

PUBLIC SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT STANDARD ADVISORY COMMITTEE¹

JOHN ROGERS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DESIGN DEPARTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

Project #3039302-SD

November 18, 2022

This report is produced pursuant to the City of Seattle Municipal Code (SMC; 23.44.006 F and 23.79). The intent and purpose of this report is to document public comment and make recommendations to the City regarding proposed modifications to development standards to facilitate construction of the new John Rogers Elementary School located at 4030 NE 109th St., Seattle, WA 98125.



¹ Pursuant to Sections 10-12 of Ordinance 126188, which will remain in effect until December 30, 2022, the Director of the Department of Neighborhoods is authorized to submit this recommendation report to the Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections in lieu of an advisory committee process.

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Attachments:

John Rogers Elementary School Departure Public Comments

SPS Response Letter to Public Comments

1. Background

1.1 Project Description

On May 31, 2022, Seattle Public Schools (SPS) submitted a request for departures per SMC 23.79.002 for the John Rogers Elementary School located at 4030 NE 109th St, Seattle, WA 98125. The departure request pertains to building height, vehicular parking quantity, bicycle parking standards and signage/changing image sign.

1.2 Site Plan

The existing John Rogers Elementary School site was reviewed by the Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board (LPB) in August 2021, and the LPB voted to not designate the school as a City landmark. A new, 3-story school building will instead be constructed on the site. When complete, the approximately 85,000 square foot school will provide permanent space for up to 500 students with planned expansion to 650 students at a future date if capacity is needed. The 9.1-acre site is partially in the flood plain for Thornton Creek.

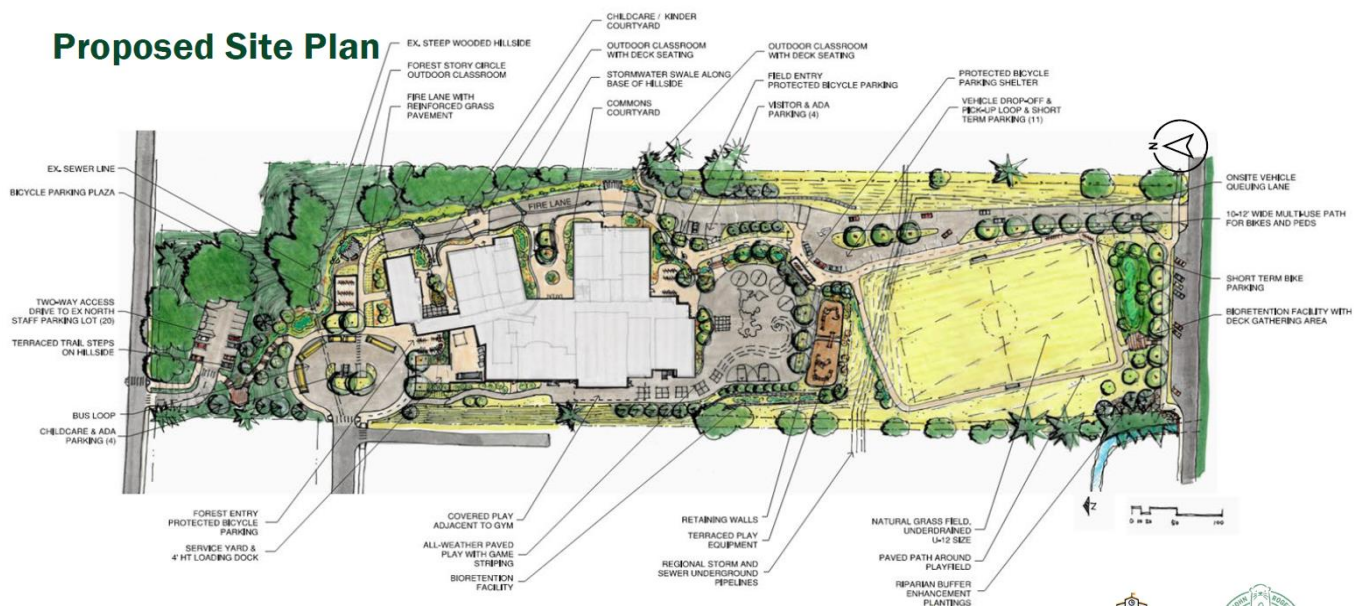


Exhibit 1 Proposed Site Plan

1.3 Neighborhood Characteristics

John Rogers Elementary School is in a quiet residential area near the Lake City neighborhood in Seattle, Washington. The site is bound on the North by 110th Street NE and 105th Street NE to the South.

