



The site is developed with an existing one-story fire station (number 28) which houses one engine company, a ladder truck, and a medic unit. The site is also developed with a training facility which consists of a one-story building, rubble obstacle course, training structures and materials.

The development pattern in the area is largely small-scale residential along Rainier, with a few churches to the north on the same side of the street. Small scale residential development has been recently built across Kenny Street to the north. Single family residential development prevails to the east of the subject property.

South Kenny Street is partially improved with only a roadway which terminates near the east property line of the subject site. Rainier Avenue South is considered an arterial and is improved with roadway, curb, gutter and sidewalk.

Most of the site is generally flat but the property rises about 17 feet along the northeast and east property lines. The site does have a mapped steep slope ECA. A limited steep slope exemption has been granted pursuant to review under this project number. All other ECA standards and requirements apply. All proposed development will be outside the ECA and its required buffer.

### Proposal Description

The proposed project includes the construction of a new 2-story, 13,650 square foot fire station and 1-story, 5,400 square foot storage building for urban search and rescue federal disaster cache. The new station will include 3-apparatus bays to house trucks and emergency vehicles, living spaces for crew, storage space and office. The project will also provide crew parking for 14 vehicles, a gas fueling tank and pump for emergency vehicles, and retention of the existing concrete rubble obstacle course. The existing fire station at the site will be operational during construction and be demolished once the new station is occupied. A landscaped plaza will be built in place of the existing fire station once it is demolished. The existing Hillman training facility building will also be demolished. Site access to crew parking and for returning emergency vehicles will be via a driveway along the south side of the property. Fire trucks and emergency vehicles will exit via an apron and curbcut fronting on Rainier Avenue South. A gated driveway off South Kenny Street will be used to access the urban search and rescue storage building. It will be used at times of emergency and for drills, perhaps up to 4 times per year.

### Seattle Design Commission

This proposal is subject to review by the Seattle Design Commission (SDC) because it is a City Facility. The Commission's role is to advise the project proponents in an effort to foster well-designed civic projects. The SDC reviewed the design on February, March and April of this year. The SDC supported the overall development proposal and program. For complete SDC actions and comments, the approved minutes from the meetings are available on the City of Seattle website located at [http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design\\_Commission/overview/](http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design_Commission/overview/)

### Public Comments

No public comments were received during the public comment period which ended on May 9, 2007.

**ANALYSIS — COUNCIL LAND USE ACTION**

Fire stations in single family zones may only be permitted by City Council. Fire stations in multifamily zones may be permitted outright when they meet the development standards for institutions. In both zones, fire stations that don't meet development standards may be permitted by City Council. In this case, the proposed station does not meet the following development standards:

<b>Development Standard</b>	<b>Required</b>	<b>Proposed</b>
SMC 23.45.094A, Institutions -Structure width and depth	Structure width of 150'	Structure width of 170'
SMC 23.54.003F, Curb Cuts	Maximum curbcut width- 30'	52' curbcut width for emergency vehicles

Section 23.76.064 of the SMC includes provisions for the City Council to grant concept approval and to waive or modify applicable development standards, accessory use requirements, special use requirements or conditional use criteria for City Facilities. SMC 23.76.064 classifies this decision as a legislative action (Type V).

Single Family Zone

*The proponent of any such use shall demonstrate the existence of a public necessity for the public facility use in a single-family zone. The public facility use shall be developed according to the development standards for institutions (Section 23.44.022), unless the City Council makes a determination to waive or modify applicable development standards according to the provisions of Chapter 23.76, Subchapter III, Council Land Use Decisions, with public projects considered as Type IV quasi-judicial decisions and City facilities considered as type V legislative decisions.*

The fire station meets all the development standards for institutions in single family zones pursuant to SMC 23.44.022.

Fire station number 28 already exists at this location within a single family zone. Fire stations are essential for protecting lives and property and must be located in specific areas so that they can rapidly and adequately respond to emergencies. A large portion of the city is zoned single family thus there are large numbers of people and property within the single family zone. In light of that, there is clear public necessity for fire stations within single family zones.

Multifamily Zone

*In all multifamily zones, uses in public facilities not meeting development standards may be permitted by the Council if the following criteria are satisfied;*

- 1. The project provides unique services which are not provided to the community by the private sector, such as police and fire stations; and*

The project provides a unique service as a fire station.

2. *The proposed location is required to meet specific public service delivery needs; and*

The project is located so that it can rapidly and adequately respond to emergencies which are an essential public service.

