



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: 3016023 and 3015311
Applicant Name: David Pool, BLRB Architects, for Seattle Public Schools
Address of Proposal: 5013 SW Dakota Street

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION

3016023 - Land Use Application to allow demolition of a 30,172 sq. ft. existing school (Genesee Hill Elementary School) in an environmentally critical area. Project includes removal of 2 exceptional trees. Environmental Impact Statement prepared by Seattle Public Schools.*

3015311 - Land Use Application to allow a 3-story, 90,763 sq. ft. structure (Genesee Hill Elementary School) in an environmentally critical area. Environmental documents are being prepared by Seattle Public Schools.* Project also includes 14,700 cubic yards of grading.

The following approval is required:

Development Standard Departure - Chapter 23.79 Seattle Municipal Code to approve or condition the following departures: To allow a maximum height of 50 feet for a portion of the school in a single-family zone – SMC 23.51B.002 D.

SEPA – For conditioning only - Chapter 25.05, Seattle Municipal Code.

SEPA DETERMINATION: Exempt DNS MDNS EIS*

 DNS with conditions

 DNS involving non-exempt grading or demolition, or
 another agency with jurisdiction.

*Environmental documents prepared by Seattle Public Schools: Genesee Hill Elementary School Replacement, SEPA Addendum to Building Excellence Phase IV Capital Improvement Program Programmatic EIS (SPS, 2012).

BACKGROUND DATA

Site Location

Genesee Elementary School is located on a six and one half (6.5) acre site in West Seattle at 5012 SW Genesee Street. The site is bound by SW Dakota Street on the north, 51st Avenue SW on the west and SW Genesee Street on the south. There is a steep slope Environmentally Critical Area (ECA) mapped on the site. A Seattle Heritage tree and City-defined exceptional trees are located on site.

Zoning

The proposal is located in a Single Family (SF 5000) zone.

Proposal Information

Seattle Public Schools (SPS) proposes to demolish the existing school (Genesee Hill Elementary School) and to construct a multi-story 90,763 square foot new elementary school with associated parking and outdoor play fields. Two project numbers 3016023 to demolish, and 3015311 to build the new school, have been merged into one review. The proposal includes removing two (2) exceptional trees.

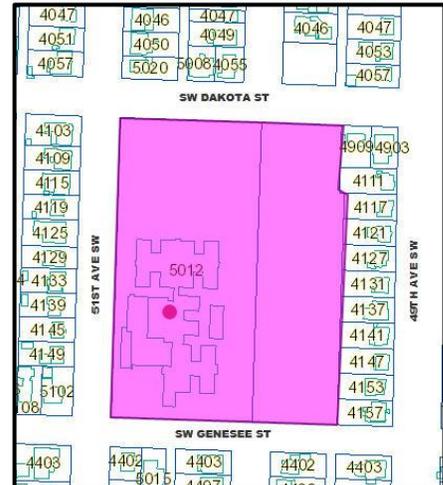
Environmentally Critical Area review is required at this site. Based on a review of the submitted information and the City GIS system, DPD concludes that the ECA Steep Slope Areas surrounding the site have been created by previous legal grading activities (per SMC 25.09.180 B2b) associated with construction of the elementary school and subsequent improvements on the property. For this reason, an ECA Steep Slope Area Variance is not required for this project. The project therefore has been given an ECA exemption.

Previous SEPA Related Actions

Prior to application for a Master Use Permit, the District exercised its prerogative to act as lead agency. A Determination of Non-Significance (DNS) was issued by Seattle Public Schools on December 6, 2013. An appeal was registered. On February 14, 2014 the DNS was recommended to be affirmed by the Hearing Examiner Pro Tem. The Seattle School District submitted their MUP applications (project number #3015311 and 3016023 are being reviewed together) to DPD for review. For the purposes of this permit application, exercise of substantive SEPA authority by DPD is limited to conditioning only for impacts previously identified by SPS. Conditioning pursuant to this authority will rely on the threshold DNS issued by the District and on environmental documents prepared by the District.

Public Comments

Several comment letters were received during the official extended public comment period which ended on December 29, 2013. They can be viewed in the public electronic file at the following link <http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/> under the project number.



Development Standard Departure

The Seattle School District No. 1 submitted a request for departures from certain Seattle Municipal Code Development Standards for the proposed new elementary school. The Department of Neighborhoods (DON) is charged with administering the School Departure process per SMC 23.79.004. DON formed the required Advisory Committee of eight voting members with a City non-voting Chair. The final Development Standard Departure_report is available in the public electronic file at the following link <http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/> under the project number.

