



City of Seattle

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

Department of Planning and Development

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

Application Number: 3005988
Applicant Name: Dean Haugen for Clear Channel Outdoor
Address of Proposal: 4810 15th Avenue Northwest

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION

Land Use Application to allow one free-standing off-premise advertising sign. The sign will be a double-sided, single column, externally illuminated sign, and will have an overall height of 55 feet, measuring 14 feet by 48 feet (672 square feet). Sign display faces will be oriented in both north and south directions.

The Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) requires the following approval:

SEPA - Environmental Determination pursuant to SMC 25.05.

SEPA DETERMINATION: Exempt DNS MDNS EIS

DNS with conditions

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

BACKGROUND DATA

Zoning: General Industrial 2 - IG2 U/65.
Date of Site Visit: December 20, 2006.
Uses on Site: Two-story commercial structure.

Site and Vicinity Description

The subject site is a corner lot located at the southeast corner of 15th Avenue Northwest and Northwest 49th Street, in the Ballard-Interbay-Northend Manufacturing and Industrial Center (BINMIC). Zoning for the subject site, as well as properties in the immediate vicinity and in this broader area of BINMIC, is General Industrial 2 with a sixty-five foot height limit (IG2 U/65). Northwest of the subject site, including further north along the corridor of 15th Avenue Northwest, the zoning changes to Commercial 2 with a height limit of sixty-five feet (C2-65).

The 13,744 square foot lot is virtually flat, and is currently developed with a 4,989 square foot two-story commercial structure that fronts on Northwest 49th Street. The remainder of the lot is paved and utilized for equipment and vehicular storage.

The BINMIC is generally characterized as an urban industrial and manufacturing center with a diverse mix of industrial and commercial uses, along with a small amount of residential uses. Development in the immediate vicinity of the subject site includes light manufacturing and wholesale sales, storage yards, retail, offices, and eating and drinking establishments. Fifteenth Avenue Northwest is a principal north/south arterial which allows direct access across the Lake Washington Ship Canal.

Northwest 49th Street is an improved connector street with concrete curb, gutter, and planting strip along both sides of the right-of-way. The site is not within any mapped Environmentally Critical Areas (ECA).

Proposal Description

The applicant proposes to erect and install a double-sided, off-premise, advertising sign (billboard) with 14 foot by 48 foot display surfaces (672 square feet) facing in northerly and southerly directions (for a total of two sign installations). Display surfaces will be externally illuminated with 2 halogen lamps per face, and will have an overall height of 55 feet above ground level. Lighting periods are from dusk to midnight, and 6:00 a.m. to dawn.



Figure 1. Vicinity Map



Figure 2. Zoning Map



Figure 3. Aerial Photo

Billboard registration numbers 41 and 67 will be transferred to the proposed off-premise advertising sign, following the removal of an off-premise sign located at 819 4th Avenue South. Additionally, a neighboring off-premise advertising sign within 300 feet and located on the same side of 15th Avenue Northwest (4900 15th Avenue Northwest), will be removed under a separate demolition permit (A/P 6132190). Clear Channel Outdoor owns and maintains each of these advertising signs.

Public Comments

The extended comment period ended January 31, 2007. Three comment letters were received during this period, one of which included a request for relocation of an existing billboard at 4900 15th Avenue Northwest. Citizens expressed strong objections to the location of another billboard of this scale along the Ballard Bridge and 15th Avenue Northwest corridor. These comment letters are available in the Land Use Application file at the Public Resource Center located at 700 Fifth Ave, Suite 2000. (<http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/prc/>)

ANALYSIS – SEPA

The initial disclosure of the potential impacts from this project was made in the environmental checklist submitted by the applicant dated November 20, 2006 and annotated by the planner. The information in the checklist, project documents, 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) 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. Thus, a more detailed discussion of some of the impacts is appropriate.

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 associated with drilling and sign installation; and consumption of renewable and non-renewable resources. Due to the short term and minor nature of construction impact associated with the construction of the sign, no mitigation is warranted by SEPA policies.

Long - Term Impacts

Long-term or use-related impacts include minor ongoing use of electricity to light the sign face and increased traffic, noise, and vehicular emissions from the monthly sign copy posting and routine maintenance visits (approximately 1 to 2 trips per month). Fifteenth Avenue Northwest is classified as a principal arterial, a State Highway, and a SEPA Scenic route that receives significant traffic volumes due in part to the presence of industrial uses. The long-term and use related impacts in the vicinity is expected to be minor within this well entrenched industrial belt. Therefore no mitigation is warranted pursuant to SEPA policies.

Public View Protection

The City's public view protection policies are intended to "protect public views of significant natural and human-made features: Mount Rainier, the Olympic and Cascade Mountains, the downtown skyline, and major bodies of water including Lake Washington, Lake Union and the Ship Canal, from public places consisting of specified viewpoints, parks, scenic routes, and view corridors identified in Attachment 1" to the City's SEPA Code (SMC 25.05.675 P.2.a.i).

The applicant conducted a view-impact study and submitted findings to DPD on March 26, 2007. There are no viewpoints or features such as those listed above within a half-mile radius of the proposed site. However, there are two public parks within a half-mile radius of the proposed site that are not listed in Attachment 1, SMC 25.05.675 P.2.a.i; Gilman Playground and the 14th Avenue Northwest Boat Ramp. The proposed off-premise sign will not be visible from either of these vantage points, nor will the proposed sign block protected views of surrounding mountains (the Olympic Mountain Range) or the Lake Washington Ship Canal.

Fifteenth Avenue Northwest is a SEPA Scenic Route, as identified by the Seattle Mayor's April 1987 Open space Policies Recommendation. The route extends from West Emerson Street south of the Ballard Bridge to Northwest Market Street, a distance of approximately one mile. While the proposed sign impedes views of motorists traveling in both north and south directions across the Ballard Bridge for a brief period of time, the impact would not be considered significant and therefore does not require additional mitigation measures.

The Sign Code (SMC 23.55) regulates the location, size, and other characteristics of off-premise signs and provides sufficient mitigation for the following impacts:

Cumulative Impacts

The revised Seattle Sign Ordinance has reduced the number of billboard advertising signs permitted in a given area of the City by modification of the sign dispersion standards. Sign dispersion standards limit the number of signs by requiring a minimum separation between signs and permitting a maximum number of signs in a one-half mile distance. According to SMC 23.55.014 E, there shall be a minimum distance of 300 feet between advertising sign structures on the same side of the street; a maximum of two advertising sign structures within 300 feet when counting both sides of the street; and, a minimum distance of 100 radial feet between advertising sign structures. Further, a maximum of five off-premise signs are permitted when counting both sides of a street within a distance of 2,640 feet (1/2 mile). The dispersion requirements and zoning standards were reviewed by the DPD sign inspector and the proposed sign has been found to show compliance with the applicable requirements, therefore, no further mitigation pursuant to SEPA is warranted.

Light and Glare

The Sign Code requires that light sources be shielded so that direct light is not visible on adjacent properties (SMC 23.55.016) and also limits fluorescent lighting of off-premise advertising signs to one watt per square foot of sign area (SMC 23.55.014.E). Surrounding land uses are industrial and commercial in nature and generate their own traffic, noise and light. The nearest residential zone is approximately 400 feet to the northeast, beyond the reach of light spillage. The sign face is approximately 14 feet high by 48 feet in length and will rise above the existing street level to a maximum of 55 feet. The proposed sign will be illuminated by a

