

# **SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

## **DENNY SEALTH SCHOOL DEPARTURE RECOMMENDATIONS**

December 2008

This report is produced pursuant to the Seattle Municipal Code 23.79. The intent and purpose of this report is to document public testimony and to record the Denny Sealth School Departure Committee recommendations to the City for granting a waiver to Seattle Land Use Code for the deficit required on-site parking of 177 parking spaces at the school in West Seattle.



City of Seattle

**Department of Neighborhoods**

*Stella Chao, Director*

*Gregory J Nickels, Mayor*

This report was prepared by Thao Tran, Department of Neighborhoods, on behalf of the Denny Sealth School Departure Advisory Committee.

# Denny Sealth School Departure Advisory Committee Report

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# **Denny Sealth School Departure Advisory Committee 2008 Final Report and Recommendation**

## **Section 1. Background**

### **1.1 General Departure Request**

In December, 2007, the Seattle Public School District (SPS) requested that a formal Departure Committee be established for the Denny Middle School/Chief Sealth High School (6-12) Campus project. The Denny-Sealth Campus Plan project includes a new Denny Middle School building, a renovated Chief Sealth High School building and new common facilities for both schools. Once completed the new facility will be approximately 340,000 square feet of area.

Based on the preliminary design developed by the architect, it is anticipated that departures for parking and building height will be required. SPS is requesting a departure (waiver) from the shortfall of 177 parking spaces from the required on-site requirement of 247 parking spaces because Denny Sealth School does not meet the Seattle Land Use Code requirement based on the schools assembly space.

A departure for the building height is also requested for the addition to the existing buildings which will have a maximum above-ground height of 60 feet, plus 15 feet for a pitched roof. The Seattle Municipal Code establishes a maximum height for a public school of 35 feet plus 15 feet for a pitched roof, or a height equal to the height of the existing school, whichever is greater (SMC 23.44.017). The proposed addition will require a departure from building height as allowed under SMC 23.44.017 and SMC 23.79.

### **1.2 Project Description**

The project would construct new school buildings on the eastern portion of the Chief Sealth High School site at 2600 SW Thistle Street in Seattle to serve as a new Denny Middle School. Denny Middle School would be relocated to this site from its existing site approximately 1,500 feet to the southwest at 8402—30th Avenue SW. The project would also renovate Chief Sealth High School—

consolidating its operations predominately to the western half of the existing Chief Sealth site. The project site (currently occupied only by Chief Sealth High School) is bounded by SW Thistle Street to the south, 27th Avenue SW to the west, SW Kenyon Street to the north, and by unimproved City right-of-way (25th Avenue SW alignment) and the Seattle Parks' Longfellow Creek Greenspace to the east. The existing Denny Middle School site to the southwest and across SW Thistle Street would also be redeveloped.

The existing buildings would be demolished, the site would be re-graded, and new recreational facilities and parking would be constructed. The recreational facilities could include up to twelve tennis courts and a softball field. These facilities would replace the facilities that would be lost with the construction of the new Denny Middle School on the northern portion of the Chief Sealth site. The new softball field is planned to be constructed in the southwest corner of the existing parking lot that serves the Southwest Athletic Complex. As a result, the softball field would displace about 180 of the existing 300 parking spaces.

The District is proposing to replace those parking spaces at the northwest corner of the redeveloped Denny Middle School site. The two parking lots—a smaller lot adjacent to the athletic fields and the new lot at the corner of SW Thistle Street and 30th Avenue SW— would provide the same parking capacity as currently exists. Both lots would be used for athletic activities at the complex, but also as overflow parking for some larger events at Chief Sealth High School. The new lot may also be used by visitors to the existing Southwest Community Center that would be located immediately to the east of it. The exact configuration of the redeveloped Denny site has not been determined.

The redeveloped schools are expected to be completed and occupied by the 2011-2012 school year with Chief Sealth High School to be completed by Fall, 2010 and Denny Middle School planned to be completed by Fall, 2010 or Winter, 2011. Redevelopment of the Denny Middle School site is expected to begin in Summer, 2011 and to be complete by Spring, 2012. Specific components of the proposed project are listed below:

- The existing Chief Sealth school buildings would be renovated with no planned changes to its existing building size of 212,529 square feet (sf). New Denny Middle School buildings would be constructed on the eastern portion of the site to provide total building space of 141,764 sf.
- The renovated Chief Sealth High School could house up to 1,200 students—an increase of 250 students compared to existing conditions. This analysis accounts for 1,200 students.
- The relocated Denny Middle School could house up to 900 students—an increase of 270 students compared to existing conditions. This analysis accounts for 900 students.

- Parking on the overall site would be redeveloped to provide a total of about 175 on-site parking spaces. Of these, about 60 spaces would be for Denny Middle School and would be located at the northwestern corner of the site. About 115 on-site spaces would be provide for Chief Sealth High School with about 93 spaces in the reconfigured main parking lot and about 22 parking spaces in the southwestern employee parking lot.
- The proposed Denny Middle School parking lot would also have automobile loading / unloading space for about 21 vehicles simultaneously; the Chief Sealth High School main lot would have loading / unloading space for about 15 vehicles simultaneously.
- A new service drive and bus pick-up/drop-off area would be provided along the eastern side of the site. It would function as a one-way drive aisle with the entrance from SW Kenyon Street and exit onto SW Thistle Street. This drive would be used for school buses serving Denny Middle School as well as for deliveries to the school's loading dock. The existing loading dock for Chief Sealth High School north of the small western staff parking lot would remain in its current location.
- Vehicular access to the new Denny Middle School parking and passenger loading areas would occur from the existing northern site access driveway that is opposite 26th Avenue SW. A new inbound-only access driveway is proposed to the east for the one-way southbound service drive and bus loading/unloading area. The service and bus lane would exit directly to SW Thistle Street at the southeast corner of the site immediately adjacent to and east of the inbound driveway for the main Chief Sealth parking lot.
- Vehicular access to the Chief Sealth site would occur from three driveways along SW Thistle Street. Students, visitors, and pick-up/drop-off vehicles would enter using the eastern inbound driveway (relocated slightly westward from its existing location) and exit using the existing middle outbound driveway opposite 26th Avenue SW. The staff parking lot and loading dock would be accessed from the existing westernmost driveway.
- Pedestrian access to the site for both schools would occur from SW Thistle Street, SW Kenyon Street, and using stairways from 27th Avenue SW.

### **1.3 General Neighborhood Characteristics**

The project is located in a residential neighborhood, surrounded by mostly single and multi-family housing. There are single-family residences, 3-story apartments, and a church to the north of the schools. To the east lie single-family residences, a two-story condominium complex, the Longfellow Creek

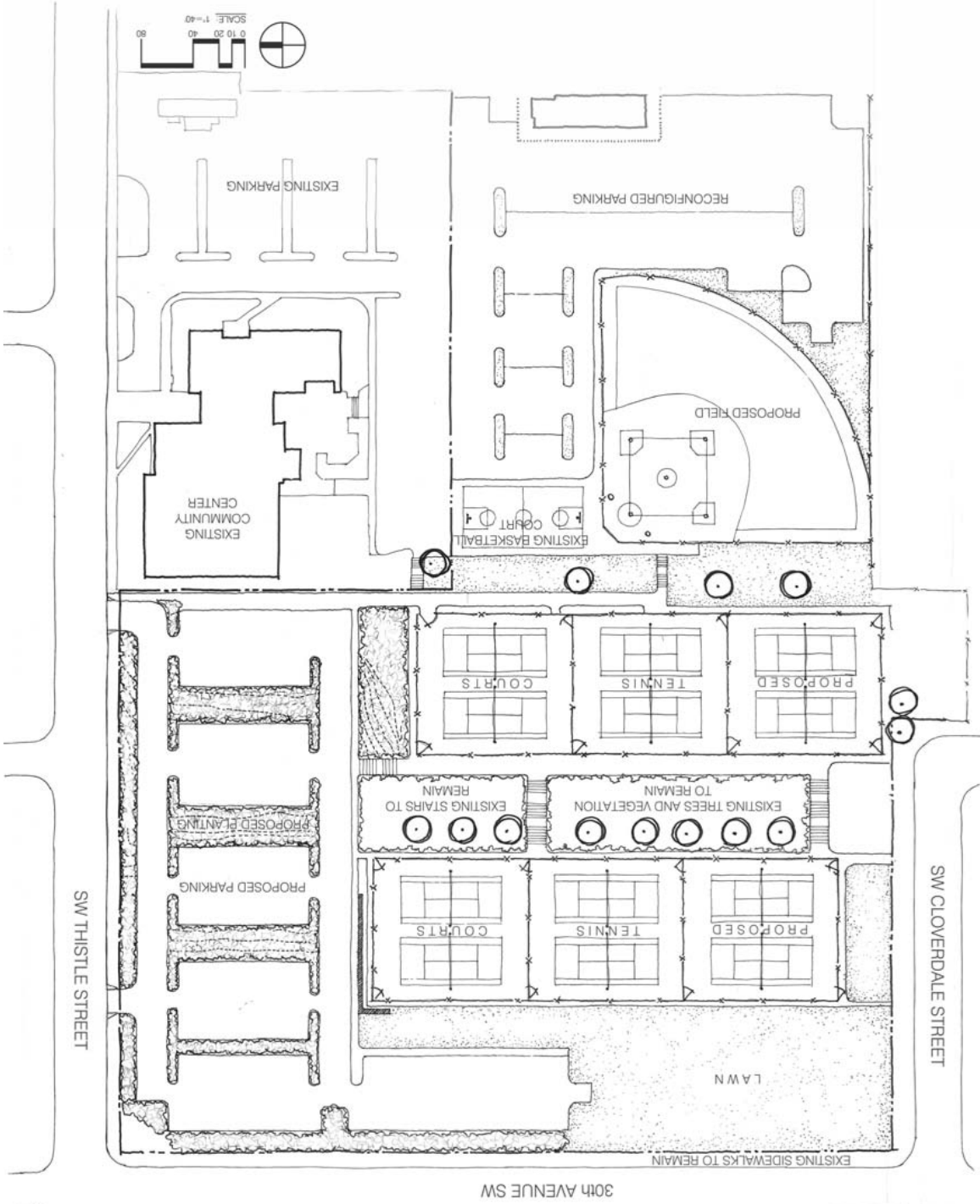
Greenspace, Longfellow Community P-Patch, and Sensory Garden. South of the schools are single-family homes, a two-story townhouse development, and commercial/retail uses. To the west are single-family residences.

