



City of Seattle
Seattle Department of Neighborhoods
Bernie Agor Matsuno, Director

SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

HAZEL WOLF K-8 @ PINEHURST SCHOOL DESIGN DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

July 2014

This report is produced pursuant to the City of Seattle Municipal Code (SMC 23.44.17 and 23.79). The intent and purpose of this report is to document public testimony and make recommendations to the City for modifications to land use code development standards in order to facilitate construction of a new school at the site of Pinehurst School located at 11530 12th Avenue NE, Seattle Washington



Hazel Wolf K-8 @ Pinehurst

Design Departure Advisory Committee

Final Report and Findings

Section 1. Background

1.1 General Departure Proposals

On September 3, 2013, the Seattle School District No. 1 submitted a request for departures from certain Seattle Municipal Code Development Standards to accommodate the demolition of the current Pinehurst Elementary School at 11530 12th Avenue in the north portion of Seattle, and the construction of a new school on this site. The School will be approximately 78,000 square feet and contain the Hazel Wolf K-8 (formerly Jane Addams K-8) program



Illustration1
Aerial View of the School Site

The Seattle School District is proposing to demolish the existing single school shown above and replace it with a larger multi-story building. The project is being funded under the \$694.9 million Building Excellence IV (BEX IV) Capital Levy that was approved by more than 72 percent of Seattle voters in February 2013. It supports the District's long-range plans to upgrade and renovate aging school facilities and address enrollment growth. Since 1998, the BEX I, BEX II and BEX III voter approved levies have allowed the District to replace or renovate 37 buildings.

Seventeen major building projects will result in new schools, replacement schools or modernized schools, Hazel Wolfe at Pinehurst being one of these.

1.2 Neighborhood Characteristics

The school site is located in the north portion of Seattle in the Northgate/Maple Leaf neighborhood. The broader neighborhood is generally zoned single family except for small strip of neighborhood commercial along 15th Avenue NE and a low-rise 3 block just south of the School Site on the south side of Pinehurst Way Northeast.

Pinehurst/Maple Leaf is a stable middle income area providing generally affordable housing. Median income is slightly lower than the City of Seattle Average at \$51,500 vs the Seattle average of about \$61,000. The average home value in 2011 was about 65% of the City of Seattle average at about \$370,000.

Maple Leaf is a stable middle income neighborhood. The surrounding area is almost completely residentially zoned and well over 90% of the homes are single family dwellings; the percentage of homeowners above the Seattle average. As might be expected with these characteristics, home maintenance levels are better than average and most homes show a high pride of ownership.

1.3 Requests for Departure and Committee Formation

The City initiated the Development Standard Departure Process, pursuant to SMC 23.44.17 and 23.79. The code requires that the Department of Neighborhoods convene an Advisory Committee (Development Standard Advisory Committee) when the School District proposes a departure from the development standards identified under the code. These standards are popularly referred to as the "zoning code".

The purposes of the Development Standard Departure Advisory Committee are: 1) to gather public comment and evaluate the proposed departures for consistency with the objectives and intent of the City's land use policies to ensure that the proposed facility is compatible with the character and use of its surroundings; and 2) to develop a report and recommendation to the City of Seattle Department of Planning and Development from the Department of Neighborhoods.

Following completion of the Committee Report and its transmittal to the City Department of Planning and Development, that department will produce a formal report and determination. The Director of the Department of Planning and Development will determine the amount of departure from established development standards which may be allowed, as well as identify all mitigating measures which may be required. This decision is appealable.

In October 2013, the Department of Neighborhoods sent notices to residents within 600 feet of the proposed new school and to a list of individuals and organizations that had shown interest in other community issues in the vicinity of Pinehurst (now Hazel Wolfe @ Pinehurst) School requesting self-nominations for membership on the Development Standard Departure Advisory Committee, and the Committee was formed. The Committee is composed of eight voting members with a City non-voting Chair.

After receiving nominations, the Committee was appointed as follows:

Appointed Members and Alternates

Eric Youngblut	Person residing and/or owning property within 600' of Pinehurst School
Despina Strong	Person residing and/or owning property within 600' of Pinehurst School
Anika Sutton-Wolf	Representative of the General Neighborhood(also residing or owning property within 600' of Pinehurst School)
Magan Harvey	Representative of the General Neighborhood (also residing or owning property within 600' of Pinehurst School)
Lisa Evans	Representative at large to represent city-wide education issues
Bre Holt	PTSA Representative
Dan Suiter	PTSA Representative
Mike Skutack	Seattle School District
Jeff Jobson	Alternate #1
Lorraine Lewis Philipps	Alternate #2 (For PTSA Representatives)

Ex-Officio Members

Steve Sheppard	City of Seattle Department of Neighborhoods (Non-voting Chairperson)
Holly Goddard	City of Seattle, Department of Planning and Development

Section 2. Departures

2.1 Specific District Requests

The Seattle School District is proposing to locate a 680 student K-8 Program on this site. This will include the very popular Environmental-Stem Program. The Pinehurst site

comes with specific design challenges, including: 1) very limited site area of about 3.2 acres; 2) greater building footprints required for a K-8 program; 3) program requirements to support the Environmental STEM program; and 4) limited parking area, drop-off and bus area due to the limited land area.

