



City of Seattle

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor
Department of Planning & Development
D. M. Sugimura, Director

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

Application Number: 3005701
Applicant: Lesley Bain for Family services of King County
Address of Proposal: 1924 Rainier Avenue South

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION

Land Use Application to allow a three-story nonresidential structure containing 2,825 square feet of general sales and service, 29,035 square feet of office, and 6,213 square feet of childcare use. Accessory surface parking for 48 vehicles will be provided on site. Existing structures will be demolished under a separate permit.

The following Master Use Permit components are required:

Design Review - Section 23.41, Seattle Municipal Code (SMC)

1. Parking Space requirement 23.54.030.B
2. Parking Aisles minimum width 24 feet for large stall (Exhibit) 23.54.030.D

SEPA-Threshold Determination (Chapter 25.05 SMC).

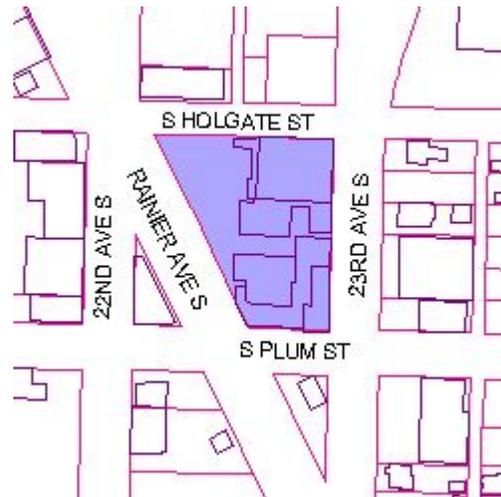
SEPA DETERMINATION: Exempt DNS MDNS EIS
 DNS with conditions
 DNS involving non-exempt grading or demolition or involving another agency with jurisdiction.

**Early Notice DNS published November 22, 2007

SITE BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Site Description

The development site occupies a total land area of approximately 42,246 square feet, in the Rainier Valley area of the Mount Baker neighborhood. The site zoned Commercial One with a height limit of 65 feet (C1-65) that occupies the entire area of a trapezoid block, with street frontage on South Holgate to the north, 23rd Avenue South to the east, South Plum Street to the south, and Rainier Avenue South to the west. The



subject site is also located within the North Rainier Hub Urban Village and the South Seattle Reinvestment Area. Additionally, the site is located in a designated Environmentally Critical Area (ECA), Liquefaction zone.

The site is fully developed with buildings, hard surface parking and loading areas, and perimeter landscaping. A number of vacant buildings once home to Artic Ice Cream occupy the development site. The previous tenants have long since left the site leaving the one and two-story buildings boarded up and locked.

The site slopes modestly upward from southwest to the northeast, approximately 8 feet over a distance of 240 feet, with a level area near the southwest half of the site. The streets abutting the subject site are fully developed rights-of-way with asphalt roadway; curbs, sidewalks and gutters. Both Rainier Avenue and 23rd Avenue are arterials with heavy traffic volumes.

Area Development

On either side of Rainier Avenue South, commercial development dominates the area with a mix of retail, restaurant, warehouse, industrial uses to name a few. Across the northeast corner of the 23rd and Holgate intersection are a number of residential zones, including a mix of Multifamily Lowrise Duplex Triplex (LDT) and Lowrise Two (L-2) zones that supports a varied assortment of residential units. The area of the subject site is relatively flat along Rainier, with a gentle slope upwards towards the east. Along Rainier Avenue, the C1-65 zone stays unchanged, with vacant land, surface parking and buildings well under the area's zoned height limit typifying this area. Dominating this area are the transportation corridors which include Rainier Avenue South connecting the south end of Seattle to Downtown, 23rd Avenue South connecting to University of Washington, and on and off-ramps serving Interstate 90 (I-90) traffic to and from the eastside of Lake Washington.

Proposal Description

The applicant, Family Services of King County, a non-profit organization that provides outreach social and counseling services for at-risk individuals and families, proposes to consolidate its services in one location. The proposal requires demolition of existing buildings to make way for redevelopment of the subject lot. The proposal will take advantage of the site's unique geometry and program requirements of Family Services. The building will extend three-stories above street grade to support a number of programs including; a childcare center, retail, community space, customer service and administrative office uses. The building will be oriented east and west, opening up to and activating abutting streets, Rainier and 23rd Avenues.

The building site layout is proposed to be more organic in design; three rectangular segments (east/west lengthwise orientation) will be connected by a recessed glass corridor. The segments will be graduated in length to take advantage of the diagonal west property line. This element is central to the overall design scheme that emphasizes natural light to filter into interior spaces. The building will establish a strong street presence scaled to neighboring properties, using modulation and spatial separation to visually enliven the area. The main pedestrian entry will be off Rainier Avenue with secondary entries taken off 23rd Avenue South. The glass corridors will allow east/west transparency – visually connecting the two street fronts.

