



City of Seattle

Mike McGinn, Mayor

Department of Planning and Development

Diane M. Sugimura, Director

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

Application Number: 3008623
Applicant Name: Paul Meyer with the Port of Seattle
Address of Proposal: 2211 Elliott Ave

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION

Land Use Application to allow The Port of Seattle to increase the peak parking capacity of the existing combined parking facilities (World Trade Center).

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

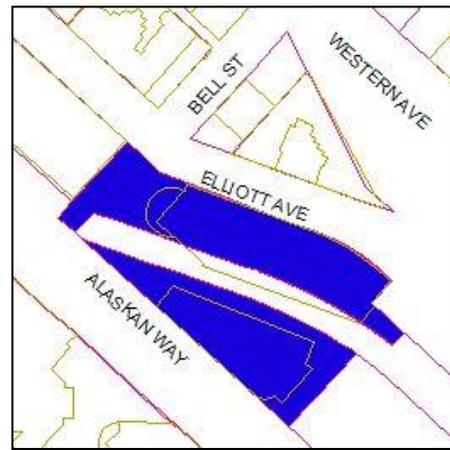
Special Exception to allow non-residential parking pursuant to SMC 23.49.019 C.2.

SEPA DETERMINATION: Exempt¹ DNS MDNS EIS
 DNS with conditions
 DNS involving non-exempt grading, or demolition, or involving another agency with jurisdiction.

BACKGROUND DATA

Three parking garages, built independently during the past two decades, were designed to function as a combined facility, operated as the Bell Street Pier/World Trade Center parking garage. The combined parking facility includes a single internal vehicle circulation plan, with common entrance/exit gates.

The Port of Seattle is seeking to increase peak capacity of the combined parking facility by 40 additional vehicles during seasonal cruise vessel operations at the Bell Street Pier Cruise Terminal (located at Pier 66) and during short term high use periods when events and conferences at Pier 66 and adjacent facilities coincide with cruise vessel operations. The purpose of the following information and attached materials is to describe existing



¹ Pursuant to **Director’s Rule 17-2008**, Section 1.B., the “construction or addition of parking spaces up to the threshold level of 40 parking spaces is exempt from SEPA review.”

conditions at the previously approved commercial buildings and parking garages comprising the present combined parking facility and to request a Special Exception to Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) 23.49.019 C., which limits parking for non-residential uses.

The Special Exception request includes the following principal elements:

1. Increase vehicle capacity in the combined parking structure from 1,557 vehicle spaces previously approved by DPD by an additional 40 vehicles, establishing 1,597 as the maximum number of vehicles allowed to be parked in the combined 3-garage facility.
2. Manage the additional vehicle capacity by providing dense, stacked valet parking in the World Trade Center East parking garage.
3. Implement valet-stacked parking operations as a specific response to vehicle capacity needs resulting from seasonal cruise vessel service at the Bell Street Pier Cruise Terminal/Pier 66 (generally, from late April through October) and for special events, particularly coincident conferences and events at the Pier 66 International Conference Center, Marriott Hotel Conference Center, Port of Seattle Pier 69 offices, and at adjacent commercial sites.

Site Description:

The subject property is bounded by Blanchard Street on the south, Alaskan Way on the west, Wall Street on the north, and Elliott Avenue on the east. The site is Zoned Downtown Harborfront (DH). During the period 1980 through 1999, three separate developments were constructed on the subject site, each with a multi-level parking garage beneath it. As each project was constructed, its associated parking garage was connected to the existing adjacent garage structure(s), combining all three parking garages into a single facility, with approval for a maximum of 1,557 parking spaces.

Plans submitted for the Stacked Parking & Valet Operations illustrates the location of the Shoreline District Boundary for the proposal, which bisects the World Trade Center (WTC) West Garage (one of the two structures comprising the development), and does not include any portion of the WTC East Garage, where the valet-stacked parking would occur.

