

181 Pearl St - Site Plan Approval Narrative December 10, 2024

Project Summary

- MR3 Zoning District
- 3 Residential Apartments
- 3,572 GSF
- 3 Stories / 34'-0"
- Transit-oriented development
- All-electric building
- Granted variance for Primary Facade Build Out

The proposed development at 181 Pearl Street is a 3-story building with three residential apartments. The site is a corner parcel within the MR3 zoning district, and is abutted by NR zoned parcels on each side. It is bounded by Pearl Street to the south, Dana Street and McGrath Highway to the east, a 2 ½ story house to the west, and a two-story house to the north. There are a mix of single-family, two-family, triple-decker, and larger residential buildings in the immediate vicinity. Across Pearl St is a gas station, and across McGrath Highway are several low rise commercial buildings.

The project is a transit-oriented development with close proximity to the Green Line at the Magoun Square Station and multiple bus lines. No off-street car parking is required nor provided. Bicycle use is encouraged through the inclusion of indoor bike parking in the building lobby. The lobby also contains the mailboxes. There is a covered trash and recycling enclosure in the courtyard off the lobby. The trash and recycling will be brought to the street by the building's tenants for city regulated trash/recycling pick up days. Loading and unloading activities are expected to take place on Dana Street and tenants are expected to obtain permits from the city for all moving vehicles.

The proposed building follows the height and setback requirements of the MR3 zoning district to create a form whose scale fits appropriately in the existing neighborhood. Simultaneously, the project uses its exterior material palette to create a project that is contemporary and forward-looking. The facade is metal with triangular-profile ribs that are vertically oriented. These shapes recall clapboard siding, though the vertical orientation creates a different kind of shadow play on the building, and the Silversmith finish creates a dynamic, specular reflection that picks up the colors of the sky and surrounding buildings. Each unit has a private balcony that is set into the facade and clad in a mint green aluminum panel that picks up on the tones in the proposed street tree and pollinator garden. These balconies and the proposed bay windows add depth and character to the facade. The bay windows are a contemporary interpretation of the bays that are seen throughout the neighborhood, in this case with a simplified, rectangular

NEIGHBOR

geometry that is neatly integrated and coplanar with the perpendicular facades. The lobby is located off a courtyard at the side of the building, accessed via a ramp from Pearl Street. This allows a zero-step entrance and a wheelchair accessible first floor unit, an important contribution to a housing stock that is mostly accessed via stairs.

The development also contributes meaningfully to the neighborhood streetscape by setting back from the curb to create a generous sidewalk and large planter along Pearl Street with a pollinator garden and street tree. Beneath the tree is a bench built into the planter that extends the stoop culture of the neighborhood. The permeable-paved courtyard also contains a common seating area and planter beds. These gardens contribute to the city's resiliency and ecological goals by increasing permeable area and adding native species and pollinators to diversify the local habitat. The all-electric building contributes to the decarbonization goals of the city. The project includes high efficiency heat pumps with ERVs in each residential unit and the lobby. Water heaters are electric tank type units. The project will meet the HERS rating requirements of the Specialized Energy Code.

Attached: See appendix for photographs and renderings illustrating the narrative.

Appendix

Photographs & Renderings

181 Pearl St
Narrative

NEIGHBOR

Stop & Shop
(1/2 Mile)

