



City of Seattle

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

Department of Planning and Development

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

Application Number: 3009125
Application Name: Seattle Fleets and Facilities for Seattle Fire Department
Address of Proposal: 2416 34th Avenue W (Fire Station 41)

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION

Land Use Application to allow a 2,000 sq. ft. addition to an existing Fire Station No. 41. Project includes the removal of one apparatus bay and renovation of the operations and living quarters. No change to parking requirements.

The following approval is required:

SEPA - Chapter 25.05 Seattle Municipal Code.

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

BACKGROUND DATA

Site and Vicinity Description

The subject site is located along 34th Avenue W just north of W. McGraw Street in Magnolia Village. The site area is 10,240 square feet and zoned Neighborhood Commercial 2 with a 40 foot height limit (NC2-40). The site is developed with fire station 41 which is a designated city of Seattle landmark structure. The station provides five surface parking spaces accessed from 33rd Avenue West via a driveway easement. The building is surrounded by large swaths of lawn and several trees in the front, rear and north side setbacks.



Surrounding zoning is NC240 to the north, south and east. Surrounding zoning to the west is Single family 5000 and developed with single family homes. Property to the north is developed with a one-story bank building (Bank of America), to the south is developed with a one-story auto repair garage and to the east is developed with a four-story mixed use structure (Bellagio Condominiums).

34th Avenue SW is designated as an arterial street and is improved with roadway, curb, gutter and sidewalk.

Proposal Description

The proposal includes remodeling of the existing station and a 2,129 square foot addition. The addition will be located on the eastside of the site which is now lawn. The completed project will include one apparatus bay to house an engine truck, station office, kitchen, offices, day room, living quarters, physical training rooms and storage spaces. Surface parking for five vehicles will be provided in generally the same locations.

In response to neighbor requests, the project will provide a plant trellis and landscaping along the east property line to replace the vegetation and trees which currently exist.

Public Comments

A public comment period was provided with the application which ended on June 4, 2008. DPD received seven written comments and a petition requesting that trees along the east property line be retained. An existing 12 inch diameter Colorado Blue Spruce tree and several fragrant winter sweet shrubs are proposed to be removed. The letters indicated that the existing trees provide good screening and provide aesthetic as well as habitat for birds.. In response to these comments Fleets and Facilities met with the neighbors to alleviate some of their concerns.

ANALYSIS - SEPA

The initial disclosure of the potential impacts from this project was made in the environmental checklists submitted by the applicant dated May 7, 2008 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 particulates from demolition, grading and clearing and hydrocarbon emissions from construction vehicles and equipment; temporary soil erosion; increased dust caused by drying mud tracked onto streets during construction activities; increased traffic and demand for parking from construction equipment and personnel; increased noise; increases in carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions and consumption of renewable and non-renewable resources.

Several adopted codes and/or ordinances provide mitigation for some of the identified impacts. The Stormwater, Grading and Drainage Control Code regulates site excavation for foundation purposes and requires that soil erosion control techniques be initiated for the duration of construction. Puget Sound Clean Air Agency (PSCAA) regulations require control of fugitive dust to protect air quality. The Building Code provides for construction measures in general. Finally, the Noise Ordinance regulates the time and amount of construction noise that is permitted in the City.

Most short-term impacts are expected to be minor. Compliance with the above applicable codes and ordinances will reduce or eliminate most adverse short-term impacts to the environment. However, some impacts warrant further discussion.

Air

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 or other hazardous substances during demolition. An inspection has been performed to identify all hazardous materials requiring abatement will be performed, and will obtain permits, if required, from PSCAA to ensure proper handling and disposal of materials containing asbestos. This will ensure proper handling and disposal of asbestos, as well as demolition of structures without asbestos.

Greenhouse gas emissions associated with development come from multiple sources; the extraction, processing, transportation, construction and disposal of materials and landscape disturbance (Embodied Emissions); energy demands created by the development after it is completed (Energy Emissions); and transportation demands created by the development after it is completed (Transportation Emissions). Short term impacts generated from the embodied emissions results in increases in carbon dioxide and other green house gases thereby impacting air quality and contributing to climate change and global warming. While these impacts may be adverse they are not expected to be significant due to the relatively minor contribution of greenhouse gas emissions from this specific project. Energy and transportation emissions are considered use-related impacts and are discussed later in this document.

