



**City of Seattle**  
Edward B. Murray, Mayor

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**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:** 3018444  
**Applicant Name:** Ralph W. Allen for SE Grainger Development Group  
**Address of Proposal:** 503 Westlake Avenue North

**SUMMARY OF PROPOSAL**

Land Use Application to allow a 3-story, 20,263 sq. ft. office addition with interior alterations to an existing 2-story retail and warehouse building resulting in a 5-story building. Review includes a change of use from retail/warehouse to office use. A 2,661 sq. ft. portion of retail to remain on the 1st floor.\*

\*Note – The project description has been revised from the following original notice of application: Land Use Application to allow a three story, 19,440 sq. ft. office addition with interior alterations to an existing 2-story retail and warehouse building resulting in a 5-story building. Review includes a change of use from retail/warehouse to office use. A 2,200 sq. ft. portion of retail to remain on the 1st floor

The following approval is required:

**SEPA Environmental Threshold Determination - (Seattle Municipal Code (SMC)  
Chapter 25.05)**

**SEPA DETERMINATION:**

Determination of Non-Significance

- No mitigating conditions of approval are imposed.
- Pursuant to SEPA substantive authority provided in SMC 25.05.660, the proposal has been conditioned to mitigate environmental impacts.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

### **Site and Vicinity Description**

This approximately 6,478 square foot (sq. ft.) proposal site is a rectangular corner lot bounded by Westlake Avenue North to the east, Republican Street to the south, a 16' wide paved alley to the west and a commercial building to the north. The site is zoned Seattle Mixed with variable height limits (SM 160/85-24) in the South Lake Union Urban Center overlay. The existing two-story with basement building on the site is commonly known as the "Eberharter Garage." No parking exists on site.

The South Lake Union (SLU) street car operates along the Westlake Avenue North right-of-way. Both Westlake Avenue North and Republican Street are improved streets with curbs, sidewalks, street trees and gutters abutting the subject site. Westlake Avenue North is a Principal Arterial and a Class I pedestrian street pursuant to SMC Chapters 23.53 and 23.48 respectively. Republican Street is considered both a Minor Arterial and designated Class II pedestrian street pursuant to the same code citations.

The surrounding property is also zoned SM 160/85-24. Existing development in vicinity of the proposal consists of existing and new commercial and mixed-use developments.

### **Proposal Description**

The proposed project involves the construction of a three-story 20,263 sq. ft. office addition to an existing two-story retail and warehouse building for a total of 39,708 sq. ft. Renovation of the existing 19,440 sq. ft. building is planned to convert a portion of the building to office use. A portion of the existing building's first floor area (2,661 sq. ft.) is proposed to remain as a retail use.

### **Public Comment**

The public comment period ended January 21, 2015. DPD received no written comments regarding this proposal.

## **SEPA ANALYSIS**

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 an environmental checklist submitted by the applicant dated December 22, 2014 and annotated by DPD. The information in the checklist, supplemental information provided by the applicant and the experience of the lead agency with review of similar projects forms the basis for this analysis and decision.

The SEPA Overview Policy (SMC 25.05.665.D) clarifies the relationship between City's 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. Under certain limitations and/or circumstances (SMC 25.05.665.D.1-7) mitigation can be considered.

Codes and development regulations applicable to this proposed project will provide some 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 Ch. 15), the Seattle Building Code, the Noise Ordinance (SMC 25.08) and Regulations for Environmental Critical Areas (SMC 25.09). The Puget Sound Clean Air Agency regulations require control of fugitive dust to protect air quality.

### 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, disruption of utilities serving the area and increases in greenhouse gas emissions. Due to the temporary nature and limited scope of these impacts, they are not considered significant (SMC 25.05.794).

Several construction-related impacts are mitigated by existing Codes and ordinances applicable to the project such as: the Noise Ordinance (construction noise), the Stormwater and Grading Codes (grading, site excavation and soil erosion), the Street Use Ordinance (watering streets to suppress dust, removal of debris, and obstruction of pedestrian right-of-way), and the Building Code (construction measures in general). Compliance with the applicable Codes and ordinances will reduce or eliminate most adverse short-term impacts to the environment. The following analyzes construction-related noise, construction impacts, traffic and parking impacts as well as its mitigation.