Foss Park
Pool & Fields

1/2 MILE - 10 MIN WALK RADIUS

Marshall
Street
Playground

1/4 MILE - 5 MIN WALK RADIUS

Gilman Square
Station

Deanna
Cremin
Playground

181 Pearl Street

80

90

Edward L.
Leathers
Community
Park

T

Public Library

90

88

Somerville High School

Capuano Field

90

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NEIGHBOR

Medford St

Pearl St

Walnut St

Pearl St

Dana St

McGrath Highway

NEIGHBOR



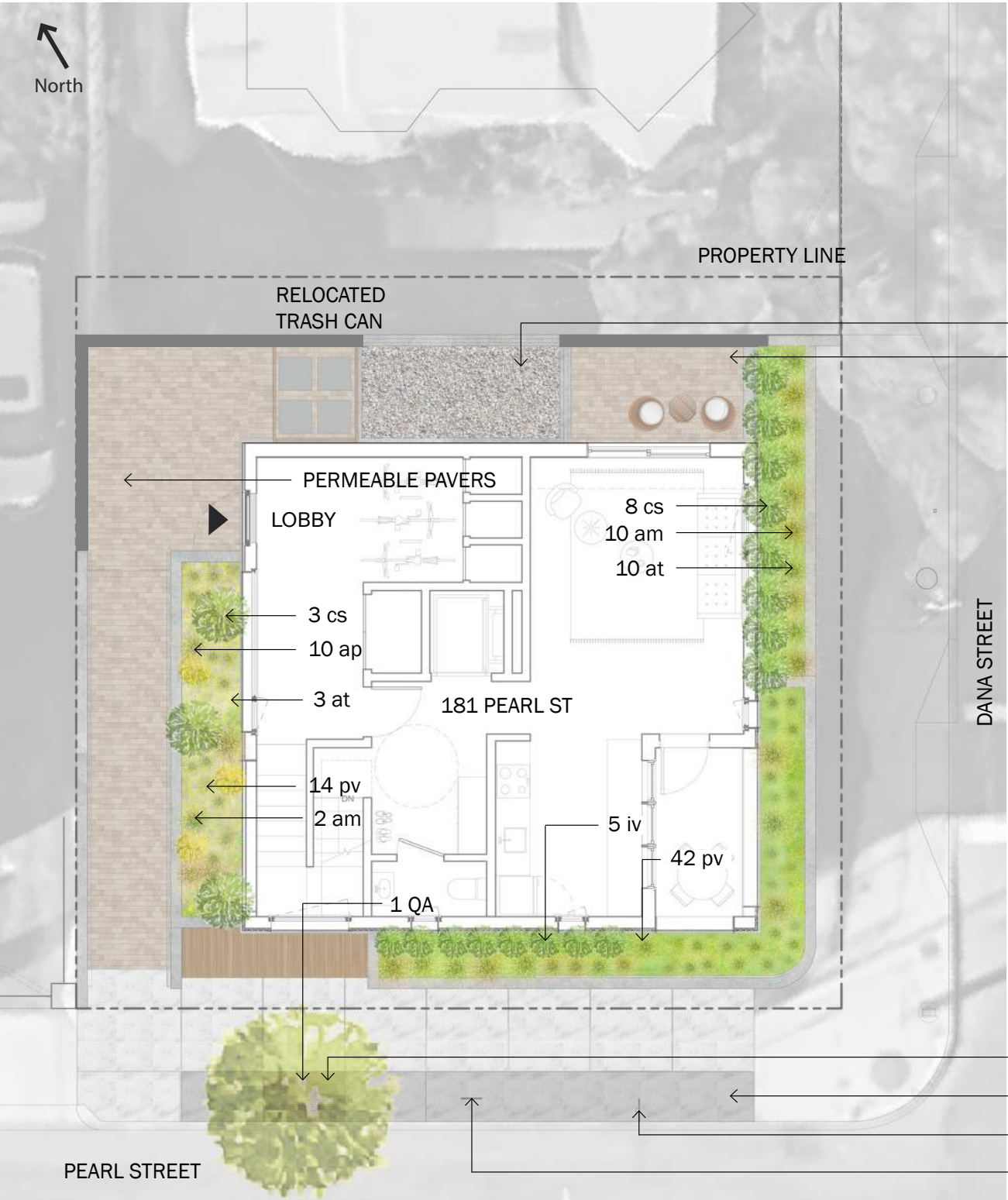
Existing
Corner
View



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Site Plan

- New street tree on Pearl St.
- Planter along Pearl St & Dana St with native species and pollinators
- New public bike rack on Pearl Street and private bike parking at lobby
- No car parking required
- Permeable paving throughout site
- All-electric building