At the southwest corner of the site, a small portion of Thornton Creek runs along the edge of the site through neighboring homes' backyards. The lower portion of the site is used by community members, Seattle Parks and Recreation, and neighbors.

Thornton Creek, which runs along the Southwestern edge of the site, contributes to wet soils to the South. It is a key component of local and regional watersheds and provides a unique opportunity for the school to connect to an important regional ecosystem.

Within a 30-minute walking area from the site, there are many community resources and amenities available to the John Rogers community. Fields, playgrounds, schools, parks, courts, trails, public transit access points and community centers provide a strong network of resources.



1.4 Requests for Departures and Process

The City administers the Development Standard Departure Process, pursuant to SMC 23.44.006F and 23.79. The Code requires that the Department of Neighborhoods (DON) convene a Development Standard Advisory Committee (hereinafter as “the Committee”) when SPS proposes a departure from the development standards identified under the Code. These standards are popularly referred to as the “zoning code.”

The purpose of the Committee is 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 recommendations to the Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections (SDCI) from DON. (SMC 23.79.008).

In April 2020, City Council passed Ordinance 126072, which temporarily allowed certain land use applications to be handled administratively. These provisions (later extended by Ordinance 126188) were part of a larger City effort to expedite permits, respond to economic challenges, and address urgent development needs during the pandemic. Thus, the DON Director is temporarily authorized to submit this recommendation report to SDCI in lieu of a public advisory committee process. Absent further legislative action, the temporary provisions will expire on December 30, 2022. The content of this report is informed by public comments solicited and reviewed by DON staff.

Following completion of DON's recommendation report and its transmittal to SDCI, the Director of SDCI will issue a formal report and decision. The SDCI Director will consider the DON report's recommendations and (1) determine the extent of departure from established development standards that may be allowed, and (2) identify all mitigating measures which may be required. The SDCI Director's decision is appealable.

2. Departures

2.1 Specific District Requests

SPS, the John Rogers Elementary School community, public listening sessions, community surveys, and the Design Team all contributed to the development and definition of a project vision: "A Thriving Culture of Otter Excellence". The Project Team referenced the school's mascot, "Otters", in defining the project vision:

- 1) Foster an ecosystem of success
- 2) Position all students, staff, and community members for growth and understanding
- 3) Focus on development of the whole student and creating spaces for high achieving students and staff through:
 - a. Connection to the Natural World
 - b. Recognize the Collective Impact
 - c. Nurturing Health and Well-being
 - d. Understanding Equitable ownership of place
 - e. Always highlighting the joy of learning.

To accommodate the project vision and goals of this project, SPS requested the following departures from the development standards found in SMC 23.51B.002.

Requested Departures Summary

- Departure for Building Height: SMC 23.51B.002.D.**
 - The code allows a maximum building height of 35' above existing average grade plane. SPS proposes a maximum building height of 55' above existing average grade plane for a departure of 20'.
- Departure for Vehicular Parking Quantity: SMC 23.54.015 Table C**
 - The code requires 145 automobile parking spaces. SPS proposes 39 automobile parking spaces for a departure of 106 spaces.
- Departure for Bicycle Parking Performance Standards: SMC 23.54.015.K.2.**
 - The code requires secure locations and arrangements for all long-term bicycle parking. SPS proposes secure long-term bicycle parking for 19 of the required 73 long-term bicycle parking spaces for a departure of 54 secure parking spaces.
- Departure for Changing Image Message Board Sign: SMC 23.55.020**
 - The code does not allow flashing, changing-image or message board signs in single-family zones. SPS proposes (1) electric changing image message board sign as a departure.

