



City of Seattle

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Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor  
**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:** 2502800  
**Applicant Name:** Steven Hawksford  
**Address of Proposal:** 5017 Autumn Lane SW

**SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION**

Master Use Permit for pruning and height reduction of approximately 24 trees in an environmentally critical area. Project includes vegetation management plan.

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 involving another agency with jurisdiction.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

**Site Location:** The site is a residential property located along Autumn Lane SW.

**Zoning:** Single Family 7200 (SF 7200)

**Parcel Size(s):** The parcel size for this property is approximately 13,900 square feet (sq. ft.).

**Existing Use:** This property is currently developed with a single family residence.

Zoning in the Vicinity: The zoning in the vicinity is Single Family 7200.

Use in the Vicinity: The development in the vicinity consists of single family residences.

### Proposal

This proposal is for pruning trees in an environmentally critical area. The pruning has already taken place.

### Public Comments

One comment was received during the official public comment period. The comment was to not allow the height reduction. (Planner note: This application was in response to a notice of violation due to pruning without a permit).

### **ANALYSIS - SEPA**

The proposal site is located in an environmentally critical area-steep slope thus the application is not exempt from SEPA review. However, SMC 25.05.908 provides that the scope of environmental review of projects within critical areas shall be limited to: 1) documenting whether the proposal is consistent with the City's Environmentally Critical Areas (ECA) regulations in SMC 25.09; and 2) Evaluating potentially significant impacts on the critical area resources not adequately addressed in the ECA regulations. This review includes identifying additional mitigation measures needed to protect the ECA in order to achieve consistency with SEPA and other applicable environmental laws.

Pursuant to SMC 25.09.320.E, the ECA ordinance states, "*The Director shall consider the following circumstances and conditions in rendering a decision on a vegetation and tree removal permit: 1) The applicant shall justify the need for tree and/or vegetation removal; 2) The applicant shall demonstrate that any tree and/or vegetation removal shall not adversely affect stability, erosion potential, existing drainage conditions, and/or fish and wildlife habitat areas on-site, on adjacent sites, or within the drainage basin; 3) The applicant shall demonstrate that the activity shall not be a precursor of a later development proposal, unless a plan is approved by the Director for public safety reasons and/or except to conduct soil testing subject to DPD's Director's Rule for Investigative Field Work in Environmentally Critical Areas; and 4) The Director may require a vegetation and tree removal and replacement plan and may otherwise condition the permit to protect the public health and safety and prevent harm to the affected environmentally critical area.*"

The initial disclosure of the potential impacts from this project was made in the environmental checklist submitted by the applicant dated March 1, 2005. The information in the checklist, pertinent public comment, and the experience of the lead agency with review of similar projects form the basis for this analysis and decision.

The Department of Planning and Development has analyzed the environmental checklist submitted by the project applicant; and reviewed the project plans and any additional information in the file. As indicated in the checklist, this action will result in adverse impacts to the environment. However, due to their temporary nature and limited effects, the impacts are not expected to be significant.

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, 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 certain limitations or circumstances (SMC 25.05.665 D) 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 impacts on the identified critical areas are expected: vegetation removal (including removal of one mature tree); increased soil erosion and sedimentation during tree removal and following until vegetation is adequately established on site; increased runoff; and noise associated with diesel or gas combustion equipment. Due to the temporary nature and limited scope of these impacts, they are not considered significant (SMC Section 25.05.794).

Several adopted codes and/or ordinances provide mitigation for some of the identified impacts. The Stormwater, Grading and Drainage Control Code require that soil erosion control techniques be initiated for the duration of the tree and vegetation removal. The ECA ordinance regulates activity within designated ECA areas. The Noise Ordinance regulates noise impacts due to equipment operations. Compliance with these applicable codes and ordinances will reduce or eliminate most short-term impacts to the environment and no further conditioning pursuant to SEPA policies is warranted.

#### Long-term Impacts

No long-term impacts are anticipated as a result of this proposal.

Several adopted City codes and/or ordinances provide mitigation for some of the identified impacts. Specifically these are: the ECA Ordinance, the Stormwater, Grading and Drainage Control Code.

### **DECISION - SEPA**

The responsible official on behalf of the lead agency made this decision after review of a completed environmental checklist and other information on file with the 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.

- 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).

**CONDITIONS – SEPA**

*For the life of the project:*

1. The applicant must monitor the health of the plants installed during the revegetation. Any declining or dead plants must be replaced with like species.

Signature: (signature on file)  
Holly Godard, Land Use Planner  
Department of Planning and Development

Date: March 9, 2006