WHITE OAK



YARROW
MOONSHINE



YARROW
TERRACOTTA



SWITCH GRASS



VIRGINIA
SWEETSPIRE



RED TWIG
DOGWOOD



HYSSOP



ALLIUM
PURPLE SENSATION



ALLIUM
GLOBEMASTER



DAFFODIL
CHEERFULNESS



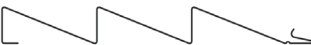
DAFFODIL
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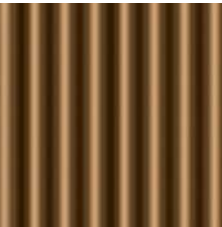
Corner of
Pearl & Dana



**“Silversmith”
Aluminum Panel**
Triangular Profile



**Mint Green
Aluminum Panel**
Flush Profile



**Copper-Colored
Aluminum Panel**
Corrugated Profile



Red Clay Brick
Solider Course



Corner of
Pearl & Dana

Below: Neighboring planter on Dana St



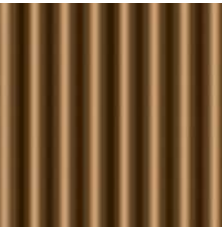
View from
Pearl Street



**“Silversmith”
Aluminum Panel**
Triangular Profile



**Mint Green
Aluminum Panel**
Flush Profile



**Copper-Colored
Aluminum Panel**
Corrugated Profile



Red Clay Brick
Solider Course



Entrance & Front Stoop



Walking along Pearl Street

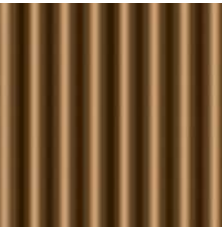
View from
Dana Street



**“Silversmith”
Aluminum Panel**
Triangular Profile



**Mint Green
Aluminum Panel**
Flush Profile



**Copper-Colored
Aluminum Panel**
Corrugated Profile



Red Clay Brick
Solider Course



Facade Details

The pleated aluminum panel changes direction between floors, creating a dynamic shadow play and variation of color.

