and CDJR	
	order to achieve unity and coherence. Building	to maintain the red brick on the service portion	buildings.	
	designs should demonstrate sensitivity to other	of the building would increase the level of	6 to 10 6 to 10 to	
	nearby structures within the Entrance Corridor.	coordination through the Phase I building, be		
	Where a designated corridor is substantially	consistent with what was approved for the		
	developed, these Guidelines require striking a careful	Subaru and CDJR building renovations, and		
	balance between harmonizing new development with	maintain a level of connection to the historic		
	the existing character of the corridor and achieving	architecture of the County.		
	compatibility with the significant historic sites in the			
	area.	Two items in the proposal are unclear. There is		
10	Buildings should relate to their site and the	a blue band at the top of the existing parapet		
	surrounding context of buildings.	wall. The drawings do not show whether this		
9	Building forms and features, including roofs,	band will be removed or painted as part of the		
	windows, doors, materials, colors and textures should	renovation. Also, the white canopy extending		
	be compatible with the forms and features of the	from the blue frame appears layered but it isn't		
	significant historic buildings in the area, exemplified	clear how the panels are arranged or attached		
	by (but not limited to) the buildings described in	to the building.		
	Appendix A [of the design guidelines]. The standard	8		
	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.			
12				
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.	The proposed design, as outlined in the previous section, adapts Honda's national branding scheme to the existing building. The blue and white ACM panels, the framing element, the storefront arrangement, and the hanging signs are primary components of the brand (Fig. 3). As such, the design is about emphasizing a level of corporate identity/trademarking. The blue (Pantone 285C) shown in the architectural drawings falls just outside of the range of standard approvable colors for the EC. A material sample will be needed to confirm the appropriateness of the proposed color.	See architectural recommendations, above.	The overall design remains an adaptation of Honda's national branding scheme to the existing building (Fig. 3). However, the revised design includes fewer trademark elements.	None.
	Structure design				
11	The overall design of buildings should have human scale. Scale should be integral to the building and site design.	The elements of human scale found in the existing building design (regularly spaced brick piers and two bays of traditional storefront windows) are replaced with the expansive use of glass. This design element, while typical of current-day automobile dealerships, reduces the existing human scale of the Honda building. It is also inconsistent with the glass in the rest of the building. Revising the design to maintain or introduce brickwork to break up the scale of the glass and retain the rhythm of regularly spaced bays of storefront windows would be appropriate.	Revise the storefront design to increase human scale.	The ARB determined at the 02/05/2024 ARB meeting that no revisions to the scale of the storefront windows were needed.	None.
13	Any appearance of "blankness" resulting from building design should be relieved using design detail or vegetation, or both.	There is no blankness in the design of the east elevation that requires relieving.	None.	There is no blankness in the design of the east elevation that requires relieving.	None.
14	Arcades, colonnades, or other architectural connecting devices should be used to unify groups of buildings within a development.	No connecting devices are proposed.	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: Visible light transmittance (VLT) shall not drop below 40%. Visible light reflectance (VLR)	The window glass criteria are noted in the applicant's narrative, but not on the architectural drawings.	Revise the architectural drawings to include the standard window glass note.	The architectural drawings have been revised to include the standard window glass note. However, the submittal does not	Provide a window glass sample for review.

	shall not exceed 30%. Specifications on the proposed window glass should be submitted with the application for final review.			include a glass sample, which is needed to confirm the tint.	
	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.	There are no accessory structures proposed.	None.	There are no accessory structures proposed.	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.	The existing roof-mounted mechanical equipment is screened by a parapet wall, and the renovation will not alter this condition.	None.	The existing roof-mounted mechanical equipment is screened by a parapet wall, and the renovation will not alter this condition.	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.	No screening devices are proposed.	None.	No screening devices are proposed.	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.	No new stormwater facilities are proposed.	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."	No new mechanical equipment is proposed.	None.	No new mechanical equipment is proposed.	None.
	Lighting				
	General Guidelines				
22	Light should be contained on the site and not spill over onto adjacent properties or streets;	No lighting information has been provided with this submittal.	Indicate where building- mounted exterior lighting is	Lighting information has been provided with this submittal. The	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.		proposed and provide a lighting plan with the next submittal.	plan shows that new lighting is limited to building-mounted fixtures.	

