

ROOSEVELT DEVELOPMENT GROUP CONTRACT REZONE EIS

SCOPING REPORT

Introduction

Purpose

The City of Seattle Department of Planning & Development (DPD) is preparing an environmental impact statement (EIS), pursuant to the State Environmental policy Act (SEPA), for a proposed rezone of properties in the Roosevelt neighborhood (Project 3010100). The purposes of this scoping report are to summarize comments received during the public scoping periods, and to determine alternatives and elements of the environment that should be evaluated in the EIS.

Project Description

Changes to the Proposal. As discussed further below, the contract rezone proposal originally described at the 2009 and 2010 scoping meetings has been revised by the applicant in response to public comment and ongoing planning. The rezone application has also been modified. The proposal has been reduced in height, intensity and area compared to the original proposal. It now proposes a rezone of one square block to NC3-125. A prior proposal to amend the Comprehensive Plan has been withdrawn.

The proposal by the Roosevelt Development Group (RDG) is to rezone properties on the block between 14th Ave. NE and 15th Ave. NE, bounded by NE 65th Street and NE 66th Street to NC3-125. The project application number is 3010100. The rezone would limit by contract the type and amount of commercial uses to that identified in the proposal. Other properties located on the south side of NE 65th Street and the east side of 15th Ave. NE are not included in the proposal. Redevelopment of the block between Brooklyn Ave. NE and 14th Ave. NE, bounded by NE 65th Street and NE 66th Street, will be considered in the EIS, although it is not part of the current rezone proposal.

Land Use & Zoning Patterns. The sites are currently occupied by a variety of residential and commercial structures of varying age and condition, generally one and two stories in height. Surrounding uses are a mix of residential (single family and multi-family), commercial and public school. Roosevelt High School is contiguous to the site on the north, and single family residential neighborhoods are located to the north, east and south. Existing zoning is a mixture of Single Family Residential (SF5000), Lowrise Duplex/Triplex (LDT), Multi-family Lowrise (L-2) and Neighborhood Commercial 2 (NC2-40). The sites proposed for rezoning are currently zoned Commercial 2 (NC2-40) and Multi-family Lowrise (L-2).

January 10, 2011 (corrected February 23, 2011)

A range and mix of potential zoning designations, building heights and intensities for the properties (65 feet and 85 feet) will be considered in the EIS. An alternative that reflects proposed legislative zoning changes proposed for the Roosevelt Neighborhood Plan will also be considered, along with a No Action alternative.

SEPA Scoping Process

Steps in the Process

Scoping is an important early step in the EIS process, and helps to determine the content of the EIS. Scoping informs the public, agencies and tribes that a proposal exists or is being developed, and that an EIS is being prepared by the lead agency (DPD). Interested parties are invited to comment on reasonable alternatives and significant environmental issues that should be evaluated in the document. Non-significant issues and issues that have been addressed in previous environmental documents, as determined by the lead agency, may be eliminated from detailed discussion.

DPD initially initiated the scoping process on May 18, 2009, with publication of a combined Determination of Significance (DS) and scoping notice. A rezone application had not been submitted at that time. The DS generally described the elements of the environment preliminarily considered to be significant, and described five rezone alternatives in addition to No Action. The alternatives included different combinations of zoning designations, which varied the height and intensity of development on various parcels. The period for receiving public comments was extended to June 24, 2009. A public scoping meeting was held from 6-8 PM on June 9, 2009 at the Calvary Christian Assembly, located at 6801 Roosevelt Way NE, in the Roosevelt neighborhood. The scoping notice was published on the City's website and in the Daily Journal of Commerce. Notice was also posted at locations on and near the site.

