



City of Seattle

---

**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:** 3010629  
**Applicant Name:** Elizabeth Grace for the Gurdjieff Foundation  
**Address of Proposal:** 4273 Woodland Park AVE N

**SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION**

Land Use Application to allow an 825 square foot addition to an existing institution (community center). No parking is proposed.

The following approval is required:

**Administrative Conditional Use Permit** - to allow an expansion of an institution not meeting development standards in a LR2 zone. (Section 23.45.506 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.

**SITE AND VICINITY**

Site Location: The institution is located at the southwest corner of N 43rd Street and Woodland Park Avenue N.

Zoning: The property is zoned LR2.

Parcel Size: Approximately 5,000 square feet.

Existing Use: The existing use is a community center. The Gurdjieff Foundation of Washington was established as a community center in 2001 with approval of Administrative Conditional Use (ACU) permit 2101833. The principle activities of the Foundation correspond to the activities of the Gurdjieff Foundation groups that exist worldwide: group discussions, presentations of ideas and themes, study and performance of the Gurdjieff/de Hartman music, and study and performance of the sacred dances introduced by Gurdjieff. Meetings occur on average two nights per week with occasional weekend events. Meetings are attended by an average of 15 members.

Project Proposal: The proposal is to construct an 825 square foot addition to the existing building. The addition will accommodate a new meditation room and be constructed adjacent to the west façade of the existing building within the existing parking lot. The addition will be located eight feet from the south property line, 20 feet from the west property line, and eight feet from the north property line adjacent to N 43<sup>rd</sup> ST. Onsite parking will be removed and the existing driveway and curbcut will be replaced with a new curb and sidewalk. Closing the existing curbcut will create two additional on street parking spaces. Additional landscaping will be provided along the south, west and north property lines, and within the planting strip located in the public right-of-way.

Public Comment: The public comment period ended on August 22, 2011. Four public comment letters were received.

### **ANALYSIS - ADMINISTRATIVE CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT (23.45.506 SMC)**

Uses permitted as administrative conditional uses in Section 23.45.504, may be permitted by the Director when the provisions of Section 23.42.042 and Section 23.45.506 are met.

SMC Section 23.45.506C states institutions other than public schools not meeting the development standards of 23.45.570 may be permitted subject to the following requirements (listed in italics below).

SMC 23.45.570A.3 states if the expansion of an existing institution meets all development standards of the Section 23.45.570, it is permitted outright. Expansions not meeting development standards may be permitted as administrative conditional uses subject to the requirements of Section 23.45.506 (listed in italics below).

The proposed expansion does not meet requirements for structure depth, structure setbacks, and parking quantity.

- 1. Bulk and Siting. In order to accommodate the special needs of the proposed institution, and to better site the facility with respect to its surroundings, the Director may modify the applicable development standards. In determining whether to allow such modifications, the Director shall balance the needs of the institution against the compatibility of the proposed institution with the residential scale and character of the surrounding area.*

The existing structure and addition is of similar scale and character of uses located in the immediate vicinity of the institution and within the lowrise zone. The addition will be setback 20 feet from the west property line adjacent to the single family zone and landscaping will be provided along this property boundary. The longer north and south facades of the existing and proposed structure are mitigated by modulation and new landscaping. The height of the structure will be approximately 10 feet above existing grade. Operable windows will be located along the south façade of the new meditation room. As a meditation room no additional noise will be generated on site as a result of the new addition.

Based on the proposed use, setbacks, modulation, and landscaping the Director finds the new structure as proposed is compatible with the residential scale and character of the surrounding area.

SMC Section 23.54.015, Table C states when the use is permitted in a multifamily zone as a conditional use, the Director may modify the parking requirements. The original ACU authorizing this use was granted in 2001. At that time there were 12 members of the Foundation and six parking stalls were located onsite. Based on the observed availability of parking around the site and the six spaces on site it was concluded that the parking demand would not create a shortage of on-street parking in the neighborhood. Therefore, no conditions were imposed to mitigate parking impacts.