Therefore, in order to accommodate the educational program for this program, the District requested the following departures from various provisions of the Seattle Municipal code:

Departure #1 - Greater than Allowed Lot Coverage – The zoning code restricts total lot coverage to 35%. In order to accommodate the needed square footage of development greater lot coverage will be required. The District is requesting 40% lot coverage.

Departure #2 - Greater than Allowed Building Height – The school will be located on land zoned for low-rise residential development and thus has a maximum allowed height of 35 ft. In order to rattach minimum open play area the District has requested a maximum height of 58 ft. Not all of the building will exceed 35 feet and much of the building will comply with the 35 ft. .

Departure #3 - Less than Required Off-street Parking – When a school is rebuilt the code required that the District provide parking as directed by the code which in this case would require 72 spaces. The current building provides only 13 striped parking stalls located at the south area of the lot that is adjacent to the building. The District is request that only 9 total parking spaces be provided.

Departure #4 - Continued On-street Bus Loading and Unloading – The zoning code directs that bus loading and unloading occur on site and not on the street. In many cases the District loads and unloads its busses on the street adjacent to the School. Currently busses load and unload on 12th Avenue. The District is proposing that on-street bus loading and unloading continue.

2.2 Committee Review and Recommendations

2.2.1 Determination that Resolution of the Issue Required only a Single Meeting

The Committee was convened in a public meeting held March 13, 2014 at Pinehurst Elementary School. After a full review of the departure request and consideration of all public testimony and correspondence received, the majority on the Committee determined that the issues were complex enough to warrant multiple meeting. A Second Meeting was held April 28, 2014. Following this second meeting, the Committee was able to move forward with its recommendations.

2.2.2 Review Criteria

The Seattle Municipal Code directs the Advisory Committee to evaluate the requested departures for consistency with the general objectives and intent of the City's Land Use Code, and balance the interrelationships among the following factors:

- a. Relationship to Surrounding Areas.

- (1) Appropriateness in relation to the character and scale of the surrounding area
- (2) Presence of edges (significant setbacks, major arterials, topographic breaks, and similar features) which provide a transition in scale.
- (3) Location and design of structures to reduce the appearance of bulk;
- (4) Impacts on traffic, noise, circulation and parking in the area; and
- (5) 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. Greater departure may be allowed for special facilities, such as a gymnasium, which are unique and/or an integral and necessary part of the educational process; whereas, a lesser or no departure may be granted for a facility which can be accommodated within the established development standards.

2.2.3 Application of Review Criteria to Requested Departures and Committee Recommendations

a. Overall need for Departures

The Seattle Municipal Code generally envisions granting departures from the requirements of the Municipal Code to accommodate the educational needs of the programs to be located in the proposed buildings. In the case of the Pinehurst site, its small 3.2 acre size presents insurmountable obstacles to meeting those needs. Some combination of greater heights, expanded lot coverage, reduced setbacks or reduction in on site non-educational activities (parking and bus loading) would appear necessary. Without some departures, the alternatives would be either: 1) further reductions in critical open play space, 2) expansion of the site through either street vacations or the purchase of adjacent property, or 3) major reductions in the proposed size and educational program of the school.

After considering the overall design and program requirements, the Committee generally determined that some departures would be needed. That does not necessarily mean that the departures as requested are all appropriate and the Committee therefore evaluated each requested departure separately against the other review criteria listed above.

Recommendation 1 - That departures from the provisions of the underlying zoning be allowed in order to facilitate the construction of a new School at the Pinehurst school site

b. Review of Departures against Departure Review Criteria a 1 through 5.
Departure #1 -Greater than Allowed Lot Coverage –

The existing Pinehurst site is small at only 137,500 square feet and has an odd triangular shape. The site itself provides significant challenges. The

