

**INTERPRETATION OF THE DIRECTOR
PURSUANT TO SEATTLE MUNICIPAL CODE TITLE 23
AND SECTION IIC OF THE 2004 CITY-UNIVERSITY AGREEMENT**

**Regarding an Amendment
To the University of Washington
Campus Master Plan**

DPD Interpretation No. 3019080

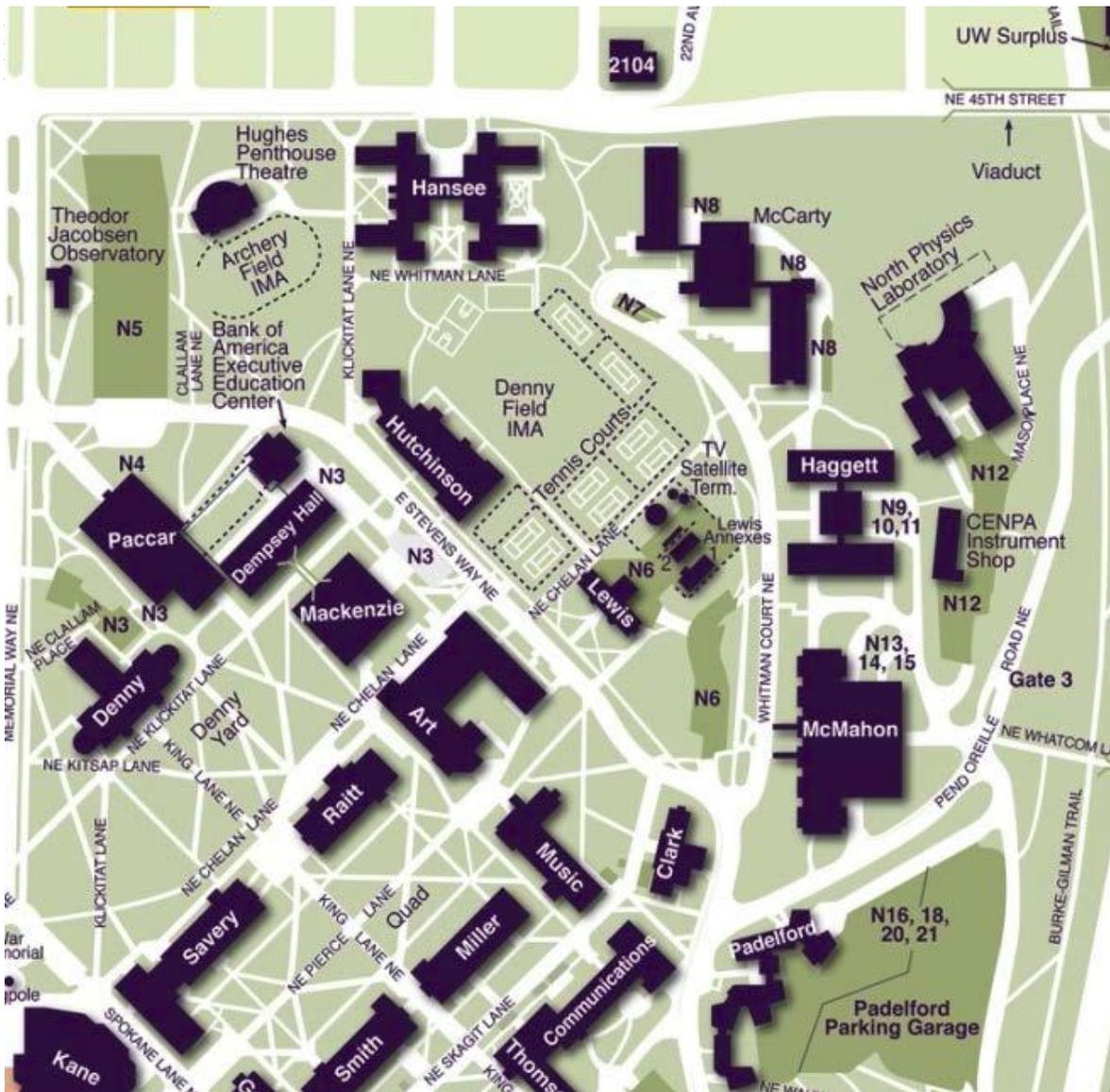
Issues Raised

Theresa Doherty, Assistant Vice President for Regional Affairs, of the University of Washington (UW) has requested this interpretation. The interpretation relates to a proposed amendment to the University's Campus Master Plan ("CMP"). The applicant asks whether the amendment constitutes a minor or major amendment to the CMP. Amendments to Major Institution Master Plans ("MIMPs") are also subject to provisions of Seattle Municipal Code SMC 23.69.035. Amendments to the UW Master Plan are also subject to the 1998 City-University Agreements, updated in 2004 by Ordinance Number 121688 ("Agreement"). SMC section 23.69.006B states that the City-University Agreement shall govern, among other things, the master plan process for formulation, approval and amendments of the CMP.

The University of Washington proposes changes to one section of the University of Washington Campus master Plan ("CMP") based on a proposal to create a new development site in the Central Campus Sector.

Background Information

The University of Washington completed its current Seattle Campus Master Plan in 2003 when the board of Regents and the City Council adopted it. The CMP provides a broad conceptual framework for future expansion and renovation of the University's programs. It identifies approximate locations of development sites, as well as schematic proposals for future development on such sites. It limits the extent to which the UW may expand, both within individual campus sectors and cumulatively across the entire campus.



The University has repeatedly analyzed on-campus housing needs. The first UW housing initiative called for increasing the percentage of students housed on campus to 22%. This was accomplished with completion of the West Campus Housing Initiative. The University has now undertaken an extensive analysis of providing and improving new student housing in the North Campus Sector of the Central Campus around Denny Field. The North Campus Housing Master Plan had several goals: to improve the on-campus experience of its students; to respond to community concerns about students living north of 45th Street; to support the University's role in sustainability and climate change by reducing commuter trips to campus; and to help implement the University Urban Center (UCUC) Plan and to update the Universities ageing facilities.