Chief Sealth High School's low-scale massing which steps down a hill fits quietly into the residential Westwood neighborhood. Neither its age, scale, nor spatial location makes it an especially identifiable visual feature in the neighborhood. The school, and particularly the school's auditorium, is easily identifiable only as one is immediately approaching the school on Southwest Thistle Avenue. The school is also known as a "community school," whereby most students who attend this school live in the neighborhood. Although the school is important to the immediate neighborhood, the adjacent community pool and recreation center, as well as the athletic complex beyond, also constitute significant resources to the community.

Built low in scale and terraced into the east-facing slope of Longfellow Valley, the building is an unassuming part of the greater Westwood neighborhood, which is generally characterized by low density, single-family structures built within the forty years spanning the 1920s to the 1960s, with most structures dating from the post-war period. The neighborhood was already fairly established by the time Chief Sealth High School was constructed on what was one of the few remaining open tracts of land in the Westwood neighborhood at the time, an area that may have been considered unsuitable for residential construction due to the relatively steep topography of Longfellow Valley.

Neither the building's age, scale, nor spatial location make it a particularly identifiable visual feature until one is directly approaching the school on Southwest Thistle Street. The most identifiable visual feature of the building from Southwest Thistle Street is the large, sloping roof form of the auditorium. Although set back some distance from the street, the large, two-story façade and undulating roof form of the gymnasium is also a prominent visual element. The school is an important community resource not so much for its physical and architectural presence, but because it has provided 9th through 12 grade educations to local schoolchildren for 50 years.

Chief Sealth High School and Denny Middle School strive to be integrated with the Westwood and Delridge neighborhoods that surround its campus.



**Figure 1. Site Plan: Denny Sealth School Proposed Parking Site Plan**

## **1.4 Requests for Departure and Committee Formation**

The City initiated the Development Standard Departure Process, pursuant to the Seattle Municipal Code 23.79. This ordinance requires that the Department of Neighborhoods (DON) convene a Development Standard Advisory Committee (cited herein as the “advisory committee”) when the school district proposes a departure (waiver) from development standards.

The role and responsibilities of the Advisory Committee are: 1) to gather public comment and evaluate the proposed departure for consistency with the objectives and intent of the Seattle’s Land Use Code regulations to ensure that the proposed facility is compatible with the character and use of its surroundings; and 2) to develop a report and recommendations to grant a departure (waiver) or not. If the departure request is granted, the Advisory Committee may suggest conditions to mitigate the impacts to the surrounding neighborhood. The Advisory Committee’s report with its recommendations and proposed conditions is forwarded to the Director of the Department of Planning and Development (DPD). The Director of DPD issues its decision that can be appealed within 14 days of its publication.

In December, 2007, DON received a School Departure Request from the Seattle Public Schools (SPS). SPS is requesting a departure (waiver) from the shortfall of 177 parking spaces from the required on-site 247 parking because Sealth High School does not meet the Seattle Land Use Code requirement based on the school’s assembly space.

In July, 2008, DON mailed out public notices to recruit and notify residents living within 600 feet of Sealth High School as part of its public involvement role for the school departure process. In addition, the notices were mailed out to various community group organizations while DON posted notices at the nearby Community Center, Public Library, Neighborhood Service Center, and at Sealth High School. The notices were also sent electronically to all the parents in the school e-mail server list, as well as being published in DPD’s Land Use Bulletin. After receiving signed letters of interest, the committee was appointed by the Director of DON.

The appointed Advisory Committee members are the following:



	Code Mandated Category	Name	Comments
1.	Representative of the Seattle School District	<i>Robert Evans</i>	Voting member
2.	Person residing within six hundred (600) feet of the site of the school and any adjoining publicly owned property	<i>Monica M Kenny</i>	Lives within 600'
3.	Person residing within six hundred (600) feet of the site of the school and any adjoining publicly owned property	<i>Angela Ross</i>	Lives within 600'
4.	Representative of the parents of the school	<i>Marie Claire Duncan</i>	Past President, Chief Sealth PTSA
5.	Representative of the parents of the school	<i>Mary Meullion</i>	Chief Sealth PTSA
6.	Representatives of the neighborhood	<i>Joe Cox</i>	Longtime resident
7.	Representatives of the neighborhood	<i>Kenneth Kunz</i>	Nearby resident
8.	Representative at large	<i>Chris Eberle</i>	Nearby resident
9.	A representative of the City selected by the Director of DON, to act as nonvoting chairperson	<i>Thao Tran</i>	Non-voting
10	DPD Representative	<i>Tamara Garrett</i>	Non-voting

## **Section 2. Review and Recommendations Concerning the Departure Request**

### **2.1 Introduction and Criteria for Departure Request**

SPS has requested a departure from the Seattle Land Use Code. SPS on behalf of Denny Sealth School is requesting a departure (waiver) from the required on-site 177 parking spaces and for the departure from the existing building height restrictions.

In reviewing the departure request the following criteria was considered:

- a. Relationship to the surrounding areas. The acceptable or necessary level of departure shall be evaluated according to:

- (1) Appropriateness in relationship to the character and scale of the surrounding area;
  - (2) Presence of edges (significant setbacks, major arterial streets, topographic breaks, and similar features which provide a transition in scale);
  - (3) Location and design of structures to reduce the appearance of bulk; and
  - (4) Impacts on housing and open space.
- b. Need for departure. The physical requirements of the specific proposal and the project's relationship to educational needs shall be balanced with the level of impacts on the surrounding area.

## **2.2 Determination that the Departure Request is Major**

Under the provisions of the code, the Advisory Committee may determine that a departure request is minor in nature requiring one public meeting, but not limited to one, and complete its review and recommendation within 30 days. If the Advisory Committee determines the departure request is non-minor, then there is a minimum of three public meetings, and the committee must complete its work within 90 days. The Advisory Committee was convened at a public meeting held Tuesday, August 26, 2008 and subsequent meetings on October 7, 2008, and October 20, 2008 at Denny Middle School. DON staff, Thao Tran, provided an overview of the role and responsibilities of the Departure Advisory Committee. Afterwards a full review of the overall renovation and departure request coupled with listening to all public comments, the Advisory Committee determined that the departure request be considered a major departure request and that the meetings can be concluded within a 90 days.

## **2.3 Departure Request Review and Committee Recommendations**

The Denny Sealth School Advisory Committee reviewed the Seattle Public School's departure request for the less than required on-site parking, and took under consideration public comments before making their recommendation with conditions. The analysis and recommendations follows.

### **2.3.1 Parking: To allow the less than required on-site parking**

#### **Details of the Specific Requested Departure**

SPS has requested a departure from the required on-site parking for Denny Sealth School. The current average daily parking demand is approximately 230

vehicles for both Chief Sealth High School and Denny Middle School. The future average daily parking demand for the project for both Chief Sealth High School and Denny Middle School when both schools are at capacity will be 295 vehicles. The departure request is for a waiver from the required 177 on-site parking spaces. The total number of parking spaces proposed on the combined site is 175. As site design progressed after the traffic analyses were completed, minor adjustments to on-site parking counts were made to accommodate landscaping and other site design elements. The current site plan shows a total of 175 parking spaces with 105 parking spaces in the Chief Sealth Parking lot on SW Thistle Street, 20 parking spaces in the southwest lot (on SW Thistle Street), and 50 parking spaces in the proposed Denny Middle School lot on SW Kenyon Street.

A departure for the building height is also requested for the addition to the existing buildings which will have a maximum above-ground height of 60 feet, plus 15 feet for a pitched roof. The Seattle Municipal Code establishes a maximum height for a public school of 35 feet plus 15 feet for a pitched roof, or a height equal to the height of the existing school, whichever is greater (SMC 23.44.017). The proposed addition will require a departure from building height as allowed under SMC 23.44.017 and SMC 23.79.