3. *The waiver or modification to the development standards is necessary to meet specific public service delivery needs; and*

#### Structure Width:

A modification to structure width regulations is requested for exceeding maximum structure width of 150 feet for an institution in an L-3 zone. The proposed structure width is 170 feet, so a modification of 20 feet is requested.

A primary program element of fire stations is the vehicle apparatus bay which must conform to certain sizes in order to accommodate the emergency vehicles and to facilitate efficient access. Additionally it is equally important to locate certain rooms next to the apparatus bay or next to other rooms. In order to satisfy these program adjacencies the structure width must exceed the code requirement. Additionally, to avoid re-locating fire station 28 during construction; the existing fire station building will remain during construction; however, this presents some design challenges which in turn resulted in the footprint proposed. The structure width proposed is necessary to meet specific public service delivery needs.

#### Curbcut Width

A modification is requested to exceed a maximum curbcut width of 30 feet when truck and auto access are combined. The proposed curbcut width is 52 feet along Rainier Avenue South to access the emergency vehicle apparatus bays.

The modification is needed to meet operational needs and alleviate safety concerns. This requested distance is the width of the clear openings of the three apparatus bays. Operationally it is critical that all emergency vehicles be able to exit the apparatus bays safely and directly. When any of the rigs are on the front apron, exit access for other rigs would be blocked unless the apron and curbcut are the full width of the bay door openings. This driveway will be designed per City of Seattle Standard Plan 430B. The curbcut width proposed is necessary to meet specific public service delivery needs.

4. *The relationship of the project to the surrounding area has been considered in the design, siting, landscaping, and screening of the facility.*

The surrounding area has been considered in the design, siting, landscaping and screening of the facility. The buildings are adequately setback from the abutting property lines and generously landscaped and screened from neighboring property. See further discussion of height, bulk and scale impacts under the SEPA analysis. A landscaped plaza is proposed where the old station building exists. The project plans show 93 proposed trees and 3870 proposed shrubs will be provided. The proposed exterior finish materials consist of brick, exposed steel canopies and pre-cast concrete sills. Design details, landscaping and finish materials will contribute towards mitigating the perception of height, bulk and scale and help the building fit into the neighborhood.

## **RECOMMENDATION – COUNCIL APPROVALS**

DPD **recommends approval** of the proposed fire station use in a Single Family and Lowrise 3 zone with the requested modification to development standards as described in Table A.

### **ANALYSIS - SEPA**

The initial disclosure of the potential impacts from this project was made in the environmental checklist submitted by the applicant dated March 14, 2007 and annotated by the Department. The information in the checklist, supplemental information provided by the applicant, 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 23.05.665) discusses the relationship between the City's code/policies and environmental review. 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 limitation". The Overview Policy in SMC 23.05.665 D1-7, states that in limited circumstances it may be appropriate to deny or mitigate a project based on adverse environmental impacts.

The policies for specific elements of the environment (SMC 25.05.675) describe the relationship with the Overview Policy and indicate when the Overview Policy is applicable. Not all elements of the environment are subject to the Overview Policy (e.g., Traffic and Transportation, Plants and Animals and Shadows on Open Spaces). A detailed discussion of some of the specific elements of the environment and potential impacts is appropriate.

#### **Short-term Impacts**

The following temporary or construction-related impacts are expected: decreased air quality due to suspended particulate from building activities and hydrocarbon emissions from construction vehicles and equipment; increased dust caused by construction activities; increased traffic and demand for parking from construction equipment and personnel; conflict with normal pedestrian movement adjacent to the site; increased noise; and consumption of renewable and non-renewable resources.

Several adopted City codes and/or ordinances provide mitigation for some of the identified construction related impacts. Compliance with these applicable codes and ordinances will reduce or eliminate most short-term impacts, but impacts such as air quality and noise require further discussion and may require SEPA mitigation.

#### **Air Quality**

The Puget Sound Clean Air Agency (PSCAA) regulations require control of fugitive dust to protect air quality and will require permits for removal of asbestos (if any) during demolition. The owner and/or responsible party (ies) are required to comply with the PSCAA rules pertaining to demolition of projects with or without asbestos. This will ensure proper handling and disposal of asbestos, as well as demolition of structures without asbestos. No further SEPA conditioning is necessary.