The goal of the President and the Board of Regents is to increase the amount of on-campus student housing and to thereby improve the on campus experience of the student body. The proposed new housing location is located next to Denny Field. The site would be added to Table IV.4 on page 86 in the Seattle CMP and would be listed with a maximum envelop of approximately 581,000 square feet and a demolition credit

(McCarty and Haggett Halls) of approximately 226,000 square feet. There would be a maximum height of 105 feet at this location and the use would be classified as general use housing.

Table IV-4, Preliminary Square Footage Estimates, of the CMP (page 86) lists development sites, corresponding maximum allowable heights, maximum building envelop and general use category. The development site for the proposed North Campus Housing is not included in the table. The University has identified housing need and a has identified the location site near Denny Field.

The University proposes to amend the adopted CMP to provide for a new building site. In a letter to the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) dated October 8, 2014, Ms. Doherty described the factors (mentioned above) which drive the proposed CMP change. The proposed site labeled '71C', is located next to Denny Field and replace the current tennis courts. The "L" shaped site is located mostly to the northeast and southeast of Denny Field. The area lies between East Stevens Way NE and Whitman Court NE. The intended use of the site is for student housing. The purpose of the new development site is to allow more planning flexibility to meet the housing needs of the student population.

The proposed development site is not environmentally critical, and is not located within 200' of the shoreline. Underlying zoning (MIO-105-MR) for the new development site is residential Midrise, modified by a Major Institution Overlay (MIO) with 105 foot height designation. The proposed residential uses are allowed outright in the overlay zone.

CMP Amendments and City-University agreement

SMC 23.69.035 regulated changes to Major Institution Master Plans (MIMPs), which include the Campus Master Plan (CMP). The City-University agreement further outlines the process for amending the CMP. The Agreement, in section C, provides a comprehensive framework for amending the CMP which supplants the one found in the Seattle Municipal Code (SMC). A change may be exempt or it may constitute a minor or a major amendment. Exempt changes require no public notice and are not subject to review on appeal. Major changes require City Council action to accomplish. Changes may be determined to be exempt, minor, or major by a City of Seattle Interpretation process consisting of a written analysis and determination prepared by the Department of Planning and Development which receives public notice and is appealable to the City of Seattle Hearing Examiner.

