



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**

Application Number: 3003288
Applicant Name: Lawrence Ahern
Address of Proposal: 4401 East Marginal Way S

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION

Land Use Application for a 60,000 square foot single story addition to an existing 164,000 square foot warehouse (WSLCB Distribution Center) in an environmentally critical area. Project includes the addition of 28 surface parking stalls for a total of 147 stalls.

The following approval is required:

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

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

BACKGROUND DATA

Site and Vicinity Description

The proposal site is located in an IG1 zone on the east side of East Marginal Way, on South Idaho Street. The topography of the site is flat. The site is mapped as a liquefaction-prone Environmentally Critical Areas (ECAs). Zoning adjacent to the site is the same as the subject property, IG1.

Proposal

The applicant proposes a 60,000 square foot single story addition to an existing 164,000 square foot warehouse (WSLCB Distribution Center) in an environmentally critical area. Project includes the addition of 28 surface parking stalls for a total of 147 stalls.

Public Comment

The public comment period for the proposed project ended on January 18, 2006. There was one comment letter which focused on the additional amount of truck traffic which will run on S. Idaho Street. (There is also a Port of Seattle project which is under review which will add truck traffic to S. Idaho). The commentator points out that the additional traffic will likely adversely impact the existing uses and businesses along the north side of S. Idaho Street. Suggestions included Additional information to be gathered, use the similar actions provision of SEPA and mitigation measures.

ANALYSIS - SEPA

The applicant has filed a SEPA Checklist dated November 18, 2005 and a geotechnical report prepared by Shannon & Wilson, inc. dated November 10, 2005. The information in the checklist, the geotechnical analysis, supplemental information in the project file, 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) clarifies the relationship between 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 such limitations or circumstances (SMC 25.05.665D) mitigation can be considered. Thus, a more detailed discussion of some of the impacts is appropriate. Short-term and long-term adverse impacts are anticipated from the proposal.

Short-term Impacts

The following temporary or construction-related impacts are expected: 1) temporary soil erosion; 2) decreased air quality due to increased dust and other suspended air particulates during excavation and construction; 3) increased noise and vibration from construction operations and equipment; 4) increased traffic and parking demand from construction personnel; 5) blockage of streets by construction vehicles/activities; 6) conflict with normal pedestrian movement adjacent to the site; and 7) consumption of renewable and non-renewable resources. These impacts are not considered significant because they are temporary and/or minor in scope (Section 25.05.794, SMC). Although not significant, the impacts are adverse and certain mitigation measures are appropriate as specified below.

City codes and/or ordinances apply to the proposal and will provide mitigation for some of the identified impacts. Specifically, these are: 1) Street Use Ordinance (watering streets to suppress dust, obstruction of the pedestrian right-of-way during construction, construction along the street right-of-way); 2) Building Code (construction measures in general); and 3) Stormwater, Drainage and Grading Code (temporary soil erosion). Compliance with these applicable codes and ordinances will be adequate to achieve sufficient mitigation and further mitigation by imposing specific conditions is not necessary for these impacts.

Earth

In compliance with Director's Rule 3-93, "Requirements for Permitting Construction in Potential Slide Areas," the applicant submitted the above-identified geotechnical report. Construction in compliance with the geotechnical consultant's conclusions and recommendations will adequately mitigate expected earth impacts. Such compliance will be required in association with building permit review. No further mitigation in this regard pursuant to SEPA is warranted.

Construction Noise

The limitations of the Noise Ordinance are likely to be adequate to mitigate potential noise impacts.

Long-term Impacts

Potential long-term impacts that may occur as a result of this project include: 1) increased surface water runoff from greater site coverage by impervious surfaces; 2) increased bulk and scale on the site; 3) increased traffic and parking demand due to additional employees and visitors with the proposed uses; 4) minor increase in airborne emissions resulting from additional traffic; 5) minor increase in ambient noise due to increased human activity; 6) increased demand on public services and utilities; 7) increased light and glare; and 8) increased energy consumption. These long-term impacts are not considered significant because the impacts are minor in scope. However more information regarding the expected traffic volumes warrants more analysis.