No SEPA conditioning is necessary to mitigate air quality impacts pursuant to SEPA policy SMC 25.05.675A.

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. Non-noisy activities, such as site security, monitoring, weather protection shall not be limited by this condition. Additionally DPD will evaluate other requests on a case by case basis to allow for emergencies, safety, or street-use related situations that warrant work outside of the construction hours.

Long-term Impacts

Long-term or use-related impacts are also anticipated as a result of approval of this proposal including: increased height, bulk and scale on the site; impact on plants and animals; impact on a historic structure; increase noise; increased traffic in the area and increased demand for parking; increased demand for public services and utilities; increases in carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions; and increased light and glare.

Several adopted City codes and/or ordinances provide mitigation for some of the identified impacts. Specifically these are: the Stormwater, Grading and Drainage Control Code which requires on site detention of Stormwater with provisions for controlled tight line release to an approved outlet and may require additional design elements to prevent isolated flooding; the City Energy Code which will require insulation for outside walls and energy efficient windows; 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 long term impacts, although some impacts warrant further discussion.

Noise

The project is expected to generate operational noise from fire alarms, radios, emergency generator and sirens. Emergency response vehicles (fire engines, ladder trucks and aid vehicles) will use sirens when leaving the site. Alert systems called, "klaxon bells" are also commonly used at fire stations to alert personnel that are outside of the building performing duties. The site is close to residential uses and these operational noises will likely be heard and could be especially adverse in the early morning and in the evening. The Seattle Noise Control Ordinance exempts sounds created by fire alarms and emergency vehicles, and are an essential function of a fire station. The fire department has indicated that the klaxon bells will be turned off between the hours of 10 PM and 8 AM. The emergency generator will be routinely operated for testing and drills, and will be equipped with a sound-muffling steel enclosure which will reduce some sound generation. All these noises will be intermittent and of short duration, and are unavoidable; therefore, SEPA mitigation is not appropriate.

Plants and Animals

The SEPA policy for Plants and Animals (SMC 25.05.675N) states, "*It is the City's policy to minimize or prevent the loss of wildlife habitat and other vegetation which have substantial aesthetic, educational, ecological, and/or economic value.*" In addition, it states, "*When the decision maker finds that a proposed project would reduce or damage rare, uncommon, unique or exceptional plant or wildlife habitat, wildlife travel ways, or habitat diversity for species...the decision maker may condition or deny the project...*"

The site contains two mature trees, a 12 inch diameter Colorado blue spruce and a 14 inch diameter beech. There are also fragrant wintersweet shrubs which will be removed along the east property line. The trees do provide some aesthetic value, and it is presumed that they provide habitat for common birds, but no information has been obtained or observed to indicate they support a unique wildlife habitat. According to Director's Rule 6-2001, none of the trees proposed for removal meet the criteria for exceptional trees. The proposed landscape plan shows that six beech trees and numerous shrubs will be planted to replace the removed trees. No SEPA conditioning is necessary pursuant to SEPA policy.

Historic Preservation

The Station is a historic building and is protected by the Landmarks Preservation Ordinance which is administered by the Landmark Preservation Board. SEPA policy (SMC 25.05.675H) states that, "*For projects involving structures or sites which have been designated as historic landmarks, compliance with the Landmark Preservation Ordinance shall constitute compliance with the policy in subsection H2a above*". Subsection H2a is the SEPA policy for Historic Preservation. The Architectural Review Committee (ARC) a subcommittee of the Landmark Preservation Board received briefings on the project on January 11, 2008 and on June 13, 2008 and has been supportive of the addition. To ensure compatibility and to protect the historic building, the applicant is required to obtain a Certificate of Approval for the addition prior to any demolition or construction activity begins. The applicant applied for a certificate of approval on October 9, 2008. No SEPA conditioning is necessary.

Other Impacts

Emissions from the generation of greenhouse gases due to the increased energy and transportation demands may be adverse but are not expected to be significant due to the relatively minor contribution of emissions from this specific project.

The other impacts such as but not limited to, increased traffic in the area and increased demand for parking; increased demand for public services and utilities and increased light and glare; are mitigated by codes and/or are not sufficiently adverse to warrant further mitigation by condition.

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 weekdays¹ 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

