



City of Seattle
Edward B. Murray, Mayor

Department of Planning and Development
D. M. Sugimura, Director

**CITY OF SEATTLE
DETERMINATION OF NON-SIGNIFICANCE BY
THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

Application Number: 3016758
Applicant Name: Dean Kralios for El Centro de La Raza
Address of Proposal: 2524 16th Avenue S

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION

Land Use Application to allow a below grade garage with surface parking above for a total of 144 vehicles in an environmentally critical area. Existing structure (El Centro De La Raza) to remain.

The following approval is required:

SEPA - Environmental Determination pursuant to Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) 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 DATA

The site of the proposed parking garage is located on the north end of the block bounded by S Bayview Street on the north, 16th Avenue S on the west, 17th Avenue S on the east Lander Street on the south. The site is split zoned with the southern one-third zoned NC2P-65 and the north two-thirds zoned LR3 (Lowrise 3). The proposed project is within the LR3 portion of the site. The site is primarily flat but drops off steeply on the north and east sides of the project site resulting in a steep slope condition. The site currently is use for parking for the El Centro de la Raza center and pre-school.

Proposed Use: The proposal is to construct a parking garage with one story below grade and additional parking at grade for a total of 144 parking spaces.

Environmentally Critical Area: The site is mapped Environmentally Critical Area, Steep Slope. The applicants applied for and received a Limited Steep Slope Exemption under permit #6397635, as follows:

“SMC 25.09. ECA review is required. Based on a review of the submitted information and the City GIS system, DPD concluded that the project appears to qualify for the criteria established in the Critical Areas Regulations, SMC 25.09.180.B2b. Specifically, the City GIS system and the submitted information for the steep slope developmental allowance application demonstrated that steep slopes at the site appeared to have been created by previous legal grading activities associated with street improvement and site development. For this reason, DPD will waive the required ECA Steep Slope Variance associated with DPD Application No. 6397635. This approval is conditioned upon the approval of building permits for a design that demonstrates that the proposed development will be completely stabilized in accordance with provisions of the ECA code and Grading Code. All other ECA Submittal, General, and Landslide-Hazard, and development standards still apply for this development.”

Public Comment: Notice of the Master Use Permit application was published on May 29, 2014 and the comment period ended June 11, 2014. DPD received one comment letter on this proposal.

ANALYSIS – SEPA

Environmental review resulting in a Threshold Determination is required pursuant to the Seattle State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), WAC 197-11, and the Seattle SEPA Ordinance (Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) 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 29, 2014. The Department of Planning and Development (DPD) has annotated the environmental checklist submitted by the project applicant; reviewed the project plans and any additional information in the project file submitted by the applicant or agents; and any pertinent comments which may have been received regarding this proposed action have been considered. The information in the checklist, the 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 D) clarifies the relationship between 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.

Under such limitations/circumstances, mitigation can be considered. Thus, a more detailed discussion of some of the impacts in appropriate.

Short-term Impacts

Construction activities 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, a small increase in traffic and parking impacts due to construction related vehicles, and increases in greenhouse gas emissions. Several construction-related impacts are mitigated by existing City codes and ordinances applicable to the project such as: 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. The following analyzes greenhouse gas and earth/soils impacts, as well as mitigation.

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.

Earth / Soils

The ECA Ordinance and Director's Rule (DR) 18-2011 require submission of a soils report to evaluate the site conditions and provide recommendations for safe construction in landslide prone areas. Pursuant to this requirement the applicant submitted a geotechnical engineering study. The study has been reviewed and approved by DPD's geotechnical experts, who will require what is needed for the proposed work to proceed without undue risk to the property or to adjacent properties.

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 on the environmentally critical area are also anticipated as a result of this proposal, including: increased surface water runoff due to greater site coverage by impervious surfaces; loss of plant and animal habitat. Compliance with applicable codes and ordinances will reduce or eliminate most adverse long-term impacts to the environment. Long-term or use related impacts should be mostly comparable to those already generated by the existing use. The existing El Centro de la Raza building contains existing community center uses and a child care center. The existing uses will not change with the proposed parking garage addition. The parking garage will remove 24 existing parking stalls and create a total of 144 new parking stalls, minimizing any existing parking impacts to the adjacent streets. Hence, long-term impacts are not considered significant because they are minor in scope. The building will be larger so potential exists for height, bulk and scale impacts, which are discussed below.

Several adopted City codes and/or ordinances provide mitigation for some of the impacts. Specifically these are: the Seattle Building Code which provides prescriptive construction techniques and standards; 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. Compliance with these applicable codes and ordinances is adequate to achieve sufficient mitigation of long term impacts.

Height, Bulk and Scale

The SEPA Height, Bulk and Scale Policy (Section 25.06.675.G., SMC) states that *“the height, bulk and scale of development projects should be reasonably compatible with the general character of development anticipated by the goals and policies set forth in Section B of the land use element of the Seattle Comprehensive Plan regarding Land Use Categories, ...and to provide for a reasonable transition between areas of less intensive zoning and more intensive zoning.”*

The proposed underground parking garage with surface parking above will be located in a Lowrise Three (LR3) zone and will meet all dimensional development standards of the zone, particularly height and setbacks. The property currently sits approximately 6-14 feet above the adjacent sidewalk along the west, east and north where there is an existing topographic berm. The parking garage will be located underground when viewed from the adjacent sidewalk. Garage access and the surface parking lot above the underground garage will be visible to adjacent properties. Properties to the south and west are more intensively zoned Neighborhood Commercial. Properties to the north and east are zoned Single Family (SF5000). Single family homes are located across the adjacent right-of-ways S Bayview Street and 17th Avenue S. The proposed underground building with surface parking above will be setback 25 feet from the north property line and 10 feet from the west property line. With the adjacent right-of-ways the cumulative setback to the single family zoned lots is 71.4 feet to the north and 76 feet to the east. The setback will include a 6 foot high screening fence and densely planted landscaping of varying heights and tree to mitigate any visual impacts from the surface parking area.

No further mitigation of height, bulk and scale impacts is warranted pursuant to SEPA policy (SMC 25.06.675.G.).

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).

The lead agency for this proposal has determined that it does not have a probable significant adverse impact on the environment. An environmental impact statement (EIS) is not required under RCW 43.21C.030(2)(C). This decision was made after review of a completed environmental checklist and other information on file with the lead agency. This information is available to available to the public on request.

This DNS is issued after using the optional DNS process in WAC 197-11-355 and early review. There is no further comment period on the DNS.

CONDITIONS

None required.

Signature: _____ (signature on file) Date: December 8, 2014
Lindsay King, Senior Land Use Planner
Department of Planning and Development

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