



City of Seattle

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

Department of Planning and Development

D. M. Sugimura, Director

**CITY OF SEATTLE
ANALYSIS AND DECISION OF THE DIRECTOR
OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

Application Number: 3001567

Applicant Name: Chris Pickering

Address of Proposal: 4854 40th Avenue SW

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION

Land Use Application to allow two 3-story 3-unit townhouse structures with parking for six vehicles located within the structures. The existing single-family residence to be removed under a separate permit.

The following approval is required:

SEPA Environmental Determination – Chapter 25.05, Seattle Municipal Code.

SEPA DETERMINATION: Exempt DNS MDNS EIS

DNS with conditions

DNS involving non-exempt grading or demolition,
or involving another agency with jurisdiction.

BACKGROUND DATA

Zoning: Residential Multifamily Lowrise 1 (L-1).

Date of Site Visit: October 6, 2006.

Uses on Site: One single family residence is to be demolished. Construction of two new three-unit townhouse buildings is proposed.

Substantive Site Characteristics:

This 8,895 square foot subject site is a rectangular lot that fronts on 40th Avenue SW to the west, SW Hudson Street to the south, and an alley to the east. The site is within an area zoned Residential Multifamily Lowrise 1 (L-1). The areas to the north and east are zoned for higher density, with Lowrise 2 and Lowrise 3 respectively. The areas adjacent to the south and west are zoned Residential Single-Family 5000 (SF5000). The uses in the area include a combination of single-family and multiple-family residences.

The site is characterized by a sloped topography, and it slopes from the east down to the west, with an elevation change of approximately 16 feet. The environmental checklist states that the steepest slope on the site is approximately 22%. The site is not located in any mapped critical area.

There is an existing single family residence on the subject site. This existing structure is proposed to be removed. Vegetation on the site is that of typical residential landscaping, including grass, trees, and shrubs.

Proposal Description:

The applicant proposes to demolish the existing single family residence and construct two, 3-unit townhouse buildings. There will be one building located in the western portion of the site, with pedestrian access from 40th Avenue SW to the unit at the western end. The other two units, as well as, the three units in the second townhouse will have pedestrian access to SW Hudson Street. Vehicular access to all units will be provided via an easement off of the alley that connects to the parking within each building.

Public Comment:

The comment period for this proposal ended on August 30, 2006. During this period, one written comment letter related to this project was received.

ANALYSIS - SEPA

Environmental review resulting in a Threshold Determination is required pursuant to the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), WAC 197-11, and the Seattle SEPA Ordinance (Seattle Municipal Code Chapter 25.05). The initial disclosure of the potential impacts from this project was made in the environmental checklist submitted by the applicant dated June 23, 2006. The information in the checklist, project plans, and the experience of the lead agency with review of similar projects form the basis for this analysis and decision.

The SEPA Overview Policy (SMC 25.05.665 D) clarifies the relationship between codes, policies, and environmental review. Specific policies for each element of the environment, certain neighborhood plans, and other policies explicitly referenced may serve as the basis for exercising substantive SEPA authority.

The Overview Policy states, in part: “*Where City regulations have been adopted to address an environmental impact, it shall be presumed that such regulations are adequate to achieve sufficient mitigation,*” subject to some limitations. Under certain limitations or circumstances (SMC 25.05.665 D 1-7), mitigation can be considered. A more detailed discussion of some of the potential impacts from this short plat follows.

Short-Term Impacts

The following temporary or construction-related impacts are expected: decreased air quality due to suspended particulates from building activities and hydrocarbon emissions from construction vehicles and equipment; increased traffic and demand for parking from construction equipment and personnel; increased noise; and consumption of renewable and non-renewable resources.

Several construction-related impacts are mitigated by existing City codes and ordinances applicable to the project, such as: the Noise Ordinance, the Critical Areas Ordinance, the Stormwater Grading and Drainage Control Code, the Street Use Ordinance, and the Building Code.

Long-Term Impacts

Long-term or use-related impacts include increased surface water runoff from greater site coverage by impervious surfaces; increased bulk and scale on the site; increased demand on public services and utilities; increased light and glare; loss of vegetation; and increased energy consumption. These long-term impacts are not considered significant because the impacts are minor in scope.

The long-term impacts are typical of multifamily residences and will be mitigated by the City’s adopted codes and/or ordinances. Specifically these include: the Stormwater, Grading, and Drainage Control Code (stormwater runoff from additional site coverage by impervious surface); the Land Use Code (minimum lot area, vehicle access to parking); and the Seattle Energy Code (long-term energy consumption). Earth-related impacts may result in the long-term and are mitigated by the Critical Areas Ordinance. An analysis of impacts associated with specific SEPA policies follows.

Earth

The site is not located within a mapped environmental critical area, therefore, no geotechnical evaluation was required. The applicant stated in the environmental checklist that there will be approximately 639 cubic yards of grading cuts in order to construct the driveway and foundation for the two buildings, and that there will be 144 cubic yards of fill (utilized from the site) to be added for this project.

Plants and Animals

The site currently contains deciduous trees, shrubs, grass, and other types of vegetation. However, most of this vegetation is to be removed with the proposed construction of the three buildings and access driveway. The applicant indicated that there are no known endangered plant species nor birds or animals on the site. During the staff site visit, no birds or animals were observed; however, it is assumed that songbirds occasionally visit the site or nearby sites.

Traffic and Parking

The Land Use Code requires each house to have at least one off-street parking space. The proposed buildings will have parking within each. The Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Manual (7th edition) estimates that townhouse units generate approximately 5.9 vehicle trips per day. These additional trips per day per each proposed dwelling unit that will be generated will not be a significant increase to the total number of vehicle trips along 40th Avenue SW and SW Hudson Street. For these reasons, no mitigation of parking or traffic impacts is warranted.

Summary

In conclusion, several adverse effects on the environment are anticipated as a direct impact of the proposed construction. However, specific impacts identified in the foregoing analysis have been mitigated by existing codes and ordinances, per adopted City policies. In addition, a few SEPA conditions have been added to the decision to provide additional mitigation.

DECISION – SEPA

This decision was made after review by the responsible official on behalf of the lead agency, of a completed environmental checklist and other information on file with the responsible department. This constitutes the Threshold Determination and form. The intent of this declaration is to satisfy the requirements of the State Environmental Policy Act (RCW 43.21C), including the requirement to inform the public agency decisions pursuant to SEPA.

- [X] Determination of Non-Significance. This proposal has been determined to not have a significant adverse impact upon the environment. An EIS is not required under RCW 43.21C.030 2C.
- [] Determination of Significance. This proposal has or may have a significant adverse impact upon the environment. An EIS is required under RCW 43.21C.030 2C.

CONDITIONS – SEPA

None.

Signature: (signature on file)
Janet Hyde-Wright, Land Use Planner
Department of Planning and Development

Date: January 15, 2007