Robust landscaping is proposed around the site's perimeter to establish a soft edge for the pedestrian within the right-of-way. A surface accessory parking lot is proposed on the subject lot's east portion. Due in part to the high level of vehicle activity within 23rd Avenue, parking access is proposed from the north and south. The surface parking lot will feature perimeter landscaping to reduce adverse visual impacts upon adjacent properties, and to enhance the development site. Special emphasis will be directed towards providing an attractive and inviting pedestrian oriented experience within all rights-of-way.

Public Comment:

Date of Notice of Application:	November 22, 2007
Date End of Comment Period:	December 5, 2007
# Letters	0

The SEPA comment period for this proposal ended on December 5, 2007. The Department received no comment letter during the public comment period.

No letters were received during the early design guidance phase.

ANALYSIS - DESIGN REVIEW

Early Design Guidance

On June 12, 2007, the Design Review Board of Area 4 met in an Early Design Guidance (EDG) meeting to consider the site and design objectives of the applicant. After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site, design context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment the Design Review Board members provided the following siting and design guidance, and identified by letter (A, B, and C, etc.) and number (1, 2, & 3) those siting and design guidelines found in the City of Seattle's "*Design Review: Guidelines for Multifamily & Commercial Buildings*" of highest priority to this project.

A Site Planning

A-1 Responding to Site Characteristics

The siting of buildings should respond to specific site conditions and opportunities.

A-2 Streetscape Compatibility

The siting of buildings should acknowledge and reinforce the existing desirable spatial characteristics of the right-of-way.

A-3 Entrances Visible from the Street

Entries should be clearly identifiable and visible from the street.

A-8 Parking and Vehicle Access

Siting should minimize the impact of automobile parking and driveways on the pedestrian environment, adjacent properties and pedestrian safety.

A-10 Corner Lots

Buildings on corner lots should be oriented to the corner and public street fronts. Parking and automobile access should be located away from corners.

B Height, Bulk and Scale

B-1 Projects should be compatible with the scale of development anticipated by the applicable Land Use Policies for the surrounding area and should be sited and designed to provide a sensitive transition to nearby, less-intensive zones.

C Architectural Elements and Materials

C-2 Architectural Concept and Consistency

Building design elements, details and massing should create a well-proportioned and unified building form and exhibit an overall architectural concept. Buildings should exhibit form and features identifying the functions within the building. In general, the roofline or top of the structure should be clearly distinguishable from its façade walls.

C-3 Human Scale

The design of new buildings should incorporate architectural features, elements and details to achieve a good human scale.

C-4 Exterior Finish Materials

Building exteriors should be constructed of durable and maintainable materials that are attractive even when viewed up close. Materials that have texture, pattern, or lend themselves to a high quality of detailing are encouraged

D Pedestrian Environment

D-1 Pedestrian Open Space and Entrances

Convenient and attractive access to the building's entry should be provided. To ensure comfort and security, paths and entry areas should be sufficiently lighted and entry areas should be protected from the weather. Opportunities for creating lively, pedestrian-oriented open space should be considered.

D-2 Blank Walls

Buildings should avoid large blank walls facing the street, especially near sidewalks. Where blank walls are unavoidable, they should receive design treatment to increase pedestrian comfort and interest.

D-4 Design of Parking Lots Near Sidewalks

Parking lots near sidewalks should provide adequate security and lighting, avoid encroachment of vehicles onto the sidewalk, and minimize the visual clutter of parking lot signs and equipment.

D-6 Screening of Dumpsters, Utilities and Services Areas

Building sites should locate service elements like trash dumpsters, loading docks and mechanical equipment away from the street front where possible. When elements such as dumpsters, utility meters, mechanical units and service areas cannot be located away from the street front, they should be situated and screened from view and should not be located in the pedestrian right-of-way.

D-7 Personal Safety and Security

Project design should consider opportunities for enhancing personal safety and security in the environment under review.

D-11 Commercial Transparency

Commercial storefronts should be transparent, allowing for a direct visual connection between pedestrians on the sidewalk and the activities occurring on the interior of a building. Blank walls should be avoided.

E Landscaping

E-1 landscaping to Reinforce Design Continuity with Adjacent Sites

Where possible, and where there is not another overriding concern, landscaping should reinforce the character of neighboring properties and abutting streetscape.

E-2 Landscaping to Enhance the Building and/or Site

Landscaping, including living plants, special pavement, trellises, screen walls, planters, site furniture and similar features should be appropriately incorporated into the design to enhance the project.

E-3 Landscape Design to Address Special Site Conditions

The landscape design should take advantage of special on-site conditions such as high-bank front yards, steep slopes, view corridors, or existing significant trees and off-site conditions such as greenbelts, ravines, natural areas, and boulevards.