Noise

The project is expected to generate loud noise during demolition, grading and construction. These impacts would be especially adverse in the early morning, in the evening, and on weekends. The Seattle Noise Ordinance permits increases in permissible sound levels associated with construction and equipment between the hours of 7:00 AM and 10:00 PM on weekdays and 9:00 AM and 10:00 PM on weekends. The surrounding properties are developed with housing and will be impacted by construction noise. The limitations stipulated in the Noise Ordinance are not sufficient to mitigate noise impacts; therefore, pursuant to SEPA authority, the applicant shall be required to limit periods of construction activities (including but not limited to grading, deliveries, framing, roofing, and painting) to non-holiday weekdays from 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM.

Long-Term Impacts

Long-term or use related impacts should be mostly comparable to those already generated by the existing use. No increase in number of apparatus bays or crew is projected by the Fire Department. Hence, long-term impacts are not considered significant because they are minor in scope. The building will be larger so potential exists for height, bulk and scale impacts, which is discussed below.

Several adopted City codes and/or ordinances provide mitigation for some of the impacts. Specifically these are: the Seattle Building Code which provides prescriptive construction techniques and standards; and the Land Use Code which controls site coverage, setbacks, building height and use and contains other development and use regulations to assure compatible development. Compliance with these applicable codes and ordinances is adequate to achieve sufficient mitigation of most long term impacts.

Height, Bulk and Scale

The SEPA Height, Bulk and Scale Policy (Section 25.06.675.G., SMC) states that *“the height, bulk and scale of development projects should be reasonably compatible with the general character of development anticipated by the goals and policies set forth in Section B of the land use element of the Seattle Comprehensive Plan regarding Land Use Categories, ...and to provide for a reasonable transition between areas of less intensive zoning and more intensive zoning.”*

The proposed two-story fire station will be located in a Lowrise 3 and Single Family 5000 zone and meet most dimensional development standards of the zone, particularly height and setbacks. Surrounding property to the north and south is zoned L-3 along Rainier avenue South and SF5000 behind similar to the subject site. A single family home abuts the site along the south property line. The proposed building will be setback more than 50 feet from the south property line so no height, bulk and scale impacts are expected along the southern boundary. Single family homes abut the property to the east, but they are topographically about 17 feet higher in elevation than the site. In addition the proposed one-story storage building will be about 90 feet away from the single family zoned properties. Single family homes are sited across South Kenny Street which is about 60 feet away from the proposed buildings. Development to the west across Rainier Avenue South is located about 140 feet away from the proposed building.

The project will provide generous landscaping; 93 existing and proposed trees and 3,870 shrubs. The proposed exterior finish materials consist of brick exposed steel canopies and pre-cast concrete sills. Design details, landscaping and finish materials will contribute towards mitigating the perception of height, bulk and scale in that these elements will break down the overall scale of the building. No further mitigation of height, bulk and scale impacts is warranted pursuant to SEPA policy (SMC 25.06.675.G.).

### **RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS - SEPA**

#### *During Construction*

The following condition(s) to be enforced during construction shall be posted at the site in a location on the property line that is visible and accessible to the public and to construction personnel from the street right-of-way. If more than one street abuts the site, conditions shall be posted at each street. The conditions will be affixed to placards prepared by DPD. The placards will be issued along with the building permit set of plans. The placards shall be laminated with clear plastic or other waterproofing material and shall remain posted on-site for the duration of the construction.

1. All construction activities are subject to the limitations of the Noise Ordinance. Construction activities (including but not limited to grading, deliveries, framing, roofing, and painting) shall be limited to non-holiday weekdays<sup>1</sup> from 7am to 6pm. Interior work using equipment within a completely enclosed structure, such as but not limited to compressors, portable-powered and pneumatic powered equipment may be allowed on Saturdays between 9am and 6pm, provided windows and doors remain closed. Non-noisy activities, such as site security, monitoring, weather protection shall not be limited by this condition.

Construction activities outside the above-stated restrictions may be authorized by the Land Use Planner when necessitated by unforeseen construction, safety, or street-use related situations. Requests for extended construction hours or weekend days must be submitted to the Land Use Planner at least three (3) days in advance of the requested dates in order to allow DPD to evaluate the request.

<sup>1</sup> New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Junior's Birthday, President's Day, Memorial Day, July 4, Labor Day, Veterans' Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day.

Signature: (signature on file)  
Jess Harris, Senior Land Use Planner  
Department of Planning and Development

Date: August 23, 2007