City of Seattle

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor
Department of Design, Construction and Land Use
D. M. Sugimura, Director

CITY OF SEATTLE
ANALYSIS AND DECISION OF THE DIRECTOR
OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION AND LAND USE

Application Number: 2205146

Applicant Name: Greg MacDonald for Blanchet High School

Address of Proposal: 8200 Wallingford Ave North

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION

Master Use permit for future construction of a 2-story 3,720 square foot (auditorium) and a 924 square foot (chapel) additions to existing private school (Blanchet High School). Project includes interior alterations for a new theatre. Project also includes modifications to existing athletic field and re-striping of surface parking lot.

The following Master Use Permit components are required:

Administrative Conditional Use - to allow the expansion of an existing institution in a single family zone (Seattle Municipal Code [SMC] Section 23.44.022).

SE**PA – Environmental Review** - Seattle Municipal Code [SMC] 25.05.660

SEPA DETERMINATION* [ ] Exempt [X] DNS [ ] MDNS [ ] EIS

[ ] DNS with conditions.

[ ] DNS involving non-exempt grading or demolition or involving another agency with jurisdiction.

BACKGROUND DATA

Existing Conditions

Blanchet High School is located on the southeast corner of the intersection of N 85th Street and Wallingford Avenue North, in the heart of a SF-zoned (and developed) residential neighborhood. Both streets are arterials. The existing school occupies approximately 85% of the large block between these streets and North 82nd Street and Meridian Avenue North. Existing access is taken from both Wallingford and 82nd. The existing school occupies the west approximately 45% of the block between Wallingford and Meridian, and the south approximately 75% of the block face between 82nd and 85th. There are large areas for parking and playfields to the east of the structure, and to the north are paved play courts and what appear to be parking areas. There are 202 parking spaces in total.

Proposal

The proposal is to remodel approximately 5,055 square feet within the existing structure to serve chapel, studio theater, and theater storage and accessory uses. It also includes additions of 924 square feet at the southwest corner of the site for the chapel, by so doing incidentally reconfiguring the main entry, and adding a 7,460 square foot instrument rehearsal auditorium to the north end of the building. This last facility would be approximately 60 feet by 60 feet. The existing distance of the structure from the north (85th) property line is almost 129 feet. It is proposed to be reduced to just over 39 feet.

The proposal includes several minor elements, including re-turfing of the existing playfield, construction of some small retaining walls southwest of the playfield to accommodate re-configured parking, and re-configuration of substantial amounts of existing parking. The number of parking spaces on site (202) is not proposed to change.

Public Comment

Notice of the proposed project was published on 24 October 2002. Four comment letters were received during the public comment period, which ended on 7 November 2002. All opposed the project, citing adverse traffic and parking impacts associated with the existing school uses.

ANALYSIS - ADMINISTRATIVE CONDITIONAL USE

Section 23.44.022 of the Seattle Municipal Code provides that institutions, including private schools, may be permitted as conditional uses in single family zones. The Code also states that "... expanding institutions shall meet the development standards for uses permitted outright in Sections 23.44.008 through 23.44.016 unless modified elsewhere in this subsection...." (SMC 23.44.022).

Dispersion (SMC 23.44.008.E)

Satisfied. There are no institutions within 600 feet of the subject institution.

Demolition of Residential Structures (SMC 23.44.022.F)

Satisfied. No residential structures will be demolished.

Reuse of Existing Structures (SMC 23.44.022.G)

Inapplicable.

Noise and Odors (SMC 23.44.022.H)

All of the uses in these additions and renovations are existing on site. There will be no noise level increase due to the proposed chapel or studio theater. A letter in the project from acoustics expert Michael R. Yantis addressed the anticipated impacts of the proposed auditorium, and appears to recommend installation of windows of STC higher than 33 in the auditorium to mitigate noise impacts on the nearest residential properties. Accordingly, approval is conditioned upon installation of such windows in the auditorium.

There will be short term noise associated with construction, which will be occurring in the heart of a residential neighborhood, and be of substantially greater scope than typical residential development. Hence, the limits of the Seattle Noise Ordinance are not deemed sufficient to mitigate them. Accordingly, approval is conditioned up limitation of hours of construction to non-holiday weekdays between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. The condition, as stated below, allows for minor variations from this schedule under truly unusual circumstances.

