



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:** 3004950  
**Applicant Name:** Brittani Ard  
**Address of Proposal:** 24 Florentia Street

**SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION**

Land Use Application to allow a two-unit townhouse structure in an environmentally critical area. Project includes 550 cubic yards of grading. Parking for two vehicles will be located within the proposed structure. A 55 sq. ft. portion of the existing single family residence is to be removed.

The following approval is required:

**SEPA Environmental Determination** – Chapter 25.05, Seattle Municipal Code

**SEPA DETERMINATION:** [ ] Exempt [X] 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: July 7, 2006

Uses on Site: One single-family residence

**Substantive Site Characteristics:**

This 5,400-square-foot subject site is a rectangular lot that fronts on Florentia Street to the south and a paved alley to the north. The subject site is located on a block zoned Residential, Multifamily, Lowrise 1 (L-1). The areas to the east and west are zoned for higher density with

Residential, Multifamily, Lowrise 2 (L-2). The area adjacent to the north is zoned Residential, Multifamily, Lowrise 3 (L-3). The area to the south is zoned Residential Single-family 5000 (SF 5000). The uses in the area include a combination of single-family and multiple-family residences. The site is characterized by a sloped topography, which slopes downward from south to north, with an elevation change of approximately 26 feet. At the northern edge of the parcel, the site slopes steeply down to the alley. The site is located in a mapped environmentally critical area for potential landslide.

There is an existing single-family-residence on the subject site. This existing structure is proposed to remain. Vegetation on the site is typical residential landscaping, including grass and shrubs.

Proposal Description:

The applicant proposes to construct one, 2-unit townhouse behind the existing single-family residence. Two parking stalls will be provided within the building. Vehicular access to the proposed units will be provided via the alley.

Public Comment:

The comment period for this proposal ended on May 31, 2006. During this period, one 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 May 1, 2006. In addition, a geotechnical report dated June 24, 2004 was also provided. The information in the checklist, geotechnical report, 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 Storm water 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 single-family residences and townhouses and will be mitigated by the City's adopted codes and/or ordinances. Specifically these include: the Storm water, Grading, and Drainage Control Code (storm water 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

A geotechnical report for the subject property dated June 24, 2004 was submitted with the subdivision application. This report stated that there is no sign of geotechnical distress on the site. The report also concluded that the proposed project "is geotechnically viable when constructed in accordance with the recommendations herein, compliance with City of Seattle DPD approved plans and requirements, and key geotechnical inspection during construction."

### Plants and Animals

The site currently contains shrubs, grass, and other types of vegetation. However, much of this vegetation is to be removed with the proposed construction of the townhouse. The applicant indicated that there are no known endangered plant species on the site. The geotechnical report states, "The proposed building and pavement area should be stripped and cleared of all surface vegetation, all organic matter, and other deleterious material. The stripped or removed materials should not be mixed with any materials to be used as structural fill." 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 house to have at least one off-street parking space. The proposed building will have two parking spaces located within it. The Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Manual estimates that a low-rise residential townhouse generates approximately six vehicle

trips per day (the ITE estimate of 5.86 trips per unit also includes high-rise residential condominiums and townhouses, and thus likely underestimates the trips generated by low-rise residential townhouses). The six 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 Queen Anne Avenue North and Warren Avenue North. Furthermore, the scope of this environmental review is limited to assessing impacts to the environmentally critical area. 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.

**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.

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) Date: March 26, 2009  
Janet L. Wright, Land Use Planner  
Department of Planning and Development

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