Following this scoping period, DPD requested additional information about the proposal from the applicant. In April 2010, RDG submitted an application for a contract rezone of the properties. Due the substantial time that had elapsed since the initial scope comment period, and additional information received from the applicant, DPD published a re-notice of the DS on June 24, 2010, and initiated a second scoping comment period. A public scoping meeting was held on July 21, 2010 from 6-8:00 PM at the Calvary Christian Assembly in the Roosevelt neighborhood. The scoping notice was published on the City's website. Notice was also posted at locations on and near the site. Following a requested extension, the official comment period closed on September 1, 2010.

Scoping Comments

During the 2009 scoping comment period, DPD received comments from more than 300 individuals and organizations. During the 2010 comment period, approximately 126 comments were received from individuals and organizations; several commenters submitted multiple comment letters. Copies of all scoping comments submitted to DPD, and transcripts from the 2010 scoping meeting, are available for review at the DPD Public Resource Center, 710 5th Avenue, Suite 2000, Seattle Municipal Tower. The Public Resources Center is open from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, and 10:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday and Thursday.

January 10, 2011 (corrected February 23, 2011)

DPD reviewed and considered all comments that were received at the scoping meetings and mailed or emailed by the end of the comment periods. A summary of comments received is included in Attachment A of this scoping report. A list of persons and organizations submitting comments is included in Attachment B (two documents with names from 2009 and 2010).

Based on this review, DPD has identified the alternatives and significant environmental issues that will be evaluated in the Draft EIS, as identified in the EIS Scope of Work.

EIS Scope of Work

Proposal & Alternatives

Proposed Contract Rezone

The applicant has defined the objectives of the proposal as follows. The primary goal of the project is to rezone the site to a zoning designation and height that will support the redevelopment of more intensive commercial and residential uses. If the main goal is achieved, the proposal will redevelop and revitalize a currently deteriorated group of properties to create an improved streetscape, new retail, residential, and commercial uses, significant open spaces, and pedestrian amenities. Another objective of the proposal is to increase growth in the Roosevelt Residential Urban Village. The proposal is intended to further focus growth near the planned Roosevelt light rail station, which is expected to increase ridership and reduce greenhouse gases and other regional and global environmental impacts.

The proposed rezone would rezone the block (consisting of eleven parcels) between 14th Ave. NE and 15th Ave. NE, bounded by NE 65th Street and NE 66th Street, to NC3-125. As noted above, a rezone to NC3-160 is no longer proposed. No other properties are included in the rezone or are proposed for development at this time. However, redevelopment of the block located between Brooklyn Ave. NE and 14th Ave. NE, bounded by NE 65th Street and NE 66th Street, would also be considered at the same zoning intensity for purposes of analysis in the EIS. The applicant owns or controls most of this block and intends to pursue additional property acquisitions. If that effort is successful, RDG would submit a separate rezone application for this block at some time in the future; timing is unknown.

The rezone proposal would lead to redevelopment of a mixed-use project that includes 283 housing units and approximately 40,000 square feet of ground floor commercial space for neighborhood retail uses, which could include a supermarket, drugstore, restaurants, retail shops, and possibly professional offices. The maximum size and types of commercial uses developed would be limited by the contract rezone. Significantly larger or different commercial uses would be outside the scope of the present EIS.

For purposes of analysis in the EIS, the adjacent block to the west is assumed to redevelop with 287 housing units and 23,757 square feet of ground floor neighborhood commercial use. Similar to the proposed rezone, the maximum size and types of commercial uses are assumed to be limited by a future contract rezone. Significantly larger or different commercial uses would be

January 10, 2011 (corrected February 23, 2011)

outside the scope of the present EIS. Cumulatively, for purposes of analysis in the EIS, the two blocks would redevelop with 570 housing units and 63,760 square feet of neighborhood commercial use.

Environmental review is commencing in the early stages of project planning, which is encouraged by SEPA (SMC 25.05.055). Detailed information regarding engineering and building design is not available at this stage. The Draft EIS is being coordinated with Early Design Guidance. The action is programmatic or non-project in nature, and is subject to the requirements of SMC 25.05.442.