ANALYSIS – Development Standard Departure for Public Schools

The Development Standard Departure process is conducted pursuant to the provisions of Seattle Municipal Code sections 23.79.002-.012. An Advisory Committee convened, public comment was received, and a written recommendation to the Director of DPD was prepared. The Director prepares an analysis and decision per SMC section 23.79.010. The Director will determine the amount of departure to be allowed as well as mitigation measures to be imposed. The Director’s decision shall be based on an evaluation of the factors set forth in Section 23.79.008 C, the majority recommendations and minority reports of the Advisory Committee, comments at the public meeting(s) and other comments from the public. If the Director modifies the recommendations of the Advisory Committee, the reasons for the modification shall be put forth in writing.

In reviewing the departure request, Section 23.79.008 directs the Advisory Committee to “gather and evaluate public comment”, and to “recommend maximum departures which may be allowed for each development standard from which a departure has been requested”. It states, “Departures shall be evaluated for consistency with the objectives and intent of the City’s Land Use Code....., to ensure that the proposed facility is compatible with the character and use of its surroundings”. The Advisory Committee is directed to consider and balance the interrelationships among the following factors in SMC 23.79.008 C 1:

- a. ***Relationship to Surrounding Areas:*** *The advisory committee shall evaluate the acceptable or necessary level of departure according to:*
1. *Appropriateness in relation to the character and scale of the surrounding area;*
 2. *Presence of edges (significant setbacks, major arterials, topographic breaks, and similar features) which provide a transition in scale;*
 3. *Location and design of structures to reduce the appearance of bulk;*
 4. *Impacts on traffic, noise, circulation and parking in the area; and*
 5. *Impacts on housing and open space.*

More flexibility in the development standards may be allowed if the impacts on the surrounding community are anticipated to be negligible or are reduced by mitigation; whereas, a minimal amount or no departure from development standards may be allowed if the anticipated impacts are significant and cannot be satisfactorily mitigated.

- b. *Need for Departure:*** *The physical requirements of the specific proposal and the project's relationship to educational needs shall be balanced with the level of impacts on the surrounding area. Greater departures may be allowed for special facilities, such as a gymnasium, which are unique and/or integral and necessary part of the educational process; whereas, a lesser or no departure may be granted for a facility which can be accommodated within the established development standards.*

Departure Request and Advisory Committee Recommendation

On July 26, 2013, the Seattle School District No. 1 submitted a request for departures from certain Seattle Municipal Code Development Standards for the proposed new Genesee Hill Elementary School.

In September 2013, the Department of Neighborhoods sent notices to residents within 600 feet of the proposed new school and to a list of individuals and organizations that had shown interest in other community issues in the vicinity of Genesee Hill Elementary School requesting self-nominations for membership on the Development Standard Departure Advisory Committee, and the Committee was formed. The Committee is composed of eight voting members with a City non-voting Chair. The Committee was convened in a public meeting held November 5, 2012 at Schmitz Park Elementary School.

The Department of Neighborhoods prepared and submitted a report to document public testimony and make recommendations to DPD for modifications to land use code development standards per SMC 23.51B and 23.79. The report contains the Committee minutes, public comments, Committee recommendations and conclusions, and appendices. Specific details outlined in this report are available for review in the in the DPD project file for this proposal (3016023 and 3005311).

Genesee Hill Elementary School sits on land zoned Single Family 5000. Allowable height within this zone is governed by Seattle Municipal Code Chapter 25.51B.002D1b - Public Schools in residential zones which states:

For new public school construction on existing public school sites, the maximum permitted height is 35 feet plus 15 feet for a pitched roof. All parts of the roof above the height limit must be pitched at a rate of not less than 4:12. No portion of a shed roof is permitted to extend beyond the 35 foot height limit under this provision.

Seattle Public Schools has designed a school on the site that contains portions that are up to three (3) stories high. The proposed school building is "L" shaped with the longest facade fronting SW Dakota Street, running the entire length of that street. The eastern portion of the proposed school along SW Dakota Street is proposed to exceed the allowable height by approximately 12 ½ feet to a maximum height of about 47 ½ feet. In order to accommodate the height of the three story portion of the building, the District requested a departure from the standards in 25.51B.002D1b to allow a maximum height of 50 feet for that portion of the building at the northeast corner of the site.