Landscaping (SMC 23.44.022.I)

New landscaping is proposed north and west of the new auditorium, which includes numerous vine maples and 3 flowering cherries to match the existing cherries trees along Wallingford Avenue North. These will replace substantial amounts of asphalt paving. To the south of the driveway, in the area outside the proposed studio theater a taller, narrow species of cherry will be planted.

Light and Glare (SMC 23.44.022.J)

Satisfied. No light and glare impacts are anticipated. Zoning code requires that any new lighting be contained on the property.

Bulk and Siting (SMC 23.44.022.K)

Overall length of the new addition approximately 90 feet. Mitigation is proposed in the form of substantial setbacks for the entirety of the new north addition, which will be heavily landscaped. The bridge will be set back substantially more than the auditorium, further enhancing

modulation. Both new buildings, and the bridge in particular, will also be substantially lower than the existing school. Further substantial mitigation is provided by the contrast in materials between the bridge portion of the new addition and the rest of the addition, as well as between the bridge and the existing building. Façade treatment of the auditorium has also been handled to create interest.

In addition to architectural modulation of the north and west facades, landscaping is proposed to substantially mitigate bulk and façade scale. The cherry trees proposed on the west side of the auditorium will achieve an ultimate height of 20-30 feet at maturity, although they are relatively slow growing and might take 15 years or more to do so. Hence, there is more than ordinary importance to be placed on the soil preparation on the size of tree at placement. Accordingly, project approval shall be conditioned upon provision of 3.5-inch caliper trees in soils prepared, as certified by a competent landscape professional, to support maximum speed of growth.

The renovation of the existing chapel into a studio theater will occur within the existing building envelope. However, a substantial modification to the façade is proposed: removal of the large stained glass windows. The existing window area is 4' tall and 35' wide with the top of the window at 31'9" above the main floor level. The window area is proposed to be infilled to complement the surrounding surface area. The existing case concrete ornamental panels will remain. Such defenestration will substantially increase perception of building mass in this area. The 11'6" setback in front of this portion of the structure allows for planting of trees that would effectively compensate for defenestration. Accordingly, approval is conditioned upon provision of a landscape plan detail showing this area, together with trees suitable for adequately compensating for defenestration. The project landscape architect has identified certain species of cherry tree as appropriate in this regard. Here, need is for caliper only between 2-3 inches; again, soils should be prepared to professional specification to maximize speed of growth.

The proposed chapel's southwest façade exceeds 30 feet in length. It is significantly modulated by a series of curved wall planes, which step back to the existing façade. There are also large openings at the main floor level to allow passage to the existing entrances of the school. The front plane is approximately 39 feet wide. It has a 20 foot wide opening at the main level. The front plane also has an architectural feature of 13'x13' stained glass windows at the center of the wall, which decreases the visual bulk of the façade. The landscaping that will be removed near the southwest corner of the site to accommodate the new chapel will not substantially lessen integration of the structure with the neighborhood. Rather, the small but dramatic modifications of the façade will appropriately modulate, demarcate and distinguish the handsome but massive school structure.

Parking and Loading Berth Requirements (SMC 23.44.022.L)

The proposed site plan shows substantial reconfiguration of parking, yielding a net loss of 1 parking space (201 spaces total) due to inability to increase the 11 parking spaces along the retaining wall at the west side of the play field to 12, because parallel parking spaces need to be 25 feet long. This space must be removed from the plans; this is not a condition of approval, but a zoning code requirement (i.e. not appealable).

Otherwise, there is no proposed increase in activities warranting any change in parking or loading requirements.

Transportation Plan (SMC 23.44.022.M)

Blanchet submitted a letter dated 17 December 2002 explaining departures from the approved transportation plan. In essence, Blanchet undertook to privately provide bus service that had been provided by partial subsidy of Metro bus passes. During the one year that Blanchet had provided bus service itself, 14 students used it (the "West Seattle route"). This compares to the average 15-students-a-year-over-a-3-year-period who had previously received Metro bus pas subsidy. The slight difference can as likely be attributed to natural fluctuation in student geographic location as to lessened effectiveness of the alternative mode utilization. Moreover, Blanchet will be lowering costs, increasing convenience, and adding a Magnolia route; as a result, it anticipates that utilization of the bus service will just about double, to 29 students. Thus, there is likely to be a marked increase in alternative mode transportation beyond that anticipated in the approved transportation plan. This increased reach of the TMP is likely to more than compensate for the loss of 1 parking space which results from revising parking to comply with development standards.

