



the south is zoned Commercial 1 with a 40 foot height limit (C1-40). The area one block to the north is 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 downward generally from the northwest to the southeast with an elevation change of approximately 12-14 feet. The environmental checklist states that there is an average 10% slope on the site. The site is not located in any mapped environmentally critical area.

The site is a vacant lot with no existing structures. Vegetation on the site includes grass, shrubs, and approximately five deciduous and evergreen trees which include fir and fruit trees. There is also a cedar hedge approximately 15 feet tall located in the northern portion of the lot.

#### Proposal Description:

The applicant proposes to construct two, four-unit townhouse buildings. Eight parking stalls will be provided within the proposed buildings. The two proposed buildings will be oriented parallel to Meridian Avenue North. One townhouse building will be on the western portion of the lot and one on the eastern portion of the lot, fronting on Meridian Avenue North. Vehicular access to all units will be provided via a shared easement (with the project to the north) running west off of Meridian Avenue North then turning south to an area between the proposed townhouses.

#### Public Comment:

The comment period for this proposal ended on May 31, 2006. During this period, no written comment letters related to this project were 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 April 4, 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.

### Construction Impacts

Codes and development regulations applicable to this proposed project will provide sufficient mitigation for most impacts. Most of the initial construction activity, including excavation and framing, will involve loud equipment and activities. This construction activity will have an adverse impact on the nearby residences. Because of the close proximity of the nearby residences, the Department finds that the limitation of the Noise Ordinance are inadequate to appropriately mitigate the adverse noise impacts associated with the proposal. The SEPA Construction Impact policies, (SMC 25.05.675.B) allow the Director to limit the hours of construction to mitigate adverse noise and other construction-related impacts. Therefore, the proposal is conditioned to limit construction activity to nonholiday weekdays between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. and between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. on Saturdays (except that grading, delivery and pouring of cement and similar noisy activities shall be prohibited on Saturdays). This condition may be modified by DPD to allow work of an emergency nature or to allow low noise interior work after the exterior of the structure is enclosed. This condition may also be modified to permit low noise exterior work (e.g., installation of landscaping) after approval from DPD.

No further conditioning or mitigation is warranted pursuant to the SEPA Overview Policy (SMC 25.05.665).

### 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). An analysis of impacts associated with specific SEPA policies follows.

Earth

This project will be required to comply with City of Seattle DPD regulations for grading, drainage, and construction. No further mitigation is warranted pursuant to SEPA policies.

Plants and Animals

The site currently contains deciduous trees, shrubs, grass, and other types of vegetation. The hedge and fruit trees will be removed for the construction of the two buildings and access driveway. The applicant indicated that there are no known endangered plant species on the site. The applicant has indicated that no birds or animals have been observed on or near the site or are known to be on or near 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 housing unit to have at least one off-street parking space. The proposed buildings will accommodate parking within the two structures. The Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Manual estimates that lowrise residential condominium/townhouses generate approximately 5.86 trips/unit per day. The approximately 47 additional trips per day for this project that will be generated will not be a significant increase to the total number of vehicle trips along Meridian Avenue North. 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.