The following is the Committee's evaluation based on SMC 23.79.008 C 1:

- a. *Relationship to Surrounding Areas:*** *The advisory committee shall evaluate the acceptable or necessary level of departure according to:*

1. Appropriateness in relation to the character and scale of the surrounding area;

Surrounding development is consistently single family with residents displaying obvious high pride of ownership and is both a stable and improving area. As is the case for almost all schools, the proposed new Genesee Elementary School would be much larger and of a different character than the surrounding single family development. The Committee recognizes that rebuilding an elementary school on the existing school site within the neighborhood it serves merits full consideration as an appropriate use at this large site. A school within the neighborhood fabric on a large site is appropriate in character and history of the area. The proposed scale of the school is balanced between play field space, school building, parking lot and forested slope. Any incongruity does not constitute so great a conflict that flexibility in modifying development standards should be denied.

2. Presence of edges (significant setbacks, major arterials, topographic breaks, and similar features) which provide a transition in scale;

The site slopes down from 51st Avenue Southwest towards the rear lot lines of the single family homes fronting the west side of 49th Avenue Southwest. The site is bisected by steep slopes which are well-forested and provide visual relief and screening to and from the higher area of the building and provide a transition in scale.

3. Location and design of structures to reduce the appearance of bulk;

The applicant has made efforts to reduce the appearance of height and bulk of the building. Two-story areas of the building located along 51st Avenue SW are lower than the street level and landscaping is proposed to be retained or replaced. Views from Genesee will see the large play field areas and the school building farther to the north of the site. The proposed SW Dakota Street facades are extensively glazed at the administrative offices. Full landscaping and building fenestration is proposed to help articulate the classroom wing facade.

Under the Land Use Code, the District could utilize sloped roof provisions to exceed the 35 foot limit without a departure. By utilizing a flat roof system instead of the sloped roof bonus, the District achieves more appropriate classroom spaces and is able to reduce overall height of that portion of the building by almost five feet. The applicant has placed the mechanical functions (normally enclosed in rooftop mechanical penthouses) in a basement mechanical room, thus further reducing the appearance of height and bulk.

4. Impacts on traffic, noise, circulation and parking in the area; and

The departure request for increased height does not have impacts that effect traffic, noise, circulation and parking.

5. Impacts on housing and open space.

The site is currently characterized by hard and soft surface open space as well as a steep slope environmentally critical area. The slope is moderately forested. The proposed plan shifts the location of the open space from the north to the south of the site and retains a comparable amount. The plan similarly retains the environmentally critical area, while providing better

pedestrian access between the upper and lower plateaus. The committee had no major concerns with the location or amount of open space. There will be an impact on housing at the northeast corner of the site where the proposed new building mass will be located where currently there is no building.

- b. Need for Departure: The physical requirements of the specific proposal and the project's relationship to educational needs shall be balanced with the level of impacts on the surrounding area.*

Given the analyses above, a majority of the Genesee Hill Elementary School Design Departure Committee concluded that the overriding need for the School, the physical requirements of a new school, programmatic and safety needs, and the minimal impact regarding items 1 through 5 above, justify granting the height departure request. However the Committee also concluded that granting the District's request should be conditioned. The Committee voted unanimously to make the following conditioning recommendation:

That a departure from the conditions in SMC 25.51B.002D1c to allow a maximum height of 50 feet for that portion of the Genesee Elementary School site lying east of the center line of the right-of Way for the alley lying between 50th and 51st Avenues SW and north of the of a line extending east from the south lot line of Lot 27, Block 1 of O. B. Williams Addition to the City of Seattle as shown on illustration 3, page 5 of this report, or sufficient to cover the area shown as exceeding the allowable height on illustration 2 page 4 of the Advisory Committee report, be granted in order to accommodate the three story portion of the proposed new Genesee Hill Elementary School subject to the following condition:

- (1). Install full and striving landscaping in the 25 foot setback along the boundary of the Seattle School District property and the rear lot lines of the adjacent properties. The intent is to soften views of the proposed three story portion of the new school from those properties. This condition applies only to the setback area of the north 100 feet of the east property line. Planting in the ECA steep slope and buffer is allowed due to the ECA exemption given to this project and noted in the building permit file for the project, number 6363672.

Details of the recommendations and discussion concerning the proposal, departure and condition are in the November 2013 report prepared by the Department of Neighborhoods (DON) and forwarded to DPD for its analysis.