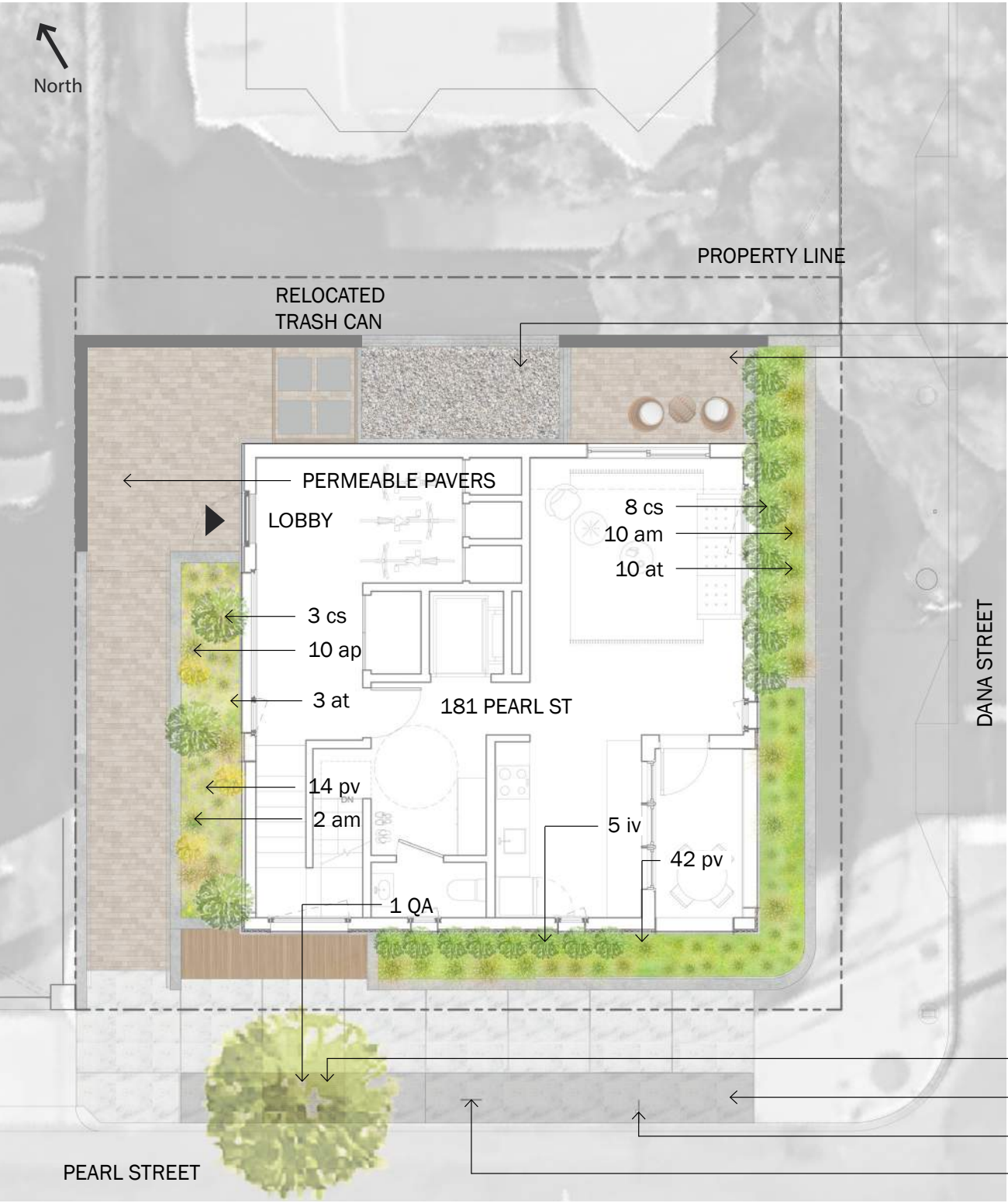
Window frames align at each level with a continuous plate that also captures the top and bottom of the metal panels.

Red-orange and cyan accent colors are added where people touch the building, at windows and railings, creating an additional sense of movement and interactivity in the facade.

The panel ends are detailed to create a small re-entrant corner, keeping the emphasis on the rhythm of the triangulated panel.

Solider Course brick cladding on planter retaining walls allows for a curved corner. The red brick recalls the masonry planter beds and foundation walls throughout the neighborhood, and the masonry apartment buildings further down Pearl Street.





181 Pearl St.

PLANTING SCHEDULE						
QUANTITY	KEY	LATIN NAME	COMMON NAME	SPACING	SIZE/CALIPER	ROOT
TREES						
1	QA	<i>Quercus alba</i>	White Oak	As shown	4-4.5" Caliper	B&B
SHRUB						
11	cs	<i>Cornus sericea</i> 'Farrow' ARCTIC FIRE	Red Twig Dogwood	As shown, , +/- 36" O.C.	5 gal.	cont.
5	iv	<i>Itea virginica</i> 'Sprich' LITTLE HENRY	Virginia Sweetspire	As shown, , +/- 24" O.C.	5 gal.	cont.
GRASSES						
48	pv	<i>Panicum virgatum</i> 'Cape Breeze'	Switch Grass	As shown, , +/- 24" O.C.	5 gal.	cont.
POLLINATORS						
10	ap	<i>Agastache</i> 'Purple Haze'	Hyssop, Hummingbird Mint	As shown, , +/- 18" O.C.	2 gal.	cont.
12	am	<i>Achillea</i> 'Moonshine'	Yarrow	As shown, , +/- 24" O.C.	2 gal.	cont.
13	at	<i>Achillea</i> 'Terracotta'	Yarrow	As shown, , +/- 24" O.C.	2 gal.	cont.
BULBS						
150	ag	<i>Allium Globemaster</i>	Globemaster Ornamental Onion	As shown, As bulb mix	Bulb	cont.
150	aps	<i>Allium Purple Sensation</i>	Purple Sensation Ornamental Onion	As shown, As bulb mix	Bulb	cont.
150	nc	<i>Narcissus</i> 'Yellow Cheerfulness'	Daffodil Yellow Cheerfulness	As shown, As bulb mix	Bulb	cont.
150	nt	<i>Narcissus</i> 'TH'	Daffodil TH	As shown, As bulb mix	Bulb	cont.