Art Institute and Parking Garage: The first of three projects constructed at the site was the Art Institute building and parking garage. The Art Institute building consists of 73,340 square feet of development with a five level parking garage below, and is located at 2301 Elliott Ave. (Parcel #6780950000). At the time of application, the City's parking code changed such that Downtown Harborfront Zone parking requirements were eliminated. As a result no additional spaces were required to accommodate the Art Institute use. Project # 8502258 was approved, allowing 650 and currently providing 624 parking spaces in the Art Institute Parking Garage. The Art Institute parking garage also serves commercial and institutional uses on the west side of Alaskan Way at Pier 69 and Pier 69, the latter including the Port of Seattle headquarter offices, Victoria Clipper transportation, and Seafloor Survey International offices, on the west side of Alaskan Way (labeled as POS Offices, at the top of Attachment A).

World Trade Center Buildings and Parking Garages: The second project at the site was the World Trade Center (WTC) Project, consisting of the WTC-East Building (191,000 square feet), located east of the rail line corridor bisecting the site (2211 Elliott Ave./Parcel #1977200187), and the WTC-West Building (70,000 square feet), located on the west side of the rail corridor, between the rail line and Alaskan Way (2200 Elliott Ave./Parcel #1977200135). In combination, a total of 261,000 square feet of commercial development was approved by Project #s 9600428 and 9604376, which included a Special Exception allowing 315 additional striped parking spaces, or a maximum of 581 spaces. There are currently 534 spaces located in the five-level parking garage below the WTC-East building (which also serves uses a Pier 66, located west of Alaskan Way), plus a single-level, 34-space, parking garage below the WTC-West building. Note that due to its location west of the BNSF rail corridor, the WTC-West parking garage is not connected to the WTC-East Garage, and is therefore operated independently from the combined 3-garage parking structure, with a separate entrance/exit from Alaskan Way at the southwest corner of the WTC-West building site.

Wall Street Building and Parking Garage: The third of the three commercial buildings to be constructed on the site was the Wall Street Project (also called WTC-North), located between Battery Street and Wall Street, at 2401 Elliott Ave. (Parcel #7666202320), consisting of 133,000 square feet of office area. This development was approved by Project #s 9707441 and 9804591, including a Special Exception to the maximum allowed number of parking spaces. The project approval permitted 63 additional spaces in the Wall Street building garage, or a maximum of 360 spaces, in the three-level parking garage below the building. There are currently 358 striped spaces located in this parking garage.

Combined Parking Facility: The three development approvals described above created a combined parking facility, with City permits allowing up to 1,557 vehicle spaces, excluding the 34-space WTC-West parking garage located west of the rail corridor.

Approval of the requested Special Exception to park 40 additional vehicles in the combined facility would limit the total allowed vehicle spaces to 1,597. These additional spaces would be created in the WTC-East garage via the proposed Stacked Parking and Valet Operations Plan and from modifications to the layout/stripping of the combined facility that reduce the total number of parking spaces elsewhere in the combined facility. Valet-operated stacked parking would be employed only in response to anticipated parking needs during periods of cruise vessel service or time-limited special events, including simultaneous conferences at visitor centers in the vicinity (e.g., conferences at both the Pier 66, Marriott Hotel conference centers, combined with events at the Port of Seattle offices). The modifications that reduce the total number of spaces throughout the facility improve pedestrian access throughout each floor and to stairways and elevators, improve vehicular circulation and access to points of ingress/egress (e.g., entrance/exit at Elliott Avenue, near Battery Street), and efficiently manage vehicle circulation within the three independently-built parking garage structures.

Proposal Description — for the Stacked Parking & Valet Operations plan

The request for a Special Exception includes valet-stacked parking, which will be restricted to the third and fourth levels of the World Trade Center East Parking Garage (WTC-East). Valet-served stacked parking would be managed as follows.