The DPD Land Use Planner has reviewed the applicant's plans and other materials as well as the Advisory Committee's report and condition. DPD concurs with the Advisory Committee's decision. As conditioned, DPD recommends approval of the building height departure.

DECISION-DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURE

The development standard departure to allow a departure from the height limit in a single-family zone is **CONDITIONALLY GRANTED**.

ANALYSIS - SEPA

The proposal's environmental impacts have been analyzed in environmental documents prepared by the Seattle School District. Documents include a SEPA Checklist dated February, 2014 and a Determination of Non-Significance (DNS) issued by Seattle School District dated March 10, 2014.

Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) Section 25.05.660 provides that proposals can be conditioned in order to mitigate environmental impacts. All conditions must be related to impacts identified in the environmental documents, based on adopted policies, and must be reasonable and capable of being accomplished. This proposal is reviewed under that substantive SEPA authority.

The Department is reviewing the environmental impacts of the proposal in order to impose further conditions, if necessary. Disclosure of the potential impacts from this proposal was made in the environmental documents listed above. This information, supplemental information provided by the applicant (plans, written descriptions of the project, geotechnical report, transportation and parking report, construction requirements, arborist reports and renderings) and the experience of this agency with review of similar proposals 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. Thus, a more detailed discussion of some of the impacts is appropriate.

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, and city ECA regulations.

Environmental impacts were identified in the Seattle Public School environmental documents which can be found in the city's electronic file for projects 3016023 and 3015311. Impacts include impacts on earth, air, plants, construction noise, aesthetics, light and glare, cultural preservation, and transportation. The identified impacts are subject to additional mitigation as described below.

Short Term 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.

Air Quality

Demolition, grading and construction activities each may create adverse air quality impacts in the surrounding area. The Puget Sound Clean Air Agency (PSCAA) regulations require control of fugitive dust to protect air quality. The Stormwater Code (SMC 22.800-808) and the Grading Code (SMC 22.170) regulate on-site grading activities and require that soil erosion control techniques be initiated for the duration of the work. Construction activities will include several measures to minimize impacts to air quality: The contractor chosen for the proposed project would be required to comply with Puget Sound Clean Air Agency (PSCAA) regulations. Regulations that apply to the proposed project include Regulation I, Section 9.11 prohibiting the emission of air contaminants that would or could be injurious to human health, plant or animal life, or property; and Regulation I, Section 9.15 prohibiting the emission of fugitive dust, unless reasonable precautions are employed to minimize the emissions.

All construction areas, including excavation and grading, which are inactive for more than seven days during the dry season (April 1st to October 31st) or two days during the wet season (November 1st to March 31st) are required to be covered.

The School district has outlined mitigation measures to reduce and/or control impacts to air which include:

- Watering the temporary dirt driveway and construction surfaces to control dust, the use of temporary ground covers, sprinkling the project site with approved dust palliatives, or use of temporary stabilization practices upon completion of grading.
- Wheel-cleaning stations will be provided to ensure construction vehicle wheels and undercarriages do not carry excess dirt from the site onto adjacent roadways.
- Streets will be regularly cleaned to ensure excess dust and debris is not transported from the construction-site onto adjacent roads.
- Construction activities will be planned to minimize exposing areas of earth for extended periods.
- The contractor will be required to comply with the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency's (PSCAA) Regulation I, Section 9.15 requiring reasonable precautions to avoid dust emissions and Regulation I, Section 9.11 requiring the best available measures to control emissions of odor-bearing contaminants. The contractor will be required to comply with recommendations in the Washington Associated General Contractor brochure "Guide to Handling Fugitive Dust from Construction Projects."

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

Construction Noise

There will be excavation required to prepare the building site and foundation. Additionally, as development proceeds, noise associated with construction of the building could adversely affect the surrounding residential uses. The limitations of the Noise Ordinance are found to be inadequate to mitigate the potential noise impacts. Pursuant to the SEPA Overview Policy (SMC.25.05.665) and the SEPA Construction Impacts Policy (SMC 25.05.675 B), mitigation is warranted, see SEPA conditions at the end of this document.

Construction Vehicles

There will be a variety of construction vehicles required to prepare the building site and to support construction activities to build the foundation, build the building and complete landscaping. As development proceeds, vehicles associated with construction of the building could adversely affect the surrounding residential uses. The applicant has anticipated this and has proposed mitigation in the SEPA checklist. Construction vehicles will not be parked in traffic lanes. Walkways leading past the site will remain clear of construction vehicles and debris and will remain passable. Flaggers will be provided as required. No further conditioning or mitigation is warranted pursuant to specific environmental policies or the SEPA Overview Policy (SMC 25.05.665).