Figure 2. Denny Sealth School Proposed Site Plan

## **Evaluation Against the Land Use Code Criteria for School Departures**

### **(1) Relationship to the surrounding area:**

**a. Appropriateness in relationship to the character and scale of the surrounding area** - In reviewing the departure request it is acknowledged that the school itself is dramatically different in scale and character to the surrounding neighborhood. The tallest point of the classroom/auditorium building is approximately 44 feet. The gymnasium has an approximate height of 34 feet. The 10 classroom units are all one-story tall, as is the abandoned shed. The addition to the existing buildings will have a maximum above-ground height of 60 feet, plus 15 feet for a pitched roof. The Seattle Municipal Code establishes a maximum height for a public school of 35 feet plus 15 feet for a pitched roof, or a height equal to the height of the existing school, whichever is greater (SMC 23.44.017). The proposed addition will require a departure from building height as allowed under SMC 23.44.017 and SMC 23.79.

Exterior building materials of the proposed addition will include concrete, masonry veneer, and metal panels. The materials of the gymnasium will remain the same and include masonry along the southern elevation, and concrete and glass on the remaining elevations. The remaining building materials include concrete, glass, plaster, and aluminum.

Views from homes on SW Kenyon Street may be somewhat altered as a result of the proposed project. Neighbors looking on this portion of the school property currently look across the street at a parking lot, a ball field, tennis courts, an auditorium, and a gymnasium. With the proposed addition, the view will be of a parking lot, lawn, basketball courts, the concrete façade of the new addition, and the auditorium. Although the features and buildings seen by residents to the north may change with construction of the project, the view from that area will remain that of school facilities. Similarly, the view of the site for residents to the east and south would be slightly altered to include the proposed addition, but would still be that of school facilities. Since the site slopes east towards Longfellow Creek, the addition would not block the view of residents west of the property who are located at a higher elevation. Vegetation to be planted as part of the planned site improvements will not block the views from surrounding properties, but may provide some screening of school buildings. Existing vegetation along the boundaries of the site would continue to provide screening for surrounding properties.

The proposed addition will be designed and constructed to integrate and complement the existing character of the school site and surroundings. Exterior components of the proposed addition will mirror the concrete and masonry

façade of the existing structures. The existing and proposed topography and landscaping will ensure that no significant aesthetic impacts would result from the proposed project. The granting of departure will further improve the aesthetic appearance of that area directly abutting the single family residences. The departure proposal improves landscapes, pedestrian access and other amenities.

**b. Presence of edges (significant setbacks, major arterial streets, topographic breaks, and similar features which provide a transition in scale)** - The project site is bounded by SW Thistle Street to the south, 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW to the west, SW Kenyon Street to the north, and by unimproved City of Seattle right-of-way (25<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW alignment) and the Seattle Parks' Longfellow Creek Greenspace to the east.

**c. Location and design of structures to reduce the appearance of bulk** - Chief Sealth High School and Denny Middle School currently accommodate academic programs for Seattle Public Schools. The completed project would continue to serve, with expanded facilities, the current scholastic programs. According to Seattle Municipal Code 23.44.006, primary and secondary public schools are allowed in Single Family Residential Zones (Seattle, 2007a).

Portions of the proposed project that would not comply with the requirements of the current zoning classification will follow the departure process. By complying with the conditions outlined in the departure process, the proposed project would not have significant impacts on land use.

**d. Impacts on housing and open space** – No housing units would be eliminated. No housing units would be provided as part of the Denny/Sealth Project. Housing impacts would not result from the project; therefore, mitigation measures to control housing impacts would not be required.

**(2) Need for Departure:**

The Denny Sealth School campus is built out structurally and programmatically to establish the middle and high school for educational purposes on a joint site. Therefore, the school district is requesting a departure (waiver) for 177 on-site parking spaces and the building height restriction as required by the Seattle Land Use Code.

## **Recommendations and Conditions**

The Denny Sealth School Departure Advisory Committee recommends granting a departure (waiver) from the Seattle Land Use Code from the required 177 on-site parking spaces. The Advisory Committee also approved the departure for the building height in addition to the existing buildings to be allowed to have a maximum above-ground height of 60 feet, plus 15 feet for a pitched roof.

The advisory committee made recommendations with the following conditions:

**Recommendations. That the departure for the building height restriction and the continuation of less than required parking be granted and that the current on-site deficit of 177 parking spaces at Denny Sealth School be maintained with the following conditions, that:**

1. Seattle Public School (SPS) make formal requests to SDOT to require no parking on the east side of 26<sup>th</sup> Ave SW between SW Kenyon Street and SW Holden Street from 7 AM - 4 PM.
2. Denny Middle School and Sealth High School encourage staff to park in designated areas on site.
3. Denny Middle School and Sealth High School to encourage carpool and use of mass transit.
4. SPS to encourage parking on 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW between SW Thistle Street and SW Kenyon Street.
5. SPS to request that the City of Seattle create angle parking on SW Thistle Street and SW Kenyon Street on 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW.
6. SPS will explore the option of shared parking with the Filipino American Seventh Day Adventist Church.
7. SPS will make request to DPD to prohibit parking on the south side of SW Kenyon Street between 28<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW and 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW from 7:00 AM – 4:00 PM.
8. There should be no parking on both sides of 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW from SW Kenyon Street to SW Holden Street from 7:00 AM - 4:00 PM.
9. SPS will require the school principals from Denny and Sealth Schools to collaborate on the prevention of major events on concurrent night that would exceed the available onsite parking. SPS will be required to publish common event calendar that will be on Denny Sealth School websites. The calendar is to be displayed and mailed to local neighbors within 300 feet.

10. SPS and SDOT will work to improve parking signage on sight. SPS to enforce no parking within a 30 feet clearance of the school driveways.

# APPENDIX X

## **Appendix 3.1**

September 16, 2008 Denny Sealth School  
Departure Meeting Notes

October 7, 2008 Denny Sealth School  
Departure Meeting Notes

October 20, 2008 Denny Sealth School  
Departure Meeting Notes

## **Appendix 3.2**

Illustration 1. Denny Sealth School Proposed Parking Site Plan

Illustration 2. Denny Sealth School Proposed Site Plan



**Denny Sealth School Departure Advisory Committee**  
**Denny Middle School**  
**September 16, 2008**  
**7:00 PM - 9:00 PM**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Committee Members:**

Mary Meullion  
Angela Ross  
Kenneth Coons  
Mary Clair Duncan  
Monica Kenny  
Chris Eberly  
Kenneth Kunz

**City Staff:**

Tamara Garrett  
Sharon Star  
Thao Tran

**Welcome and Introduction:**

The meeting convened at 7:05 PM. Thao Tran welcomed all to the meeting this evening. He stated that the purpose for the meeting is due to the fact that the Seattle Public School has requested for a departure from the zoning codes of height limit and parking requirements for the development of Sealth Denny School site. The Seattle Municipal code requires that when the Seattle Public School desires to make a zoning change that the Department of Neighborhood (DON) initiate a public process to solicit community input on the issue. Seattle does not have zones per say specific for schools. Schools are often built in single family 5000 square feet units and it's important for the City to evaluate the potential impact of the proposed project on the neighborhood and community. Our task was to identify community members that are willing to serve, listen, advise and help collect public input.

Thao Tran spoke about a handout that describes the Departure process and that the committee first must determine whether the departure request is a major or standard issue for this neighborhood. A minor issue would require only one meeting while a classification of a major issue will require at least three meetings within 90 days. Furthermore, if the departure is approved, then the committee must decide if there should be recommended conditions to SPS to mitigate potential impacts to the neighborhood.

Thao Tran sited that once the meetings are concluded that he will write a report on behalf of the Committee to the Department of Neighborhoods Director, Stella Chao. Once the report is delivered, the Director will have up to ten days to publish her final decision on her recommendation to the Department of Planning and Development. Thao Tran opened the meeting for public comment and there was none.

**Seattle Public School Presentation,**

Loren McCanahy with Bassetti Architects provided a quick overview of the project and then spoke about the two departures facing this project. There were three view boards on display. The first one was of aerial view of the schools/neighborhoods. The proposal is to co-locate Denny Middle School onto Chief Sealth campus with a connecting galleria. Sealth High School is being demolished and that process is underway which is shown in the diagram. The intent is to keep Thistle Street on the south and make that side the primary access to Sealth High School and have SW Kenyon Street as the primary access to the Denny Middle School. The second board was a three dimensional model of the site showing the linkage point as the central galleria on eastern edge of Sealth which runs north to south and is dividable to have a middle school lunch and high school lunch room. More significantly, the galleria is critical as it serves to link the two schools. The background behind the gym is where the new middle school will be. The third board shows the entrances into Denny Middle School.