Overall, the Board felt that the preferred alternative was well conceived and represented quality design. Ensuring a well proportioned scale at the development site is a critical factor to successfully integrate the project into the existing neighborhood fabric. The design team should pay particular attention to the outdoor childcare play area due to its proximity to the heavily traveled Rainier Avenue with its potentially for adverse impacts. In addition, Rainier's street frontage must resolve street-level transparency concerns to activate the pedestrian environment within the public right-of-way. Directed attention should focus on upper level fenestration to reduce the appearance of the buildings mass while minimizing glare. The design team should incorporate design elements as necessary to create quality infill development; utilizing building materials and massing sensitive to adjacent zones. The Board felt that there should be more attention to the impacts of the proposed surface parking lot on the abutting street fronts. Parking at grade must be designed with the highest level of effort to minimize visual presence.

The community/meeting room is in an appropriate location to maximize solar exposure, with direct access to South Plum Street. The Board encouraged the design team to provide a full kitchen in the meeting room space to offer wider options for the neighborhood. Experience has shown that providing a full kitchen creates greater flexibility for users of the space, and opens up more opportunities to rent out the space.

Summary: The previously stated design guidelines were all chosen by the Board to be high priority. The Board wants the developer to engage the streetscape wherever possible and scale the design to integrate itself into area at a site with two significant street frontages; Rainier Avenue and 23rd Avenue South.

Design Review Board Recommendations

On November 5, 2007, the applicant submitted the full Master Use Permit application, and on December 11, 2007, the Southeast Design Review Board (Area 4) convened for the recommendation meeting. The applicant team presented elevation renderings, site plans that responded to design guidelines set forth by the Board during the previous meeting. The applicant requested two development standard departures from the City's Land Use Code:

- Parking Space
- Parking Aisle

Updated Design:

Since the Early Design Guidance Meeting held on June 12, 2007, there have been a number of refinements that have affected the size and configuration of the proposed development. These include:

Building Mass: During the EDG meeting the building’s mass was loaded towards Rainier Avenue. The most western extent of the proposed building wings ran parallel to Rainier Avenue. In order to increase the amount of natural light into the open space areas with western exposure the design team squared-off the building’s wings at the southwest corner. This reconfiguration increased the amount of natural light between the wings and reduced the volume of the solid portion of the structure adjacent to the common area and the right-of-way. This design decreases the building’s mass as viewed from the south and west, while strengthening it’s presence along the Rainier Avenue and South Plum streetscape, without dominating the corner.

Parking: After consulting SDOT, City Light, and DPD, access to parking has been redesigned to minimize potential adverse impacts of vehicle congestion within the right-of-way. Exit only driveway will be allowed through South Holgate, with a two-way driveway adjacent to South Plum Street. Additionally, the solid waste area has been located to the far northeast corner of the proposed surface parking lot. Berming and landscaping will be employed to minimize adverse visual impacts both on and off-site. The amount of trees and shrubbery will be increased in the parking lot to augment perimeter landscaping to further mitigate 48 parking stalls.

Public Comments

Approximately twelve (12) members of the community were in attendance during the December 11, 2007, Final Recommendation meeting. A member from the neighborhood thanked the applicants for a design that would be a positive addition to the neighborhood, and encouraged the Board to approve all requested departures. Another member from the public suggested that the parking lot should be lower than the sidewalk level, if possible to reduce visual impacts on properties to the east. The overall design is well conceived and thoughtful, but landscaping in the parking lot should be a high priority. With the number of plants in the parking lot protecting trees and shrubbery is crucial to avoiding a ‘strip mall-like’ parking lot. The location of the dumpster is definitely a problem; it should be relocated or made durable and attractive. One member thought that the original design of the angled exterior walls, running parallel to Rainier, were much better than the squared-off right angle walls of the current design.

Two *departures* from standards of the Land Use Code were requested by the applicant at the time of the meeting and summarized below:

<i>Development Standard</i>	<i>Requirement</i>	<i>Proposed</i>	<i>Comment/Ratio nal BY Architect</i>	<i>Board Recommendation</i>
<i>1. Parking aisle dimensions 23.54.030.E</i>	<i>For large stall length (19) at 90 degree angle, 24 foot aisle is required</i>	<i>22 feet.</i>	<i>To increase the amount landscaping buffer adjacent 23rd Avenue to minimize impervious surfaces.</i>	<i>The board will consider the departure on seeing how the project better meets the design guidelines</i>

<p>2. Parking Space Requirements 23.54.030.B</p>	<p><i>When twenty or more parking stalls are provided for nonresidential use a minimum of thirty-five (35) percent and the maximum shall be of sixty-five (65) percent of the parking spaces shall be striped for small vehicles. A minimum of thirty-five (35) percent of the spaces shall be striped for large vehicles.</i></p>	<p><i>Large (19' by 8.5') stalls provided (9) or 18.75 %.</i></p>	<p><i>To deemphasize vehicles and accommodate the siting of additional trees in the parking lot.</i></p>	<p><i>The board will consider the departure on seeing how the project better meets the design guidelines</i></p>
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Board Discussion

After considering design plan, project context, hearing public comments, and reconsidering the previously stated priorities, the Board began their deliberations by providing a general assessment of the project proposal and its impact on the neighborhood. Ensuring an elegantly detailed building at the development site is a critical factor to successfully integrate the project into the existing neighborhood fabric. Board members acknowledged their appreciation of Family Services for reestablishing their ties to the neighborhood and for taking steps to build a sense of community through design, both internally and externally.

