



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

Application Number: 3013282
Applicant Name: Michael Godfried with Nicholson Kovalchick Architects
Address of Proposal: 6313 15th Avenue Northeast

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION

Land Use Application to allow four three unit apartments (12 units). Existing single family residence (6313 15th Ave NE) to remain; existing single family residence (6317 15th Ave NE) and existing duplex (6321 15th Ave NE) to be removed. For a total of 13 residential units.*

Note - The project description has been revised from the following original notice of application: Land Use Application to allow four three unit apartments (12 units). Existing single family residence (6313 15th Ave NE) to remain; existing single family residences (6317 & 6321 15th Ave NE) to be removed. For a total of 13 residential units.

The following approvals are required:

SEPA - Environmental Determination (Seattle Municipal Code Chapter 25.05).

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

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Site and Vicinity Description

This approximately 14,645 sq. ft. proposal site is the consolidation of three neighboring properties (6313, 6317 and 6321 15th Avenue Northeast). It is bounded by 15th Avenue Northeast to the east, commercially zoned property to the north and an improved 16' wide alley to the west and south. The site is zoned Lowrise 2 with an incentive zoning suffix (LR2 (0.75)); located within both the Roosevelt Residential Urban Village and the Roosevelt Station Overlay district.

Development on the site consists of two two-story single family residences (6313 and 6317 15th Avenue Northeast), one two-story duplex residence (6321 15th Avenue Northeast) and a detached concrete block garage. Vehicular access to the detached garage and other informal parking areas is via the existing paved alleyways.

15th Avenue Northeast is an improved street with curb, sidewalk and gutters abutting the subject site. It is classified as a minor arterial street, pursuant to SMC Chapter 23.53. A King County Metro bus shelter, bus load/unload zone, and bus stop sign is situated on the 15th Avenue Northeast sidewalk along the proposal property's east boundary line.

The topography of the site slopes gently downward from the northeast corner to the southwest corner approximately 5.5%. Existing vegetation consists of grass, shrubs and mature trees. The subject site is not located within any identified or designated Environmentally Critical Areas.

Surrounding property west, south and north of the proposal site is zoned as Single Family 5000 (SF 5000). Neighborhood Commercial 2 (NC2-40) zoning is north of the subject property. Existing development in the vicinity of the proposal consists of a food retail business to the north and a variety of single family residences to the west, south and east varying in age and architectural style. A Seattle Public school (Roosevelt High School) is two blocks north of the proposal and two City Parks (Ravenna Park and Cowan Park) are located two blocks south of the site.

Proposal Description

The proposed project involves the creation of a residential development comprising of four three-story triplex apartment buildings and one existing single family residence: for a total of thirteen residential units on site. Three existing structures (single family residence (6317 15th Avenue Northeast), duplex residence (6321 15th Avenue Northeast) and detached garage) will be demolished.

The four new triplex structures are actually four existing duplex townhouses established and constructed in 2003 under DPD Master Use Permit (MUP) number 727628. The applicant proposes to physically move these structures from their current location (1023 Northeast 66th Street) to the proposal site. Each duplex structure will be altered by the initial removal of basement floors, porches, decks and stairs. The applicant plans to place each altered structure above and connect them to four new foundations/first floor units constructed onsite to receive them. The proposal design also includes interior alterations, exterior alterations and porch/stair additions for each of the new triplex apartment buildings. No alterations to the remaining existing single family residence are proposed.

Ten surface parking spaces accessory to the residential uses will be provided onsite. Vehicular access to the proposed parking spaces will occur via an existing 16' wide alley that has entry points abutting 15th Avenue Northeast, 14th Avenue Northeast and Northeast 65th Street.

Construction of the buildings and poor health status determinations necessitate the removal of several mature trees. However, the proposal includes the retention of one significant exceptional tree (19" Japanese Maple, *Acer palmatum*). Landscaping enhancements inclusive of trees, street trees, plantings, shrubs, and groundcover are also proposed. Site improvements including pedestrian pathways, common courtyard amenity area, seating and bike racks are included with this proposal.

Public Comments

The public comment period for this project ended May 16, 2012. DPD received three written comments regarding this proposal. The neighbors voiced concerns regarding future expansion of an existing shared sewer line, increased vehicular traffic in the alleys, demolition of a potential historically significant building (6317 15th Avenue Northeast) and increased building scale.

