



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: 3015185
Applicant Name: Kim Baldwin
Address of Proposal: 651 W Olympic Pl

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION

Land Use Application to remove 23,760 sq. ft. of invasive vegetation and 21 trees and to allow 753 cu. yds. of grading (243 cu. yds. cut; 510 cu. yds. fill) in an environmentally critical area to facilitate the renovation of an existing park (Kinnear Park). Project includes trail improvements, new picnic tables, and resurfacing existing tennis court. Review includes re-vegetation plan. Environmental documents prepared by Seattle Parks and Recreation. The following approval is required:

SEPA for conditioning only (Chapter 25.05, Seattle Municipal Code).

SEPA DETERMINATION: Exempt DNS EIS
 DNS with conditions
 DNS involving non-exempt grading, or demolition
or involving another agency with jurisdiction.¹

BACKGROUND DATA

Site and Vicinity Description: Kinnear Park is a 14-acre park located on the southwest slope of Queen Anne Hill. The majority of the park is comprised of undeveloped areas containing native and invasive vegetation. There are trails and a tennis court in the lower portion of the park. The upper portion of the park, adjacent to West Olympic Place, is flat and developed with areas of lawn, a children's play area and a comfort station. The property is zoned Lowrise 3 (LR3). Surrounding development is predominantly single- and multi-family residential. Kinnear Park is considered an historic resource as it was included in the Olmsted Plan for Seattle parks. The

¹ Seattle Parks and Recreation prepared an Environmental Checklist and published a Declaration of Non-Significance on July 12th, 2012.

park existed prior to the Olmsteds coming to Seattle, but the Olmsted Plan noted its significance and recommended improvements. The park is also on the list of City Landmarks.

Slopes in the park are steep and there is a history of landslides in areas of the park. There are several identified Environmentally Critical Areas (ECAs) in the park (landslide-prone areas, including known landslide and potential landslide areas).

Proposal Description: The project involves improving existing trails, construction of new paths, enhancement of entries, and renovation of an old tennis court. The project also includes slope stabilization planting, invasive plant removal, construction of rockeries and terracing, and addition of new signage. Four phases of the project are outlined in detail in the environmental checklist prepared by Seattle Parks and Recreation. Implementation of the phases would occur over at least three years.

Public Comment: The public comment period was from May 9th, 2013, to May 22nd, 2013. August 15, 2012. One comment was received.

ANALYSIS – SEPA

Seattle Parks and Recreation is the SEPA Lead Agency responsible for making the threshold determination with respect to this proposal. Initial disclosure of potential impacts from this proposal was made in an environmental checklist, signed by a Seattle Parks and Recreation representative June 1st, 2012. Seattle Parks and Recreation issued a Determination of Non-significance, on July 12, 2012. No appeals of this determination were filed.

The SEPA Overview Policy (SMC 25.05.665) discusses the relationship between 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. Under specific circumstances (SMC 25.05.665 D 1-7) mitigation can be required. A discussion of potential impacts follows.

Short-term (Construction) Impacts

The SEPA checklist and Threshold Determination prepared by Seattle Parks and Recreation identifies the following temporary or construction-related impacts: hydrocarbon emissions from construction vehicles and equipment; increased dust from construction activities; potential soil erosion and potential disturbance to subsurface soils during site work; increased traffic from construction equipment and personnel; increased noise; displaced recreational users; consumption of renewable and non-renewable resources and a resultant increase in greenhouse emissions.

Several adopted codes and/or ordinances provide mitigation for some of the identified impacts. The Stormwater Code regulates stormwater management during and after construction. The Grading Code regulates site excavation and requires that soil erosion control techniques be initiated for the duration of construction and until the site is permanently stabilized. The Environmentally Critical Area Regulations regulate development and construction techniques in and nears designated ECA’s. The Street Use Ordinance requires construction best management

practices and regulates obstruction of the pedestrian right-of-way. The Puget Sound Clean Air Agency regulations require control of fugitive dust to protect air quality. The Building Code regulates building design. Finally, the Noise Ordinance regulates the time and amount of construction noise that is permitted in the city.

Seattle DPD has reviewed the project plans and supporting materials, including the geotechnical engineering report prepared by Terracon Consultants, Inc., dated June 24th, 2011, and determined the proposal is in compliance with the City's standards for development on sites with geologic hazard areas. While typical temporary construction-related impacts are expected, these impacts are not considered significant because they are temporary and/or minor in scope (SMC 25.05.794). Seattle DPD concurs with Seattle Parks and Recreation Determination of Non-significance with respect to short-term impacts. The impacts associated with construction are expected to be minor and of short duration. Compliance with applicable codes and regulations will sufficiently minimize adverse impacts to the environment so that no additional conditioning is necessary.

Long-term Impacts

Once the construction activities are complete, usage at Kinneer Park will return to its present condition and will likely increase with the addition of an off-leash area and the improvements to the tennis courts. The improved trails may get more usage and the hillside will be made more stable. Seattle Parks and Recreation anticipate that the increased usage will primarily be from local residents taking advantage of improved amenities. The natural environment at the park is expected to be enhanced by the removal of invasive plants and addition of native vegetation. Seattle DPD concurs with Seattle Parks and Recreation Determination of Non-significance, which concludes that no long-term adverse environmental impacts are expected. Therefore, no conditioning is necessary.

CONCLUSION – SEPA

In conclusion, DPD finds several effects on the environment resulting from the proposed project. However, these impacts noted here as mitigated by code are not sufficiently adverse to warrant further mitigation by condition.

CONDITIONS – SEPA

None

Signature: _____ (signature on file) Date: September 9, 2013
Seth Amrhein, Senior Environmental Analyst
Department of Planning and Development

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