

Connecticut Environmental Policy Act (CEPA) Public Hearing

University of Connecticut Mansfield Apartment Redevelopment

Presented by:

SLR International Corporation

November 7, 2022

global **environmental** and **advisory** solutions



Presentation/CEPA Team



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Presentation Outline

- I. Meeting Purpose
- II. CEPA Process and Timeline
- III. Project Overview
 - Purpose and Need
 - Alternatives
- IV. Assessment of Impacts
- V. Public Comments



Meeting is being recorded and will be available online following presentation

MEETING PURPOSE

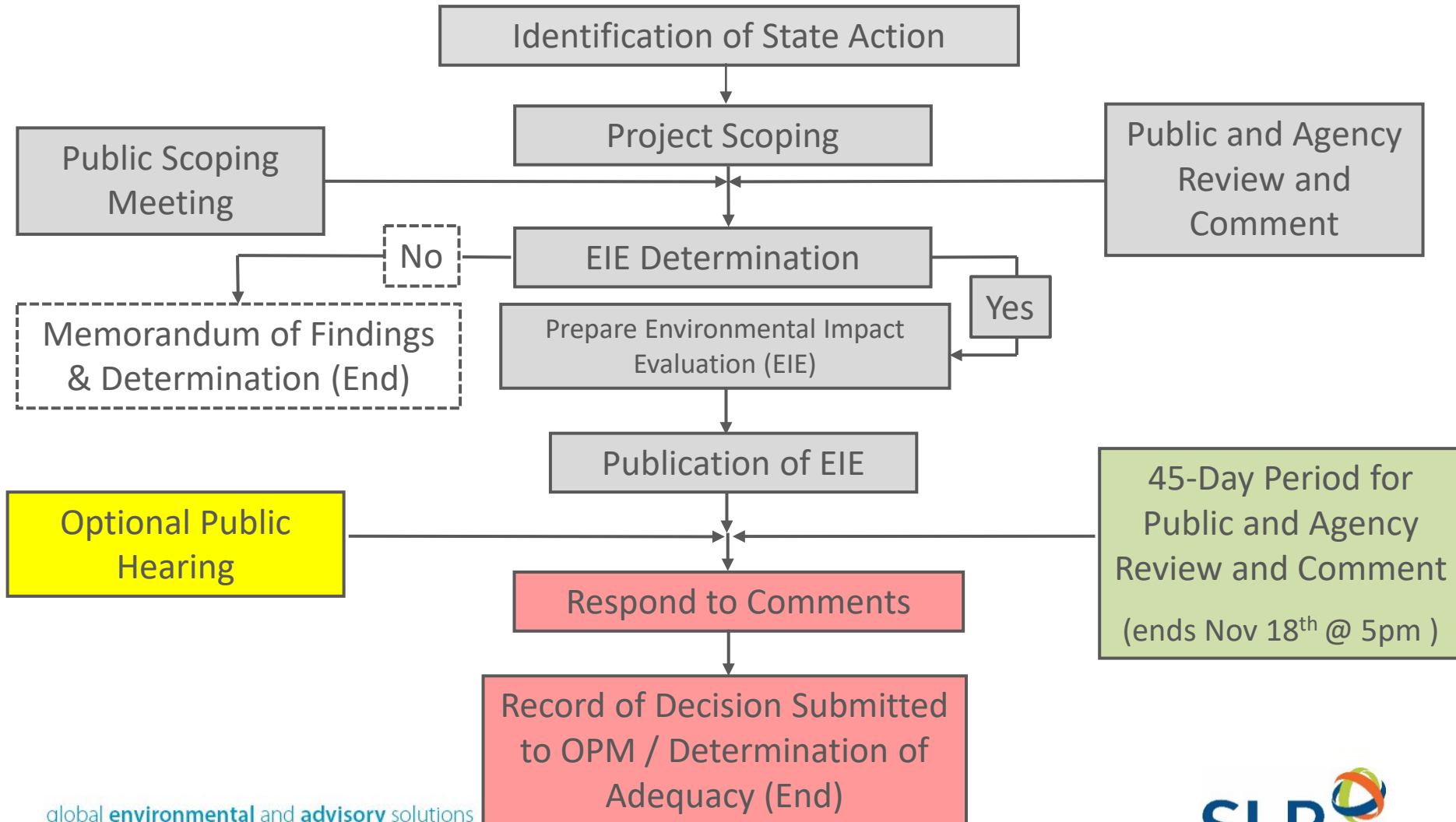
- Provide information on **Mansfield Apartments Redevelopment**
- Describe **potential impacts** and **mitigation**
- Outline the **final stages** of CEPA process
- Solicit **verbal and written comments** from members of the public