Additional Information

DPD issued a Master Use SEPA and Temporary Use Permit (3012326) which reviews included analysis pertaining to the demolition of the aforementioned four townhouse structures (eight dwelling units) to allow a temporary staging area for Sound Transit to be erected at their current property (1023 Northeast 66th Street). As a result, this aspect of the proposal will not be included in the analysis and decision of this SEPA application.

SEPA ANALYSIS

Environmental review resulting in a Threshold Determination is required pursuant to the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), WAC 197-11, and the Seattle SEPA Ordinance (Seattle Municipal Code Chapter 25.05).

The initial disclosure of the potential impacts from this project was made in the environmental checklist submitted by the applicant dated April 24, 2012. The information in the checklist, public comments, supplemental information 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 the City's codes, 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 limitations. It may be appropriate to deny or mitigate a project based on adverse environmental impacts in certain circumstances as discussed in SMC 25.05.665 D1-7. In consideration of these policies, a more detailed discussion of some of the potential impacts is appropriate.

Short - term Impacts

The following temporary or construction-related activities on this site could result in the following adverse impacts: construction dust and storm water runoff, erosion, emissions from construction machinery and vehicles, increased particulate levels, increased noise levels, occasional disruption of adjacent vehicular and pedestrian traffic, increased consumption of renewable and non-renewable resources, and a small increase in traffic and parking impacts due to construction-related vehicles.

Several construction-related impacts are mitigated by existing City codes and ordinances applicable to the project such as: the Noise Ordinance, the Stormwater Code, the Grading Code, the Street Use Ordinance, and the Building Code. Compliance with these and other applicable codes and ordinances will reduce or eliminate most adverse short-term impacts to the environment. Further discussion of short-term construction related impacts follows.

Noise

The site abuts an arterial, 15th Avenue Northeast, which is a north-south roadway. Residential properties are situated south, east and west of the project site. Vehicular traffic is cited as an existing noise source.

Short-term noise and vibration from construction equipment and construction activity (e.g., backhoes, trucks, concrete mixers, generators, pneumatic hand tools, engine noise, back-up alarms, etc.); demolition of the existing structures; and construction vehicles entering and exiting the site would occur as a result of construction and construction-related traffic. Compliance with the Noise Ordinance (SMC 25.08) is required.

Although compliance with the Noise Ordinance is required, due to the proximity of the project site to nearby residential uses, additional measures to mitigate the anticipated noise impacts may be necessary. The SEPA Policies at SMC 25.05.675.B and 25.05.665 allow the Director to require additional mitigating measures to further address adverse noise impacts during construction. Pursuant to these policies, it is the Department's conclusion that limiting hours of construction beyond the requirements of the Noise Ordinance may be necessary on this site. Therefore, as a condition of approval, construction activities (including but not limited to demolition, grading, deliveries, framing, roofing, and painting) shall be limited to non-holiday weekdays from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Interior work that involves mechanical equipment, including compressors and generators, may be allowed on Saturdays between 9:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. once the shell of the structure is completely enclosed, provided windows and doors remain closed. Non-noisy activities, such as site security, monitoring, weather protection shall not be limited by this condition.

Construction activities outside the above-stated restrictions may be authorized by the Land Use Planner when necessitated by unforeseen construction, safety, or street-use related situations. Requests for extended construction hours or weekend days must be submitted to the Land Use Planner at least three days in advance of the requested dates in order to allow DPD to evaluate the request.

Air Quality

Construction of the triplex apartments will result in localized short-term increases in air particulates and carbon monoxide which could temporarily affect the quality in the vicinity. Construction activities that would contribute to these impacts include excavation, grading, soil compaction, and operation of heavy trucks and smaller equipment (i.e., generators and compressors). Compliance with the Street Use Ordinance (SMC 15.22.060) will require the contractors to water the site or use other dust palliative, as necessary, to reduce airborne dust. In addition, compliance with the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency regulations requires activities which produce airborne materials or other pollutant elements to be contained with temporary enclosure. Regarding asbestos, Federal Law requires the filing of a Notice of Construction with the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency ("PSCAA") prior to demolition. Other potential sources of dust would be soil blowing from uncovered dump trucks and soil carried out of the construction area by vehicle frames and tires; this soil could be deposited on adjacent streets and become airborne.

