



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:** 3004825  
**Application Name:** Seattle School District No. 1  
**Address of Proposal:** 9201 15<sup>th</sup> Ave. NW

**SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION**

Land Use Application to allow resurfacing of an existing athletic field and track at Whitman Middle School. The project includes 9,100 cubic yards of grading. There is no change to existing parking.

The following approval is required:

**SEPA – for conditioning only - SMC Section 25.05**

**SEPA DETERMINATION:**  Exempt  DNS  MDNS  EIS  
 DNS with conditions\*  
 DNS involving non-exempt grading or demolition or involving another agency with jurisdiction.

\*The Seattle School District No. 1 issued a Determination of Non-Significance on April 28, 2006.

**BACKGROUND DATA**

Site and Vicinity Description

The proposal site, zoned SF72000, is an existing grass athletic field with a cinder running track located immediately west of the Whitman Middle School buildings and north of the existing Soundview Playfields (owned and operated by Seattle Parks and Recreation Department) on 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue NW. There are single family homes to the north and the west of the site.

The proposed renovation activities are located within a steep slope buffer that was created through previous legal grading and no adverse impact on the steep slope is expected to occur. DPD has granted this area a steep slope exemption after a determination the slope in question was artificially steepened and proposed grading activity will improve the stability of these slopes.

### Proposal

The proposed project is to renovate the existing athletic field and provide a full-size synthetic turf soccer field and a baseball field with natural turf outfield and dirt-based infield. The project would retain site access as it currently exists with no changes proposed to parking. Additional proposed on-site improvements include an irrigation system, below-ground drainage and new fencing.

### Public Comment

The DPD comment period ended October 19, 2006. No comments were received.

### ANALYSIS – SEPA

Disclosure of the potential impacts from this project was made in a March 2006 SEPA Checklist. The Seattle School District issued a Determination of Non-Significance on April 28, 2006. The information in the environmental documents, supplemental information provided by the applicant (plans, further project descriptions), and the experience of DPD with review of similar projects form the basis for this analysis and conditioning decision wherein substantive SEPA conditioning will be considered and imposed as warranted.

The SEPA Overview Policy (SMC 25.05.665) 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 such limitations/circumstances (SMC25.05.665) mitigation can be considered. Thus a more detailed discussion of some of the impacts is appropriate.

### Short-Term Impacts

The following temporary or construction-related impacts are expected: (1) temporary soil erosion due to site work; (2) disturbance of birds (gulls, crows and songbirds) currently frequenting the proposed site; (3) decreased air quality due to increased dust and suspended particulates during site work and transport of materials to and from the site; (4) increased noise and vibration from construction operations and equipment; (5) increased traffic and parking demand from construction personnel; and (6) tracking of mud onto adjacent streets by construction vehicles. Although not significant, these impacts are adverse, and in some cases, mitigation is warranted.

Several adopted City codes and/or ordinances provide mitigation for some of the identified impacts. Specifically, these are: Critical Areas Ordinance (soil stability and water quality) Stormwater, Grading and Drainage Control Code (grading, site excavation and control of soil erosion through use of best management practices); Street Use Ordinance (watering streets to suppress dust, removal of debris, and obstruction of the pedestrian right-of-way); and the Noise Ordinance (construction noise). Compliance with these applicable codes and ordinances will reduce or eliminate short-term impacts to the environment and, with the exception of construction related noise impacts, they will be sufficient without conditioning pursuant to SEPA policies.

Noise

Some of the construction activities including grading and use of concrete delivery and pumping trucks will create high levels of noise. Later activities, consisting almost entirely of landscaping activities are expected to be fairly quiet. Residential uses exist immediately adjacent to the proposal site to the west, north and also across 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue NW to the east. It has been the experience of DPD that additional limits of the hours of construction operation, in addition to those provided in the Seattle Noise Ordinance, are sometimes necessary to limit noise impacts to nearby residences to an acceptable level. The Seattle Noise Ordinance would allow these very noisy, construction-related activities to take place from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. The use of grading, concrete delivery and concrete pumping equipment in the project area shall be limited to the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on non-holiday weekdays. Other construction-related activities should be adequately limited by the Noise ordinance.

Erosion Control

The proposal site contains steep slopes which were created by legal grading activity. If this project on a critical area site is to take place between October 31<sup>st</sup> and June 1<sup>st</sup>, a Wet Season Construction Waiver must be approved. Review of the waiver application will involve review of best management practices to be implemented. It will be approved only if DPD is convinced adequate measures to control stormwater and soil erosion are proposed. SEPA conditioning to control soil erosion during construction does not appear warranted.

Long-term Impacts

The School District did not identify any long-term adverse environmental impacts in their Determination of Non-Significance.

**CONDITIONS – SEPA**

During Construction

1. The use of grading, concrete delivery and concrete pumping equipment in the project area shall be limited to the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on non-holiday weekdays.

Signature: (signature on file)  
Marti Stave, Land Use Planner  
Department of Planning and Development

Date: December 11, 2006