



City of Seattle
Edward B. Murray, Mayor

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: 3015077
Applicant Name: Kirsten Wild with Weinstein A+U
Address of Proposal: 1000 Virginia Street

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION

Land Use Application to allow a two-story addition to an existing structure (Cornish College of the Arts) for a total of 48,864 sq. ft. No change in parking.*

*Note – The project description has been revised from the following original notice of application: Land Use Application to allow a 2-story addition to an existing structure (Cornish College of the Arts) for a total of 50,400 sq. ft. No change in parking

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

This approximately 14,400 square foot (sq. ft.) proposal site is a square corner lot bounded by Terry Avenue to the southwest, Virginia Street to the southeast, a 16' wide paved alley to the northeast and residential property to the northwest. The site is zoned Downtown Mixed Commercial with variable height limits (DMC 240/290-400) in the Denny Triangle Urban Center Village overlay. Existing development on this site consists of a two-story private fine arts school (Cornish College of the Arts) building. No parking exists on site.

Both Terry Avenue and Virginia Street are improved streets with curbs, sidewalks, street trees and gutters abutting the subject site. Virginia Street is a Minor Arterial and a Class II pedestrian street pursuant to SMC Chapters 23.53 and 23.49 respectively. Terry Avenue is considered both a non-arterial street and designated green street pursuant to the same code citations.

Surrounding property northeast, northwest and southwest of the proposal site is also zoned DMC 240/290-400. DMC 340/290-400 zoning is south of the subject property. Existing development in the vicinity of the proposal consists of Cornish College facilities and a designated historic landmark property (Old Norway Hall) across the alley to the northeast; a surface parking lot across the street to the southeast; a parking garage across the street to the southwest; and an apartment to the northwest.

Proposal Description

The proposed project involves the construction of a two-story 22,202 sq. ft. addition to an existing two-story institutional building (Cornish College of the Arts) for a total of 48,864 sq. ft. Renovation of the existing 26,930 sq. ft. building is planned. No onsite parking is proposed.

Public Comment

The public comment period for this project ended November 20, 2013. DPD received no written comments regarding this proposal.

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 September 26, 2013. The information in the checklist, 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. Specific policies for each element of the environment, and 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 regulations applicable to this proposed project will provide sufficient mitigation for short and/or long term impacts. Applicable codes may include the Stormwater Code (SMC 22.800-808), the Grading Code (SMC 22.170), the Street Use Ordinance (SMC Title 15), the Seattle Building Code, and the Noise Control Ordinance (SMC 25.08). Puget Sound Clean Air Agency regulations require control of fugitive dust to protect air quality.

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. Compliance with 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 two streets (Virginia Street and Terry Avenue). A residential property is situated northwest of the project site and located in the same zone as the project site. Vehicular traffic on adjacent streets is identified as an existing noise source. The applicant asserts on the SEPA checklist that construction activity will be confined to construction hours per the City's Noise Ordinance.

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.); renovation of the existing structure; 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.

The Noise Ordinance states construction activities within downtown zones shall be limited to non-legal holiday weekdays from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. and 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. on weekends and legal holidays. Impact construction work (pile driving, jackhammers, vactor trucks, etc.) is further limited (8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. weekdays and 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. weekends and legal holidays). It is the Department's conclusion that limiting hours of construction beyond the requirements of the Noise Ordinance is not justified for this project on this specific site. No further conditioning or mitigation is warranted.

Construction-Related Streets, Parking and Pedestrian Circulation

Construction activities will necessitate occasional closures of adjacent roadways and sidewalks. The applicant explains that temporary sidewalk closures along Terry Avenue North are planned and installation of the upper levels abutting both streets will be installed off a scaffolding system that allows for public access under the lowest deck.

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 construction workers will be accommodated by the owner (Cornish College) at a nearby parking lot.

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). 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

Long term or use-related impacts are also anticipated as a result of this proposal, including: increased bulk and scale on the site; increased public demand for public services and utilities; increased energy consumption; minor increase in light and glare; and increased traffic and parking demand due to students and staff. Compliance with applicable codes and ordinances will reduce or eliminate most adverse long-term impacts to the environment.

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... When a project is proposed adjacent to or across the street from a designated site or structure, the decisionmaker shall refer the proposal to the City's Historic Preservation Officer for an assessment of any adverse impacts on the designated landmark and for comments on possible mitigating measures..."*

SEPA provides authority to mitigate impacts to historic buildings (SMC 25.05.675.H.2.c). In this instance, the existing building addressed as 1000 Virginia Street is not designated as a historical landmark. However, because this proposal involves exterior modifications to an existing building which is within close proximity to a designated site (Old Norway Hall), the subject site's proposal was referred to the Department of Neighborhoods (DON) for review. The DON Historic Preservation Staff communicated to DPD that a SEPA adjacency review to assess potential adverse impacts to the aforementioned historic landmark had been completed and a determination was made that no further actions were necessary. Therefore, no mitigation is warranted by SEPA.

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).

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

None Required.

Signature: _____ (signature on file) Date: October 20, 2014
Tami Garrett, Senior Land Use Planner
Department of Planning and Development

TG:drm

K:\Decisions-Signed\3015077.docx