The long-term impacts are typical of this type of development and will be mitigated by the City's adopted codes and/or ordinances. Specifically these are: Stormwater, Grading and Drainage Control Code (storm water runoff from additional site coverage by impervious surface); Land Use Code (aesthetic impacts, height, setbacks, parking); and the Seattle Energy Code (long-term energy consumption).

The other impacts not noted here as mitigated by codes or conditions (increased ambient noise; increased demand on public services and utilities; increased airborne emissions; increased light and glare) are not sufficiently adverse to warrant further mitigation by condition.

Traffic and Transportation Impacts

A traffic analysis was prepared by The Transpo Group, Inc. (4/26/06, supplemented 7/5/06), to identify traffic and transportation impacts from the proposed project. The liquor warehouse expansion is proposed to accommodate expected future sales growth to the year 2016. The traffic analysis indicates that, by the year 2016, 392 trips will be made to and from the WSLCB site. Of these, 320 are current trips and 72 are expected to be added as future liquor sales increase. The report states "growth and the sites increase in trip generation will occur with or without the warehouse expansion". The traffic study analyzes the impacts from the additional 72 trips; to the extent that some or all of these trips would occur within the existing facilities on the WSLCB site, their identification as traffic associated with the warehouse expansion project may overstate the potential impacts of the expansion project.

Data in the Transpo report indicate that the busiest hour of the day on the Liquor Control Board site is 2-3 PM, when the main employee shift ends. Currently, 88 trips occur during this hour; forecasted growth to the year 2016 is expected to add 18 trips during this hour, for a total hourly volume of 106 trips. The second-busiest hour is expected to be 5-6 AM, with 64 trips in 2016 (57 existing and 7 additional trips).

Typically, project traffic impacts are greatest during the busiest hours of adjacent street traffic, which for primary arterials such as E. Marginal Way S are roughly 7-8 AM and 5-6 PM. During the AM peak hour, the WSLCB site is expected to generate 16 trips in 2016 (eleven existing and five new), while generating eight trips in the PM peak hour (five existing and three new).

The Port of Seattle has proposed development at its Terminal 106 (T-106), north of the Liquor Control Board site. This project would modify access to and from T-106, with outbound truck traffic using South Idaho Street. A cumulative analysis of future conditions on South Idaho Street with both the WSLCB project and T-106 was conducted as part of the Transpo traffic report. Peak traffic volumes on South Idaho Street occur between 3 and 4 PM; to identify “worst case” traffic conditions, the analysis assumed that the WSLCB peak traffic volumes would occur during the 3-4 PM time frame.

The analysis therefore includes two time periods: 3-4 PM (the S. Idaho Street + WSLCB peak) and 5-6 PM (S. Idaho Street/E. Marginal Way intersection peak). It also includes four scenarios: existing traffic conditions; conditions in 2016 with some background traffic growth on E. Marginal Way S, but without the Liquor Control Board or T-106 project; conditions in 2016 with the WSLCB project; and a cumulative condition in 2016 with both the WSLCB and T-106 projects. The results of the analysis are provided in the following table:

3:00 – 4:00 PM	Overall Intersection		Idaho St EB App.	
	LOS	Delay (in secs.)	LOS	Queue
Existing Conditions	A	7.5	E	103 ft.
2016 Baseline	A	8.1	E	106 ft.
2016 with WSLCB	A	8.8	E	117 ft.
2016 with WSLCB and T-106	B	11.0	E	145 ft.

5:00 – 6:00 PM	Overall Intersection		Idaho St EB App.	
	LOS	Delay (in secs.)	LOS	Queue
Existing Conditions	A	7.5	E	90 ft.
2016 Baseline	A	9.0	E	95 ft.
2016 with WSLCB	A	9.2	E	97 ft.
2016 with WSLCB and T-106	A	9.9	E	107 ft.

Comparing the 2016 baseline (future condition without the warehouse expansion) to 2016 with the WSLCB project indicates the impact of the project itself. The greatest impact would be experienced between 3 and 4 PM (assuming Liquor Control Board traffic peaked at this time, as noted above), with slightly under 1 second of additional delay at the intersection of S. Idaho Street and E. Marginal Way S. The 95th percentile eastbound queue on S. Idaho Street at this

