



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: 3014618
Applicant Name: Monica Lake
Address of Proposal: 5500 Phinney Avenue North

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION

Land Use Application to expand and re-stripe existing parking lot and add 165 new parking spaces for a total of 257 spaces. Seven portable office structures to be relocated on the site. Review will include 900 cu. yds. of grading. (Woodland park Zoo, Inner North parking Lot Expansion Project).

The following approval is 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

The proposal site is located within the Northwest portion of the Woodland Park Zoo which is located on a site bounded by Phinney Ave. North on the west, North 50th Street on the south, Aurora Ave. North on the east and North 59th Street on the north in north Seattle near Green Lake. The project area includes the existing Inner North Parking Lot, portable office structures located just to the west of the parking area, and an unused area just to the south of the existing West Entry Plaza for the zoo.

The project site topography is relatively flat with an overall grade change from southwest to northeast of approximately 10 feet (2%). There is a Steep Slope Environmentally Critical Area located north of project site classified as “areas of over 40% slope” however the construction

activity will not occur closer than 15 feet from the buffer area associated with the steep slope area. Existing vegetation consists of ivy, shrubs and mature trees.

Development in the vicinity surrounding the zoo largely reflects its zoning. North of the site, across N 57th Street, is a grassy open space and children's playground. To the west across Phinney Ave N there are several lowrise apartment buildings and single family homes, a midrise apartment (Norse Home), and a church (St John Lutheran). The majority of the zoo property is to the east and south of the site.

Phinney Avenue North is a minor arterial, fully developed with curbs, gutters, and sidewalks. The corridor includes dedicated bicycle lanes.

Proposal Description

The proposed project involves the following:

- Relocation of eight existing modular structures that contain the Woodland Park administrative offices to another location in the northwest portion of the zoo adjacent to the current Administration Building;
- Reconfiguration of the existing Inner North parking Lot and addition of two parking areas adjacent to the Inner North parking lot to provide a net increase of 165 spaces to a total of 257 spaces;
- Provision of a raised walkway through the Inner North Parking Lot to access the Zoos' West Entry Plaza; and
- Landscaping and lighting of the new and reconfigured parking areas.

The finished project will increase the impervious surface area by approximately 20,000 square feet. This will raise the total impervious surface area on the zoo site from 8.4 % to approximately 9%.

Public Comments

The required public comment period for this project ended March 20, 2013. DPD received several written comments regarding this proposal during the public comment period regarding the need for additional parking, environmental concerns and general neighborhood impacts. Some comments received regarding past actions by the Zoo are beyond the scope of this review.

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 January 24, 2013 and revised June 21, 2013. The Department of Planning and Development has analyzed and annotated the environmental checklist submitted by the applicant; reviewed project plans and any additional information in the file and any pertinent comments which may have been received regarding this proposed

action have been considered. However, due to the temporary nature or limited effects, the impacts are not expected to be significant.

The SEPA Overview Policy (SMC 25.05.665 D) 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.

Codes and development regulation applicable to this proposed project will provide sufficient mitigation from most short and/or long term impacts. Applicable codes may include the Stormwater Code (SMC22.800-808), the Grading Code (SMC22.170), the Street Use Ordinance (SMC Title 15), the Building Code, and Noise Control Ordinance (SMC 25.08). However, additional discussion regarding short term impacts is found below.

Short-Term Construction Impacts

The following temporary or construction-related impacts are expected: temporary soil erosion; decreased air quality due to increased dust and other suspended air particulates during excavation, filling and transport of materials to and from the site; increased noise and vibration from construction operations and equipment; increased traffic and parking demand from construction personnel traveling to and from the work site; consumption of renewable and non-renewable resources; disruption of utilities serving the area; and conflict with normal pedestrian movement adjacent to the site. Compliance with applicable codes and ordinances will reduce or eliminate most adverse short-term impacts to the environment.

The short-term, construction related impacts anticipated from the proposal are as summarized in the following list:

- *Air Quality* --- Increased dust and particulate matter due to construction activities and hauling of waste materials.
- *Transportation & parking* --- An increase in vehicular traffic adjacent to the site due to construction vehicles.

Construction parking - the traffic study by Heffron Transportation, Inc. dated January 22, 2013, evaluated the short-term parking impacts associated with construction. The study recommended the following mitigation measures for parking during construction:

- If construction occurs during off-peak season (for zoo visitors), construction parking should be located on the Zoo site.
- If construction occurs during the peak season, temporary construction parking should be located off-site and off-street.

Approval will, therefore, be conditioned upon these mitigation measures.

Greenhouse gas emissions - 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. 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.

Codes and development regulations applicable to this proposed project will provide sufficient mitigation and no further conditioning or mitigation is warranted pursuant to the SEPA Overview Policy (SMC 25.05.665).

Long-Term Impacts

Long term or use-related impacts are also anticipated as a result of this proposal, including: increased surface water runoff due to greater site coverage by impervious surfaces; increased bulk and scale on the site; increased traffic in the area and increased demand for parking; increased demand for public services and utilities; loss of plant and animal habitat; and increased light and glare. Compliance with applicable codes and ordinances will reduce or eliminate most adverse long-term impacts to the environment.

The long-term use-related impacts anticipated to result from approval of this proposal are summarized in the following list:

- *Parking and Traffic --- anticipated increased trip generation*

The increase in parking will increase traffic directly to and from the site. This will potentially result in a decreased in the number of patrons seeking parking in the neighborhoods surrounding the site.

Greenhouse gas emissions - Operational activities, primarily vehicular trips associated with the project and the projects' 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 (SMC25.05.665).

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 requirements 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

1. Construction parking

- If construction occurs during off-peak season (for Zoo visitors), construction parking shall be located on the Zoo site.
- If construction occurs during the peak season, temporary construction parking shall be located off-site and off-street.

Signature: _____ (signature on file) Date: July 25, 2013
Marti Stave, Senior Land Use Planner
Department of Planning and Development

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