Discussion ensued among the Board, including support of requested departures, exterior cladding, landscaping, and resolution of surface parking lot layout. The Board accepted the applicant’s proposal with recommended conditions to better achieve a design that is at once complimentary to the surrounding neighborhood, yet bold in making a vibrant architectural statement. The Board expects the planner to work out the details with the architect prior to issuing the Master Use Permit.

The Board liked the design team’s response to guideline priorities set on June 12, 2007. The revised building mass closest to Rainier Avenue has spatially opened up two courtyards to allow additional natural light to brighten internal areas between the east/west building segments. The squaring off of the west end walls is an appropriate response to site characteristics that the Board supports. The Board next turned their attention to signage. The lack of signage detail along Rainier was puzzling. The Board felt that Rainier and 23rd Avenue frontages warranted signage that is visible and integrated into building or landscaping. Based on the design packet presented thus far, the Board was confident that the design team would find the appropriate design solution. **Therefore, the Board recommended the applicant work with DPD to find an appropriate design solution for the placement or design of the signage.** (*Guidelines A-1, A-3, C-2, C-3, D-1, D-9, & E-2*)

The Board strongly supported the proposed material palette which includes smooth faced CMU at the base, two types of metal siding on the upper level, and aluminum framed windows. The interplay of light and dark colors and the juxtaposition of solid and transparent surfaces on exterior walls are invigorating. The glass corridors connecting the three solid wings will allow visibility to adjacent street fronts to the west and east. The arrangement of solid walls and distribution of colors help to ground the building solidly to the site while minimizing the

appearance of bulk upon adjacent uses. The Board was satisfied the selected colors and materials met the design objectives for the location. Metal visors have been placed above the upper level windows to lessen glare from natural sunlight. **The Board was very supportive of the proposed design, specifically including the owner's desire to seek Silver LEED Certification.** (*Guidelines A-1, A-10, C-2, C-4, D-2, & D-11*)

The siting and layout of the solid waste area continues to be problematic. It would be more appropriate if the dumpster was located in or near the building. If it needs to be sited in its current location exploring taller screening walls may prove beneficial. A bunker approach with green features could conceivably work if it is integrated into the proposed landscaping. If designed correctly, a green fence, wall, or bunker should lessen adverse impacts on adjacent areas. The Board wants this area to be as inconspicuous as possible. The recycle area may need to be fully enclosed to mitigate odor, noise, safety concerns, and adverse visual impacts in and around pedestrian areas. Therefore, **the Board recommended a more rigorous design solution to the placement or design of the recycle station. The applicant will explore alternatives to minimize the presence of the solid waste station with implementing stronger screening elements and/or relocation. Reducing potential odors is a high value element in the design progression.** (*Guidelines A-1, A-10, C-4, D-4, D-6, E-2 & E-3*)

The applicant has created dynamic and lively facade surfaces framed within robust landscaping to animate the pedestrian street experience. The concern is the parking lot where the departures have been requested. The Board is sensitive to the potential adverse impacts associated with surface parking lots adjacent to sidewalks. The planting schedule in the landscape plan documented intensive vegetation in and around the parking lot. To be successful in reducing visual intrusion of the parking lot adjacent to the public right-of-way, plant density should be increased. The architect should work with DPD on the details for improvements to the parking lot. **The Board recommended that the applicant explore greening up and softening the parking lot along Holgate, 23rd, and South Plum. This area should be more visually calming owing in part to the volume of users within the abutting streets.** (*Guidelines A-1, A-10, D-4, D-6, D-7, E-2 & E-3*)

In order to facilitate alternative modes of travel to and from the subject lot, the Board recommends the design team to consider adding protected bicycle stalls in more prominent locations. The architect should work with DPD on the details for improvements to the proposal as identified above. The Board supports the pull-out along South Holgate. It provides an opportunity for off-site loading on a side street that is moderately traveled. **The Board was very supportive of the proposed right-of-way improvements and would like to extend to SDOT their unanimous support for the proposed design, specifically including the pull-out along South Holgate Street.** (*Guidelines A-1, A-8, D-7, & E-2*)