- Valet staff would park cruise-passenger cars in existing striped spaces on the third and fourth levels of the WTC-East garage (the bottom two levels of the WTC-East portion of the combined 3-garage parking facility) and, once all striped spaces are occupied, valet attendants would “stack-park” cars (end-to-end) along one side of the existing drive aisles and in other vehicle use areas on the third and fourth garage levels. A single-lane drive aisle would be maintained, allowing valets to retrieve the stack-parked vehicles on demand. As shown on the Stacked Parking and Valet Operations Plan, the parking on level four (bottom level of WTC-East Garage) has 93 striped spaces, with space for the parking of approximately 54 additional “stack-parked” vehicles, for a maximum of approximately 147 parked vehicles. All of level four (Basement Level) will be dedicated to valet-stacked parking during high parking-demand cruises or other peak parking events. The parking on Level three has 135 striped parking spaces with space for approximately 16 additional stack-parked vehicles, for a total of approximately 151 vehicles. The valet-stacked parking plan also designates space on level three for luggage, valet station, waiting area, and other activities necessary for safe and efficient valet parking operations.
- Arriving cruise passengers selecting to valet-park would be directed to the south end of level three of the WTC-East garage, forming a queue in the portion of level three isolated from garage through-routes, identified as the “Drop Off Area” on the Valet-Stacked Parking Plan. The vehicle drop-off queue can accommodate approximately 18 vehicles. Arriving cruise passengers would unload, leaving the vehicles to be parked by valet operators, and passengers would use elevators serving level three for access to the pedestrian bridge at garage level One, connecting to the Pier 66 cruise terminal building west of Alaskan Way. Returning passengers make payment and wait at the level three valet station for their vehicles to be retrieved.
- Departing vehicles would proceed to any of the three existing combined garage structure exits, using a pre-paid exit ticket. During peak use periods, valet operators would direct vehicles to alternative exits, minimizing delays at any one exit. In addition, use of pre-paid exit tickets reduces the time required for totaling fees due, and minimizes vehicle cashier check-out time at each exit.

It is important to note that the portion of the WTC-East garage proposed for stacked-parking does not interfere with vehicle circulation in the remainder of the combined parking garage structure. Level four of the WTC-East Garage, and the portion of level three to be used for valet parking, do not include flow-through vehicle connections to other areas of the combined parking garage. Therefore, making maximum use of these two lower levels in WTC-East will not disrupt two-way vehicle circulation elsewhere in the parking structure. The exit portion of level three, where level three connects to adjacent internal portions of the combined parking garage, is not proposed for stacked-parking and will remain open in order to ensure unimpeded internal two-way vehicle movement throughout the combined parking facility.

Employing valet-operated stacked vehicle parking in the lower two levels of the WTC-East garage, would increase the capacity of the combined parking garage facility and provide the following benefits:

1. Separate cruise-passenger parking, isolated and distinct from others using the parking garage, minimizing conflicts and congestion in the parking garage;

2. Provide more predictable short term parking elsewhere in the combined parking facility for use by building tenants, workers in the surrounding area, and visitors, and reduce conflicts with long-term parking uses; and
3. Provide increased parking capacity through operational means, using a non-structural alternative in response to peak parking needs.

Need for the Request

The number of passengers using the Port's cruise vessel facilities in Elliott Bay has increased in recent years. In 2001, a maximum of 135 cruise passenger vehicles were parked in the combined parking garage structure serving the Bell Street Pier Cruise Terminal (Pier 66). Most recent estimates of the cruise passenger parking demand, based on past ship calls, destinations, and resulting parking use, indicate approximately 285 parking spaces were used. The operator of the combined parking garage,

Republic Parking has observed several days in 2007 and 2008, coincident with cruise ship calls, when less than 100 parking spaces were available in the combined parking facility. Republic Parking indicates that maintaining an inventory of at least 100 open parking spaces is important in avoiding and minimizing garage congestion.

Republic Parking has used valet-served dense vehicle parking in several instances in the past few years as a special-case operation in response to parking demand in order to minimize congestion and delay entering and exiting the combined garage facility. However, one instance, late in the 2007 cruise season, when cruise ships often alter passenger loading/unloading due to re-routing and re-positioning of vessels, resulted in a single large pulse of passengers exiting the garage late in the afternoon, coincident with special events being held at the Pier 66 International Conference Center. As a result, the parking garage exits became congested. It is important to note that typical cruise vessel operations disembark passengers following peak morning traffic hours (after 9:00 AM), with in-coming passengers arriving throughout the day, prior to vessel departures between 4:00 and 5:00 PM. No similar incidents due to late season changes in the tempo and character of vessel discharges have been experienced since 2007.

As a result of the 2007 incident, the City of Seattle determined that the use of stacked vehicle operations has the potential to increase the capacity of the combined parking structure and should be reviewed by DPD as a Special Exception request. The present request to park 40 additional vehicles in the combined garage by operating valet-stacked parking in the lower two levels of the WTC East garage includes detailed parking garage information for DPD review and decision-making.

