



City of Seattle

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

Department of Planning and Development

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**CITY OF SEATTLE
ANALYSIS AND DECISION OF THE DIRECTOR
OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

Project Name: North Northgate Way Rezone

Applicant Name: City of Seattle - Department of Planning and Development

Address of Proposal: Properties at the intersection of North Northgate Way, Burke Avenue North, and North 107th Street

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION

The proposal is to rezone an area near the intersection of North Northgate Way, Burke Avenue North, and North 107th Street from SF 7200 to L3.

The following approval is required:

SEPA - Environmental Determination - Chapter 25.05, Seattle Municipal Code.

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

Background

The subject area includes about 35,000 sq ft or 0.8 acre of private property. The properties included are all in residential use and contain a total of 20 units in 7 duplexes, 2 triplexes, and one single-family detached home.

The subject area is designated multi-family residential area on the Future Land Use Map of the Comprehensive plan and is located within the Northgate Urban Center.

The surrounding neighborhood is a mix of residential uses that are zoned primarily Single-family to the west and Lowrise 3 and Midrise to the north and east, with commercial zoning adjacent to these multifamily zones further to the north and east.

The density allowed by the proposed rezone could result in a maximum potential of 43 units in large apartment buildings.

The Proposal

The proposal is to rezone an area near the intersection of North Northgate Way, Burke Avenue North and North 107th Street from SF 7200 to L3.

Public Comment

Proposed changes to the Land Use Code require City Council approval. Public comment will be taken on the proposed amendments at a future City Council Public Hearing.

ANALYSIS - SEPA

This proposal is an adoption of legislation, which is defined as a non-project action. This action is not a categorical exemption (SMC 25.05.800). A threshold determination is required for any proposal that meets the definition of “action” and is not categorically exempt.

The disclosure of the potential impacts from this proposal was made in an environmental checklist submitted by the applicant dated September 21, 2009. The information in the checklist, the Director’s Report and Recommendation, other information provided by the applicant and the experience of the lead agency with review of similar projects form the basis for this analysis and decision.

ELEMENTS OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Adoption of the recommended Code amendments would result in no immediate adverse short-term impacts because the adoption would be a non-project action. The discussion below evaluates the potential long-term impacts that might conceivably result from future development.

Natural Environment

Earth, Air, Water, Plants and Animals, Energy, Natural Resources, Noise, Releases of Toxic or Hazardous Materials

By creating additional development capacity that could result in denser future residential development, the code amendments could contribute indirectly to increased air emissions, water discharges, production/storage/release of hazardous substances or noise. The increments of additional impact would primarily relate to production of wastewater, household heating and electrical use, production of garbage, and noise generated by residents. The existing regulations and development standards that govern construction and occupation of such uses would tend to reduce potential for significant adverse impacts. For example, erosion, grading and drainage control requirements during construction and required stormwater control facilities in new development would eliminate most of the added potential for impacts as a result of the proposal. Expected efficiencies generated by denser residential development could also mean less per-capita impact on the natural environment when compared to less-dense forms of occupation such as single-family homes.

The proposal's increase in development capacity would increase total greenhouse gas emissions from future development in that vicinity. Based on analysis including preparation of Seattle's climate change impacts worksheets, future buildout from 20 units in small apartments and one single family home to a maximum potential of 43 units in large apartment buildings could generate up to approximately 13,444 tons of additional greenhouse gases over the lifespan of the potential future development.

Within a citywide and regional context, due to their limited magnitude, these emissions are unlikely to generate significant adverse air impacts related to greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. However, no definitive conclusions may be drawn on impact significance relative to the global atmosphere, which are problematic due to scientific uncertainty regarding appropriate methodologies to make such a determination. The lead agency may proceed even without such conclusions (SMC Section 25.05.080).

Built Environment

Land & Shoreline Use, Height/Bulk/Scale

The proposal would contribute to minor changes in probable future land use and building bulk outcomes on the subject properties, by allowing rezone of single family land to multifamily residential, increasing potential density and development of multi-family residential structures. While the proposal would not allow non-residential uses, the proposal would increase the likelihood of future development and increase the probable density of residential uses. However, within the context of the Urban Center location, these are not identified as necessarily adverse or significant adverse land use or height/bulk/scale impacts. Impacts of bulk, such as potential for increased shadowing on nearby properties or interruption of views are noted. However, these are interpreted at most to be adverse impacts but not significant adverse impacts. The proposed rezone would not increase the allowed height. Additionally, much of the proposed site has already been developed to L3 standards.

Consistency with the Seattle Comprehensive Plan

The proposal is consistent with Seattle's Comprehensive Plan because it would focus growth in an Urban Center and modify zoning consistent with the existing multi-family residential use designation on the Future Land Use Map. The comprehensive plan calls for accommodating the greatest share of development in urban centers and areas surrounding major transit hubs (Goal UVG5 and Policy UV2.5) both of which are relevant to this area. The proposed rezone is generally consistent with this policy as the site and most of the adjacent properties to the north and west are multifamily and the increased density would be contained within the existing urban center. Additionally, the proposed area is designated as multi-family residential area on the Future Land Use map, which supports a rezone to Lowrise.

This proposal is generally consistent with the Northgate neighborhood plan. Policy NG-P2 calls for concentrating the most intense development in the core. This property abuts the designated core but is not part of it, which suggests that an L3 zoning would be appropriate as it would reserve more intense development for the core, but would allow for a gradual transition in density between the core and surrounding single-family areas. Policy NG-P6 established a goal of promoting additional multifamily housing opportunities for households of all income levels to the extent that a compatible scale and intensity of development can be maintained with adjacent single-family areas. This rezone is generally compatible with adjacent single family areas as it would provide a gradual transition from the Midrise zoning to the east and the Single-Family zoning to the West.

The only goal that specifically references the rezoning of single family zoned land is goal NG-P8 which calls for maintaining the “character and integrity of the existing single-family zoned areas by maintaining current single family zoning on properties meeting the locational criteria for single-family zones”. This property does not meet the location criteria for single-family zones as the block contains primarily multi-family structures and the increasing trend in the block is toward multi-family development.

The proposal is also consistent with the land use policies of the Comprehensive Plan. Policy LU57 is to designate as single-family residential areas, those areas that are predominantly developed with single-family structures and are large enough to maintain a low-density development pattern. The area of the propose rezone is predominantly multifamily and thus is not addressed by Policy LU57. Policy LU71 is to designate as multifamily residential areas, existing areas predominantly occupied by multifamily development, as well as areas where greater residential development is desired to increase housing opportunities and promote development intensities consistent with the urban village strategy. The subject area meets Policy LU71 for designation as a multifamily residential area.

Transportation, Public Services and Utilities

The proposal would not result in direct transportation or public service/utility impacts, but could indirectly result in minor added impacts to transportation, public services, and utilities if additional development potential is realized in future development. Using an estimated vehicle trip generation of 6 trips per unit, the net increase in development capacity allowed under this proposal could result in as much as 132 additional vehicle trips per day. Based on an interpreted moderate level of traffic congestion in the area, the availability of public transit options and the urban center location, it is unlikely this additional demand would result in significant adverse transportation system impacts. While no parking is required in urban centers, it is likely parking would be supplied in a manner that approximates market demands for parking. This would be expected to avoid the potential for significant adverse parking impacts.