WHAT IS CEPA?

- The Connecticut Environmental Policy Act (CEPA) established statutes and regulations that apply to certain State-funded projects in Connecticut.
- A mechanism for planning and coordination among interested parties, including the public at large.
- A process of identifying and evaluating environmental impacts in the early stages of a project such that they can be avoided, minimized, and/or mitigated.

CEPA PROCESS



PROJECT OVERVIEW

SITE LOCATION – EXISTING CONDITIONS

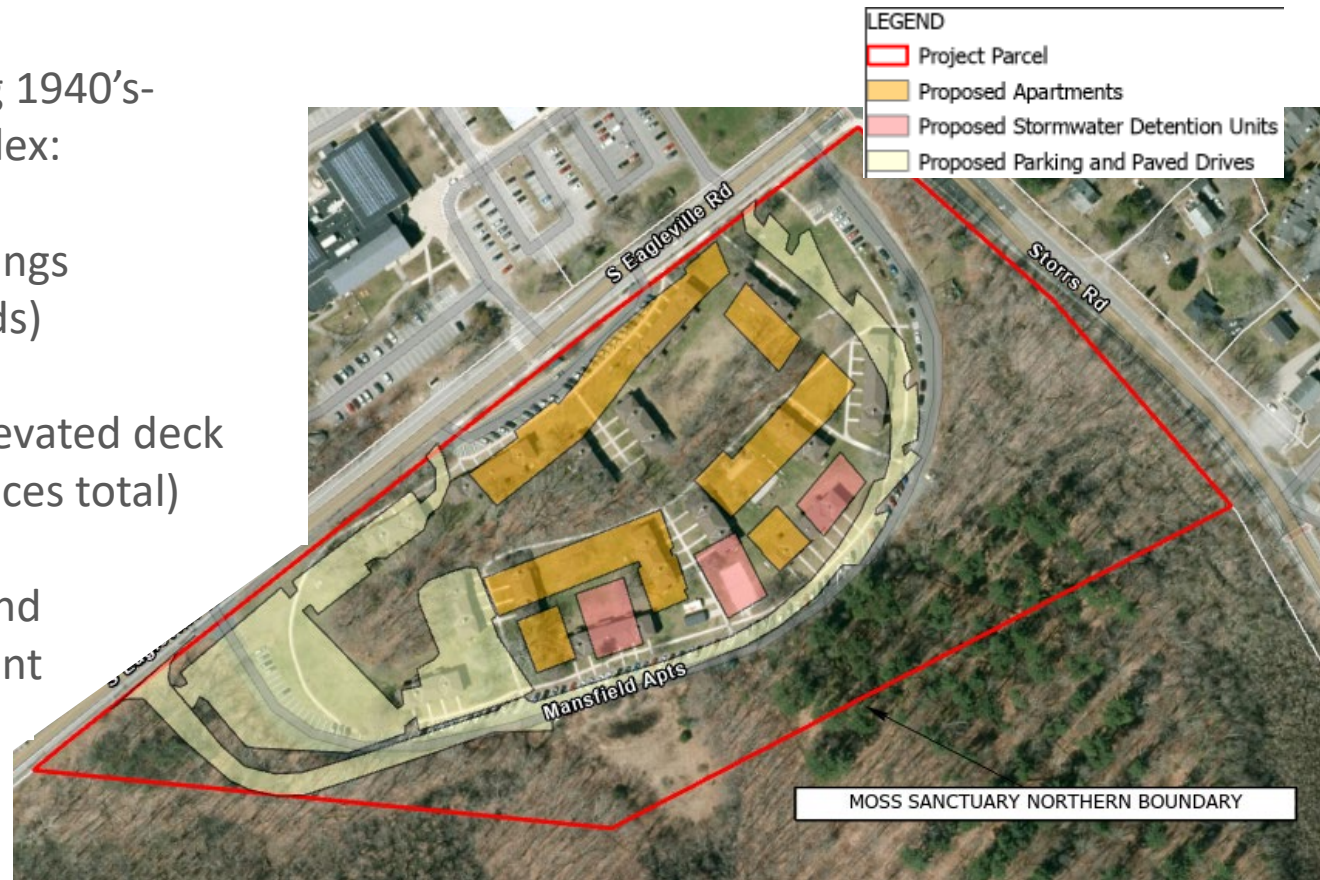
- 16-acre parcel with 1-acre outparcel (E); no work proposed in outparcel
- Located at SW intersection of Route 275 and Route 195
- Abuts 135-acre Moss Sanctuary to the south
- Project confined to UConn property within loop road (avoiding vegetated buffer to the preserve)