Departure Analysis

1. *To allow alternatives to Parking Space Requirements (SMC 23.54.030.B.2.c).*

When twenty (20) or more parking stalls are provided for nonresidential use, a minimum of thirty-five (35) and a maximum of sixty-five (65) percent of the parking spaces may be striped

for small vehicles. A minimum of thirty-five (35) percent of the spaces shall be striped for large vehicles. The applicant proposes to provide 18.75% (or nine) large parking stalls to plant trees and shrubbery within the parking lot to provide better screening to minimize visual impacts of the surface parking lot upon adjacent streets. The planting beds will break up the impervious surface and improve air quality at the site. An indirect benefit in granting the alternative reduction in large stall space requirement, by providing eight (8) medium stalls spaces (16' by 8'), is to deemphasize use of large vehicles and encourage smaller vehicles. The Board supported a design that deftly deployed landscaping within the surface parking lot and maximized emphasis of the pedestrian experience. **Owing in part to the graphics presented at the recommendation meeting, the Board recommended approval of the alternative to providing less large stalls with the understanding that additional measures to soften and green-up the parking lot with additional plants and provide measures to screen the solid waste station from vehicles and pedestrians was warranted. (Design Guidelines: A-3, A-8, D-1, D-4, D-6, E-2, & E-3).**

2. *Parking Aisles minimum width 24 feet for large stall (SMC 23.54.030.E)*

Minimum aisle widths shall be provided for the largest vehicles served by the aisle. The development proposes large parking stalls (8.5 feet by 19 feet) for the nonresidential use which requires 24 feet horizontal clearance. The applicant proposes to reduce the horizontal clearance to 22 feet in an attempt to deemphasize the importance of vehicles maneuvering within the surface parking lot, in support of establishing a strong pedestrian environment. The site design proposes a continuous landscape buffer along 23rd to soften its edge to the east which has effectively encroached into the spatial layout of the parking lot; directly impacting aisle width. The applicant has demonstrated that vehicles can maneuver safely in and out the stalls spaces with little to no negative impact. Other than causing minor inconveniences of requiring an additional maneuver or two the design scheme is well conceived. Trees are planted throughout the parking lot area may be compromised with additional maneuvering. **Therefore, the Board recommended protective devices be installed around trees or planting beds. Otherwise, the Board felt that the design objectives expressed during EDG were achieved in the proposed design. (Design Guidelines: A-3, A-8, D-4 & E-2)**

The five Board members present recommended that the design should be approved with the refinements noted to be worked out with DPD. In particular; the solid waste recycling area in the parking lot should be screened to minimize visual intrusion, denser landscaping in parking area, and thoughtful signage integrated into site design (building's exterior elements or landscape should find expression) are all warranted. The Board also recommends approval of all the requested departures as stated in the departure matrix. Thus, the project should move forward as designed.

Summary of Departures

<i>Development Standard</i>	<i>Requirement</i>	<i>Proposed</i>	<i>Comment/Ratio nal BY Architect</i>	<i>Board Recommendation</i>
<i>1. Parking aisle dimensions 23.54.030.E</i>	<i>For large stall length (19) at 90 degree angle, 24 foot aisle is required</i>	<i>22 feet.</i>	<i>To increase the amount landscaping buffer adjacent 23rd Avenue to minimize impervious surfaces.</i>	<i>Approve (Design Guidelines: A-1, A-8, D-4, D-6, E-2, & E-3).</i>
<i>2. Parking Space Requirements 23.54.030.B</i>	<i>When twenty or more parking stalls are provided for nonresidential use a minimum of thirty-five (35) percent and the maximum shall be of sixty-five (65) percent of the parking spaces shall be striped for small vehicles. A minimum of thirty-five (35) percent of the spaces shall be striped for large vehicles.</i>	<i>Large (19' by 8.5') stalls provided (9) or 18.75 %.</i>	<i>To deemphasize vehicles and accommodate the siting of additional trees in the parking lot.</i>	<i>Approve (Design Guidelines: A-1, A-8, D-4, D-6, E-1, E-2, & E-3).</i>

Summary of Boards' Recommendations:

The recommendations summarized below were based on the plans submitted at the December 11, 2007 meeting. Design, siting or architectural details not specifically identified or altered in these recommendations are expected to remain as presented in the plans and other drawings submitted for review on November 5, 2007. After considering the site and context, hearing public comment, reconsidering the previously identified design priorities, and reviewing the plans and renderings, the five Design Review Board members recommended approval of the subject design and departures with conditions. The Board made the following recommendations. (Authority referred to in letter and numbers are in parenthesis):

1. The Board was very supportive of the proposed sidewalk improvements and would like to extend to SDOT their unanimous support for the proposed design, specifically including the proposed pull out area along South Holgate. (*Guidelines A-1, A-8, D-7, & E-2*)
2. Explore a more rigorous design solution to the placement or design of the recycle area. The applicant will explore alternatives to minimize the presence of the solid waste station with implementing stronger screening elements and/or relocation. Reducing potential odors is a high value element in the design progression. (*Guidelines A-1, A-10, C-4, D-4, D-6, E-2 & E-3*)
3. Applicant shall green up and soften the parking lot along Holgate, 23rd, and South Plum Street. This area should be more visually calming with dense landscaping owing in part

to the volume of individuals who use the abutting streets. (*Guidelines A-1, A-10, D-4, D-6, D-7, E-2 & E-3*)