During the townhouse building move process and construction, on-site activity and periodic traffic delays on adjacent streets could contribute to slight increases in localized vehicle emissions but it is not expected that these emissions would result in a violation of any local ambient air quality standards.

There is no indication of unusual short term adverse impacts. Current codes are adequate to provide mitigation and pursuant to the Overview Policy (SMC Section 25.05.665) and Air Quality Policy (SMC Section 25.05.675A). Therefore, no further mitigation is warranted.

Construction-Related Streets, Parking and Pedestrian Circulation

This proposal includes the relocation and installation of four residential structures originating from a property (1023 Northeast 66th Street) located four blocks from the subject site. The submitted building contractor narrative explains that a “road move permit” is issued by the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT). Per SDOT requirements, the building moves must occur on weekends after 12:00 a.m. (midnight) and be completed by 6:00 a.m. The contractor anticipates the move will involve two subsequent weekends-moving two buildings per weekend.

The structure relocation proceedings and other construction activities will necessitate occasional closures of adjacent roadways and sidewalks. Also, the submitted plans illustrate temporary displacement of the existing bus shelter and bus stop sign along 15th Avenue Northeast. Temporary closures of sidewalks and/or traffic lane(s) are typically addressed through Seattle Department of Transportation permits. King County Metro is the responsible agency concerning impacts to bus transportation facilities.

Demolition of three structures (duplex, single family residence, detached garage) and minor grading (excavation and export of approximately 350 cubic yards of soil) is proposed. This material would be trucked from the site. Per the submitted drawings, construction vehicles would enter the project site from a temporary construction entrance situated near the northwestern area of the property via the existing paved alley.

Construction of the project is proposed to last for several months. The demand for parking by construction workers during construction is not anticipated to reduce the supply of parking in the vicinity. Per the applicant, parking demand for a maximum of ten construction workers will be accommodated and managed at another property’s surface parking area located within close proximity to the proposal site (6501 15th Avenue Northeast).

It is the City's policy to minimize or prevent adverse traffic impacts which would undermine the stability, safety, and/or character of a neighborhood or surrounding areas (25.05.675 R). The Street Use Ordinance includes regulations which mitigate dust, mud, and circulation. Any temporary closure of the sidewalk and/or traffic lane(s) is adequately controlled with a street use permit through the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT.). The City Planner has verified that King County Metro has been notified about the future impacts to the bus facilities and confirmed that this impact can be facilitated through coordination between the building contractor and their agency. Parking demand for construction personnel has been adequately addressed. Therefore, no further mitigation will be required.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Construction activities including construction worker commutes, truck trips, the operation of construction equipment and machinery, and the manufacturing 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. While these impacts are adverse, they are not expected to be significant due to the relatively minor contribution of greenhouse gas emissions from the project.

No further conditioning or mitigation is warranted pursuant to specific environmental policies or the SEPA Overview Policy (SMC 25.05.665).

Long - term Impacts

Potential long-term or use-related impacts anticipated by this proposal include: increased surface water runoff due to greater site coverage by impervious surfaces; increased bulk and scale on the site; increased ambient noise associated with increased human activity and vehicular movement; minor increase in light and glare from exterior lighting and from vehicle traffic (headlights); increased traffic and parking demand due to residents and visitors; increased airborne emissions resulting from additional traffic; increased demand on public services and utilities; and increased energy consumption.

Several adopted City codes and/or ordinances provide mitigation for some of the identified impacts. Specifically these are: The Stormwater Code and Grading Code which requires on-site collection of stormwater with provisions for controlled tightline 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. However, due to the size and location of this proposal, preservation of historic buildings, plants, greenhouse gas emissions; and traffic and parking impacts warrant further analysis.

Historic Preservation

Section 25.05.675.H of the SEPA code describes the City's policies for protecting historical sites. *"It is the City's policy to maintain and preserve significant historic sites and structures and to provide opportunity for analysis of archeological sites.....For projects involving structures or sites which are not yet designated as historical landmarks but which appear to meet the criteria for designation, the decisionmaker or any interested person may refer the site or structure to the Landmarks Preservation Board for consideration.....On sites with potential archaeological significance, the decisionmaker may require an assessment of the archaeological potential of the site."*

SEPA provides authority to mitigate impacts to historic buildings (SMC 25.05.675.H.2.c). In this instance, the existing single family residence addressed as 6317 15th Avenue Northeast and the existing duplex building addressed as 6321 15th Avenue Northeast are not designated as historical landmarks.