Project Overview

Redevelopment of existing 1940's-1950's-era, 270-bed complex:

- 3 new apartment buildings (approximately 900 beds)
- Parking: Surface and elevated deck (approximately 370 spaces total)
- Utility improvements and stormwater management infrastructure
- Pedestrian safety improvements along Route 275/S Eagleville Rd
- Housing complex will be apartment-style intended for UConn upperclassmen, and will be owned and operated by UConn



PROJECT PURPOSE AND NEED

- Existing apartment complex is aged, past the useful life of the facility, and in need of redevelopment
 - Need for modernization of housing options on the UConn campus
 - This is the second project identified in a campus housing renewal plan that is currently under review by the Board of Trustees
- In the long term, there is a need to modernize residential experiences and introduce new housing typologies on the campus
 - In the short term, residential space is needed to house students who currently reside in other aging residential complexes



2015-2035 MASTER PLAN

- Identified many residential complexes in need of renovations and redevelopment
- Identified Mansfield Apartments as a Mid-Term (2020-2025) “Potential Redevelopment Site” that could include projects such as:
 - ✗ Mixed Use Redevelopment
 - ✗ Parking Garage
 - ✗ Hockey Arena
 - ✓ Redeveloped Residential Complex

UConn | UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT

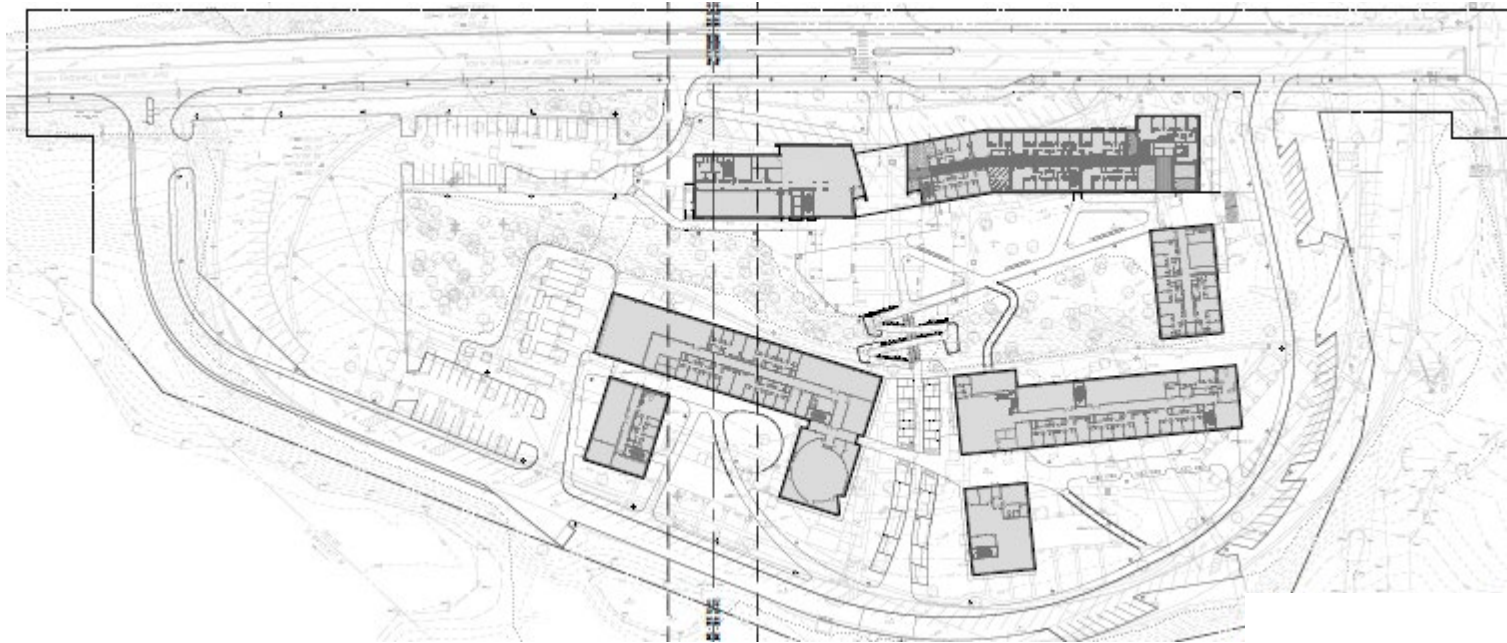
Campus Master Plan

1 Campus Master Plan

SKIDMORE, OWINGS & MERRILL LLP
MAY, 2015

PROPOSED PROJECT ELEMENTS

- Demolish existing buildings, walks, and utilities (preserve existing loop road)
- Construct 3 new residential buildings (approximately 450,000 gross square feet)
- Construct approximately 370 parking spaces (surface and elevated deck)