At this point, it seems clear that Blanchet is proceeding to reduce parking demand, more than compensating for the 1 parking space likely to result from the proposal. However, the parameters of the private bus service component of the TMP are unclear, and the extent to which it will actually reduce student parking demand unclear also. Thus, as a condition of approval, Blanchet shall clarify these matters by: providing a precise description of the bus program, including but not limited to the following aspects: the route, hours of operation, number of students in catchment area, number of students served (by year: freshpersons, sophomores, etc.), cost, means of soliciting participation, limitations on car use of participants (if any), and type of records kept regarding participation. These identified aspects, and others, shall be reviewed and modified as directed by DCLU prior to issuance of the MUP.

DECISION - ADMINISTRATIVE CONDITIONAL USE

The proposed expansion, as conditioned below, would meet the applicable development criteria. Accordingly, the proposal is **CONDITIONALLY APPROVED.**

CONDITIONS - ADMINISTRATIVE CONDITIONAL USE
(following SEPA analysis)

ANALYSIS - SEPA

The Department of Construction and Land Use has analyzed and annotated the environmental checklist dated 26 September 2002; reviewed the projects plans and any additional information in the file; and any comments which may have been received regarding this proposed action have been considered. 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. Codes and development regulations applicable to this proposed

project, including conditions imposed pursuant to ACU authority in this decision, will provide sufficient mitigation and no further conditioning or mitigation is warranted pursuant to the SEPA Overview Policy (SMC 25.05.665).

Adverse parking and traffic impacts have been asserted by 4 commenters, and there is little doubt that such impacts exist. However, there is nothing in the proposal which is likely to increase these impacts. It is beyond the scope of DCLU authority to retroactively mitigate. Hence, this is, while not ignored, cannot be addressed.

DECISION

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)

CONDITIONS - SEPA

None.

CONDITIONS - ADMINISTRATIVE CONDITIONAL USE

Prior to issuance of the MUP:

The owner(s) and/or responsible party(s) shall revise plans to show:

- Windows of STC higher than 33 in the auditorium (elevation plans).
- Provision of a landscape plan expanded to show the entire area around the proposed auditorium and the area between the proposed studio theater portion of the school building and Wallingford Avenue N. In the first area, cherry trees matching existing trees along Wallingford Avenue North shall be shown, 3.5" caliper or better. In the second area, taller, narrow cherry trees shall be shown, 2-3" caliper or better. In both areas, planting specifications to maximize speed of growth shall be shown as provided by a licensed professional.
- shall provide a precise description of the bus program, including but not limited to the following aspects: the route, hours of operation, number of students in catchment area, number of students served (by year: freshpersons, sophomores, etc.), cost, means of soliciting participation, limitations on car use of participants (if any), and type of records kept regarding participation. These identified aspects, and others, shall be reviewed and modified as directed by DCLU.

During Construction:

The owner(s) and/or responsible party(s) shall enforce during construction and post at the site in a location on the property line that is visible and accessible to the public and to construction personnel from the street right-of-way the following condition, to be affixed to placards prepared by DCLU and issued along with the building permit set of plans. The placards shall be laminated with clear plastic or other weatherproofing material and shall remain in place for the duration of construction.

1. The hours of all work not conducted entirely within an enclosed structure (e.g. excavation, foundation installation, framing and roofing activity) shall be limited to non-holiday weekdays between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Limited work on weekdays between 6:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. and on Saturdays between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. may be allowed if prior approval is obtained from the Land Use Specialist at DCLU. Such after hours work could include emergency construction necessitated by safety or street use concerns, or work which would substantially shorten the overall construction timeframe. Any request for departure from the approved schedule of operations shall be submitted at least 3 working days in advance.

Prior to occupancy and for the life of the project:

The owner(s) and/or responsible party(s) shall

2. Maintain the development per plan, particularly the façade details and landscaping along Wallingford Avenue North.
3. Maintain the TMP per plan.

Non-Appealable (zoning and administrative) conditions:

The owner(s) and/or responsible party(s) shall

- Revise the cover sheet to comport with the proposed design.
- Provide a plan detail clearly showing existing parking configuration.

Signature: (signature on file) Date: April 10, 2003
Paul M. Janos, Land Use Planner
Department of Design, Construction and Land Use

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