



City of Seattle

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

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

Application Number: 3009170
Applicant Name: Brittani Ard
Address of Proposal: 2917 NW 85th Street

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION

Land Use Application to allow a 3-unit townhouse structure in an environmentally critical area. Parking for three vehicles to be provided within the proposed structure. The existing structure is to be demolished. This environmental review includes a future unit lot subdivision.

The following approval is required:

SEPA – Environmental Determination –Chapter 25.05 Seattle Municipal Code

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

BACKGROUND DATA

Site visit: June 13, 2008

Zoning: Residential Multifamily Lowrise 2 (L-2)

Uses on Site: Single family residence and detached garage

Substantive Site Characteristics:

This 4,000 square foot subject site is a rectangular corner lot that fronts on NW 85th Street to the north and an alley to the east. The site is located within an area zoned Residential Multifamily Lowrise 2 (L-2) which continues to the west and east. The area adjacent to the south is zoned Single Family Residential 5000 (SF 5000) and the area one-half block to the north is zoned Single Family Residential 7200 (SF 7200).

The site is relatively flat, with no substantial topography. The vegetation on site is primarily lawn in front of the existing single family residence. The site is located within a mapped environmental critical area due to Blue Heron habitat.

Area Development:

Development in the vicinity consists primarily of single-family and multifamily residences on lots of varying shapes and sizes.

Proposal Description:

The applicant proposes to remove the existing single family residence and to construct one, 3-unit townhouse structure. This environmental review includes a future unit lot subdivision.

Public Comment:

The comment period for this proposal ended on June 18, 2008. During this period, one comment letter was received.

ANALYSIS – SEPA

The initial disclosure of the potential impacts from this project was made in the environmental checklist submitted by the applicant on May 15, 2008 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. A more detailed discussion of the potential impacts from this development proposal follows.

Short-Term Impacts

The following temporary or construction-related impacts are expected: 1) temporary soil erosion, 2) increased vibration from construction operations and equipment; and 3) emissions from construction vehicles. These impacts are not considered significant because they are temporary and/or minor in scope (SMC 25.05.794).

City codes and/or ordinances apply to the proposal and will provide mitigation for some of the identified impacts. Specifically these are: 1) Street Use, 2) Building Code (construction measures in general), 3) Regulations for Environmentally Critical Areas; and 4) Stormwater, Drainage and Grading Code (temporary soil erosion). Compliance with these applicable codes and ordinances will be adequate to achieve sufficient mitigation and further mitigation by imposing specific conditions is not necessary for these impacts.

Air

Construction activities including construction worker commutes, truck trips, the operation of construction equipment and machinery, and the manufacture of the construction materials themselves result in increases in carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions which adversely impact air quality and contribute to climate change and global warming. The applicant submitted a greenhouse worksheet for this project which outlines the potential greenhouse gas emissions over the life of the project. While these impacts are adverse, they are not expected to be significant due to the relatively minor contribution of greenhouse gas emissions from this project. No unusual circumstances exist which warrant additional mitigating, 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 single family residences and will 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 (minimum lot area, vehicle access to parking); and the Seattle Energy Code (long-term energy consumption). Earth-related impacts may result in the long-term and are mitigated by the Critical Areas Ordinance. An analysis of impacts associated with specific SEPA policies follows.

Earth

The environmental checklist completed by the applicant states that there will be approximately 115 cubic yards of excavation.

Plants

There is primarily grass and lawn on this site and a few shrubs. On the environmental checklist, the applicant stated that all vegetation will be removed and replaced with an approved landscape plan.

Animals

The proposal site is located within an environmentally critical area due to Blue heron habitat. The construction activity will take place during the approved time period per the per the standard Heron management plan provided in Director's Rule 5-2007.

Historic and Cultural Preservation

The single family structure on the proposal site is more than 50 years old, and therefore, the structure was reviewed for possible historic building status by the Historic Preservation Officer of the Department of Neighborhoods per SMC 25.05.675H. The review concluded that the building would be unlikely to meet the standards for designation as an individual landmark due to the loss of integrity of the building.

Parking and Traffic

The Land Use Code requires each house to have one offstreet parking space so the minimum number of parking spaces will be provided. The builders and homeowners have the option to provide more parking spaces. This project proposes three off-street parking spaces to be provided within the proposed 3-unit townhouse. The Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Manual estimates that a townhouse unit generates approximately 5.9 vehicle trips per day. These approximately 18 trips per day that will be generated by the proposed development will not be a significant increase to the total number of vehicle trips along N^W 85th Street. For these reasons, no mitigation of parking or traffic impacts is warranted.

Summary

In conclusion, several adverse effects on the environment are anticipated from the proposal. However, specific impacts identified in the foregoing analysis have been mitigated by existing codes and ordinances, per adopted City policies.

DECISION – SEPA

This decision was made after review by the responsible official on behalf of the lead agency of a completed environmental checklist and other information on file with the responsible department. This constitutes the Threshold Determination and form. The intent of this declaration is to satisfy the requirement of the State Environmental Policy Act (RCW 43.21C), including the requirement to inform the public of agency decisions pursuant to SEPA.

- Determination of Non-Significance. This proposal has been determined to not have a significant adverse impact upon the environment. An EIS is not required under RCW 43.21C.030(2)(C).
- Determination of Significance. This proposal has or may have a significant adverse impact upon the environment. An EIS is required under RCW 43.21C.030(2)(C).

CONDITIONS – SEPA

During Construction

Any clearing, grading or outside construction shall be done outside of the Great Blue Heron nesting season (February 1 – July 31). The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife may approve an alternative site-specific plan.

Signature: _____ (signature on file) Date: July 24, 2008
Janet L. Wright, Land Use Planner
Department of Planning and Development

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