28	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. In determining the appropriateness of lighting fixtures for the Entrance Corridors, the individual	The lighting levels shown for the building fixtures do not exceed 20 footcandles.	None.
25	context of the site will be taken into consideration on a case-by-case basis. 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 shows that the building-mounted fixtures will have a color temperature of 3000K.	None.
26	Dark brown, dark bronze, or black are appropriate colors for free-standing pole-mounted light fixtures in the Entrance Corridors.	The plan provided does not provide information on the finishes for the fixtures.	Revise the lighting plan to provide information on the proposed finish for the building-mounted lighting.
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.
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 standard lighting note has not been included in the lighting plan.	Revise the lighting plan to include the standard lighting note.

	Guidelines for the Use of Decorative Landscape				
30	Lighting light used for decorative effect shall:	No lighting information has been provided	In disease with one havilding	No deconstine lighting is	None.
30	a. be compatible with the character of the Entrance	No lighting information has been provided with this submittal.	Indicate where building- mounted exterior lighting is	No decorative lighting is proposed.	None.
	Corridor. Compatibility of exterior lighting and	with this submittal.	proposed and provide a	proposed.	
	lighting fixtures is assessed in terms of design, use,		lighting plan with the next		
	size, scale, color, and brightness.		submittal.		
	b. impact only the immediate site. The effect of the		suomittai.		
	illumination should not be discernible from distances				
	along the Entrance Corridor.				
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.				
7-8,	Landscaping	No changes are proposed to the existing	On-site landscaping must	The submittal includes	Confirm and replace all
32-38		landscaping, but some of the approved	comply with the approved	information on landscaping	landscaping missing
		landscaping along Rt. 29 is missing (Fig. 4).	site plan.	missing from the site. However,	

	Site Development and layout	The approved landscaping successfully mitigated the parking and integrated the development into the Entrance Corridor. Maintaining the approved landscaping is important to maintaining orderly, harmonious, and attractive development along the corridor.		the information provided only confirms landscaping missing from the Honda/CDJR portion of the site. Landscaping is also missing from the Subaru portion of the site. Bringing the entire site into conformity would provide a consistent appearance along the corridor.	from the approved site plan.
	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 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 Albemarle County Zoning Ordinance 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.	No changes are being made to the existing access to the site. The existing building is to remain parallel to the EC and no alterations to the existing on-site circulation patterns are proposed. The site has been previously developed. Views around the site are not expected to be negatively impacted. No changes to the site have been provided with this submittal. The applicant's narrative notes that information on landscaping and exterior site lighting will be provided with subsequent submissions.	See the recommendations provided with the lighting and landscaping Guidelines above.	No changes are being made to the existing access to the site. The existing building is to remain parallel to the EC and no alterations to the existing on-site circulation patterns are proposed. The site has been previously developed. Views around the site are not expected to be negatively impacted.	See the recommendations provided with the lighting and landscaping Guidelines above.

	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; ensuring 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.	The site has been previously developed. No new grading has been shown with this submittal.	None.	The site has been previously developed. No new grading has been shown with this submittal.	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.				
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				

43	remain in place until completion of the development of the site. Preservation areas should be protected from storage or movement of heavy equipment within this area. Natural drainage patterns (or to the extent required, new drainage patterns) should be incorporated into the finished site to the extent possible.				
	Signs	Signage is reviewed and approved by separate submission.	Sign applications are required for all proposed signs.	Signage is reviewed and approved by separate submission. Note, however, that the Flow and Honda signs shown in the submittal are a different type – hanging signs – than the existing Subaru and CDJR signs, which are wall-mounted. The hanging signs do appear to be composed of individual letters, which maintain a degree of coordination. Also, a spotlight for the dealer hanging sign is shown in the drawings. Lighting information, including illumination value, fixture finish, and color temperature will be needed with the sign application if proposed.	Sign applications are required for all proposed signs. New signs will be reviewed for compatibility with existing signs. Information on the illumination value, fixture finish, and color temperature for the spotlight will be needed if proposed.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends the following as the primary points of discussion:

- 1. The compatibility of the southern half of the building (Honda) with the design approved for the northern half (CDJR).
- 2. The compatibility of the Honda building with the Subaru (Phase II) building.
- 3. The lack of coordination between the Honda and Subaru/CDJR wall sign types.