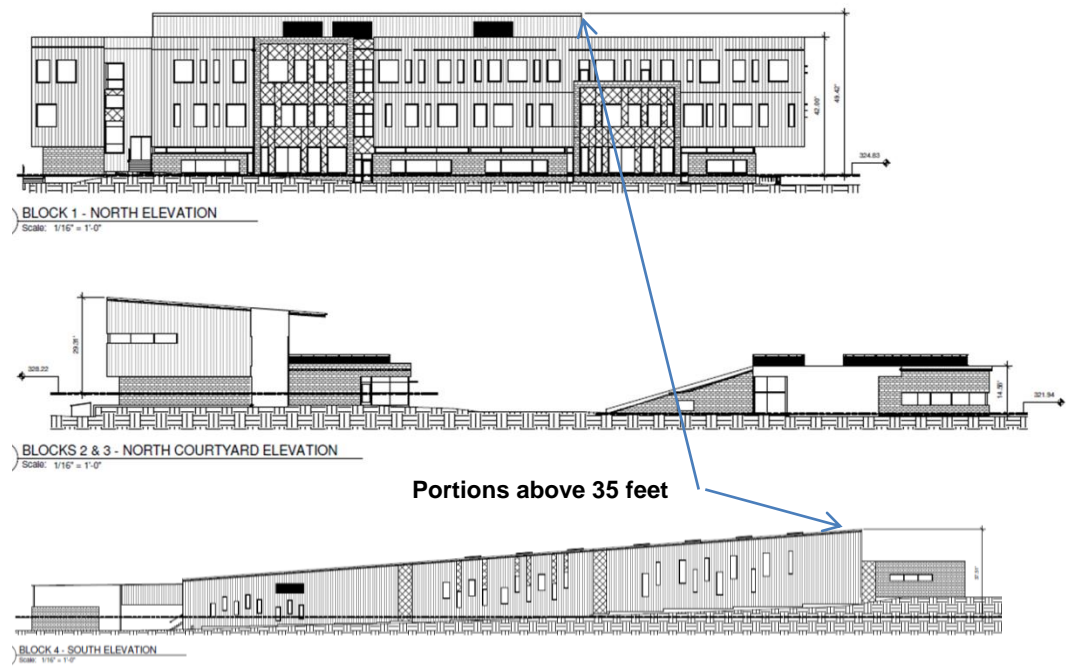
educational program for location of the Hazel Wolf K-8 program at the school drives a need for at least 80,000 gross square feet of space.

The Committee considered these challenges and concluded that there was value in allowing greater lot coverage to avoid greater height. Greater lot coverage allows a slight spreading out of the structures and limits the amount of the project that is designed to three stories. Granting this request is based in large part on the analysis of Departures 2, 3 and 4 against the review criteria.

In consideration of the above, the Committee recommends:

Recommendation 2 - That the departure to allow increased lot coverage from 35% to 40% lot coverage be approved without modifications and without conditions

Departure #2 - Greater than Allowed Building Height –



Facades showing Proposed Heights

While most of the buildings proposed would be under the 35 foot height limit in the Single Family zone, the portion shown on the Block 1 elevation above would be above that limit. Calculations by the District indicate that the main building would be 43 feet with the penthouse extending to 48 feet. In addition a small portion of the building along Pinehurst Way (elevation 4) would slightly exceed the 35 feet at 39 feet.



Aerial View of Site Showing Height Massing

The Committee carefully considered the requested heights. Members noted that the height was clearly greater than the surrounding single family areas to the north and west, and expressed some concerns regarding view and particularly shadowing in those areas, and asked for additional information from the District on the shadow impacts.

After consideration of information presented by the District the Committee concluded that the District had gone to relatively great lengths to mitigate the impacts of greater height as follows:

- 1) The building is appropriately pushed southwest with minimum setbacks from Pinehurst Way. - This siting specifically takes advantage of the natural edge that the Pinehurst Way arterial offers. Shifting the structures southeast, towards the higher multi-family and commercial structures across Pinehurst Way further mitigates the impact of heights. In addition the placement of the major open spaces along 12 Avenue Ne and the Open spaces and parking areas along NE 117th Street buffers the more sensitive single family areas.
- 2) The orientation of the building on the site further reduces its appearance of bulk and height - Angling the buildings to both 12th Avenue NE and NE 117th Street truncates views slightly and further reduces the appearance of bulk and

In consideration of the above, the Committee recommends:

Recommendation 3 - That the departure for greater than allowed height be approved as requested by the District without modifications and without conditions.