WHITE OAK



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MOONSHINE



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MOONSHINE**



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TERRACOTTA**



**RED TWIG
DOGWOOD**

Somerville Green Score

DIRECTIONS:

1. Enter the Lot Area in square feet to the right >>>
2. Enter the area in square feet or the number of landscape elements

Soils	
Landscaped area with a soil depth less than 24 inches (enter square feet)	
Landscaped area with a soil depth equal to or greater than 24 inches (enter square feet)	
Pervious Paving with 6 to 24 inches of subsurface soil or gravel (enter square feet)	
Pervious Paving with more than 24 inches of subsurface soil or gravel (enter square feet)	
Groundcovers	
Turf grass, mulch, and inorganic surfacing materials (enter square feet)	
Plants	
Vegetation less than two (2) feet tall at maturity, +0.1 Native (enter square feet)	
Vegetation less than two (2) feet tall at maturity, + 0.1 Native Species, +.01 Visible (enter square feet)	
Vegetation at least two (2) feet tall at maturity (enter number of individual plants)	
Trees	
Small Tree (enter number of trees)	
Large Tree (enter number of trees)	
Preserved Tree (enter DBH)	
Engineered Landscape	
Vegetated Wall (enter square feet)	
Rain gardens, bioswales, and stormwater planters (enter square feet)	
Green Roof with up to 6" of growth medium (enter square feet)	
Green Roof with 6"-10" of growth medium (enter square feet)	
Green Roof of 10"-24" growth medium (enter square feet)	
Green Roof of over 24" growth medium	

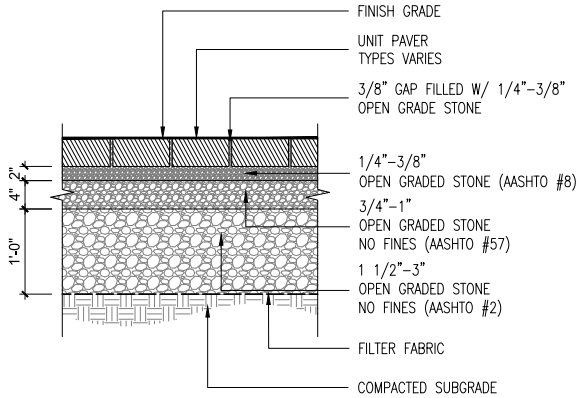
Area or Number
2,024

Sq Ft Credit	Multiplier	Weighted Area	Score Value	% of Score
actual sq ft	0.3	0	0.000	0%
actual sq ft	0.6	145.2	0.072	22%
actual sq ft	0.2	70.4	0.035	11%
actual sq ft	0.5	0	0.000	0%
actual sq ft	0.1	0	0.000	0%
actual sq ft	0.3	0	0.000	0%
actual sq ft	0.4	96.8	0.048	14%
12	0.3	356.4	0.176	53%
50	0.6	0	0.000	0%
450	0.6	0	0.000	0%
65	0.8	0	0.000	0%
actual sq ft	0.1	0	0.000	0%
actual sq ft	1.0	0	0.000	0%
actual sq ft	0.1	0	0.000	0%
actual sq ft	0.4	0	0.000	0%
actual sq ft	0.6	0	0.000	0%
Calculate as if soils, groundcovers, plants, and trees				N/A