The current proposal eliminates all onsite parking spaces. There are currently five delineated parking spaces located on site and a total of nine parking spaces are required with the addition of the meditation room. The proposed meditation room is intended to serve existing members and will not result in an increase in enrollment or be used for activities outside the Foundation. The original ACU required that the building and site be used for the use described and applied for by the Grudjjeff foundation of Washington. Rental of the building and site for other uses is outside of the approval of the ACU and is prohibited. This condition still applies and will be carried forth with this conditional use.

A parking demand study was prepared by the Applicant to assess potential impacts to on-street parking in the area. The institutions peak parking demand will occur during the regularly scheduled weekday evening meetings. An on-street parking count was conducted during the evening on a Tuesday and Wednesday. The study showed that the parking utilization rate (number of legal parking spaces divided by the number of parked cars) was between 66-67 percent. Adding the parking demand of the institution of four cars, the utilization rate is 72 percent. DPD considers parking to be at capacity when the parking utilization reaches 85 percent. Therefore the elimination of on-site parking will not result in on-street parking reaching capacity. In order to accommodate and encourage other mode splits the proposal will be conditioned to require an on-site bike rack accommodating at least four bicycles.

Based on the parking demand of the current institution and on-street parking utilization rates below capacity, the Director finds the elimination of onsite parking will not be incompatible with the residential scale and character of the surrounding area.

2. *Dispersion Criteria. An institution that does not meet the dispersion criteria of Section 23.45.570 may be permitted by the Director upon determination that it would not substantially worsen parking shortages, traffic safety hazards, and noise in the surrounding residential area.*

The existing institution is not proposing to expand its existing boundaries. Therefore this criterion does not apply.

3. *Noise. The Director may condition the permit in order to mitigate potential noise problems. Measures the Director may require for this purpose include, but are not limited to the following: landscaping, sound barriers, fences, berms, adjustments to yards or the location of refuse storage areas, location of parking areas and access, structural design modifications and regulating hours of use.*

The addition of a meditation room will not generate additional noise at the site. The removal of offsite parking will decrease noise associated with parking lots, such as noise from car doors and engines. It is not anticipated that the new addition will increase noise levels at the site, therefore no mitigation is required.

4. *Transportation Plan. A transportation plan is required for proposed new institutions and for those institutions proposing to expand larger than 4,000 square feet of floor area and/or required to provide 20 or more new parking spaces. The Director may condition a permit to mitigate potential traffic and parking impacts pursuant to a Transportation Management Plan or Program as described in directors rules governing such plans or programs. The Director will determine the level of detail to be disclosed in the transportation plan based on the probable impacts and/or scale of the proposed institution.*

A transportation plan is not required for an existing institution that is not expanding larger than 4,000 square feet and/or required to provide 20 or more new parking spaces.

SMC Section 23.42.042B states in authorizing a conditional use, the Director may impose conditions to mitigate adverse impacts on the public interest and other properties in the zone or vicinity.

The proposal has been conditioned. See below.

SMC Section 23.42.042C states the Director may deny or recommend denial of a conditional use if the Director determines that adverse impacts cannot be mitigated satisfactorily, or that the proposed use is materially detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to property in the zone or vicinity in which the property is located.

### **Conclusion**

The Director has determined that the use will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to property in the zone or vicinity in which the property is located. The conditional use application is **Approved with conditions.**

**DECISION - ADMINISTRATIVE CONDITIONAL USE**

The Administrative Conditional Use is **GRANTED with conditions.**

**ADMINISTRATIVE CONDITIONAL USE CONDITIONS**

*Prior to Building Permit Issuance*

1. Plans shall show the location of an on-site bike rack accommodating at least four bicycles.

*For Life of Project*

2. This building and site shall be used only for the use described and applied for by the Grudjjeff Foundation of Washington. Rental of the building and site for other uses is outside of the approval of this Administrative Conditional Use and is therefore prohibited- ACU 2101833.
3. A bike rack accommodating at least four bicycles shall be available on site.

Signature: (signature on file) Date: December 15, 2011  
Stephanie Haines, Senior Land Use Planner  
Department of Planning and Development