Pursuant to **Director's Rule 17-2008²**, Section I.B., the "construction or addition of parking spaces up to the threshold level of 40 parking spaces is exempt from SEPA review." This proposal, to allow parking of 40 additional vehicles in the WTC-East Garage, without any re-striping or physical alteration of the combined garage facility, is therefore exempt from SEPA review. Approval would allow a total of 1,597 vehicles in the combined three-garage facility.

² State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) Exemptions From Environmental Review Requirements When Establishing, Changing or Expanding A Use

Public Notice and Comment Period

Public notice of the Land Use Application was given on December 3, 2009. The public comment period ended on December 16, 2009. The Land Use Application file is available at the Public Resource Center located at 700 Fifth Ave, Suite 2000³.

ANALYSIS – SPECIAL EXCEPTIONS

Seattle Municipal Code 23.49.019 C. (Maximum Parking Limit for Nonresidential Uses), limits parking in the Downtown Harborfront Zone to a maximum of one parking space per 1,000 square feet, exceeded only through approval of a Special Exception.

When deciding whether to grant a special exception, the Director shall consider evidence of parking demand and alternative means of transportation, including but not limited to the following:

a. ... will the additional parking substantially encourage the use of single occupancy vehicles;

The proposed additional vehicle capacity will not substantially encourage the use of single occupancy vehicles because no additional striped parking spaces will be provided in the existing parking facility. The maximum 40 additional parked vehicles will be stack-parked by valets in an area that will be identified for cruise passenger/event vehicle parking only. It is important to note that cruise passengers are, generally, out-of area visitors and are not representative of regular commute and work force traffic in the Seattle commercial area and may therefore not be viewed as an element of local traffic management plans.

b. [What are] the characteristics of the work force and employee hours, such as multiple shifts which end when transit service is not readily available;

The combined three-garage facility serves the following: (1) employees and visitors in the three World Trade Center buildings; (2) students and employees of the Seattle Art Institute; (3) conference attendees at the Pier 66 International Conference Center, and the Columbia Hospitality employees that operate the conference center; (4) employees and visitors of Odyssey Museum at Pier 66; (5) employees and patrons of Anthony's Restaurant and the Bell Street Deli at Pier 66; (6) employees of the Marriott Hotel, and conference attendees using the hotel's conference facilities; (7) Clipper Navigation employees and passengers at Pier 69; (8) Port of Seattle employees and visitors at the Port of Seattle's Pier 69 headquarters office; (9) Employees and clients of Seafloor Survey International at Pier 69; and, (10) Pier 66 cruise ship passengers, and the employees of Cruise Terminals of America.

Employees and visitors driving to the World Trade Center buildings, and other facilities, including Pier 66, Pier 69, and the Marriott Hotel, park in the combined three-garage facility during typical five-day work week hours. Students and employees at the Art Institute have variable travel schedules outside of standard five-day work week hours, depending on class schedules and the need to access studios. Activities and user/visitor traffic associated with the Pier 66 International Conference Center, Odyssey Museum, restaurants at the site, the Marriott Hotel and conference center, Clipper Navigation, and the cruise ship terminal at Pier 66, are irregular, with periodic increases in parking use outside of standard five-day work week hours.

³ <http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/PRC/LocationHours/default.asp>

c. [What is the] proximity of transit lines to the lot and headway time of those lines;

Bus Route 99 serves Alaskan Way, the waterfront, and the International District (the former Waterfront Streetcar Route). Two Route 99 bus stops are located at Pier 66, on Alaskan Way, west of the parking garages, at Alaskan Way/Bell Street and at Alaskan Way/Wall Street. The bus runs from Alaskan Way and Clay, to 8th Avenue South and South King Street. The bus operates from 6:30 AM to 11:20 PM, Monday through Friday, and from 10:30 AM to 11:20 PM, Saturday and Sunday with service every 30 minutes.

In addition to Waterfront Route 99, a list of 6 other Metro bus routes is provided below. These routes run along First, Second, and Third Avenues, which are three to six blocks east of the subject property. Note that this is not a complete list of all the transit lines available in proximity to the subject property. In addition, the Washington State Ferry Terminal is located at Alaskan Way and Columbia Street, at Pier 52.