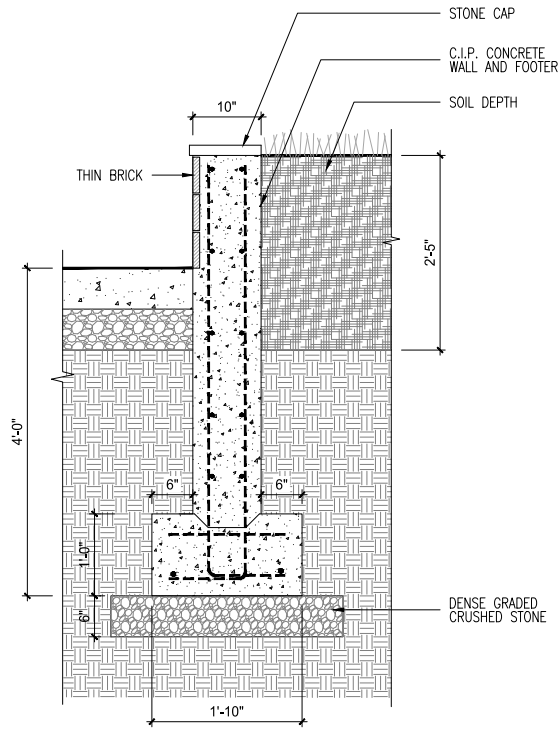
Green Score = 0.330

Required Score:
Target Score:
Actual Green Score:

Green Score District Requirements			
NR & UR	MR3 & MR4	MR5, MR6, & HR	FAB, CC, CB, CI
0.35	0.25	0.20	0.20
0.40	0.3	0.25	-
0.330	0.330	0.330	0.330

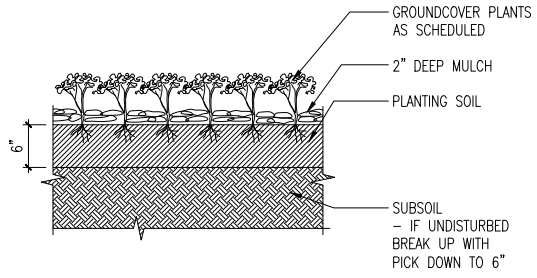


1 PERMEABLE PAVERS
SCALE: NTS

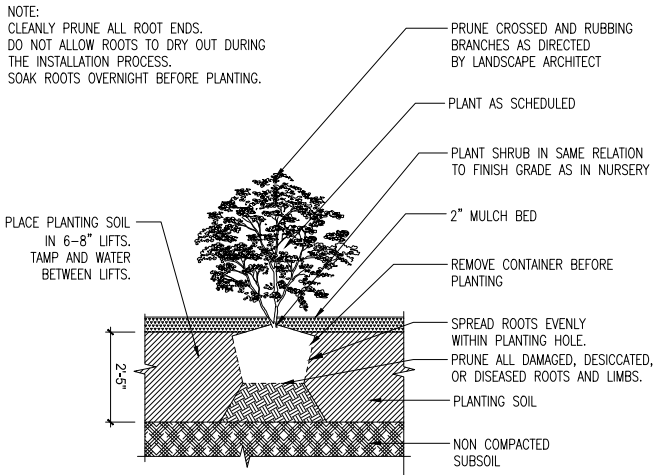


3 C.I.P. CONCRETE WALL
SCALE: NTS

NOTE:
SEE PLANT SPACING DIAGRAM
FOR GROUNDCOVER SPACING



2 GROUNDCOVER PLANTING
SCALE: NTS



4 SHRUB AND PERENNIAL PLANTING
SCALE: NTS

Thank you.