- Utility and infrastructure improvements:
 - Energy- and water-efficient utilities
 - Lower GHG-emitting energy generation (Fuel Cell)
 - Low Impact Development (LID) features will reduce peak rate of stormwater and improve water quality downstream
 - Green infrastructure and native plantings



ANTICIPATED PROJECT OUTCOMES

- Site redevelopment that maintains campus residential use, largely within existing development footprint
- Construction of new residential complex (LEED v.4 Gold Standard and SITES Certifications)
- Realignments of site egress and access to South Eagleville Road
- Upgrade/relocation of sewage pumping station and force main
- Project will provide high-quality on-campus housing that meets the demand of a diversity of lifestyles and student preferences



ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED TO DATE

1. No Action

- A. Keep using complex as-is until buildings can no longer be used
- B. Rehabilitate the complex in-situ

Lost opportunities:

- Increased/Improved housing options
- LEED-certified buildings
- Energy-efficiency standards
- EV charging stations
- Fuel Cell power generation
- Improved stormwater management

2. Alternatives Considered & Not Pursued

- A. Hockey Rink
- B. Mixed Use
- C. Parking Garage

~~X~~ Alternatives presented do not meet the University's need for increased on-campus housing capacity and typologies



REDEVELOP EXISTING SITE

- No change in land use
- Consistent with Campus Master Plan
- Pedestrian accessible to campus via connectivity on Route 195
- Proximity to Downtown Storrs
- Meets project purpose and need:
 - Eliminates buildings beyond useful life
 - Increases housing availability to support other renovation projects in the short-term
 - Increases housing diversity through modernization and typology



ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT

TYPICAL CEPA ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS CATEGORIES

Physical

- Air Quality
- Noise & Light
- Traffic, Parking & Circulation
- Public Utilities
- Potable Water Supply
- Stormwater Drainage
- Solid & Hazardous Waste
- Aesthetic Resources
- Cultural Resources

Natural

- Geology, Topography & Soils
- Surface Water Resources
- Groundwater Resources
- Floodplains
- Wetlands
- Fisheries
- Plants & Wildlife / State Listed Species
- Specimen Trees

Socioeconomic

- Land Use & Zoning
- State, Local & Campus Master Planning
- Open Space & Farmland
- Public Health & Safety
- Economy, Employment & Income
- Environmental Justice
- Community Facilities & Services

RESOURCES NOT PRESENT AT PREFERRED ACTION SITE

Natural Resources

- No Farmland Soils
- No Sole Source Aquifers/Aquifer Protection Areas
- No Coastal Resources
- No State-Listed Species or Known Habitat
- No Navigable Waterways
- No Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Floodplains
- No Unique Geologic/Topographic Features

Social/Cultural Resources

- No Historic/Archaeological Resources (per SHPO/THPO review)
- No Environmental Justice Communities

NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Campus, State, and Local Planning

- Proposal is compatible with State Conservation & Development Plans (Priority Funding Area)
- Site/project is identified in UConn Campus Master Plan

Noise

- No new types of noise impacts, though an increase in residents/cars is anticipated

Air Quality

- New stationary emissions limited to 500 kW emergency generator
- Electricity to be sourced via three proposed 500 kW fuel cells on site (Fuel Cells will use natural gas with no combustion or significant emissions of nitrous oxide, carbon monoxide, or volatile organic compounds)

Public Health and Safety

- UConn equipped to handle resident student population on site
- Required water service updates including new water main, hydrants, and fire pump will increase available water volume and pressure to meet safety standards

NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Water Quality/Resources

- Proposed green infrastructure and stormwater management will mitigate for 12% increase in impervious cover on site
- Stormwater utilities designed in accordance with the 2004 CT Stormwater Quality Manual
 - Reduced peak flows and improved water quality compared to existing conditions



Wetlands

- All work will occur outside of wetlands, no direct wetland impact
- Proper sedimentation and erosion controls will limit indirect wetland impacts during construction period

NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Visual/Aesthetic Character

- New complex to encompass a green, sustainable aesthetic (LID elements)
- More open site plan (fewer buildings) will enhance forested views to the south
- Dark Sky compliance measures will limit light pollution and exterior light trespass
- Native landscaping (SITES Certification for Sustainable Landscape Design)



NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Natural Communities, Flora and Fauna

- Minor activities within adjacent forested edge habitat
- Revegetation with native plants
- Vegetated buffer between development and preserve will be maintained

Moss Sanctuary:

- Redevelopment avoids impact to access, habitat, and character of the preserve
- Water quality improvements proposed (reduced peak flows from Mansfield Apartments and enhanced treatment train of runoff from the development area)



NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Traffic, Parking, and Transportation

- Impacts from increased volume of traffic will be mitigated by redistribution of access egress along S Eagleville Road (3 exits proposed versus 1 existing)
- Vehicle queuing conditions improved due to relocation of northeast egress (to align with Community Center egress)
- Project will require a Major Traffic Generator Certificate - Office of the State Traffic Administration (OSTA) to review proposed traffic mitigation/safety measures on the state highway system
- Pedestrian safety improvements proposed along S Eagleville Road



NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Energy Use and Conservation

- Sustainability/energy conservation measures (guided by LEED certification design standards) will mitigate for increases in energy usage on site from higher occupancy



NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

- **Solid Waste**

- Similar type and amount of waste generated per student compared to existing use; trash and recycling collection will increase to accommodate higher occupancy
- Trash receptacle enclosures to protect Moss Sanctuary