Grading/excavation

During grading and excavation activities City code (SMC 11.74) provides that material hauled in trucks not be spilled during transport. The City requires a minimum of one foot of "freeboard" (area from level of material to the top of the truck container) be provided in loaded, uncovered trucks which minimize the amount of spilled material and dust from the truck bed in route to or from a site.

The contractor will submit a written earthwork plan to the Project Engineer for approval prior to commencing with any mass excavation or filling. The earthwork plan will also include:

- Sequencing of the earthwork and grading activities;
- Proposed equipment to be utilized;
- Surface water diversion and control (description of how existing catch basins at the project site would remain intact measures used to protect them from sediment during construction);
- Proposed protection methods for excavated stockpiled fill materials and trenches;
- Soil drying procedures; and
- Any other information pertinent to the manner in which the earthwork and grading will be performed.

The contractor will obtain the City of Seattle's Department of Planning and Development (DPD) approval that erosion control measures are in place and functioning and will maintain erosion control measures as earthwork and utility construction commences in accordance with City of Seattle standards, as part of building permit review. No further conditioning or mitigation is warranted pursuant to specific environmental policies or the SEPA Overview Policy (SMC 25.05.665).

Construction Parking

During construction, parking demand will increase due to additional demand created by construction personnel and equipment. It is the City's policy to minimize temporary adverse impacts associated with construction activities. Construction workers can be expected to arrive in early morning hours and to leave in the mid-afternoon. Surrounding residents generate their peak need for on-street parking in the evening and overnight hours when construction workers can be expected to have departed. In addition, most of the commercial uses in the surrounding area include enough on-site parking such that street parking is not an issue. Construction parking impacts will be insignificant and therefore SEPA mitigation of parking impacts during construction is unwarranted. No conditioning or mitigation is warranted pursuant to specific environmental policies or the SEPA Overview Policy (SMC 25.05.665).

Construction Traffic

Site preparation will include demolition of the existing building. Existing City code (SMC 11.62) requires truck activities to use arterial streets to every extent possible. Traffic impacts resulting from the truck traffic associated with the removal of the existing building will be of short duration and mitigated in part by enforcement of SMC 11.62. The findings in the Heffron *Traffic Impact Analysis* prepared for this project note that truck traffic associated with construction (including earthwork) will likely be noticeable, but would not result in significant impacts to traffic operations so no conditioning is warranted. Construction vehicle traffic to and from the site will be minimized during peak traffic hours. No conditioning or mitigation is warranted pursuant to specific environmental policies or the SEPA Overview Policy (SMC 25.05.665).

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

Earth

The project will require grading/excavation and construction permits. The existing Codes (The City of Seattle Stormwater Code, SMC 22.800, Regulations for Environmentally Critical Areas SMC 25.09, and the City of Seattle Grading Code SMC 22.170) provide authority to require appropriate mitigation for this project, and that no specific conditioning is warranted in this

regard. Surface water controls (i.e. temporary interceptor swales, check dams, silt fences, etc.) will be constructed simultaneously with clearing and grading for project development. Surface water and erosion control measures will be relocated or new measures will be installed so as site conditions change, erosion control measures remain in accordance with City of Seattle Best Management Practices (BMP) requirements during the construction period.

SPS has proposed mitigation to address short term impacts as described above. The measures outlined in their environmental documents adequately address impacts. Except for noise conditioning listed at the end of this document, no further conditioning of the short term impact elements of the project is warranted pursuant to SEPA policies.

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 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.

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 (SMC 25.05.665).

Plants

A report conducted by Tree Solutions, Inc. identifies trees on the site. Ten trees were identified as exceptional trees as defined by the City of Seattle. Two of the exceptional trees are proposed to be removed since it is expected they will be subject to "irreversible damage" to their root systems. Additionally, the lot coverage and school functional relationships cannot be achieved on site without their removal. Four (4) new trees of like species will be planted on site. (SMC 25.11) Over a 12-year period, the American elm, a Seattle heritage tree, will be treated to inoculate it from Dutch elm disease. The exceptional Douglas fir located along SW Genesee Street will be afforded a 43-foot radius special protection zone during construction activity. SPS will follow standard best practices for preservation of all other vegetation and trees during construction that are scheduled for retention, including retaining a certified arborist to advise during site disturbance activities. No further conditioning or mitigation is warranted pursuant to specific environmental policies or the SEPA Overview Policy (SMC 25.05.665).

