City of Seattle

Department of Planning & Development
D.M. Sugimura, Director

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

Project Number:	3012915
Applicant Name:	Tara Howard, Wright Runstad & Company
Address of Proposal:	3200 NE Clark Road (**IMA Field #1 University of Washington**)

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION

Land Use Application to allow improvements to University of Washington IMA Field No. 1 to include artificial turf surface, fencing and eight (8), 80 foot tall field lights. No change in parking. Draft Supplementary Environmental Impact Statement dated January 2012 has been issued by the University of Washington.

The following approvals are required:

SEPA – to impose conditions - SMC 25.05

SEPA DETERMINATION: [ ] Exempt [ ] DNS [ ] MDNS [X] EIS[1]

[ ] DNS with conditions

[ ] DNS involving non-exempt grading, or demolition, or Involving another agency with jurisdiction

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Site and Vicinity

IMA Field No. 1 is located in the East Campus of the University of Washington south of NE 45th Street between Montlake Boulevard NE and Mary Gates Way. The field is located immediately east to the UW Driving Range and the University Slough riparian area, adjacent to NE Clark Road. (The natural grass athletic field located at the southwest corner of NE 45th Street and Mary Gates Way NE is not part of this project proposal).

[1] UW issued the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement on January 27, 2012 and the Final Supplemental EIS on May 4, 2012.

The parcel is designated Major Institution Overlay (MIO) with a 37 foot height limit. The UW Environmental Safety Office building, storage buildings and the corporation yard are located immediately south of the project site. Southeast of the site is the UW Ceramics and Metal building located at the intersection of Mary Gates Drive NE and NE Clark Road. UW Laurel Village Student Housing site is located east of Mary Gates Drive NE. Immediately north of NE 45th Street is University Village and QFC.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project is to install artificial turf on the existing IMA Field No. 1, which currently is a natural grass athletic field. The turf will be striped for multiple uses including one standard full size soccer field, three intramural soccer-flag football fields (aligned across the full-size soccer field), and two softball fields – one with the home plate in the northeast corner and the other with the home plate in the southwest corner. Installation of the turf will require approximately 8,000 cubic yards of grading, which includes site regrading for drainage purposes and import of field subgrade.

Improvements will include eight 70- to 80 foot high light poles with an array of 10 to 14 shielded, amiable, halide lighting fixtures with reflectors and shields designed to direct light onto the field and minimize spill-over light. The field will be contained within a continuous 8-foot tall black vinyl clad chain link fence with pedestrian and service access gates. Behind home plate at the two softball fields, additional ball control netting will extend to a total height of 20 feet at a distance of 190 feet in each location.

Construction staging will occur in the easterly portion of the IMA Field No. 1 or in a portion of Parking Lot E4. Parking for construction workers will be provided in Parking Lot E1 or E4. A construction management plan, which will include a truck haul route, will be submitted to SDOT and DPD for review and approval prior to issuance of construction permits.

The proposal will be located immediately adjacent to the University Slough. The slough is identified as wetland on the City's Environmental Critical Area map. Recent environmental assessments of this area have identified the slough as a riparian corridor consisting of a riparian watercourse and riparian management area. All improvements will be located outside of the wetland, wetland buffer and Riparian Management Area. Temporary removal and restoration of vegetation within the wetland and riparian buffer will result from installation of the stormwater discharge facility, which entails an overflow catch basin and gravel-lined channel. The area to be disturbed is entirely within an area previously disturbed and replanted as part of the NE Clark Road culvert replacement project.

A Critical Areas Study dated March 2012 was reviewed and approved by DPD. The Study includes a buffer restoration planting plan to mitigate impacts to the riparian management area from the installation of the catch basin and gravel-lined channel. The plan includes Goals, Monitoring and Maintenance of the restored area. The restoration plan will be amended and incorporated into the construction drawings. The plan will be amended to include:

1. Willow stakes four feet on center will located within the gravel stormwater discharge pad.

The Washington State Department of Wildlife identifies the portion of the University Slough south of NE Clark road as a waterfowl breeding concentration area. The slough and associated wetlands provide nesting and loafing opportunities for dabbling ducks that are adapted to urban conditions. The proposal will not remove any trees and the restoration plan identifies native shrubs to enhance waterfowl habitat. (Further analysis of wildlife impacts has been provided in the supplementary FEIS).

Public Comments

Notice of Application was published on February 16, 2012 and the public comment period ended on March 14, 2012 after a 14-day extension. One comment letter was received by DPD. Numerous comments were received by the University of Washington on the Supplemental DEIS. These comments have been addressed in the Supplemental FEIS.

SEPA ANALYSIS

Environmental impacts of the proposal have been analyzed in environmental documents prepared by the University of Washington. The initial disclosure of the potential impacts from this project was made in the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for the University of Washington Intramural Activities Field No. 1 Improvements issued January 27, 2012; the Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement issued May 4, 2012; and Critical Areas Study prepared by Parametrix Inc. dated March 2012.

The Department reviewed the environmental impacts identified in the University of Washington's environmental documents in order to impose further conditions if necessary. This proposal is reviewed under substantive SEPA authority. Disclosure of the potential impacts from this project was made in the Draft and Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statements. This information, supplemental information provided by the applicant and the experience of this agency with review of similar projects form the basis of this analysis and conditioning.

The SEPA Overview Policy (SMC 25.05.665) establishes the relationship between codes, policies, and environmental review. Specific policies for specific elements 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 certain limitations/circumstances (SMC 25.05.665 D 1-7) mitigation can be considered.

Short-Term Impacts

Short-term impacts identified by the University of Washington include: Construction noise from heavy construction equipment including excavators, bulldozers, and generators; and, noise from the hauling of soils and construction materials. Due to the location of the field in proximity to residential uses in the area compliance with the City of Seattle Noise Ordinance will appropriately mitigate these potential adverse impacts. Further, the University's environmental documents specify measures that will appropriately mitigate identified short-term impacts from construction noise. No additional conditions will be imposed.

Long-Term Impacts

Long-term impacts identified by the University of Washington include: Visual impacts from light poles and chain link fencing; light and glare from field lights; increase in operational noise (participants and spectators); increase in energy use; increase in greenhouse gas emissions; and impacts to wildlife from loss of natural grass area and installation of field lighting. The University's environmental documents did not identify any significant long-term impacts from the installation of light poles, fencing, noise, energy use, or greenhouse gas emissions. The University's environmental documents specify measures that will appropriately reduce impacts from light and glare on surrounding uses and wildlife areas. The University's analysis concluded that it is unlikely that replacement of mowed grass in IMA Field No. 1 with synthetic turf will affect the diversity or abundance of wildlife in the area. No additional conditions will be imposed.

SEPA CONDITIONS

None.

Signature: (signature on file) Date: May 14, 2012
Stephanie Haines, Senior Land Use Planner
Department of Planning and Development
Land Use Services

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