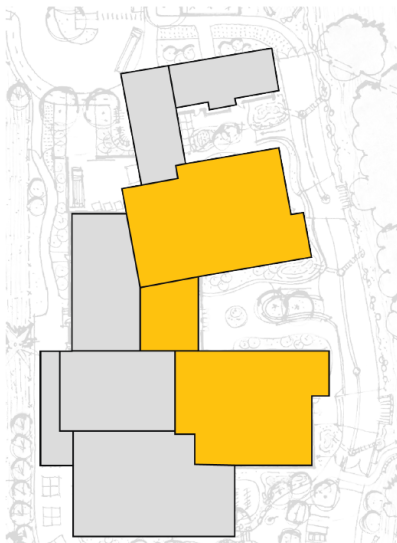




Departure #1 – Greater than Allowed Building Height

Existing Standard: SMC 23.51B.002.D.1.b: For new public-school construction on existing public-school sites, the maximum permitted height is 35 feet.

Allowed Building Height: 35 feet (23.51B.002.D1b)

Requested Departure #1 : Building Height



-  Area of roof under height limit (55% of Roof Area)
-  Area of roof that extends above 35' height limit (45% of Roof Area)

Site constraints such as topography, soil mitigation areas, steep slope buffers, utility easements and fire lanes limit the available area for the location of the new building on-site. A 3-story structure is necessary to meet the requirements of the SPS Educational Specification while also addressing the many site constraints.

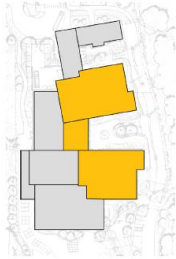
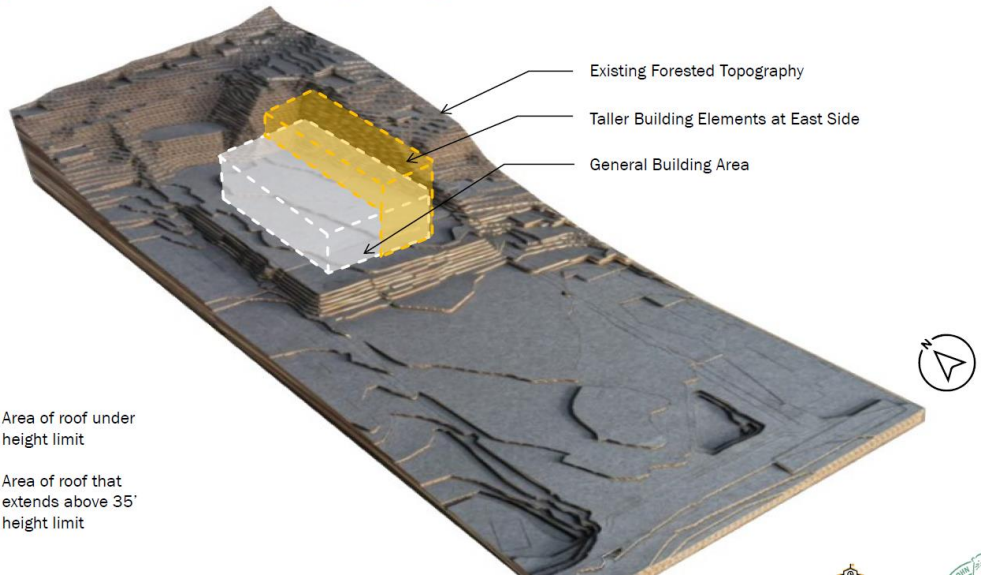
Portions of the building that request a departure to maximum building height are located on the east side of the site, adjacent to a steep slope and existing tall trees. This topography, in addition to the existing tall trees along the steep slope, help mitigate the impact of the 3-story building to the surrounding neighborhood.

In lieu of rooftop mechanical penthouses above the 3-story structure, mechanical spaces are located throughout the building on different floor levels. This helps limit the building height and limit the requested departure to 20' above the maximum allowable height above existing average grade plane.