### ***Height Departure***

Loren McCanahy mentioned that the face of Chief Sealth High School auditorium and the next additional part which is the top of galleria is 10 feet lower than highest point of Sealth School. The City of Seattle says we have to build a 35 feet wall with another 15 feet for a slope roof. For the secondary school we have to build below 60 feet as our top height. We are not approaching that 60 foot limit, and the new design will be ten feet below existing height. How we get this is the City asks for an average height above sea level, which is median height for the topography. The average of existing Sealth building is 322.7 above sea level. Building elevation allowed on the City's calculation allows for our highest point to be on the average of 341.3 feet above sea level and this is the scoped roof over the galleria. We are asking for departure for 345 with wiggle room.

Loren McCanahy spoke about the fourth display board referring to about average heights. She mentioned one area of interest is what happens down the side of the steep hill and how will construction impact the two story apartment neighbors to the east. The architects have responded by leaving major tree lines to camouflage the building, maintaining a 120 feet edge between building and adjacent neighbors. In addition the school is maintaining a 50 feet setback from property line.

Committee asked at what angle were the pictures taken. Loren McCanahy responded that they were taken from a yard in the apartment, 300-400 feet back from Kenyon Street in terms of where the school sits.

### ***Parking Departure***

The Seattle Municipal Code has an interesting way of setting the requirements for parking. On the existing site, we have a parking lot on southeast corner. The City says that it is pre-existing and thus grandfathered in. There are an additional 20 parking spaces at the Sealth southwest corner. That lot was not in the City's drawing so it views it as new parking. We also have an existing parking lot behind Sealth, it is un-striped and basically asphalt. We are making that into a striped official middle school drop-off parent access parking lot. From the City's perspective, there are several things that are grandfathered in. First, the parking lot just referred is acceptable to meet the needs of the assembly area, auditorium, gyms, and galleria. When we look at additional parking for the new gym and the galleria, we need to ask how many parking spaces are required for

the two new uses. The galleria is a square foot calculation which needs 211 parking spaces, the middle school gym needs 37 parking spaces, resulting in a need totaling of 248 parking spaces for the new area in the school. The old assembly areas are grandfathered in when we count up the spaces. In the new space there is 70 therefore the delta between 70 and 247 is 177 spaces. More information that is particularly important is that across the street at the major complex we have 300 spaces. On-adjacent streets there are 83 spaces directly around the Sealth lot and 291 spaces within 400 feet which is reasonable walking distance. The total of existing and proposed spaces is 849 spaces and the total for school property is 475 spaces. As a point of comparison with Franklin High School – 80 spaces, Roosevelt High – 114 spaces, West Seattle – 193 spaces, thus we can see that in comparison to these schools there is a huge amount of parking in the Chief Sealth site. The other point is to look at all the assembly areas we use at the same time. If the two major assemblies on this campus are used at one time, the impact of needing this 850 total parking space is almost slim to none.

Committee member asked for the official number of parking at Sealth currently. Denny has no on-site parking. Loren McCanahy pointed to the boards and explained that there are 20 and 105 marked and unmarked spaces. Don Gilmore showed the ones across the street because the school districts own them do not discount either because the land is contiguous?

Monica Kenney has concerns regarding the data because this is the first year Sealth is no longer busing students. The students are being given metro passes and that is typical for high schools now. She asked if we have data on students that are driving to school now. The architects asked that question and received no reply so they can not tell. They don't issue parking passes for students. Don Gilmore gave a comparison to West Seattle School has 1400 students and Sealth will be designed for 1200. That lot has 193 spaces and always has a place to park, and there are two lots. Public member said that the north and east side is accessible but that you can't park on south side because of storage and if you go half a block that's usually all full. Same thing happened at Sealth with the teachers because they have to park on the side street. It's a first come serve parking at Sealth. Students driving get into parking lot first, teachers have to find someplace else.

Don Gilmore stated that district doesn't give parking passes because not all the students want to park on campus. The only thing you can compare is how many students elect to park on campus. Roosevelt is always full and it has fewer spaces.

Mary Muillion asked are we adding Denny Middle to the Sealth site but not adding any additional parking other than what's there. Loren McCanahy said partially yes because this is paved asphalt and there are a few people that park there. The north lot was made into an official lot for Denny Middle and based on the way the City looks at it, this part (referring to the view boards) this is not present and will not become one so there is an addition of these 50 spaces. Then there are 20 here, not sure why it was not counted by City. Don Gilmore asked how many parking spaces Denny Middle School has now. Denny has zero spaces on-site right now.

Joe Cox asked if it's safe to say that a majority of the teachers and staff park in the lower parking lot. Loren McCanahy said he could not say, except majority of them also park in the neighborhood. Joe Cox also asked why would they park in the lot directly behind

them. Don Gilmore said that if they can park a shorter distance from the door then they will. Joe Cox said if you are looking to relocate everything it could be done north of Thistle Street and we are not including these spaces here and presuming they will try and find the closest parking spot.

Robert Evans said in proximity to the school, available parking is between 80 and 180 spaces on the side of the school which should more than accommodate parking demands and we should use these available street parking.

Committee member said that SW Kenyon Street is not an arterial street. It is a narrow steep street where 28<sup>th</sup> Street goes over the hill straight pass Sealth and the new site. I live on the dead end on 27<sup>th</sup> Street. Sounds like you are creating an arterial then if what you are saying about the relocation with all the traffic patterns in north end of SW Kenyon St.

### **Committee Discussion**

Monica Kenney said that she has looked at old permits for heights of recent years and the parking for the different high schools. Some of the schools are larger, like Ballard with 1650 students and has 149 parking spaces. When Don Gilmore spoke about West Seattle's stats and even Nathan Hale with 1100 students and 289 parking spaces, he reminded us that Nathan Hale has an athletic complex on their site too. Monica Kenny asked that wouldn't include those numbers. Don Gilmore said it would because it's co-tangent to their school.

Don Gilmore said Nathan Hale spaces have had this for the past 30 years, nothing is changing, what's happening is the lot are remaining as is. Those are the spaces they already had when the building was originally built.

Monica Kenney said Sealth High School has 197 spaces and effectively reduced to 115 and 60 for Denny so this is a loss of 20 spaces. Don Gilmore said that was without considering the 300 spaces across that the district owns. Monica Kenny stated she found transportation study which talks about what they want to do with Denny property and the loss of parking spaces, 180 spaces will be lost when they build the softball field, so the 300 parking spaces isn't true if the intent of what they say is realized.

Monica Kenney said people do not want to walk and will prefer to park in the neighborhood rather than walk the distant northeast corner of the Denny property down the hill to Sealth. Don Gilmore said that they were getting off track and the site has not been designed yet.

Monica Kenney said that was her concern and we say it's all right to go with less parking because we have parking over here but we do not know what's going to happen with this property. Don Gilmore said that you can condition it with this process by saying that we would like it to remain where it is or we would like some of it to move up to the corner. Part of the process is that the committee can condition that and if the committee says all spaces to the south has to remain as they are then that's the condition of the permit.

Angela Ross said that earlier the school district representative said it does not issue parking permits to students. She is confused what that means, does it mean not allowed to park on school property if you don't have a permit or we encourage parking across the street and that on campus is a free for all, anybody can park there, first come, first serve or is there restrictions.

Don Gilmore said a lot depends on the individual administrator, there is no board policy or superintendent policy on issuing passes for students or non students. Different schools do it differently. In West Seattle the theory is that the north part of the lot is staff and south is for students and students pay \$5.00 for an identification card for their cars so if someone's car needs to be towed they would know whose car it is. Some of the lots are open 24 hours a day without gating so they are open to the public, the idea of the West Seattle parking lot was so that it could be used for the small junction for commercial so its open 24 hours a day. Some principals are very defensive of the space and title each space. Some will number students spaces and assign a student a number space. If the committee thought the lot should be open 24 hours a day, then that could be a condition of the departure. The committee has a possibility of many different options for conditions.

Mary Muillion asked if the handicapped space been accounted for because they won't be accessible to everyone and how many per area? Loren McCanahy said yes that the handicapped parking is accounted for.

Mary Muillion made an observation after visiting Sealth School at various times that because of the overload parking on the north side, there has always been empty parking space on the south side and five or less spaces on the north side. Hardly anyone parks on 27<sup>th</sup> Street above the school. One of the things discussed in the design committee was the project to encourage student parking on 27<sup>th</sup> Street which is wider and would be less disruptive to the neighborhood. This is an idea for managing the parking at the school.

Chris Eberly asked if the school district and architects have a contingency plan in case the departure is denied by the committee. Loren McCanahy said we have not designed the contingency plan per say. If this committee says they need more spaces we will work that. Don Gilmore included that the contingency plan would to take the playfield on the north end and turn it into a parking lot is what would happen. There is a playfield for the middle school students east of the 50 student lot should the committee deny the parking then we would have to turn playfield into a parking lot because in the City's calculations we can't use the space to the south because the land is not conjoined.

Loren McCanahy added that this is one of the challenges for the school design team's proposals are where do we put the money? Parking is a tough trade off when you are looking at \$10,000 for a space and that's where you will invest a bunch of school district parking. We want a reasonable tool to solve the parking problem. We don't want to get out of bounds because it basically takes learning space away.