4. Explore additional measures to soften and green-up the parking lot's interior area with additional plants, and provide protection from vehicles maneuvering in the area. (*Design Guidelines: A-3, A-8, D-1, D-4, D-6, E-2, & E-3*).
5. Applicant shall work with DPD to find an appropriate design solution to the placement or design of the signage that is visible from Rainier Avenue South and 23rd Avenue South. (*Guidelines A-1, A-3, B-1, C-2, C-3, D-1 & E-2*)

Director's Analysis and Decision : Design Review

The Design Review Board recommended that the assigned planner should work with the applicant to resolve several Board recommendations prior to final DPD approval. DPD is equally pleased with the overall building design but as was noted in the recommendation meeting by the Board, the street level pedestrian experience needs additional design development adjacent to the parking lot. Further, the Director is authorized to provide additional analysis and then accept, deny or revise the Board's recommendations (SMC 23.41.014.F) to advance the proposal forward. The Design Review Board identified elements of the Design Guidelines (above) which are critical to the project's overall success with concurrence of the Director.

The location of the development site presents a unique design opportunity given its four street frontages that each have distinct pedestrian activity demands that requires individual attention. The architect has responded to the comments and concerns of both the public and the Design Review Board and has established a distinctively design commercial building from the vantage points from all street frontages. With minor lapses, the siting of the proposed structure set within a landscaped frame, is well thought out and executed. In particular, the squaring off of the exterior walls along Rainier served to address two major concerns of potential adverse impacts of heavy traffic volumes adjacent to outdoor activity areas; the reduction of solid wall surfaces has increase natural light and reduce sound reverberation. The design response to elevate the outdoor courtyard above the sidewalk, and framed with landscaping that included bench high seating walls abutting the sidewalk, has served to strengthen the Rainier streetscape experience and secure the childcare play, which the Director considers to be a high quality design response. Subsequent conversations with the applicant after the recommendation meeting to resolve other design details, the applicant reiterated their desire to maintain a high level of landscaping to ensure protective screening of the outdoor childcare play area.

The design of the new building (containing three floors of commercial uses) is proportionally similar in scale, proportion and materials, but reduces the appearance of bulk through use of modulation, expansive glazing and rhythmic structural frame schemes. The design of the proposed structure reinvigorates architectural elements found in the area with modern touches to provide visual interest that seeks a sense of individuality. The proposed building establishes a strong street presence through a unique design that is well under the allowed underlying zoned height limit. The structure's bulk and scale will have a good relationship with surrounding

properties that contain one and two-story structures. Facade materials and color are well suited for its location.

The Director shared similar concerns with the Board, the surface parking lot layout with accessory use areas needed additional refinement. Since the conclusion of the recommendation meeting the applicant has had several conversations to resolve the screening of the solid wastes station and increasing vegetation density. Plant species which provide a denser foliage or canopy area have been added in key locations. As well as, screening of the recycling area has been adequately addressed to the satisfaction of the Director. An agreement in principal has been reached between to applicant and DPD with regard to signage detail. Final design detail will be secured prior to final approval of associated building permit. In all cases the Director of DPD affirms the Board conclusions and will support the proposed pull out street improvement.

The Director of DPD has reviewed the recommendations and conditions of the Design Review Board. The Director finds that the proposal is consistent with the *City of Seattle Design Review Guidelines for Multifamily & Commercial Buildings Design Guidelines*. The Director **APPROVES** the subject design consistent with the Board's recommendations above. This decision is based on the Design Review Board's final recommendations and on the plans submitted at the public meeting on December 11, 2007 and the plans on file at DPD. Design, siting or architectural details not specifically identified or altered in this decision are expected to remain substantially as presented in the plans submitted to DPD on November 5, 2007.

ANALYSIS - SEPA

The initial disclosure of the potential impacts from this project was made in the environmental checklist submitted by the applicant (dated November 5, 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.

Traffic - Construction activities are expected to affect the surrounding area. Impacts to traffic and roads are expected from truck trips during earth moving activities. The SEPA Overview Policy (SMC 25.05.665) and the SEPA construction Impacts Policy (SMC 25.05.675B) allow the reviewing agency to mitigate impacts associated with transportation during construction. The excavation of the lower levels will require the removal of material from site and can be expected to generate truck trips to and from the site. In addition, delivery of concrete and other materials to the site will generate truck trips. As a result of these truck trips, an adverse impact to existing traffic will be introduced to the surrounding street system, which is unmitigated by existing codes and regulations.

It is expected that most of the material to be removed from the site will be due in part to demolition and excavation for the at-grade building will have nominal impact on surrounding properties. During excavation a single-loaded truck will be used which holds approximately 10 cubic yards of material. This will require approximately 115 truck loads to remove approximately 1,150 cubic yards of material and may require a nominal number of trucks loads of fill material for regarding purposes. The site has ready access to I-90 and I-5, approximately 5 miles away to the furthest point, via primary arterials that are anticipated to have minor impacts on the neighboring thoroughfares. In order to limit this negative impact as much as possible, a Truck Trip Plan will be required and approved by SDOT prior to issuance of a building permit. The Truck Trip Plan shall delineate the routes of trucks carrying project-related materials, and include a limitation of truck trips during peak hours, which are from 7 AM to 9 AM and 4 PM to 6 PM.