ROUTE	AREA SERVED	HEADWAYS
First Ave. Routes		
15	Downtown to Ballard/Blue Ridge	20 - 40 Minutes
18	Downtown to Ballard/North Beach	48 - 68 Minutes
22	Downtown to White Center	50 Minutes
Second Ave. Routes		
19, 24	Downtown to Magnolia	40 Minutes
134	Downtown to Burien/Des Moines/Kent	65 – 85 Minutes
37	Downtown to W. Seattle	45 - 50 Minutes
Third Ave. Routes		
2	Downtown to Madrona	45 Minutes
5	Downtown to Shoreline/Northgate	50 Minutes
13	Downtown to Queen Anne/SPU	25 - 30 Minutes
Alaskan Way/Waterfront Route		
99	Waterfront to International District	15 Minutes

Source: Metro On-line

d. [Is there a] need for a motor pool or large number of fleet vehicles at the site;

The existing garages include parking for thirteen Port of Seattle fleet vehicles in the lower level of the Art Institute Parking Garage. However, Port fleet vehicles are for use by Port employees for business use only. No motor pool is present in the combined parking facility and no motor pool, or expansion of fleet vehicles, is proposed.

e. [Is the subject property in] proximity to existing long-term parking opportunities downtown, which might eliminate the need for additional parking on the lot;

Adequate long-term parking opportunities do not exist in proximity to the subject property. A five-level parking garage is located east of Western Avenue, between Vine and Cedar streets. However,

the garage is four blocks north and one block east of the pedestrian overpass to the Pier 66 cruise ship terminal.

The proposal for valet-operated stacked parking is for the purpose of needed additional long-term vehicle capacity associated with cruise vessel passengers. The peak parking demand currently generated in the parking garage by the Pier 66 cruise terminal is not great enough to implement an off-site long-term parking plan. Providing off-site long-term parking, with associated shuttle services to Pier 66, would not be feasible. The proposal will allow implementation of a non-structural alternative, using operational modifications only, for time-specific/seasonal events. The operational modifications described above for valet-stacked parking separate cruise-passenger parking from others using the combined parking garage and minimize conflicts and congestion in the garage.

f) [Will] the additional parking adversely affect vehicular and pedestrian circulation in the area;

The proposed additional parking will not adversely affect vehicular circulation in the area. Valet-stacked parking of additional vehicles on the bottom two levels of the WTC-East garage is not anticipated to exceed the functional capacity of the parking facility, affect vehicular traffic on public rights-of-way near entrance/exit locations, or adversely affect pedestrian circulation near the facilities.

Arriving cruise-parkers would be directed to the south end of garage level three, forming a queue on level three of the WTC-East garage, in an area isolated from garage through-routes. The “drop-off area” would accommodate approximately 18 vehicles in an internal queue. Arriving cruise passengers would move directly to elevators at level three for access to the pedestrian bridge at level One, connecting to Pier 66, with valet operators responsible for all vehicle parking. Returning passengers would make payment and wait at the level three valet station for their vehicles to be retrieved. Departing vehicles would use any of 3 existing garage facility exits, moving through the exits with minimal delay using a pre-paid exit ticket.

The parking design and internal circulation of the combined parking facility emphasizes minimizing potential vehicle queues on adjacent streets and vehicle conflicts with through-traffic in public right-of-way areas. Three garage exits effectively distribute exiting vehicles at independent locations, avoiding negative interactions among the exits. Vehicles exiting the combined garage facility make a short stop at each of the three garage exits and use a pre-paid ticket prior to exiting. Passing through a gated exit effectively meters traffic onto adjacent streets, minimizing disruption of street traffic. When the number of exiting vehicles is high, the garage operator alternates exiting vehicles between the three exits, to minimize delays at any one exit. In addition, standard procedure is to release passengers from ships in small groups, over longer periods of time, ensuring orderly discharge of passengers through customs and baggage claim areas and minimizing negative effects on parking garage internal traffic and adjacent right-of-way areas.

Inbound vehicles simply receive a ticket from a pedestal-mounted dispenser, ensuring rapid entry into the parking facility and minimizing the potential for queuing on the street. Embarking passengers have pre-scheduled times for check-in that are staggered to avoid crowding in passenger processing and baggage areas, with the corollary effect of avoiding congestion in the combined parking garage and in adjacent public right-of-way and transportation routes.

