



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:** 3007375  
**Applicant Name:** Stuart Stovin for Seattle Public Schools  
**Address of Proposal:** 3528 South Ferdinand Street

**SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION**

Land Use Application to allow six portable classroom buildings (which total 8,064 sq. ft.) on the existing Columbia Elementary School site. No change in parking is proposed. The Determination of Non-Significance was prepared by the Seattle School District.

The following approvals are required:

**SEPA** - Environmental Determination - Chapter 25.05 SMC.

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

**BACKGROUND DATA**

Site Description

This 3.2 acre (140,400 square foot) site is located in a Lowrise 1 (L1) zone in the Columbia City neighborhood of South East Seattle. The site is developed with an existing public school building (Columbia Elementary School). The site is bounded by four streets: 35<sup>th</sup> and 37<sup>th</sup> Avenues South, South Edmunds Street, and South Ferdinand Street. The site is located within a 1,000 foot methane buffer from an abandoned landfill.

### Area Development

Development in the vicinity consists primarily of single family residences in the Single Family 5000 zone to the west and south of the site. There is a mixture of single family and multifamily residences in the Lowrise zones to the north of the site. There is a mixture of commercial and multifamily development along both sides of Rainier Avenue South. The Columbia City library, a public park, and a former grocery store building proposed for redevelopment are located on the block to the north of Columbia Elementary School. The Rainier Community Center is located two blocks northeast of the site.

### Proposal Description

The Seattle Public School District proposes to locate six portable classroom buildings (which total 8,064 square feet) onto the existing Columbia Elementary School site. No change in parking is proposed. The project includes moving five portable single classroom manufactured buildings onto the school property for use as general elementary-level classrooms, to accommodate relocated student enrollment, beginning with the 2007-2008 academic year, due to closure of other elementary schools in the Seattle School District. The five portables will house a total of five to eight staff and approximately 110 students. Each of the five portable classroom buildings is 906 square feet in building area, each with a ramp and landing of approximately 137 square feet. Each classroom building is to be a state (L&I) approved "gold-label" manufactured building.

### Public Comment

No comment letters were received during the public comment period which ended July 4, 2007.

### ANALYSIS-SEPA

The initial disclosure of the potential impacts from this project was made in the environmental checklist submitted by the applicant (dated May 25, 2007) and annotated by the Land Use Planner. The information in the checklist, the supplemental information submitted by the applicant and the experience of the lead agency with the 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 such limitations/circumstances (SMC 25.05.665) mitigation can be considered.

### Short-Term Impacts

Construction activities could result in the following adverse impacts: Construction dust and storm water runoff, erosion, emissions from construction machinery and vehicles, increased particulate levels, increased noise levels, occasional disruption of adjacent vehicular and

pedestrian traffic, and a small increase in traffic and parking impacts due to construction workers' vehicles. Existing City codes and ordinances applicable to the project such as: the Noise Ordinance, the Stormwater Grading and Drainage Control Code, the Street Use Ordinance, and the Building Code, would mitigate several construction-related impacts. Following is an analysis of the air, water quality, streets, parking, and construction-related noise impacts as well as mitigation.

The Street Use Ordinance includes regulations that mitigate dust, mud, and circulation. Temporary closure of sidewalks and/or traffic lane(s) would be adequately controlled with a street use permit through the Engineering Department, and no further SEPA conditioning would be needed.

Construction of the project is proposed to last for several months. Parking utilization along streets in the vicinity is moderate and the demand for parking by construction workers during construction could reduce the supply of parking in the vicinity. This temporary demand on the on-street parking in the vicinity due to construction workers' vehicles may be adverse. In order to minimize adverse impacts, construction workers will be required to park onsite for the duration of construction. The authority to impose this condition is found in Section 25.05.675B2g of the Seattle SEPA Ordinance.

The proposal site is located adjacent to a residential area where construction of this scale would impact the noise levels. The SEPA Noise Policy (Section 25.05.675B SMC) lists mitigation measures for construction noise impacts. It is the department's conclusion that limiting hours of construction beyond the requirements of the Noise Ordinance is necessary to mitigate impacts that would result from the proposal on surrounding properties, because existing City ordinances do not adequately mitigate such impacts. This is due to the density of residential units in the area and the proximity of these structures to the proposal site. The proposal is, therefore, conditioned to limit construction activity to non-holiday weekday hours between 7:00 A.M. and 6:00 P.M. and Saturdays from 9:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. Interior construction may be done in compliance with the noise ordinance. The department may modify this condition to allow work of an emergency nature or which cannot otherwise be accomplished during these hours by prior written approval of the Land Use Planner.

Construction is expected to temporarily add particulates to the air and will result in a slight increase in auto-generated air contaminants from construction worker vehicles; however, this increase is not anticipated to be significant. Federal auto emission controls are the primary means of mitigating air quality impacts from motor vehicles as stated in the Air Quality Policy (Section 25.05.675 SMC). No unusual circumstances exist which warrant additional mitigation, per the SEPA Overview Policy.

#### Long-Term Impacts

Long-term or use-related impacts are also anticipated from the proposal: 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 a mixed-use structure and will in part be mitigated by the City's adopted codes and/or ordinances. Specifically these are: Stormwater, Grading and Drainage Control Code (stormwater runoff from additional site coverage by impervious surface); Land Use Code (height; setbacks; parking); and the Seattle Energy Code (long-term energy consumption). Additional land use impacts which may result in the long-term are discussed below.

### Drainage

Rain water on roofs and on the driveways will be the major source of water runoff on the site. The rain water on the roofs will be collected in gutters and connected to the storm drainage system. No drainage will be directed to the adjoining streets. Verification of an appropriate stormwater control system and its proposed location of connection to the public system will be required to be shown on the construction plans. No additional mitigation measures will be required pursuant to SEPA.

### Traffic and Transportation

The number of staff will increase from 25 to 30 during the 2007-2008 school year. Staff will generate 60 total vehicle trips per day, 10 more trips than the previous year. Ten additional vehicle trips are not anticipated to be significant. The six portable classroom will accommodate 110 additional students who will generally arrive at and depart the school by bus and walking. Some students will be transported by their parents, but this number is not expected to significantly increase traffic volumes near the school. The existing volume of traffic along the surrounding streets is moderate and nearby intersections operates at acceptable levels. The school site is located between two arterials, Rainier Avenue South and Martin Luther King Jr. Way South providing ready access to and from the school. The amount of traffic expected to be generated by the proposed project is within the capacity of the streets in the immediate area. Therefore, no SEPA mitigation of traffic impacts is warranted.

### Parking

Columbia Elementary School was constructed in 1927 prior to code required parking. There are no designated parking spaces onsite. No parking spaces will be eliminated by the project. The current staff of 30 will park on the surrounding streets as they have in previous years with no apparent adverse impact to the neighborhood. The parking policy in Section 25.05.675M of the Seattle SEPA Ordinance states that parking impact mitigation may be required only where on-street parking is at capacity as defined by the Seattle Transportation Department or where the development itself would cause on-street parking to reach capacity. Parking utilization in the vicinity appears to be below capacity and on-street parking can be found during the daytime or evening hours. The existing onstreet parking spaces are expected to accommodate the parking demand generated by the project. Therefore, no mitigation of parking impacts is necessary pursuant to SEPA.

## **SUMMARY**

In conclusion, several adverse effects on the environment are anticipated resulting from the proposal which are nonsignificant. The conditions imposed below are intended to mitigate specific impacts identified in the foregoing analysis, or to control impacts not regulated by codes or ordinances, per adopted City policies.