Exempt Changes

Section II.C.2 of the Agreement states an exempted change shall be:

- a. A change to the design and/or location of a proposed structure or other improvement from that shown in the Master Plan, provided that the change to the structure or

improvement meets the development standards set forth in the Master Plan and the location is within the same sector, as defined in the Master Plan; or

b. Any movement of gross floor area within a sector, as defined by the Master Plan. Any new gross floor area added to a structure or proposed project must be accompanied by a decrease in gross floor area elsewhere within the sector if the total gross floor area permitted for the applicable sector would be exceeded; or

c. Restriping or moving parking spaces around the campus; except that moving an approved parking structure from one sector (as defined by the Master Plan) to another shall not be exempt. After the ceiling of parking spaces set forth in the Master Plan is reached, for an action to be exempt, any new parking space(s) must be accompanied by a decrease in parking space(s) elsewhere on campus so that the total number of approved parking spaces on campus is not increased; or

d. Any change in the phasing of construction, if not tied to a condition of the Master Plan imposed under approval by the Council; or

e. Any increase in gross floor area below-grade.

Minor Amendments

Minor Amendments. A proposed change to an adopted Master Plan shall be considered and approved as a minor amendment when it is consistent with the general goals of the Master Plan, is not an exempt change according to Section II.C.2., is not a major amendment as listed in Section II.C.5.a. or Section II.C.5.b., and meets at least one of the following criteria:

a. The amendment will not result in significantly greater impacts than those contemplated in the EIS for the adopted Master Plan; or

b. The amendment is a change to the Master Plan development standard or Master Plan condition, or a change in the location or decrease in size of open space identified in the Master Plan, and the proposed change would not go beyond the minimum necessary to afford relief and will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to the property or improvements in the vicinity in which the major institution is located; or

c. The amendment or proposed project will implement the adopted goals and objectives of an adopted neighborhood plan.

Major Amendments

Major Amendments. A proposed change to an adopted Master Plan shall be considered a major amendment when it is not an exempt change according to Section II.C.2. or a

minor amendment according to Section II.C.4. If an amendment is determined to be major, the amendment and environmental review process shall be subject to the provisions of Section II.B. In addition, either of the following shall be considered a major amendment:

- a. An increase in a height designation or the expansion of the boundary of the MIO District if the adopted Master Plan has been in effect less than ten (10) years; or
- b. A reduction in housing stock within the Primary or Secondary Impact Zone that exceeds the level approved in the adopted Master Plan.

Comment by CUCAC

The City-University Community Advisory Committee (CUCAC) met twice during the review period for this interpretation. DPD received no comments from the CUCAC.

Amendment: To create a new development site in the Central Campus Sector

The new development site would be site 71C to be added to Table IV.4 on page 86 in the UW Seattle CMP and would be listed with a maximum envelop of approximately 581,000 square feet, height of 105 and general use “housing”. The proposal includes a demolition credit (for McCarty and Haggett Hall) of approximately 336,000 square feet, The proposed site is adjacent to, and partially rings, Denny Field.

Analysis

DPD has reviewed the CMP language related to identification of building sites and conservation of campus open spaces.

Section II.C.2 of the City-University Agreement states an exempted change shall be a) A change to the design and/or location of a proposed structure or other improvement from that shown in the Master Plan, provided that the change to the structure or improvement meets the development standards set forth in the Master Plan and the location is within the same sector, as defined in the Master Plan; or b) Any movement of gross floor area within a sector, as defined by the Master Plan. Any new gross floor area added to a structure or proposed project must be accompanied by a decrease in gross floor area elsewhere within the sector if the total gross floor area permitted for the applicable sector would be exceeded; or c) Restriping or moving parking spaces around the campus; except that moving an approved parking structure from one sector (as defined by the Master Plan) to another shall not be exempt. After the ceiling of parking spaces set forth in the Master Plan is reached, for an action to be exempt, any new parking space(s) must be accompanied by a decrease in parking space(s) elsewhere on campus so that the total number of approved parking spaces on campus is not increased; or d) Any change in the

phasing of construction, if not tied to a condition of the Master Plan imposed under approval by the Council; or e) Any increase in gross floor area below-grade. The proposed amendment does not meet any of the above conditions and is therefore not exempt.