Pedestrian access to the combined garage is provided at each of the three vehicle entrance/exit locations, and via stairs and elevators from inside the three buildings above the parking garages. Pedestrian access is also available via the Bell Street pedestrian bridge over Alaskan Way, connecting Pier 66 uses and activities, including the cruise ship terminal, with the combined parking structure. Mechanisms also exist at each of the three vehicle/pedestrian exits providing visual and aural warnings to pedestrians when vehicles are exiting. Existing safety measures and pedestrian access routes are sufficient to handle the incremental increase in pedestrian and vehicle traffic generated by the proposed valet-stacked parking activity.

g) [Is there the] potential for shared use of additional parking as residential or short-term parking;

Yes. The valet-stacked parking area would be used only during cruise vessel operations (late April through October), or for other time-limited events, such as conferences at nearby conference centers, meeting rooms, hotels, and restaurants. During periods when cruise vessels are not present, the existing striped spaces in the lower two levels in the WTC-East Garage would continue to be available for use by area employees and other users as short term parking. The general public would not have access to the area set aside for valet parking during the cruise season. However, by concentrating vehicle valet parking in the smallest footprint, additional capacity for vehicles created by dense parking serves to reduce congestion and increase access to all other parking areas in the combined garage facility, ensuring availability of spaces for general public parking that would otherwise have been used for cruise passenger parking.

Other than the 100 spaces allocated to the Marriott Hotel, no residential uses are served by the parking garages. The Port has lease restrictions/agreements with the tenants and site users served by the combined parking garage specifying the number of spaces allocated to each use/development.

h) [Is there a] need for additional short-term parking to support shopping in the retail core or retail activity in other areas where short-term parking is limited.

No. The subject property is not located in proximity to a core retail area. However, the 173 striped spaces within the area proposed for valet-stacked parking would be available for use by the general public/area employees for short-term parking during periods without cruise vessel operations.

Additionally, there evidence of demand for additional long-term parking to support the Cruise Terminal

The number of cruise-passengers using the Pier 66 cruise terminal continues to increase. In 2001, a maximum of 135 cruise passenger vehicles were parked in the combined parking garage structure serving the Pier 66 cruise terminal. According to the most recent counts, the maximum cruise passenger parking demand is approximately 285 parking spaces. Republic Parking observed several days in 2007 and 2008, coincident with cruise ship calls, when less than 100 parking spaces were available in the combined parking facility. Republic Parking indicates that maintaining an inventory of at least 100 open parking spaces is important in avoiding garage congestion.

Republic Parking has effectively used valet-served dense vehicle parking in limited instances in the past few years, as a method for minimizing congestion and delays entering and exiting the combined garage facility. However, one occasion, late in the 2007 cruise season when cruise ships often alter passenger loading/unloading due to re-routing of vessels, resulted in a single large pulse of passengers exiting the garage late in the afternoon, coinciding with special events being held at

the Pier 66 International Conference Center. As a result, the parking garage exits became congested. Typically, cruise passengers disembark in off-peak morning hours, with in-coming passengers arriving throughout the day, prior to vessel departures between 4:00 and 5:00 PM. No similar incidents have been experienced since 2007.

CONCLUSION

The single large pulse of cruise passengers exiting the garage coincident with attendees at special events in the area in 2007 was an isolated incident, and the need to follow standard procedures for the release of cruise passengers was communicated to cruise operators, and there has been no recurrences.

The following actions are consistent with applicable code review requirements, and are supported by the above information and attached documentation:

1. Increasing vehicle capacity in the combined parking structure from 1,557 vehicle spaces previously approved by DPD by an additional 40 vehicles;
2. Managing the additional vehicle capacity by providing dense, valet-stacked parking in existing vehicle use areas in the bottom two levels of the World Trade Center East parking garage, separate from through-traffic areas, and;
3. Implementing valet-stacked parking operations in response to parking capacity needs resulting from seasonal cruise vessel service at Pier 66 or high-use special events.

DECISION – SPECIAL EXCEPTION

The proposal is **GRANTED**.

CONDITIONS – SPECIAL EXCEPTION

None

Signature: _____ (signature on file) Date: March 15, 2010
Colin R. Vasquez, Senior Land Use Planner
Department of Planning and Development

CRV:lc