However, because this proposal involves the demolition of two Buildings which are more than 50 years old, as required per a memorandum of agreement between the Department of Neighborhoods (DON) and DPD, historical information concerning both properties (prepared by the applicant) was referred to DON for review. The Historic Preservation Staff reviewed the information and stated, "Based on the reviews of the information submitted by the applicant including historic photos, we have determined that it is unlikely, due in part to a loss of integrity, that the buildings located at the address above (6321 and 6317 15th Avenue Northeast) would meet the standards for designation as individual landmarks". Therefore, no further conditioning is warranted by SEPA.

Plants

Per SMC 25.05.675.N, Seattle's SEPA Plants policy aims to "*minimize or prevent the loss of wildlife habitat and other vegetation which have substantial aesthetic, educational, ecological, and/or economic value. A high priority shall be given to the preservation and protection of special habitat types...A high priority shall also be given to meeting the needs of state and federal threatened, endangered, and sensitive species of both plants and animals.*". Additionally, SEPA policy suggests mitigation or denial of a project if it is found, "*...that a proposed project would reduce or damage rare, uncommon, unique or exceptional plant...or habitat diversity for species (plants or animals)...*". In this instance, several existing mature trees situated onsite have the potential to be affected by the proposed project. The proposal includes removal of nine mature trees and construction activity within close proximity of one mature tree of which may be considered exceptional tree status per Director's Rule (DR) 16-2008. The tree species affected include Japanese Maple (*Acer palmatum*), English Laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus*), English Hollys (*Ilex aquifolium*), European White Birch (*Betula pendula*), Red Leaf Plum (*Prunus cerasifera*), Photinia (*Photinia spp.*), Pacific Crabtree (*Malus fusca*), Bigleaf Maple (*Acer macrophyllum*), and Common Hawthorne (*Crataegus laevigata*). Therefore, further discussion of the ecological value of these trees is warranted.

The applicant provided an arborist report prepared by Scott Selby, ISA Certified Master Arborist/Certified Tree Risk Assessor (Tree Solutions, Inc.) dated June 7, 2012. The summary of the Arborist report findings is the following: "*Of the ten significant trees on the site only one-- a Japanese maple--meets the definition of exceptional (per DR 16-2008) and is required to be retained. Tree protection of exceptional trees during construction must comply with Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) 25.11.050 as outlined in this report. Implementation of the tree protection plan as proposed should result in minimal impact to the maple tree.*" The submitted report, which is located in the project file, further details the tree matrix inclusive of tree identifications, names, conditions and recommended actions.

SMC 25.05.675.N.2.b states in part that projects which are proposed within an identified plant habitat shall be assessed to determine the extent of the adverse impact and need for mitigation. As noted above, out of the aforementioned tree species, the Japanese Maple is the only mature trees existing onsite that meets the exceptional status criteria outlined in DR 16-2008. Per the MUP site plans and landscape plans, nine trees will be removed and the identified exceptional tree situated near the property's easternmost property edge will not be removed. DPD has reviewed the identified report/landscape plans and concur with the Arborist's findings. Specific details concerning the tree protection and the Arborist instructions aren't illustrated in the MUP plans. Therefore, in order to formalize the preservation of the exceptional tree, a condition will be added to require the applicant to incorporate an approved tree protection landscape plan inclusive of the arborist's specifications and recommendations with the current MUP plans prior to issuance and with future demolition/building permit application plans.

Traffic and Transportation

The Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation Manual (8th edition) estimates that single-family detached housing generates approximately 9.57 vehicle trips per weekday and apartments generate approximately 6.65 vehicle trips per weekday. ITE doesn't provide estimates for duplex apartments. Consequently, an estimate of approximately 8.11 vehicle trips per weekday for duplex apartments was calculated by averaging the estimated vehicle trips for both aforementioned housing types. Based on these estimates, both the single family residence and four three-unit apartment developments would generate approximately 89.37 (89) trips per day. A total of two single family residences and one two-unit apartment building currently exists on the subject site. Therefore, an estimate of 35.36 (35) vehicle trips per weekday exists now. The table below illustrates the existing and proposed trip generation estimates:

Trip Generation Estimates	
Use(s)	Trips per weekday
Existing	
Two single family detached houses	19
One two-unit apartment	16
Subtotal	35
Proposed	
Four three-unit apartments	79
One single family detached house	10
Subtotal	89
Net Increase	54

It is estimated that 54 additional vehicle trips will be generated during the weekday. Due to the close proximity of the proposed residential development to existing bus stops to Downtown, this situation will make it likely that there will be fewer vehicle trips than from development sites located in outlying suburban areas on which the ITE generation equation is based. The subject property has immediate access to 14th Avenue Northeast, 15th Avenue Northeast (minor arterial) and Northeast 65th Street (minor arterial). Given the net increase in vehicle trips for this site is minimal, it is expected that the amount of traffic generated by this proposal is within the capacity of the streets in the immediate area. Thus, no SEPA mitigation of traffic impacts is warranted.

Parking

The proposal site is situated within both the Roosevelt Residential Urban Village and the Roosevelt Station Overlay district which, per SMC 23.54.015-Table B, does not require parking for residential uses. The submitted MUP plans indicate ten parking spaces are provided. Based on current City experience with multifamily housing demand, it is expected that this project will generate a residential parking demand of approximately one space per unit. Using this multiplier, the estimated parking demand for thirteen dwelling units would be thirteen parking spaces. As a result, a minor amount of spillover parking (approximately three vehicles) is expected on the surrounding street system. The majority of on-street parking is prohibited along that portion of 15th Avenue Northeast abutting the subject site due to the existing bus stop zone.

Although SEPA Policy 25.05.675M recognizes that increased parking demand associated with development projects may adversely affect the availability of parking in an area, Policy 25.05.675M2b2 states no SEPA authority is provided for the decision maker to mitigate the impact of development on parking availability for residential uses located within urban villages and within 1,320 feet of a street with frequent transit service, as in this case. Therefore no mitigation is required.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Operational activities, primarily vehicular trips associated with the project and the project's energy consumption, are expected to result in increases in carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions which adversely impact air quality and contribute to climate change and global warming. 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 further conditioning or mitigation is warranted pursuant to specific environmental policies or the SEPA Overview Policy (SMC 25.05.665).

Summary

In conclusion, several effects on the environment would result from the proposed development. The conditions imposed at the end of this report are intended to mitigate specific impacts identified in the foregoing analysis, to control impacts not adequately regulated by codes or 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 43.21.C), including the requirement to inform the public of agency decisions pursuant to SEPA.

[X] 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).

SEPA CONDITIONS

Prior to Issuance of the Master Use Permit

1. Update the submitted MUP plans set with a tree protection plan that illustrates tree protection measures and incorporates the Arborist's recommendations pertaining to the retention of the identified exceptional tree (Japanese Maple-*Acer palmatum*). Final design must be reviewed by DPD tree reviewer (Seth Amrhein) prior to issuance.

Prior to Issuance of the Demolition and Building Permit

2. The owner(s) and/or responsible party(s) will be required to incorporate a copy of the approved tree protection landscape plan and arborist report with future demolition/building permit application plans. Plans should meet all requirements per Arborist report.

During Construction

The following condition 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 onsite for the duration of the construction.

3. In order to further mitigate the noise impacts during construction, the hours of construction activity (including but not limited to demolition, grading, deliveries, framing, roofing, and painting) shall be limited to non-holiday weekdays between the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and non-holiday weekends from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Interior work that involves mechanical equipment, including compressors and generators, may be allowed on Saturdays between 9:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. once the shell of the structure is completely enclosed, provided windows and doors remain closed. Non-noisy activities, such as site security, monitoring, weather protection shall not be limited by this condition. This condition may be modified by DPD when necessitated by unforeseen construction, safety, or street-use related situations. Requests for extended construction hours or weekend days must be submitted to the Land Use Planner at least three days in advance of the requested dates in order to allow DPD to evaluate the request.
4. Implement all recommendations for tree protection as identified in the approved arborist report and illustrated on the approved tree protection landscape plan. The arborist conducting the work must attend an on-site pre-construction conference with DPD's Site Inspector to discuss protection measures and monitoring methodology prior to the start of work.

Signature: (signature on file)
Tami Garrett, Senior Land Use Planner
Department of Planning and Development

Date: July 5, 2012