Noise - Most of the initial construction activity including demolition, excavation, foundation work, and framing will require loud equipment and will have adverse impacts on nearby residences. The protection levels of the Noise Ordinance are considered inadequate for the potential noise impacts on the nearby residential uses. The impacts upon residential uses would be especially adverse in the early morning, in the evening and on weekends. The SEPA Overview Policy (SMC 25.05.665) and the SEPA Construction Impacts Policy (SMC 25.05.675 B) allow the reviewing agency to limit the hours of construction in order to mitigate adverse noise impacts. Pursuant to this policy, and because there are residences in the vicinity, the applicant will be required to limit construction hours. Demolition and construction activities taking place within an enclosed structure, which meet the standards of the Noise Ordinance, are allowed. Construction activities (including but not limited to demolition, grading, deliveries, framing, roofing, and painting) shall be limited to non-holiday weekdays from 7am to 6pm. Interior work that involves mechanical equipment, including compressors and generators, may be allowed on Saturdays between 9am and 6pm once the shell of the structure is completely enclosed, 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

Air and Environmental Health - 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 multifamily structures 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.

Height, Bulk, and Scale

The proposed three-story project will rise to approximately 47.5 feet to the top of the parapet from the lowest sidewalk elevation grade along the South Plum Street. The development site and surrounding area is located within a Commercial One zone with a height limit of 65 feet (C1-65). The proposed structure will be the tallest building within the immediate area, but well under the allowable height limit by approximately 17.5 feet, as would otherwise be allowed by code. The adjacent lots contain one-story structures that are considerably undersized for the zoned height and would be prime candidates for redevelopment. The proposed building's height is scaled within the existing structure height envelope to lessen its visual impact in the area. The development site occupies an irregular shaped block, with adjacent building stepping down by two-stories on either side. The proposed project is being developed well under allowed C1-65 height standards, as allowed by the Land Use Code, and is thereby in keeping with the scale of the potential of the zone as well as being sensitive to existing structures in the vicinity.

The SEPA Height, Bulk and Scale Policy (Sec. 25.05.675.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, the shoreline goals and policies set forth in Section D-4 of the land use element of the Seattle Comprehensive Plan, the procedures and locational criteria for shoreline environment redesignations set forth in SMC Sections 23.60.060, and 23.60.220, and the adopted land use regulations for the area in which*

they are located, and to provide for a reasonable transition between areas of less intensive zoning and more intensive zoning.”

In addition, the SEPA Height, Bulk and Scale Policy states that “(a) *project that is approved pursuant to the Design Review Process shall be presumed to comply with these Height, Bulk and Scale policies. This presumption may be rebutted only by clear and convincing evidence that height, bulk and scale impacts documented through environmental review have not been adequately mitigated.*” Since the discussion in the previous paragraph indicates that there are no significant height, bulk and scale impacts as contemplated within this SEPA policy, and since the Design Review Board approved this project with conditions, no mitigation of height, bulk and scale impacts is warranted pursuant to this SEPA policy.

Traffic and Transportation

The applicant submitted a Trip Generation Analysis, prepared by Transportation Solutions, Inc., that addressed on-site parking demand. The report contrasted existing and proposed uses at the development site with impacts associated with personal trip generation. Trip generation for the proposal was determined by employing figures derived from Trip Generation (*Institute of Transportation Engineers’ [ITE], Trip Generation Manual, 7th Edition, 2003*). Quantitative values found within the reference document reflect nationwide studies in suburban communities that are not necessarily representative of urban trends. Adjustments were made to more accurately capture the nature of the social services support agency (Family Services of King County) that would operate a retail and childcare use for their clientele. The report contained a conservative trip generation analysis that did not take into consideration split mode (personal vehicle, bus, light rail, bicycle, and pedestrian foot traffic) travel analysis. Consequently the net trip totals are higher than would otherwise be expected in urban areas.

The proposed project is anticipated to generate 376 vehicle trips per day, 60 vehicle trips during the AM peak hour, and 55 vehicle trips during the PM peak hour. The net increase in total daily vehicle trips to the development site is 254. With an increase of approximately 45 trips during the AM peak hour and 39 trips during the PM peak hours anticipated from the existing uses, this increase is not expected to have a substantial impact on the surrounding roadways.