Angela Ross said she lives directly across the street on SW Kenyon Street and you are correct that there is not a lot of parking on the north side of the school at this point. The concern Mary Muillion has is making it a plan to reduce the traffic down around SW Kenyon Street. One of her primary concerns is encouraging students to park on 27<sup>th</sup>

Street. She thinks it takes the responsibility off school district to protect those neighborhoods. I live on that street. There will be a lot of new traffic to that street and possibly increase vandalism on homes and property which are already occurring. I would like to know what the plan from the school district's perspective when they push all the parking onto the street, whose responsibility is it to monitor that parking.

Don Gilmore said from his experience serving on various Departure committees, he has seen other committees come up with various mitigations to parking. At Nathan Hale, the neighbors had same concern and they added a condition to the departure that the administration work with having students park on school property, this is like asking the administration about using the lot south of Thistle Street. You have the ability to add to the condition of the zoning mitigation. You can control it and at one of the other school they asked the school administration to where students park.

Joe Cox stated that it seems like they have two schools that are loosely linked, the parking is spread out around the neighborhood for both facilities. Parking for Denny Middle School goes down 29<sup>th</sup> Street to SW Trenton Street. It seems you are condensing these two sites, they are loosely connected in one tight spot and allowing parking to overflow onto the surrounding neighborhood.

Don Gilmore said that the committee has the ability to recommend to the school district that SDOT place no parking signs or no parking during schools hours. The issue is to get the parking used that is not used. The committee needs more creative ways to relieve the Kenyon Street issue by requiring people to park somewhere else. If this is "no parking" signs then we can go back to SDOT and ask for parking between 7:00am – 3:00pm. This is so the committee can come up with mitigations to reduce the impact on Kenyon Street.

Chris Eberly asked where will the buses go? Loren McCanahy replied that buses for Denny Middle School will be dropped off behind the school where it is turned into a drop-off/service drive. The high school does not have buses.

Mary Muillion agrees there will be increased traffic on Kenyon Street and it is a good suggestion for having it signed for parking regulation. She said that having increase traffic might have benefits because there are more eyes on your property and school security does go out to street for issues.

Monica Kenney stated that from looking at these numbers, she is confused with the new project why there is less parking? She needs more clarification on this.

Kenneth Kuntz said that middle school children do not drive. Monica Kenney said that the parking was for staff. He would like better numbers around the middle school teachers that are driving and then from high school, which ones are driving age so that we can see the impact from student drivers.

Don Gilmore said that one of the reason this site has fewer spaces because we have 300 spaces across the street. The school district made a decision not to condemn housing to build parking as the solution for increasing parking area or build parking structures which would not be publicly popular. If we look at total demand and total provided, the provided exceeds the actual demand.

## **Public Comment**

Charles Stangle said that the northwest parking lot is being used for a construction area right now. The City has no recommendations for that being a parking lot. How did they build it, pave it and put in new lighting? Don Gilmore replied he had no answer for that.

Tamara Garrett stated that only school district can explain on how the parking was created. Don Gilmore said theorizing that maintenance crew gradually over the years paved more area and is sure they placed the lighting. Charles Stangle said that all that was done in the last year. Why isn't the City counting this as parking space for Sealth?

Angela Ross gave an explanation on a meeting she attended before that there are more parking spaces that people are using on the campus but it is if they are not specifically lined, measured and have barriers that the City does not count them as parking. Don Gilmore and Tamara Garrett both agreed with Angela's explanation.

Chris Jackins distributed information for everyone at the meeting then read a couple of paragraphs from this document.

Pablo Lambinico said there are three on the committee that have expressed concerns about the Departure. The responses have been to legislate and regulate human behavior for high school students, not sure you can do that. He is concern about dislocating and relocating parking which should merit in what you decide about the departure. He expressed that human use paths and will use the shortest distant to get somewhere. He stated that he has lived here since 1974.

Joe asked about all committee members and how they are affiliated to the neighborhood. Each member gave their reply with how they are connected to the neighborhood.

Robert Evans discussed that through the school design committee the hours closest to classes between 6:30am to 4:00pm have the biggest traffic impact. Don Gilmore asked Robert Evans how many total spaces did he calculate on a daily basis. Robert Evans said roughly 270, all lots combined included across the street is 475. Thao Tran thought overflow was over 30 spaces. Robert Evans said overflow was more like 70 – 80 parking in the streets because of students. He was assuming max capacity with an ebb and flow in the course of a day.

Faith Fisher asked why staff and students can not be assigned parking across the street and let that be the end of the story. Don Gilmore and Thao Tran said that could be identified as a condition of the departure.

## **Committee Discussion**

Thao Tran thought motions were needed on a couple of items at this time. First, the committee will need to entertain a motion to decide whether the height and parking departure request should be classified as a standard or major one.

**Motion:** Don Gilmore made a motion to vote this departure request to be a standard one. There was seconded at this time.

Monica Kenney wanted to better understand the whole process and felt she could possibly not make a decision tonight. Thao Tran gave a better explanation on how this process works. Don Gilmore asked about if this is a major issue if we have to meet two more times? Thao Tran said according to Code that we would have to.

**Motion:** Angela Ross made a motion that this be a major departure. Monica Kenney seconded. There was a request that there be a further discussion before the vote.

### **Height Discussion:**

**Motion:** Don Gilmore asked for the granting of the height departure of 345 feet. Mary Claire seconded. Angela Ross had questions and concerns about heights.

Angela Ross wanted clarification from the architect with questions on the height. The drawing all have the perspective of looking from Thistle to the north and just curiously standing on SW Kenyon Street and looking south, the highest point is the dome. Is the gym roof 327.6 feet all the way across? Loren McCanahy replied that it is all the same height all the way through.

Loren McCanahy stated that the highest point of the school is the top of auditorium arch and highest point of new addition is the galleria which is the center spine that's 10 feet lower than the top of barrel vault at the south edge of this site. Other slightly high zones are two classroom wings and a gym in the back that are in-line with the Sealth gym. Angela Ross asked for the heights. Loren McCanahy said the classroom wings – 339 ft, galleria – 340. Angela Ross said a point of concern is are there shadows on the Long fellow Creek.

Joe Cox stated that light can have a barren on fish in a stream, shade can effect the environment. Don Gilmore asked Loren McCanahy how far is the school building from the creek? The classroom wing to adjacent apartment is 120 feet, therefore 250 – 300 feet to stream edge. There is an issue of a major forest zone, that creek as it runs through the forest is in shade. There is a wide zone between the school and adjacent properties and even wider zone before you get to the creek. The existing gym is the adjacent structure to the creek. The new school is adjacent to the apartment which is on the north side. Don Gilmore said they could do a sun study if it was desirable.

Angela Ross stated that her question before had to do with all the building elevation being allowed up to 322 feet and what was presented is part that we are speaking about is for departure is the center structure but in fact all the classroom buildings is going to be departing that building elevation allowed. A question from the committee's standpoint as we discuss the elevation departure is that something we address building by building or is that a total for entire vicinity.

Don Gilmore said the stated the ordinance highest point of the addition because it doesn't ask for the average height. We could average it all again, he agreed that Angela Ross



was right that there are points that are above the 322 figure. The ordinance says we have to compare the 322 to the highest part and the mass is higher of the galleria.

Kenneth Kunz asked the architects if the height becomes an issue and if the drawings have to be redone. This creates additional costs and it will still go through, my point is that readjusting all heights will add costs to this project.

Thao Tran gave the committee some ideas on issues to think about. Don Gilmore asked how Loren McCanahy would compare the structure to three story apartment complex. Loren McCanahy said it's similar in height; we tried very hard to do make it so. This is a terraced site with the high school on top, middle school is on the lower and that was intentional to the design team's approach. Critical item is learning space, with research kids learn better with good day lighting in the classroom. The roof forms of the building are to bring more daylight into the building. Don Gilmore said they tried to come up with a bulk and height that was relevant to the neighborhood with the new developments along Holden Street.

Angela Ross said it is not in the multi-complex zone. She said the gym on Kenyon Street seems like this enormous looming thing and this structure is going to be 15 feet taller and closer to where she lives. I don not know how to make that determination on the committee, that is her gut feelings. I do not want to look at this site from across the street. Don Gilmore said this problem occurs with every committee that works on schools because the City doesn't have school zone. Other areas have school zones and there are regulations for how it is supposed to be. Seattle elected allow the school had to comply with the zone that it is in so if a heavy multi-family zone then it could be 90 feet high. If it is in a single-family zone it would be limited to the 35 feet rule so a building will never be congruent with the neighborhood. So the committee has to decide if it is reasonable for the school district to build for the good of the region. There is no doubt that this has a local impact, we will never be able to build buildings that are the scale of the neighborhood. We try to break the size and scale down. All we can try to do is the best we can and serve the needs of the students and whole region because we draw students from a large area.

Monica Kenney asked how close the new Denny School building to the apartments is? Loren McCanahy said 120 feet wall to wall. Roughly 50 feet from the building to the property line and there is a 30 foot right of way between the west property line and the east property line and roughly 40 feet to apartment façade.

**Vote:** Thao asked for a vote of those in favor of the height departure request by the school district.

Monica said that when she signed up for this committee she thought is was a commitment for three meeting. She feels like she is being pushed. Angela said she does not understand process and needs more clarification and she doesn't want to approve the elevation departure and what does that mean. What is the consequence of the decision if we don't like this idea, what are our alternatives?