Historic Preservation

The City of Seattle has determined that preserving historic buildings and districts is important to the citizenry for retaining a living sense and appreciation of the past, and has established the Landmarks Preservation Board to determine the historical and cultural significance of individual buildings and sites. A Landmark Nomination was prepared for the Genesee Elementary School and subsequently submitted to the Board for its review and approval. At the August 7, 2013 meeting the Board declined to grant landmark status to the existing school buildings or site. As regards the existing building no conditioning or mitigation is warranted pursuant to specific environmental policies or the SEPA Overview Policy (SMC 25.05.665).

The Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) Statewide Predictive Model indicates the project site contains areas of low to very high risk for encountering pre-contact archaeological resources. According to the DAHP model, the northeast corner of the project is classified as having a high risk for archaeological remains. SPS will hire a consultant to prepare an inadvertent discovery plan which will be submitted to the City planner. The project will be conditioned to provide the plan.

Earth

A swath of steep slopes runs through the site running northeast to southwest and is mapped as a steep slope environmentally critical area (ECA). A geotechnical investigation was performed at the project site by Shannon & Wilson, Inc. in November 2012. The study included geotechnical engineering recommendations to use in the foundation design of the proposed school building. These recommendations have been incorporated into the plans for the Genesee Hill Elementary School and have been approved in DPD's ECA review of the project. Temporary erosion and sedimentation control BMPs and construction water treatment measures will be installed to minimize erosion and to treat stormwater runoff during construction. No further mitigation is necessary or warranted.

Environmental Health

A Phase I Abatement and Finishes Removal process will be conducted to remove any toxic materials, such as asbestos containing materials, PCB containing light ballast, mercury containing fluorescent lighting tubes and switches, in advance of school demolition activities. Project specifications require adherence to all applicable local, state and federal regulations governing hazardous materials removal and disposal, eliminating public exposure. The underground fuel storage tank will either be closed in place or removed in accordance with state regulations (WAC 173-360). No mitigation is necessary or warranted.

Air

Upon completion, the project would result in a decrease in air quality over existing conditions, especially at morning and afternoon peak loading and unloading periods, but similar to those when the school was more fully operational. Enrollment at Genesee in 2007 was approximately 400 students. If 68% of the students arrived by separate vehicles (the percentage of students currently arriving at Schmitz Park Elementary by separate vehicles) that would yield approximately 272 morning vehicle trips in 2007. The traffic analysis projects approximately 455 morning vehicle trips in 2016, an increase of 183 vehicle trips. Even with this increase in the

number of vehicle trips, major pollutants are projected to decrease by at least 40% over 2007 levels due to rapidly improving emission technology. The analysis was based on use of the California Air Resources Board EMFAC2011 model. The impact of the proposed project on air quality in the area from 2007 levels is not anticipated to be significant. As has been done at the Schmitz Park Elementary School, the administration has begun a program to encourage non-motorized trips (such as walking, biking, and bussing) and it is expected that these efforts would be continued at the new Genesee Hill Elementary School. Therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

Noise

Reactivating the vacant school site will introduce and increase new sounds reminiscent of the school when it was last in operation in 2009 with 400 students. While 260 additional students is a substantial increase, the school accommodated over 700 in the late 1950s. Most active outdoor play is below street level, which provides some noise buffering. The noise level is expected to be below established noise thresholds for residential zones. Therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

Light and Glare

Exterior lighting on the site will be expanded and interior lighting will be noticeable at two and three-story elevations changing the ambience of the neighborhood around the new school during some dark hours during the school year. New lighting will be installed at the bus loading/unloading area along 51st Avenue SW and in the new SE parking area where no lighting currently exists. Lighting at the bus load/unload area on SW Dakota Street will be supported by the existing street light fixtures. Exterior building and property lighting from the completed project are not expected to interfere with views and should improve safety. Views will change from what residents and passersby have been accustomed to in the past. New lighting will be installed around the property where street lights are not currently in place. New modern exterior fixtures are cut-off type, meaning no light escapes beyond a 90-degree angle reducing light trespass and resulting in no glare. It is anticipated that both exterior and interior lighting will be on controlled timers with a shut off time at 10:00 pm. Lighting at building entrances may remain on past 10:00 pm to maintain safety for district personnel. The lower (southeastern) parking lot lighting will be on controlled times to turn off at 10:00 pm. With these controls in place no further mitigation is warranted.