- **Toxic and Hazardous Materials**

- Special procedures will be followed for the handling and disposal of asbestos-containing materials (found in existing buildings)
- Environmental Site Assessment (Phase 1/Phase 2) identified two potential soil/groundwater impact areas:
 - Historical petroleum release – Medium Risk
 - Existing 600-gallon diesel underground storage tank to be removed - Low Risk
- Soils from the above areas are not to be freely reused on site
- If groundwater is extracted, must be properly disposed of or discharged to the publicly owned treatment works (with CT General Permit)
- Construction Contractor to be properly trained in hazardous waste protocol; Environmental Professional to be called on site if signs of contamination in soils are encountered

CONSTRUCTION PERIOD IMPACTS

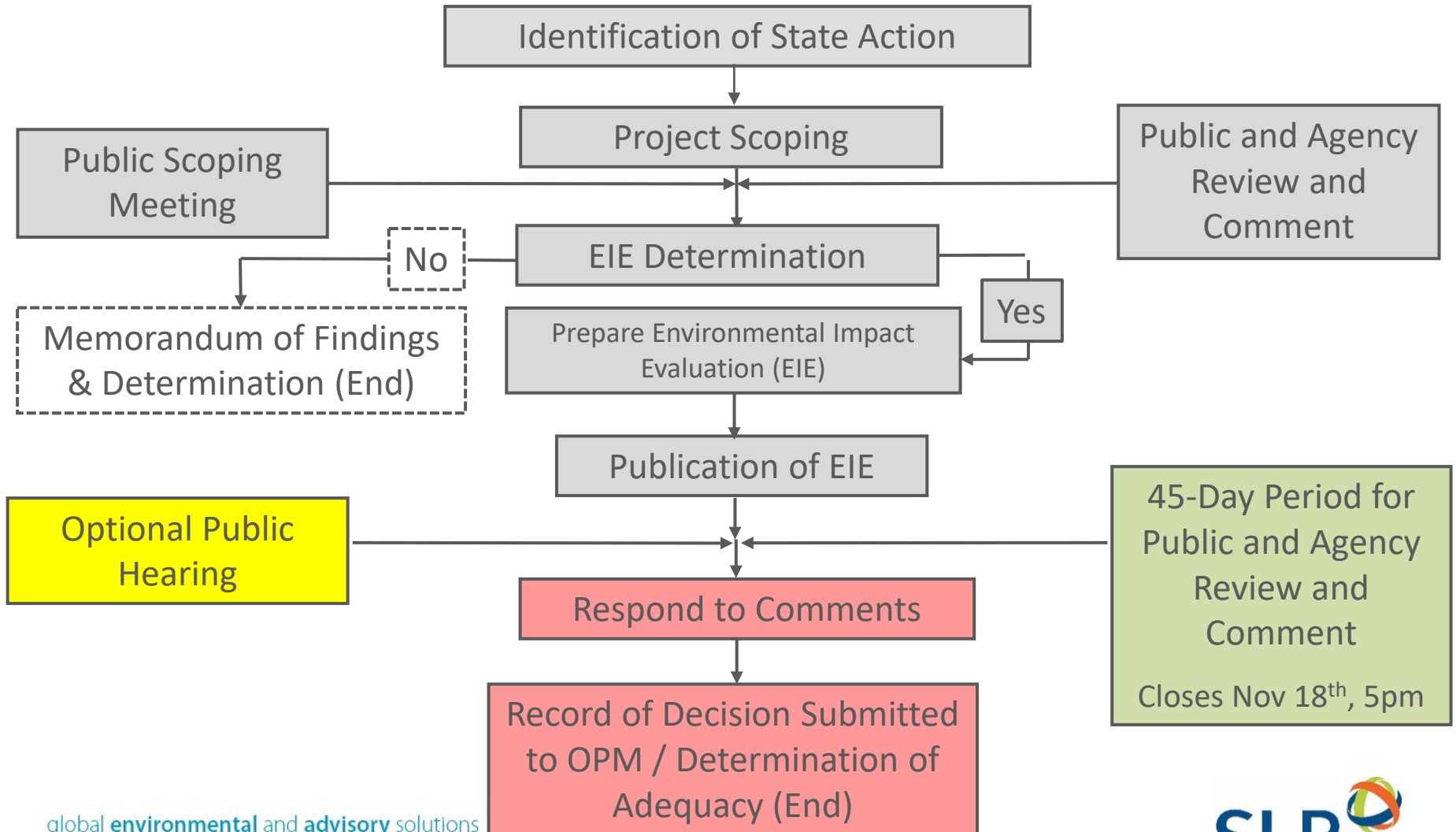
- No parking impacts during construction; contractors to be accommodated by University property
- Access to Moss Sanctuary will be maintained during construction from the existing southern entrance
- A construction logistics plans will be reviewed and approved by the University. Construction traffic will be regularly monitored and mitigated as needed. Frequent updates will be provided to the Town.