Don Gilmore gave a more explanation about what this process is and where it does go from this point and the options. Another committee member stated essentially we are

making a recommendation to the DON Director what to do. Don Gilmore gave an overview on the whole process and alternatives. Mary Claire thought people felt more comfortable with more meeting, she was OK with that.

Tamara Garret read from the process document handed out at the beginning of meeting. Angela Ross asked about Thao Tran about the timeframe to get back information within the time of the next meeting. Tamara Garret referred to the third page of the same document and the role of the committee that is the criteria that needs to be taken into consideration.

Don Gilmore said if the committee wants more impact on the parking the debate would be what kind of conditions to put on what road and the parking lot, those are the real issues.

Joe Cox would like more information on traffic counts on Kenyon Street and what is projected and tie that with parking space. Don Gilmore said to send the committee more data and so the committee can come back at the next meeting more informed.

Mary Muillion stated from the parking departure that she does not want to impact family from evening events at night. She wants to put stipulations on events in the evening. Don Gilmore gave examples of numbers uses at different schools. Mary Claire also stated that the schools do not schedule on the same nights. Mary Muillion wants this condition to be put into the departure report. Mary Claire wants the administrators to work and inform the neighborhoods.

**Motion:** Don Gilmore asked to amend a motion from early to have a second meeting. Monica seconded.

**Vote:** Thao Tran asked those in favor to make this a minor departure.

Favor - 3

Rejected - 3

Vote: Draw

**Motion:** Don Gilmore make a motion to make this is a major departure. Angela Ross seconded.

**Vote:** Yes - 6

**Motion:** Don Gilmore made a motion be that height departure be approved at 345 feet.

**Vote:** Yes - 5

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 PM.

The next meeting is scheduled for October 7, from 7:00-9:00 PM at Denny Middle School.

**Denny Sealth School Departure Advisory Committee  
Denny Middle School  
October 7, 2008  
7:00 PM - 9:00 PM**

**Draft Meeting Minutes**

**Committee Members:**  
Chris Eberly

**City Staff:**  
Tamara Garrett

Angela Ross  
Kenneth Coons  
Mary Clair Duncan  
Don Gilmore  
Monica Kenny  
Joe Cox  
Mary Meullion

Melinda Bloom  
Thao Tran

**Welcome and Introduction:**

The meeting started at 7:05 PM. Thao Tran welcomed all those in attendance and explained the departure process. He continued to say that the public input process is overseen and facilitated by him as the representative to the City of Seattle. This is the second meeting and the meeting focus is to discuss the Seattle Public Schools (SPS) departure request for parking. The SPS's request for the height departure was approved by the Advisory Committee in the first meeting. The committee approved the height departure because we did not see any adverse impact to the neighborhood related to the request. Today the committee must weigh the impact of the parking departure request and work to reach a decision whether to approve the parking departure or not. Thao Tran also explained that the committee ruled this Departure to me a major issue so pursuant to the Seattle Municipal Code rules we are required to have at least three meetings to conclude our public input process.

James Knight, the project manager from Bassetti Architects started the project presentation by referring to the displayed drawings. He stated that Denny Sealth project involves 16 – 17 acres and the scale of the project includes parking at the front of the building on Thistle and north parking space. The existing parking space on the school has areas with 105 stalls, 20 stalls and another 50 stalls which are currently striped and an additional 25 non-striped stalls. What the Seattle Public School is asking for is essentially a departure from the parking requirements. The parking requirement does not have anything to do with the number of people who go to the school, work or drive to the facility. It has to do with school space and primary reason is not specific to a human application similar to the requirements for a shopping mall. At the Denny site there is no parking available relevant to the school. There is a parking lot adjacent to the field but we can not calculating the requirements for this project to include 300 parking spaces that are in that parking lot. We can only include parking within the Sealth School area boundaries. The parking spaces both on the grounds as well as the parameters of the property have adequate numbers of parking for Sealth High School and Denny Middle School administrative staff and students. The parking projection is based on 2012 estimated needs for Denny and Sealth combined site.

Thao Tran opened the meeting for questions to the architects.

Don Gilmore asked how many staff members are there at the new Denny and Sealth School site combined. James Knight responded that in 2012 there will be 80 staff from Denny, which currently there are currently 60. Sealth School has 130 staff. The future combined staff size will be 210 from both facilities.

Don Gilmore asked how many students park on campus in a daily basis. James Knight responded that currently there are 45 students.

Joe Cox mentioned that when Sealth High School was in operation, everyone parked off site and no one parked on the designated lot. James Knight stated that there was adequate space to park on site and a lot of students and staff chose not to because people felt that it was difficult to get out of a parking area when they wanted to go home.

Monica Kenny asked how the SPS obtained these numbers. James Knight replied the information is in the Transportation Report. Monica asked if it was polling teachers or if they obtain the information in any other manner because the staff numbers she has are different from what is now being presented.

Joe Cox asked if the traffic consultant was here tonight. James Knight said they are not.

Thao Tran asked if these are the numbers the school keep tally on a daily basis and what method was used to obtain this information?

Don Gilmore stated that it's the number of employees and that the principal will know. In addition, a large percentage of staff and teachers use public transportation for both schools. Some are part-time and that Denny is busier in the morning than Sealth.

Angela Ross wanted to know numbers of actual cars parked again because the information is not lining up. According to a handout given last week, currently there are demands for 175 stalls. Angela Ross wants to know what is being lost in the plan and what is being added? James Knight said nothing is being lost and added in parking spaces.

Don Gilmore clarified that the presentation was the proposed plan and Angela Ross asked what is current. James Knight said Traffic Report counts 172 parking spaces plus 25 un-striped parking spaces.

Robert Steward spoke about the available parking on the slope and James Knight responded that that will not be available.

Don Gilmore asked James Knight to state categorically how many spaces will be provided in the new plan on site? James Knight said 175 parking spaces. Don Gilmore asked how many parking stalls currently exist today? James Knight repeated that there are 172 available striped stalls plus 25 un-striped stalls.

Angela Ross stated that 25 un-striped spaces are being lost during the development and James Knight agreed.

James Knight said correctly the parking area doesn't include spaces for special needs van allowance that takes up additional parking space over conventional parking space. Those parking areas had to be taken into consideration. He said that those numbers do take this into consideration. Don Gilmore asked about whether there is a new playfield in the development. James Knight said yes and pointed to a corner. Don Gilmore asked if that

playfield was removed it could be converted to parking and James Knight said it could be.

Mary Duncan asked if that playfield have to be completely removed to make parking spaces. James Duncan pointed to the presentation and said that a total of 50 parking spaces would be gained.

Joe Cox asked which 70 new spots would be provided and where? James Knight said this is based on existing parking calculations that did not include that particular parking spot. Joe Cox said this is not talking about new parking spaces, it is something we are now naming new parking space even if it existed previously as a parking space. James Knight said it was included by the City of Seattle as an acceptable parking area. Joe Cox stated people parked there and the space functioned as a parking lot and stated that this is not really adding new 50 parking spaces. James Knight responded that from a count stand point in the way one looks at it currently and the way the City looks interprets it, we are adding parking spaces. Mary Duncan stated that from the neighborhoods point of view and how it affects the neighborhood these are losses in parking. Mary Duncan stated that what we currently have for parking and what they counted or did not count for parking has never been on a full school day. It will be full between Denny/Sealth; it will be a matter of a few parking spaces compared to how it is to be because there always seems to have 30-40 empty spaces at Sealth in the main parking lot and 3-4 empty in the back. The practical affect to the neighborhood will be smaller than it appears because we had a big parking lot and it was never full.

Don Gilmore asked how many spaces are across the street on the SPS's property to the south. Thao Tran asked to have Mary Duncan's statement verified? James Knight said that it was correct, current parking load is less than the available parking spaces. Angela Ross asked by how much and could you give the date on this? James Knight said currently 197 with 25 un-striped and that on average 160 vehicles are parked on site daily.

Kenneth Coons asked if James Knight worked with Heffern transportation before. He answered 'no'. Kenneth Coons reference his following question to page 13 with a chart that shows on street parking demand survey results for September 2007. They took three peak surveys, 9:30 AM, 1:00 PM and measured the traffic during an event between Cleveland High School and Sealth High School. Out of the peak times the max utilization of all the total available parking spots along 25<sup>th</sup> Street, Kenyon Street and 27<sup>th</sup> Street as resulted in peak utilization equalled to only 14% percent. The school does not require any parking process in terms of labels, or monitoring of who comes and goes from the site. People will still park on the street due to convenience. There is not a school or city that can enforce parking on public roads unless they are parking more than 24 hours. If parking and streets are not at capacity, we need to move towards trying to address mass transit and kids on bikes. Kenneth Coons sees ample parking on site because there will be a blend of parking both on the streets and in the parking lots. He sees this plan to address parking as more than sufficient.

Joe Cox asked to see who from the committee lives near the school and will be negatively impacted. Thao Tran said that there should be two people that live within 600 feet of the school.