Staff recommends approval with the following changes:

- 1. Provide a window glass sample for review.
- 2. Revise the lighting plan to provide information on the proposed finish for the building-mounted lighting.
- 3. Revise the lighting plan to include the standard lighting note: 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.
- 4. Confirm and replace all landscaping missing from the approved site plan.
- 5. Sign applications are required for all proposed signs. New signs will be reviewed for compatibility with existing signs. Information on the illumination value, fixture finish, and color temperature for the spotlight will be needed if proposed.

POSSIBLE MOTIONS

Should an ARB member choose to recommend approval of the request:

I move to recommend approval of ARB2024-24: Flow Honda with the conditions outlined in the staff report.

Should an ARB member choose to recommend approval with revised conditions:

I move to recommend approval of ARB2024-24: Flow Honda with the conditions outlined in the staff report, amended as follows (state amendments).

Should an ARB member choose to recommend denial of the request:

I move to recommend denial of ARB2024-24: Flow Honda for (state the reasons).

ATTACHMENTS

- Attach. 1: ARB2024-24: Flow Honda Architectural Drawings
- Attach. 2: ARB2024-24: Flow Honda Lighting Plan



Figure 2: Approved Design for Flow CDJR.



Figure 3: Honda national branding example (left). Proposed building design 4/15/2023 (right).

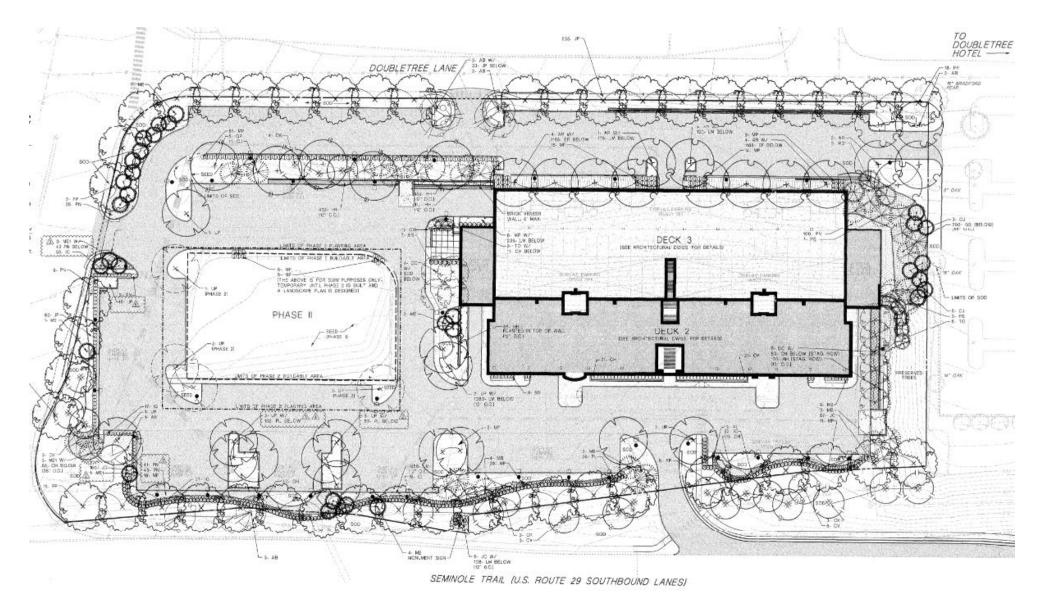


Figure 4: SDP2003-67 Approved Landscape Plan (Phase I)