INDIRECT AND CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

- **No indirect impacts** associated with induced growth or encroachment/alteration are anticipated (project not expected to affect overall student population)
- **No cumulative, negative impacts** are anticipated
- The Proposed Action is in line with UConn Housing Master Plan

NEXT STEPS



SCHEDULE MILESTONES

Milestone	Tentative Date
Analysis of Environmental Impacts	Summer – Fall 2022
Public Hearing & Public Comment Period	October 4 – November 18, 2022
CEPA Record of Decision (ROD)	Anticipated December 2022
OPM Determination of Adequacy	Anticipated January 2023
Proposed Start of Construction	Spring 2023

COMMENTS

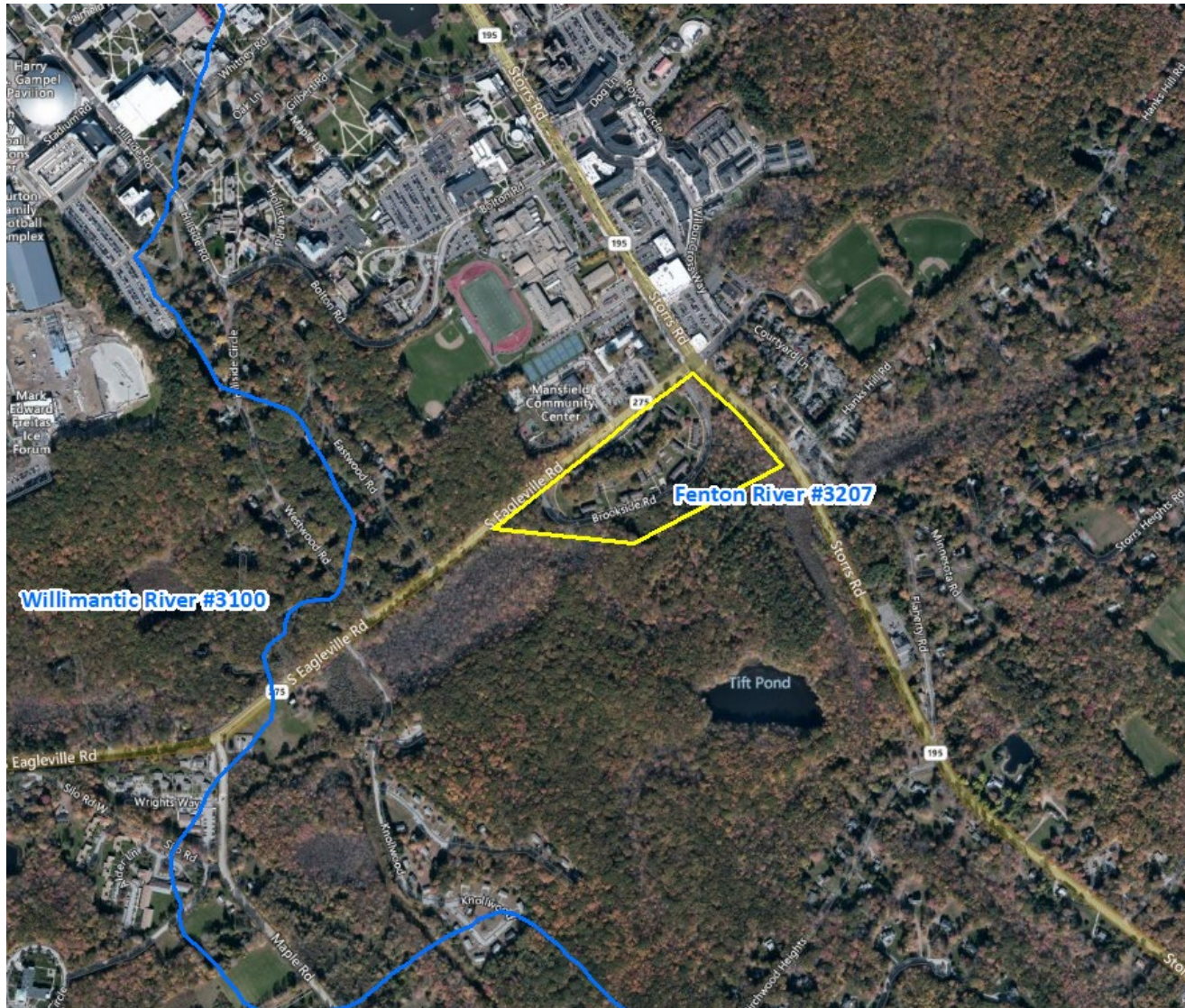
- Comments accepted tonight
(via online Kaltura chat function or by raising hand to speak)
 - State name, address, and your comments
- Submit comments (email preferred) to:
 - John Robitaille, AIA, CSI
 - 31 LeDoyt Road, Unit 3038, Storrs, CT 06269-3038
 - Fax: 860-486-3117/Phone 860-486-5930
 - John.Robitaille@uconn.edu
- End of comment period: **November 18, 2022**
- Additional information regarding the meeting, as well as a link to a recording of the meeting, will be posted at: <https://updc.uconn.edu>
- Recording will be posted after November 9, 2022

THANK YOU

PROJECT PURPOSE AND NEED

- **Purpose:** To **expand and diversify housing typologies** available to UConn students by **redeveloping an existing housing site** and constructing an **environmentally sensitive, apartment-style residential complex**. The project will maintain and enhance access to transportation routes while respecting boundaries of adjacent Town and Open Space areas.
- **Need:** Mansfield Apartments was identified in the UConn 2015-2035 Campus Master Plan as a “**Potential Redevelopment Site**” in the mid-term (2020-2025), as an **outdated complex which has aged past its useful life**.
 - In addition, UConn has an essential need in the **short-term** for more **safe and modern housing** to accommodate current and future students while updating other aging residential complexes.
 - In the long-term, **diverse housing typologies** will improve and enhance the UConn residential experience.

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT – WATERSHED DIVIDES



AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT – WATER QUALITY

- Project is in the Fenton River Watershed, drains to Willimantic Reservoir
- Groundwater is Class GA
- Nearby Surface Water (Fenton River) is Class AA
- No FEMA floodplain
- State soil mapping; wetlands drain to Tift Pond and Bundy Brook
- Design acknowledges sensitivity of Moss Sanctuary and adjacent areas; will seek opportunities for water quality improvement



AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

- Site is not mapped as a Natural Diversity Data Base (NDDDB) area; no identified presence of endangered, threatened, or special concern species (hatched area not on site)
- Limited vegetative clearing is required with redevelopment as opposed to new development
- Opportunity to improve stormwater treatment / management controls