Departure #3 - Less than Required Off-street Parking –

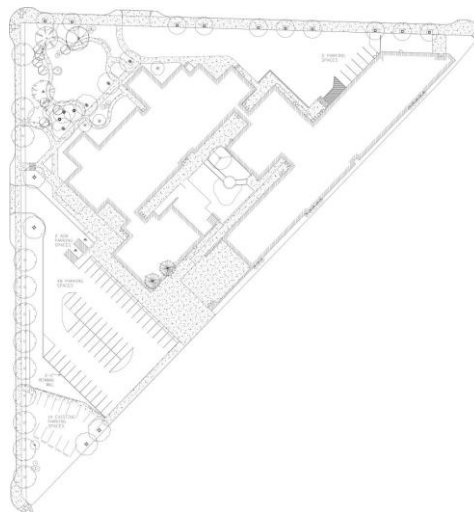
Under the Code the District is required to accommodate all required parking on site whenever a new school is built or existing school renovated. The present school provides 13 spaces in its south lot and up

to another three unstripped spaces in the loading area. The District is proposing to provide only 9 full-time spaces mostly in the north loading area.



Site Plan Showing Proposed Parking Locations

Committee members were concerned with the lack of parking. Both the public and Committee members noted that parking can spill over onto adjacent streets. However it was obvious that accommodating the 66 spaces required by code would be difficult. The Committee requested that the District model what a site plan might look like that accommodated all 66 spaces. That modelling is shown below.



Modeled Site Plan Accommodating Required Parking

Accommodating required parking would severely impact the amount of open space (Criteria 5) essentially eliminating most open plan/recreation space. The District noted that open space is already below the amount that the educational standards. Committee members considered this unacceptable. Similarly, providing the required parking while retaining the open space might require purchase of adjacent property for satellite lots, or construction of prohibitively expensive underground parking.

Still some additional parking was considered prudent. Members noted that the load zone (north lot) could be striped for additional parking when not needed for loading. It was estimated that this might allow an additional 10 spaces. In addition the Committee noted that the District's transportation consultant had offered a series of suggested conditions to mitigate for providing less than required parking. After reviewing those conditions members concluded that they would be effective.

In consideration of the above, the Committee recommends:

Recommendation #4 - That the departure to allow less than required parking (a minimum of 9 stalls to be provided) be approved with the following conditions: 1) That the loading zone located in the NE corner of the school be available and appropriately marked for general parking on non-school hours; and 2) that the District adhere to those additional mitigation conditions as identified by Heffron Transportation at the April meeting, not superseded by the bus loading and unloading recommendations below, and considered directly relevant to reducing parking demand. These further recommendations are summarized as follows:

- Prior to the building opening, The District develop an access management plan to address congestion, pedestrian crossings, access patterns and vehicle load/unload zones
- The District establish a communications plan to educate parents and students about access and parking challenges that will exist, and that encourages school bus ridership, carpooling and supervised walking.
- The District and SDOT confirm the locations and signage of parent-vehicle load/unload zones
- The District coordinates with SDOT and SPD to implement and enforce school-zone speed limits near the site.
- The District identifies potential walk routes and advocate for improvements along these routes that could be

funded through the City's School Road Safety Initiative or other grant programs.

- The District develop a neighborhood communications plan to inform nearby neighbors of events that provide the dates, times and rough magnitude of attendance.
- The schools develop a Transportations Management Plan.

Note that the full text of the Heffron recommendations is attached as appendix 3. The Committee considers all of these to be positive recommendations, but in some cases request considerations or, or actions not necessarily enforceable as a condition.

Departure #4 - Continued On-street Bus Loading and Unloading

Under the code all bus loading/unloading is to be accommodated on site. Presently bus loading and unloading is on-street along 12th Avenue NE in both the AM and PM and along Pinehurst Way in the PM only. The District proposed that this situation continue and proposed improvements for the bus loading area along 12th Avenue NE, with that street remaining the primary loading location.

There was considerable discussion of the impact of this bus-loading. The Committee concluded that the Seattle School District was able to generally justify the need for the departure for continued on-street bus loading. Because the desire of both the District and neighborhood to retain as much open play space as possible and accommodate other uses. Members expressed preference for removing bus loading from 12th Avenue NE in favor of allowing it to continue along Pinehurst Way.

Pinehurst Way is an arterial and members felt that loading and unloading on that street clearly met the intent of the review criteria better than along 12th Avenue NE. Removing loading and unloading from 12th Avenue NE would reduce impacts on adjacent homes, and utilize the natural buffer/edge provided by Pinehurst Way.

In consideration of the above, the Committee recommends:

Recommendation 5 - The departure for continued on-street bus loading and unloading be approved on condition that: 1) loading and unloading shall be on Pinehurst Way until : 2) in the event that the Seattle Department of Transportation determines continued use of Pinehurst Way for this purpose is not possible other alternatives may be evaluated.

For the Committee

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Steve Sheppard". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent initial "S".

Steve Sheppard
Non-Voting Chair

- Appendix 1 Meeting Minutes
- Appendix 2 Full Hefron Recommendations
- Appendix 3 SDOT Letter Authorizing use of Pinehurst Way for both AM and PM Bus Loading and Unloading