Circulation within the area includes bus routes providing access to downtown and other employment destinations. There are also many dining, shopping, medical and entertainment opportunities within walking/bicycling distance and along the public transit routes. The proposed nonresidential use at the development site is expected to draw clientele from its social service network. It is anticipated that Rainier and 23rd Avenue, primary arterials, will handle the increase demand falling within its capacity. After discussion with SDOT, access to and from the site was limited to the side streets (Holgate & Plum) to mitigate potential stacking impacts within Rainier & 23rd arterials. The amount of traffic expected to be generated by 48 parking stalls devoted to Family Services of King County’s clientele is within the capacity of the streets in the immediate area, so no SEPA mitigation of traffic impacts is warranted.

Parking

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 is limited and does not appear to be near capacity. Parking can be found during the daytime with limited availability during evening hours. Forty-eight (48) off-street parking spaces will be provided on-site for the new use. Required commercial parking for the types of uses proposed is forty (40) stalls. The applicant has chosen to provide eight (8) additional stalls to accommodate spill-over demand, if any actually occurs.

On-street parking capacity in the surrounding area is sufficient to meet any additional spill-over parking that might be generated from the proposed commercial uses, if any actually occurs. Therefore, no mitigation of parking impacts is necessary pursuant to SEPA.

CONCLUSION - SEPA

In conclusion, several adverse effects on the environment are anticipated resulting from the proposal, which are non-significant. 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.

DECISION - SEPA

This decision was made after review by the responsible official on behalf of DPD as the lead agency of the 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 requirement of the State Environmental Policy Act (RCW 43.21.C), including the requirement to inform the public of agency decisions pursuant to SEPA.

- [X] 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(2)(C).
- [] Determination of Significance. This proposal has or may have a significant adverse impact upon the environment with respect to transportation, circulation, and parking. An EIS limited in scope to this specific area of the environment was therefore required under RCW 43.21C.030(2)(C).

CONDITIONS – DESIGN REVIEW

The owner/applicant shall update plans to show:

Non-appealable conditions

1. Embed all conditions of approval into the cover sheet on the updated MUP plan set and all subsequent building permit drawings.
2. Embed colored elevation and landscape drawings into the MUP and building permit drawings.

3. Any proposed changes to the external design of the building, landscaping or improvements in the public right-of-way must first be reviewed and approved by the DPD planner prior to construction.

Prior to issuance of MUP

4. Explore a more rigorous design solution to the placement or design of the recycle area. The applicant will explore alternatives to minimize the presence of the solid waste station with implementing stronger screening elements and/or relocation. Reducing potential odors is a high value element in the design progression, subject to DPD approval.
5. Revise plan set illustrating additional landscaping to green up and soften the parking lot along Holgate, 23rd, and South Plum Street. This area should be more visually calming with denser landscaping owing in part to the volume of pedestrian and vehicle activity within the abutting streets, subject to DPD approval.
6. Explore additional measures to soften and green-up the parking lot's interior area with additional plants, and provide protection from vehicles maneuvering in the area, subject to DPD approval.
7. Applicant shall work with DPD to find an appropriate design solution to the placement or design of the signage that is visible from Rainier Avenue South and 23rd Avenue South, subject to DPD approval.
8. Revise plan set to comply with outstanding zoning corrections identified in Correction Notice dated 1/29/08.

After Issuance of Building permit and Prior to Groundbreaking

9. Arrange a pre-construction meeting with the building contractor, building inspector, and land use planner to discuss expectations and details of the Design Review component of the project.

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.

10. All proposed changes to the exterior facades of the building and landscaping on site and in the ROW must be reviewed by a Land Use Planner prior to proceeding with any proposed changes.

Prior to Issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy

11. Compliance with the approved design features and elements, including exterior materials, parapets, facade colors, landscaping and ROW improvements, shall be verified by the

DPD Planner assigned to this project or by the Manager of the Urban Design Program. Inspection appointments with the Planner must be made at least 3 working days in advance of the inspection.

SEPA CONDITIONS

The owner(s) and/or responsible party(s) shall:

Prior to Issuance of Construction Permit

12. The owner(s) and/or responsible party(s) shall submit a copy to DPD of any required PSCAA Demolition Permit(s).
13. Submit a Truck Trip Plan to be approved by SDOT prior to issuance of a building permit. The Truck Trip Plan shall delineate the routes of trucks carrying project-related materials, and include a limitation of truck trips during peak hours, which are from 7 AM to 9 AM and 4 PM to 6 PM

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 weatherproofing material and shall remain in place for the duration of construction.

14. In order to further mitigate the noise impacts during construction, the owner(s) and/or responsible party(s) shall limit the hours of construction to non-holiday weekdays between 7:00 AM and 6:00 PM and Saturdays between 9:00 AM and 6:00 PM. This condition may be modified by the Department to permit work of an emergency nature to allow low noise exterior work (e.g., installation of landscaping) or to allow work which cannot otherwise be accomplished during the above hours upon submittal of a noise mitigation plan and after approval from the Land Use Planner. After the structures are enclosed, interior work may proceed at any time in compliance with the Noise Ordinance.

Signature: _____ (signature on file) Date: January 31, 2008

Bradley Wilburn, Land Use Planner
Land Use Services
Department of Planning and Development

BW:bg