Don Gilmore stated that traffic study doesn't dictate where cars park, it only tells what the city describes as available.

Joe Cox thinks what the traffic study is trying to do is to define areas that could be potentially impacted by drivers and where that impact can be diverted. He's saying if there are eight cars going on 27<sup>th</sup> Ave, north of Kenyon that is going to be a significant problem. Don Gilmore said for him to ask neighbors to get together to ask SDOT for either no parking or limited parking in those spaces. Joe Cox said that will be part of the conditions for the committee to decide, and both Don Gilmore and Thao Tran agreed. Joe Cox said that with the new Denny School coming that a significant change going from 950 cars currently to a potential future with 2100 cars at full capacity of both schools resulting in an increase of 120%. At the same time we are reducing the on-site parking space at that same location by 10%. James Knight commented that middle school students do not drive in, only the staff and teachers.

Kenneth Coons asked if the schools are being held to a standard for commercial parking, so that essentially you are being held to the same standards as Westwood Village. The majority of patrons drive and that increases in drivers are only accounting school age kids that are eligible drivers. We can't count raw head increases, we have to look at those registered drivers.

Monica Kenny expressed that codes exists for a reason and that the Denny Sealth Schools represent the largest group of students in SPS. She is concerned that you will have to get a variance from the start. Don Gilmore stated that all schools have had to ask for a variance and in this one has more available spaces than any other. In addition, because of the parking 60ft across the street, we are not discussing the huge lot that the district has to the south. Monica Kenney said because they are going to minimize that parking lot, SPS's plan is to eliminate 180 spaces and relocate them on the corner of 30<sup>th</sup> and Thistle St. The plan would try to get students and staff to park up the hill and walk to Denny Sealth Schools and they also acknowledged that due to human nature that this would not likely be the case.

Tamara Garrett said she believes that the parking requirements are tied to the revitalization of the Denny site in this project. This document when drafted took into consideration the redevelopment of the existing Denny site. Monica Kenny said if that is the case the committee should not be talking about the parking across the street. Tamara Garrett said you should be talking about the parking behind this building but not the parking on this site.

(Tamara Garrett pointed to the illustration on the presentation board)

The parking accessory to the athletic field is what Don Gilmore is referring to. Don Gilmore said that is an allowable mitigation. Tamara Garrett explained that when the school district decides what to do with this site then a whole new review and then this topic will be taken into consideration.

Monica Kenny is concerned that if we say that everyone can park across the street then two years from now when Denny is gone and they say 'no' we are taking away this parking to replace the softball field then that parking will be lost. Tamara Garrett

responded that that isn't even part of the consideration. It is not a part of the discussion. Don Gilmore said mitigations are taken into consideration in the study if the committee decides that one of the criteria is that lot should remain as is then so be it.

Joe Cox commented on the subject of holding SPS accountable for commercial standard. If this applies then all 247 required parking spaces would have to be provided on-site, we are not talking about that and we are making concessions. I don't know if 247 spots are reasonable for the concessions.

Monica Kenny resents that the neighborhood is being set-up knowing this was different and significant parking change. Parking spaces compared to other schools are better than what we already allow for Chief Sealth. I do not understand how the district created this when they knew they would need this variance and feel we are being treated unfairly for having questions about it. Don Gilmore said that all schools have required a parking variance and some schools have no on site parking. He has done about 40 projects that have not required a variance because the city wasn't platted like Issaquah and Kent. If we build a parking lot to accommodate that many we would cover the whole site leaving no room for physical building structure. Is this in the best interest of the neighborhood and students, probably not, what's better is a compromise. If the street is covered during a football event it's only 25% which is very minimal. The areas around Roosevelt, Cleveland or Rainier Beach are at 70% capacity during athletic events.

**Public Comment:**

Bob Stewart who lives on 26<sup>th</sup> Ave SW for a few years and works as a field inspector for the Seattle Engineering Department witnessed the building of the said street. He said that the street has now gone to pot. Sealth School has arterials all around and two semi-trucks carry heavy loads on a daily basis. These semi-trucks create a lot of noise for the neighborhood.

Tom Riley asked if the plan was to put 50 parking spaces on 26<sup>th</sup> Street.

James Knight said no. There are 160 parking spaces on 27<sup>th</sup> St. & Kenyon St.; we don't need 160 additional parking spaces. The departure number is purely an administrative number, it doesn't indicate actual parking means.

Bob Steward said there are too many cars that are going to be driving through the neighborhood.

James Knight said parking exists in those areas for 25 cars or 13% of the total available parking around the school. In terms of what they anticipate, actual parking usage will be 80%, which does not reach maximum capacity. The reason for the capacity for the school parking is less are due to the fact that the street parking distance is less of a walk to the school but there are ways to mitigate that. You can choose to ask for no parking.

Mary Claire said to put no parking signs in certain areas and that would make sense for Kenyon St. We are hoping to encourage parking on 27<sup>th</sup> Ave SW, which will be close to the building and easy parking.



Warren Holte said north of the Sealth school there is a church and they use the parking there on weekends but not on school days. Why can't students and staff park in there on weekdays? It's a large lot and would be adequate.

James Knight said there is also a parking lot across the street that we cannot talk about because the code will not recognize that as part of the school parking count. Even at the most opportune time, the spaces parking usage is less than 59%. There are another 25% of daily cars parking in the north lot of Sealth and remaining cars are parked near the community lot. People park where it's easiest.

Mary Claire asked if we could ask to use the church parking lot and felt that the school would be amenable to that idea since the church has always wanted to be a good neighbor. Mary Claire request that the school try and ask the church for shared parking in there lot.

Joe Cox said the church across Kenyon Street have 40 paved parking spots. Is that an opportunity to identify more parking spaces? Mary Claire thinks it is a good option to have zone signs for residents on 26<sup>th</sup> Street for a certain amount of hours. It might eliminate and force people to move to different areas.

Don Gilmore said residents get stickers. SPS is required to do study, not to state where people park, all the study says is that what street has how many parking spaces available by the ordinance of what the city says is a parking space. The committee has the ability to approve the departure and regulate or recommend the district to go back to the City and if the neighbors agree we can work with the City to sign this street for two hour parking. The committee can recommend we pursue shared parking with the church.

Angela Ross said she agreed with Kenneth Coons, when we look at other options including parking lot across the street from Thistle St. She does not want to see that playfield converted into a parking lot. She would like a commitment from SPS that if the Advisory Committee approves the departure request that the school work to encourage and incentivize the use of the parking lot on site and on Thistle Street that are available. I'm not hearing this, there are creative ways.

Don Gilmore asserted that those are available resources that we are not discussing.

Kenneth Coons said that if the street utilization is 25%, I would say OK. I want to make this as easy as possible. Human nature is not to use the parking spaces. Sometimes we confuse traffic with parking.

Angela Ross agrees but that we can encourage certain behavior.

Don Gilmore said we have many sites that we encourage the administration to create programs to reduce parking. In other cases, encourage on-site parking and ways you creatively suggested already. He spoke about all the different ways. If the committee can make a condition to have administration give incentives to park in the lots that would be great. Thao Tran said that is a role and we can mention other opportunities and solutions when we propose conditions for the departure request.

Joe Cox said traffic and parking impacts each other and he gave an example. Thao Tran said if that's a hazardous potential we can put a no parking sign and that is enforceable. Angela Ross said the issue of establishing this is not easy.

Mary Claire-Duncan – thought the committee could make a recommendation for buses not to go up Thistle and around 27<sup>th</sup> Street and then down. That way you don't clog up 26<sup>th</sup> Ave SW. Mary Clair-Duncan understands Angela's concern and she believes that the schools will try to be good neighbors because it is in their best interest. She has confidence that the schools can work with the neighbors.

Joe Cox stated that 26<sup>th</sup> Street & Kenyon Street according to traffic study at the intersection there will be 505 cars traveling through there at the AM peak time. Parking impacts that traffic, we need to look at the aggregate and put both of these issues into considerations.

Angela Ross is concerned about the potential use of the combined campus and that we don't know what's happening with the parking lot across at Thistle St. She believes that the committee needs some foresight and work towards that future. This design didn't have that with the planning. What happens when it does have that critical traffic mass 5 – 10 years down the road?

Kenneth Coons asked that to depart from 177, where would you propose we put it. (Tape stopped)

Don Gilmore said there are two criteria for city parking requirements, the square footage of assembly or the number of seats in a gym and this doesn't relate too much. The number is relevant to how many people occupy the building on a five day week basis. Unless we add building to the site, they have to go through this all over. The parking is designed for the maximum capacity of the building as proposed here assuming 1 teacher and 25 students per classroom with the number of classrooms in each of the buildings.

Joe Cox said that the important thing for him is parking because the building increases so much capacity. Thao Tran asked Robert Evans for demographics studies and for the number of school attendance rate for the next five to ten years for this school? Robert Evans said 910 last year and 950 this year. Don Gilmore said that the school is designed to anticipate for growing number of student population.

Mary Meullion states that she does not see the number of high school drivers going up. Don Gilmore said the high school students will most likely end up in the lot across the street.