Alternatives

The requirements for identifying alternatives to be evaluated in an EIS are included in SMC 25.05.440. An EIS need only contain “reasonable alternatives”, which are defined as “those that could feasibly attain a proposal’s objectives, but at a lower environmental cost or decreased level of environmental degradation” (SMC 25.05.440.D). A No Action alternative is also required, to provide a basis of comparison with other scenarios.

The City’s SEPA Rules (SMC 25.05.440.D.4) identify when an EIS must consider an off-site alternative. When a proposal is for a private project on a specific site, the lead agency is required to evaluate only the No Action alternative plus other reasonable alternatives for achieving the proposal’s objectives on the same site. However, a proposal for a rezone must also consider an off-site alternative unless the proposed “use” is allowed in a Comprehensive Plan adopted after review under SEPA. The RDG proposal would rezone the subject properties to various mixed-use (commercial-residential) zones, and this use is currently permitted by the Comprehensive Plan. Therefore, consideration of an off-site alternative is not required.

The Roosevelt Neighborhood Association has recommended evaluating proposed zoning changes to the Roosevelt Neighborhood Plan. These changes, if adopted by the City Council, would maintain the existing NC2-40 and L2 zoning on the rezone parcel. Rezones of some parcels are proposed for the adjacent block to the west, and for parcels on the south side of NE 65th Street. This alternative will be considered in the EIS.

The other rezone alternatives are intended to examine the effects of different combinations of use, height and intensity of development on the rezone parcels. The range of alternatives that will be considered in the EIS include the following:

Alternative 1: No Action. No Action assumes that no rezones would occur but the properties would be developed or redeveloped according to existing zoning.

Alternative 2: 2006 Proposed Roosevelt Neighborhood Legislative Zoning Revisions. Alternative 2 assumes a legislative rezone and resulting redevelopment of the site and surrounding area, as a result of DPD’s analysis that incorporates the neighborhood’s recommendations. This Alternative will reflect the City-sponsored legislative rezone of the area. This legislative rezone is still in review within DPD and has not been approved. The Draft EIS will describe the most recent DPD proposal as Alternative 2.

January 10, 2011 (corrected February 23, 2011)

A map provided by DPD titled “Roosevelt Zoning Proposals, Discussion Draft 2010” (attached to this Scoping Report) illustrates some preliminary analysis related to the Roosevelt Neighborhood Plan and the City sponsored legislative rezone of the neighborhood. This map was presented as a working proposal for discussion with the community in November 2010.

The working proposal depicted on this map shows a zoning change to part of the block between NE 65th Street and NE 66th Street, between 14th Ave NE and 15th Ave. NE (the proposed contract rezone block). The map shows the legislative rezone as applicable to roughly half this block, with the result that the entire block would be zoned NC2-40 (from existing NC2-40 and L2 zoning).

On the adjacent block, between Brooklyn Ave. NE and 14th Ave. NE, the maps shows that the entire block may also be rezoned to NC2-40 (from existing NC1-40 and L2 zoning). (Note that DPD’s map identifies these two blocks as subject to possible further discussion between RNA and RDG.)

The northern one-half of the block between 12th Ave. NE and Brooklyn Ave. NE would be rezoned to NC2-40 (from existing NC1-40 zoning); the southern one-half of the block would remain at NC2-40. On the south side of NE 65th Street, zoning would be a combination of NC1-40 and NC1-65. (Note that DPD’s map identifies some areas on the south side of NE 65th Street as needing further review and confirmation.)

Alternative 3: Rezone to NC3-65. Alternative 3 would apply the NC3-65 zone to all properties within the study area, resulting in mixed-use buildings of uniform height and bulk along the north side of NE 65th Street between Brooklyn Ave NE and 15th Ave NE.

Alternative 4: Rezone to NC3-85. Alternative 4 would rezone properties in the study area to NC3-85.