### Construction-Related Traffic and Parking

Construction activities will necessitate occasional closures of adjacent roadways (Westlake Avenue North, Republican Street and alley) and sidewalks. The applicant explains construction staging will occur mostly from Republican Street and the alley. Sidewalk closures are anticipated at Republican Street during most phases of the project. Installation of overhead pedestrian protection to allow pedestrian access is planned on Westlake Avenue North.

Construction of the project is estimated to last for several months. During this time, parking demand will increase due to additional demand created by construction personnel and equipment. The applicant estimates that a daily average of 20-30 construction workers will be onsite at peak phases of the construction process. The applicant states that the contractor and all subcontractors will be required to seek parking offsite. Due to the recent increase of construction projects simultaneously underway within close proximity to the project site, parking utilization along streets in the vicinity is near capacity. The demand for parking by construction workers for the project would likely reduce the supply of parking in the vicinity.

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 controlled with a street use permit through the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT). Due to construction related demand affected by construction worker parking, staging, and deliveries; additional mitigation is warranted pursuant to the Construction Impacts Policy (SMC 25.05.675.B). Pursuant to this policy, a Construction Management Plan (CMP) addressing construction worker parking, alley/street/sidewalk closures, truck haul routes and hours of truck traffic, will be required to mitigate identified impacts. This plan should include elements that will reduce construction worker parking demand on surrounding streets. The approved plan will be required prior to the issuance of any future demolition, grading and/or building permit.

As conditioned, compliance with the Street Use Ordinance is expected to mitigate any additional adverse impacts to traffic and parking which may be generated during construction of this project.

#### 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.

Several adopted City codes and/or ordinances provide mitigation for some of the identified impacts. Compliance with these applicable codes and ordinances is adequate to achieve sufficient mitigation of most long-term impacts and no further conditioning is warranted by SEPA policies. However, due to the size and location of this proposal and historic preservation, warrant further analysis.

#### 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.....On sites with potential archaeological significance, the decisionmaker may require an assessment of the archaeological potential of the site."*

SEPA provides authority to mitigate impacts to historic buildings (SMC 25.05.675.H.2.c). In this instance, the existing building addressed as 503 Westlake Avenue North is not designated as historical landmark. However, because this proposal involves the substantial alteration of a building which is more than 50 years old, historical information concerning this property was referred to the Department of Neighborhoods (DON) for review. The Historic Preservation Staff reviewed the information and determined that the structure would meet the standards for landmark designation and recommended a landmark nomination be presented to the Landmarks Preservation Board. At the February 18, 2015 meeting of the City's Landmarks Preservation Board, the Board voted to deny the designation of the Eberharter Building based on the finding that this property does not meet any of the designation standards of SMC 25.12.350.

### 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 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**

#### Prior to Issuance of Any Demolition, Grading and Building Permit

1. The owner and/or responsible parties shall submit a Construction Management Plan (CMP) to be reviewed and approved by Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) in consultation with DPD. The CMP shall identify approximate phases and duration of construction activity, truck haul routes to and from the site, alley/street/sidewalk closures, hours of truck traffic, address ingress/egress of trucks and personnel/equipment as well as construction worker parking.

During Construction

2. The owner(s) and/or responsible party(s) shall comply with the Construction Management Plan (CMP). A copy of that plan must be kept onsite.

Signature: Denise R. Minnerly for Date: June 29, 2015  
Tami Garrett, Senior Land Use Planner  
Department of Planning and Development

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**IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR ISSUANCE OF YOUR MASTER USE PERMIT**

Master Use Permit Expiration and Issuance

The appealable land use decision on your Master Use Permit (MUP) application has now been published. At the conclusion of the appeal period, your permit will be considered “approved for issuance”. (If your decision is appealed, your permit will be considered “approved for issuance” on the fourth day following the City Hearing Examiner’s decision.) Projects requiring a Council land use action shall be considered “approved for issuance” following the Council’s decision.

The “approved for issuance” date marks the beginning of the **three year life** of the MUP approval, whether or not there are outstanding corrections to be made or pre-issuance conditions to be met. The permit must be issued by DPD within that three years or it will expire and be cancelled. (SMC 23-76-028) (Projects with a shoreline component have a **two year life**. Additional information regarding the effective date of shoreline permits may be found at 23.60.074.)

All outstanding corrections must be made, any pre-issuance conditions met and all outstanding fees paid before the permit is issued. You will be notified when your permit has issued.

Questions regarding the issuance and expiration of your permit may be addressed to the Public Resource Center at [prc@seattle.gov](mailto:prc@seattle.gov) or to our message line at 206-684-8467.