**Public Comment:**

Michelle Anderson said that there is very little parking in her immediate residential area and she lives three blocks away. She does not think that residents should be punished by allowing staff and students to clog the limited available residential parking spaces.

Warren Holte expressed concern about two hour parking and how that will affect local residents.

Chris Jackins delivered a copy from neighbors who are opposed to departure for parking because it is not justified in terms of educational needs. Seattle Education Association and Custodian Union #609 have voted against this project. There are currently only 197 parking spaces and Denny School demands will make the situation worst. The code talks about event parking and how the school needs more parking. Chris Jackins emphasized that school play area can not be used for parking and that DPD review did not look at the area across the street to develop parking.

Thao Tran said that we can begin to entertain a motion to approve the parking departure request as we need time to discuss the conditions to identify solutions to parking and traffic mitigation.

Don made a motion to move to recommend the departure for 177 parking spaces for Denny/Sealth project.

Joe Cox wants to take more time to understand the specifics of the parking request. Angela Ross also wants more clarifications in regards to the parking departure request. Don Gilmore explained the main motion and amended the main motion for a vote. Joe Cox asked what happens if all voted no to the departure.

Robert Evans said we are following Robert's Rules of Order, which he gave a brief explanation of the process. Joe Cox said that he would feel more comfortable if the committee look at the amendments and come up with a list of conditions and then follow with a yes or no vote on the departure.

Don Gilmore said the motion is now on the floor which conditions the committee wants to place and we should vote on each one of those.

Don Gilmore made a motion for amendment from SPS to SDOT to require no parking on the east side of 26<sup>th</sup> Ave SW between SW Kenyon and SW Holden streets. Joe Cox seconded this motion.

A question was asked if the community wanted hourly permit parking on certain street. Don Gilmore proposed this motion because community said it couldn't fit parking on both sides. Tamara Garrett asked if the reasoning for this motion is because there will be more traffic from buses, residents, teachers and parents. They agreed it was a combination of all of them. Don Gilmore said the motion could be amended to say 7:00 AM – 3:00 PM or 7:00 AM – 5:00 PM or whatever the committee decides. All district can do is asked SDOT and they have to go to the neighbors and get a certain percentage of the neighbors to agree. Resident Parking Zone has to be voted by either 60% or 80 % to get the special parking zone approved. Don Gilmore suggested 7:00 AM – 4:00 PM then amended his motion to the following: "it would be no parking on the east side of 26<sup>th</sup> Ave SW and SW Kenyon and SW Holden from 7:00 AM to 4:00 PM". Mary Claire-Duncan clarified the SDOT process for community.

Don Gilmore made a motion that the administration of Denny Middle School and Sealth High School encourage:

1) that student's park in designated lots on the district property or

- 2) using mass transit and
- 3) carpooling and
- 4) encouraging parking on 27<sup>th</sup> Street between Thistle Street and Kenyon Street and
- 5) create angel parking on the east side of 27<sup>th</sup> Street between Thistle Street and Kenyon Street even if it requires setting back the sidewalk for traffic access. This was seconded by Angela Ross.

Angela Ross made a motion:

- 6) SPS investigate joint use of parking lots. This was second by Mary Claire-Duncan. Tamara Garrett needed clarification if the suggestion is for daily or events usage? Angela Ross said for daily use.

Angela Ross made another motion:

- 7) To have no parking between 7:00 AM – 4:00 PM on south side of SW Kenyon Street between 27<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> Streets. This was seconded by Don Gilmore. Then questions were asked if this was a load and unload zone. James Knight explained that loading zones have two type of traffic, one is for bus and the other is for pickup and drop off of children. The entrance is separate and apart from the drop off area for vehicles. Bus loading is on-site and parent drop off is up by the parking lot. There is enough room for 35 to 40 cars. Angela Ross also said there is a safety issue. Maybe it should be load unload area for all day.

Joe Cox said there are a lot of vehicles/cars going through 27<sup>th</sup> Street between Thistle Street and Kenyon Street and end up in the corner with cars coming from the north side which realize they can't get through 28<sup>th</sup> Street resulting in a traffic jam. A car going through intersection every nine seconds and 397 cars total that will last ½ hour. Don Gilmore thought that side of the street should be a restricted load/unload only area. Joe Cox believes that buses will have to co-exist with cars trying to drop off students. Joe Cox said it's an issue and don't know what the solution is.

Mary Claire-Duncan needed more clarification on this issue. Don Gilmore suggested creating a morning and evening loading zone to relieve the congestion where you can only unload and go on or you make it no parking from 7:00am to 4:00pm. James Knight said the intersections counts, especially this intersection as it is relevant to the nature of the traffic flow and because it is not a one-way traffic situation. Once parents drop off the students they return the same way. James Knight explained that the 396 number of cars is for the same vehicles counted twice from coming and going.

Don Gilmore made a motion:

- 8) SPS will ask SDOT to require no parking on the south side of SW Kenyon between 28<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> between the hours 7:00 AM to 4:00 PM.

Angela Ross asked if they need to have a 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting. Joe Cox asked if the committee will get a copy of the final report. Thao Tran explained that the code requires the completion of a report within 30 days after the last meeting. He said that he will send a draft for the committee's review before submitting it to DPD.

Joe Cox asked not to allow parking or some limited parking for two hours on 27<sup>th</sup> Ave SW between SW Kenyon Street and SW Holden Street which is only 15 feet wide. Tamara Garrett suggested that it should be limited parking.

Angela Ross made a motion:

9) Principals of Sealth and Denny Schools will continue to work together to not have events on same nights and avoid when Metro or other entities have large sports events.

Don Gilmore restated the motion to spell out that there should be no concurrent major athletic or school event and that SPS publishes a yearly event schedule.

Angela Ross amended motion #7 to paint the corners around driveways for all buses, parents, and students drop off for good buffer and clearer signage. Don Gilmore said SDOT already have those things done.

Tamara Garrett made comment clearer signage for parent drop off.

Angela Ross proposed to have the parents be routed similarly to the buses. This can be added to one of the other conditions. Joe Cox asked about church parking, which was covered already.

Don Gilmore restated the conditions for approval:

- 1) No parking on east of 26<sup>th</sup> Ave. between Kenyon Street and Holden Street between the hours of 7:00 PM to 4:00 PM,
- 2) Staff at Denny Sealth Schools will encourage parking on-site and work to minimize congestion and impact off-site,
- 3) Denny Sealth Schools staff will encourage the use of mass transit and carpool,
- 4) Denny/Sealth staff will encourage parking on 27<sup>th</sup> Ave. SW between SW Thistle Street and SW Kenyon Street,
- 5) SPS will recommend to DPD that 27<sup>th</sup> Ave. W on the east side will be recommended for angled parking,
- 6) SPS will encourage shared parking with the church on SW Kenyon Street between the school and the church,
- 7) SW Kenyon Street between 28<sup>th</sup> Street and 25<sup>th</sup> Street will be no parking 7:00 AM to 4:00 PM on the south side of the street. Signs will display the off limits hours.
- 8) SPS will propose that there be no parking on both sides of 27<sup>th</sup> Street.

Angela Ross wanted to withdraw the last amended conditions. Joe Cox asked what is the alternative? Angela Ross then further proposed an amendment that we have a requirement of 30 feet clearance from driveways of school property. Don Gilmore restated his proposed condition to no parking between 7:00 AM to 4:00 PM on the south side of SW Kenyon Street between 27<sup>th</sup> Street and 28<sup>th</sup> Street and there will be a 30 foot clearance at access driveways off of SW Kenyon Street and Holden Street.

- 9) The district will avoid concurrent major athletic school events and publish a yearly schedule of events within 600 feet of the property.
- 10) Site signage will clearly describe parking and access to the site.

Thao Tran asked the committee to now vote on the departure request and if the committee approves the departure than we should move to a vote on the conditions.

Don already made the motion and proposed a friendly amendment to add all conditions, therefore the conditions are now a part of the motion. Angela Ross seconded the motion.

**The parking departure was approved by the following vote:  
7/1 (yes, no), Angela Ross voted no, there were no abstentions.**

Meeting ended at 9:25.

Next Meeting: Monday, October 20th at 7:00 PM at Denny Middle School.

**Denny Sealth School Departure Advisory Committee  
Denny Middle School  
October 20, 2008  
7:00 PM - 9:00 PM**

**Draft Meeting Minutes**

**Committee Members:**

Mary Meullion  
Angela Ross  
Kenneth Coons  
Mary Clair Duncan  
Monica Kenny  
Joe Cox

**City Staff:**

Tamara Garrett  
Sharon Star  
Thao Tran

**Welcome and Introduction:**

The meeting convened at 7:10 PM. The agenda for the days meeting was brief. This was the third and final meeting for the Advisory Committee. The Committee completed all its necessary work but pursuant to Seattle Municipal Code when the committee determined that this was major issue that three meeting was required.

Thao Tran gave an overview of what the timeline was for submitting the departure report. He said that he will have a draft final report for everyone to review in a couple of weeks. Once he has forward a draft report to the committee, he hopes that committee members can provide him with any edits or suggestions within a week before he finalizes the report and submits it to the Director of the Department of Neighborhoods.

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 PM.