EIS Alternative	Proposed Rezone		Proposed Rezone + Adjacent Block to West	
	Housing Units	Commercial Space (Sq.Ft)	Housing Units	Commercial Space (Sq.Ft.)
1. No Action	97	29,940	175	49,520
2. Roosevelt Plan Zoning Amendments	118	40,004	235	63,760
3. Rezone to NC3-65 feet	216	40,004	431	63,760
4. Rezone to NC3-85 feet	274	40,004	561	63,760
5. Proposed Rezone to NC3-125 feet	283	40,004	570	63,760

Elements of the Environment That Will Be Evaluated in the EIS

DPD has reviewed and considered comments on potential impacts to the environment, and has determined that the impacts listed below are likely to be significant and should be considered in the EIS. Direct, indirect and cumulative impacts will be discussed for these elements of the environment. Recent revisions to the proposal (i.e., reduction in area and height) do not raise any

January 10, 2011 (corrected February 23, 2011)

additional or different environmental issues that have not already been identified in the extensive public comments received.

A. Natural Environment

2. Air

- a. Air quality
- b. Odor
- c. Climate/wind

3. Water

- a. Surface water movement/quantity/quality
- b. Runoff/absorption

4. Plants & Animals

- a. Habitat - exceptional trees

5. Energy and Natural Resources

- a. Amount required/rate of use/efficiency
- d. Conservation and Renewable Resources

B. Built Environment

1. Environmental Health

- a. Noise
- c. Risk of potential releases to the environment (site contamination)

2. Land & Shoreline Use

- a. Relationship to existing land use plans and estimated population
- b. Housing
- c. Light and glare
- d. Aesthetics
- f. Historic and cultural preservation

3. Transportation

- a. Transportation systems
- b. Vehicular traffic
- d. Parking
- e. Movement/circulation of people and goods
- f. Traffic hazards

4. Public services and utilities

- a. Fire
- b. Police
- c. Schools
- d. Parks and other recreational facilities
- e. Water/storm sewer
- f. Sewer/solid waste

Elements of the Environment Eliminated from the Scope of the EIS

Based on review of comments and existing information about the proposed site and surrounding area, DPD has determined that it is unlikely that significant impacts would result to the elements of the environment listed below. These elements will not be evaluated in the EIS:

A. Natural Environment

1. Earth

- a. Geology
- b. Soils
- c. Topography
- d. Unique physical features
- e. Erosion

3. Water

- c. Floods
- d. Groundwater movement/quantity/quality
- e. Public water supplies

4. Plants and animals

- b. Unique species
- c. Fish/wildlife migration routes

5. Energy and natural resources

- b. Source/availability
- e. Scenic resources (views will be considered under B.2.d Aesthetics)

B. Built Environment

1. Environment health

- b. Risk of explosion

2. Land and shoreline use

- g. Agricultural crops

3. Transportation

- c. Waterborne, rail and air traffic

4. Public services and utilities

- e. Maintenance
- f. Communications
- i. Other governmental services or utilities.

Next Steps

Draft EIS

Preparation of the Draft EIS will begin following publication of this scoping report, and will include analysis of all elements of the environment that have been determined to be significant. Information from the Early Design Guidance process will be reflected in the Draft EIS. At this time, publication of a Draft EIS is anticipated late winter or spring of 2011. Notice of publication of the document will be published and the document will be circulated to agencies, tribes and interested individuals and groups for review and comment. The document will also be available for review at libraries in the project area and can be purchased from DPD. A 30 day comment

January 10, 2011 (corrected February 23, 2011)

period will be provided following publication. A public hearing will also be held during the comment period to accept testimony.

Final EIS

The Final EIS will address comments received on the Draft EIS and provide additional information about the alternatives or analysis if appropriate. DPD may identify a preferred alternative in the Final EIS; this alternative may combine elements of the alternatives considered in the Draft EIS. At this time, publication is anticipated in summer 2011.