Traffic Impacts

The new 90,763 square foot Genesee Hill Elementary School is expected to have an enrollment capacity of about 660 students. During the years prior to its closure, the school had enrollment ranging from about 350 to 400 students and prior to that, 700 students.

Technical information regarding traffic impacts and projections for the school's re-opening is included in a Traffic Impact Analysis, prepared by Heffron Transportation, Inc. dated September 10, 2013. The Analysis is available for review on the DPD website at <http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/>.

Plans approved by DPD, show a total of 71 on-site parking spaces in two lots. A new staff parking lot (with 55 stalls) located at the southeast corner of the site with an access driveway on SW Genesee Street. A visitor parking lot (with 16 stalls) is proposed on the north side of the school with one access driveway on SW Dakota Street. The site would also have a service vehicle access driveway on 51st Avenue SW for deliveries and garbage/recycling collection. Bus load and unloading is proposed on SW Dakota Street and 51st Avenue SW. Parent load and unload is proposed along 51st Avenue SW.

To help evaluate the potential traffic conditions near the site during morning arrival and afternoon dismissal times for the school, new peak period traffic counts were performed at two key intersections-SW Genesee Street/51st Avenue SW and SW Dakota Street/51st Avenue SW. These intersections are expected to serve as the primary access points for parent vehicles and school busses that drop off students in the morning and pick them up in the afternoon. Peak period traffic counts were performed from 7:30 to 9:30 a.m. and from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. to approximate school opening and dismissal hours.

The school is expected to generate new pedestrian trips and increase the number of pedestrians crossing at both off-site study area intersections. The overall average delay at both intersections would correspond to Level of Service C and above factoring in all movements. The added delay would be relatively small (seven seconds or less). It is expected that during the 20-minute periods before and after school, parent-vehicle traffic along 51st Avenue SW and SW Dakota Street will be noticeable with some congestion, but would not represent a significant adverse impact. Non-school traffic volumes on the local roadways are relatively low during the morning and afternoon peak hours, and would accommodate the increase in traffic associated with the Genesee Hill Elementary school project.

The project proposes 71 parking stalls, including 55 stalls in the staff parking lot and 16 stalls in the visitor lot. Some parking demand is likely to occur adjacent to the school on neighboring streets. This study indicates that there would be parking spaces available for neighborhood use even with anticipated spill over. Larger events are expected to impact streets within one or two blocks of the school eight to ten times per year.

The following summarizes the findings of the traffic analysis:

- The Genesee Hill Elementary School is expected to accommodate a student capacity of 660.
- At its proposed enrollment capacity, the school is projected to generate 850 trips per day, with 455 trips in the morning peak hour, and 259 trips in the afternoon peak hour.
- The school will likely result in busy traffic conditions along 51st Avenue SW and SW Dakota Street in the morning before school begins and in the afternoon when school is dismissed.
- The school would generate pedestrian and bicycle trips within the site vicinity and the increase in pedestrian trips is expected to noticeably increase the frequency of pedestrian crossings of SW Dakota Street, 51st Avenue SW, and SW Genesee Street adjacent to the site as students and parents walk between the school, local residences, and on-street parking that surrounds the site. This activity would add some delay to vehicle traffic, but would not result in significant adverse impacts to traffic operations in the site vicinity.

- At the proposed capacity of 660 students, the school is expected to generate midday parking demand of about 86 vehicles—consisting of school employees, visitors, and parent volunteers. A majority of the midday parking demand could be accommodated within the on-site parking areas, but some overspill to on-street parking along SW Dakota Street, 51st Avenue SW, and SW Genesee Street is also likely to occur on school days.
- The available on-street parking could easily accommodate the overflow parking demand associated with a typical school day. During the evenings when large events are held at the school (expected to be eight to ten times per year), parking conditions close to the school are expected to be highly utilized and congested before and after events.

Based on findings in the traffic analysis, measures are required to further reduce traffic and parking impacts associated with the Genesee Hill Elementary School project, and in order to provide for mitigation, the proposal has been conditioned, as noted at the end of this document.