The next level of consideration for the Director to undertake is to test the proposal on the minor amendment criteria. The following minor amendment criteria are set out in the City–University agreement:

A proposed change to an adopted Master Plan shall be considered and approved as a minor amendment when

1. *it is consistent with the general goals of the Master Plan,*
2. *is not an exempt change according to Section II.C.2.,*
3. *is not a major amendment as listed in Section II.C.5.a. or Section II.C.5.b., and meets at least one of the following criteria:*
 - a. *The amendment will not result in significantly greater impacts than those contemplated in the EIS for the adopted Master Plan; or*
 - b. *The amendment is a change to the Master Plan development standard or Master Plan condition, or a change in the location or decrease in size of open space identified in the Master Plan, and the proposed change would not go beyond the minimum necessary to afford relief and will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to the property or improvements in the vicinity in which the major institution is located; or*
 - c. *The amendment or proposed project will implement the adopted goals and objectives of an adopted neighborhood plan.*

The minor amendment proposal is consistent with the general goals of the Campus Master Plan as outlined on page 9 of the document. Ten goals of the CMP are listed including providing facilities for the space facility and infrastructure needs of the University, to maximize flexibility in order to best accommodate future growth and to encourage efficiency with advantageous location for facilities and advantageous adjacencies of uses. A new site for housing and one located in an area characterized by other residential buildings and associated open space for residential uses appears to meet the criteria. The proposed change is not an exempt change according to Section II.C.2. The proposed change is not a major amendment as listed in Section II.C.5.a (an increase in height designation or expansion of the MIO boundary) or Section II.C.5.b (an increase in housing stock that exceeds approved levels) and meets at least one of the following criteria.

Criteria a: the amendment of a new development site will not result in significantly greater impacts than those contemplated in the EIS. The proposed development is within the CMP approval for 3 million gross square feet of development capacity based on information presented in the EIS 2013 page 104. Parking is not proposed to be a part of

future development at the site and therefore will not cause increased vehicle traffic to the area, especially in light of the proposed demolition of nearby McCarty and Haggett Halls, which was contemplated in the EIS. The proposal is for a maximum envelop of approximately 581,000 square feet and a demolition credit (for McCarty and Haggett Hall) of approximately 336,000 square feet, height of 105 feet and general use “housing”. All of which was contemplated in the EIS for the CMP. Directly adjacent to the proposed site 71C is Denny Field, the original UW football field. Denny Field is consistently identified as a Unique and Significant Landscape (CMP page 30). The CMP states that *the landscapes are critical to the overall campus form and must be conserved.* Information provided by the University shows the development site along the northeast and southeast edges of the field with a small portion on the southwest portion of the site; the current location of the tennis courts. (See graphic above with the site outlined with dashed lines.) The tennis courts are outside of the Denny Field Open Space as shown in the CMP page 55 and thus Denny Field is preserved.

Criteria b: the amendment is a change to the Master Plan development standard or Master Plan condition, or a change in the location or decrease in size of open space identified in the Master Plan, and the proposed change would not go beyond the minimum necessary to afford relief and will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to the property or improvements in the vicinity in which the major institution is located. The proposal is a change to the CMP development standard or condition by adding a new development site. The proposal will replace tennis courts, but these are not identified open space, and will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to the property or improvements of the University.

Criteria c: the amendment or proposed project will implement the adopted goals and objectives of an adopted neighborhood plan. The amendment is not proposing to implement the goals and objective on an adopted neighborhood plan.

Summary

The proposed new development site is not environmentally critical, and the extent of development contemplated for the site is within the prescribed limits established by the CMP. DPD considers the proposed amendment to be minor, as it is consistent with the general goals of the CMP, and it would not result in significantly greater impacts than those contemplated in the CMP and its associated EIS.

The proposed change is not a major amendment, as it meets criterion 4(b) of the City University Agreement. Specifically, it does not affect height limits or other development standards; it does not expand the MIO; it has no effect on housing stock in the Primary or Secondary Impact Zone; it does not modify the University’s TMP; the proposed relocation would not require Council approval; and it does not exceed limits for floor area or parking established in the CMP.

Decision

The proposed addition of development site 71C to the Campus Master Plan, for the purpose of future housing, is a **minor amendment**.

Entered this 18th day of December, 2014.