Transportation

The following streets provide access to the Genesee Hill Elementary School site: SW Genesee Street fronts the site on the south, 51st Avenue SW fronts the site on the west and SW Dakota Street fronts the site on the north. Vehicular access is proposed to occur from all three streets. Visitors and accessible parking would access an on-site parking lot from SW Dakota Street; teachers and staff would access a parking lot from SW Genesee Street; and service vehicles would access the school from 51st Avenue SW. School buses and parents are expected to load and unload students from on-street loading areas on 51st Avenue SW and SW Dakota Street. See Figure 1, Vicinity Map, and Appendix D, Traffic Impact Analysis available in the public electronic file at this link <http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/>. Bus service in the area is provided by King County Metro Transit. The nearest bus stops are located along the south corners of the project site on SW Genesee Street at 49th and 51st Avenue SW. These stops are served by Metro Route 57, which provides weekday peak period service between Downtown Seattle, Alki and Alaska Junction in West Seattle. Route 57 operates with four trips into Downtown Seattle in the morning and four trips out of Downtown Seattle in the afternoon. The completed project would have 71 parking stalls including 55 in a staff parking lot with access from SW Genesee Street and 16 stalls in the visitor lot accessed from SW Dakota Street. The proposal would not require any new roads or streets. The District would provide frontage improvements along SW Dakota Street and 51st Avenue SW as required by the City of Seattle. Frontage improvements would include widening of SW Dakota Street east of 50th to accommodate special education bus loading. Widening includes 200 linear feet (LF) of curb and pavement widening with an average width of 5.5 feet. Improvements would also include replacement of 370 LF of sidewalk along SW Dakota Street and 51st Avenue SW as required by the City of Seattle.

The District will engage the Seattle School Safety Committee (of which the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) is a member) to review walk routes and determine any needed changes to crosswalk locations, signage, pavement markings, school zone speed limits, crossing guard locations and traffic control for the adjacent uncontrolled intersections on SW Dakota Street.

The District and school administration will develop a neighborhood communication plan to inform nearby neighbors of events each year. The plan will be updated annually (or as events are scheduled) and will provide information about the dates, times and estimated attendance. The communication will be intended to allow neighbors to estimate occasional on-street parking demand that may occur with large events.

In light of these transportation impacts, and in order to provide for mitigation, the proposal has been conditioned, as noted at the end of this document.

DECISION - SEPA

The application is **CONDITIONALLY GRANTED**.

CONDITIONS-DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURE

For the Life of the Project

1. Full and hardy landscaping shall be planted and maintained in good condition in the 25 foot setback the length of the north 100 feet of the east property line.

CONDITIONS – SEPA

Prior to Issuance of Demolition and Construction Permit

2. The Seattle School District will require the selected contractor to develop a construction management plan (CMP) that addresses traffic and pedestrian control. It will define truck routes, lane closures, sidewalk closures, and parking disruptions. To the extent possible, the CMP should direct trucks along the shortest route to arterials and away from residential streets to avoid unnecessary conflicts with resident and pedestrian activity. The CMP must identify parking locations for the construction staff. The CMP will be filed with the land use planner, Holly J. Godard, Holly.Godard@seattle.gov
3. Submit an inadvertent discovery plan to Holly J. Godard, Holly.Godard@seattle.gov

During Demolition and Construction

4. All construction activities are subject to the limitations of the Noise Ordinance. Construction activities (including but not limited to demolition, grading, deliveries, framing, roofing, and painting) shall be limited to non-holiday weekdays from 7am to 7pm. Interior work that involves noisy construction equipment, including electrical compressors, may be allowed on Saturdays between 9am and 7pm 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 undersigned Land Use Planner at least three (3) days in advance of the requested dates in order to allow DPD to evaluate the request.

Prior to Issuance of Any Certificate of Occupancy

5. The Seattle School District will engage the Seattle School Safety Committee (of which the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) is a member) to review walk routes and determine any needed changes to crosswalk locations, signage, pavement markings, school zone speed limits, crossing guard locations, and traffic control for the adjacent uncontrolled intersections on SW Dakota Street. Documentation of the outcome of the meeting will be filed with the land use planner, Holly J. Godard, Holly.Godard@seattle.gov.
6. The Seattle School District and school administration will develop a neighborhood communication plan to inform nearby neighbors of school year events. The plan will be updated annually (or as events are scheduled) and will provide information about the dates, times, and rough magnitude of attendance. The communication is intended to allow neighbors to plan for the occasional increase in on-street parking demand that would occur with large events. The plan will be available on the school website.

Signature: _____ (signature on file) Date: May 29, 2014
Holly J. Godard, Land Use Planner
Department of Planning and Development

HG:drm