Requested Departure #1: Building Height

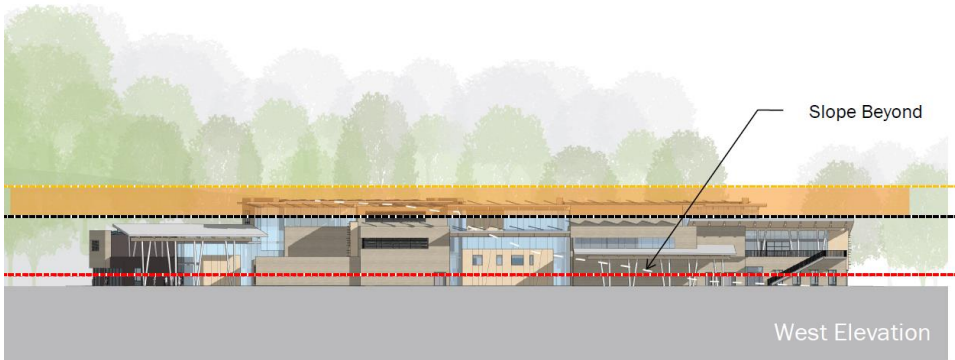
Site Existing Topography | General Building Location

- Building located at North end of site near steep slope
- Taller Building Elements at the East Side near hill



- Area of roof under height limit
- Area of roof that extends above 35' height limit

Requested Departure #1 : Building Height



- Average Existing Grade
- 35' Maximum Building Height Above Average Existing Grade
- Requested Departure Height of 20' Above Maximum Building Height Allowed by Zoning Code (for a portion of the building)
- Area above 35' Limit



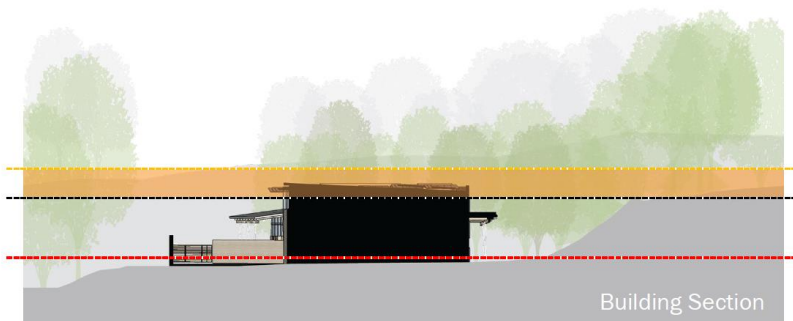
Requested Departure #1 : Building Height



- - - - - Average Existing Grade
- - - - - 35' Maximum Building Height Above Existing Grade
- - - - - Requested Departure Height of 20' Above Maximum Building Height Allowed by Zoning Code (for a portion of the building)
- Area above 35' Limit



Requested Departure #1 : Building Height



- - - - - Average Existing Grade
- - - - - 35' Maximum Building Height Above Existing Grade
- - - - - Requested Departure Height of 20' Above Maximum Building Height Allowed by Zoning Code (for a portion of the building)
- Area above 35' Limit



Proposed Departure Requested: The Code allows a maximum building height of 35 feet above existing average grade plane in neighborhood residential zones. SPS requests a maximum building height of 55 feet above existing average grade plane for a portion of the new building, for a departure of 20 feet.

Departure #2 – Reduced vehicular parking quantity

Existing Standard:

SMC 23.51B.002 – Public Schools in Residential Zones;

SMC 23.51B.002.G – Parking Quantity;

SMC 23.54 – Quantity and Design Standards for Access, Off-Street Parking, and Solid Waste Storage;

SMC 23.54.015 Table C – Required Parking for Public Uses and Institutions

Required Parking:

Childcare Calculation

1 Parking Space per 10 Children $60/10 =$ 6 spaces

Childcare Loading Zone Calculation

1 Loading Zone Space per 20 Children $60/20 =$ 3 spaces

Elementary School Calculation

Public Assembly Spaces @ 80 spaces/SF

Dining Commons + Gymnasium $10,820/80 =$ 136 spaces

Total: 145 spaces

Departure Requested:

Required Parking Spaces

145 Spaces

Provided Parking Spaces

39 Spaces

Departure:


106 Spaces

Requested Departure #2 : Vehicular Parking Quantity

Existing On-Site Parking Quantity

 Striped Spaces: 35 Spaces

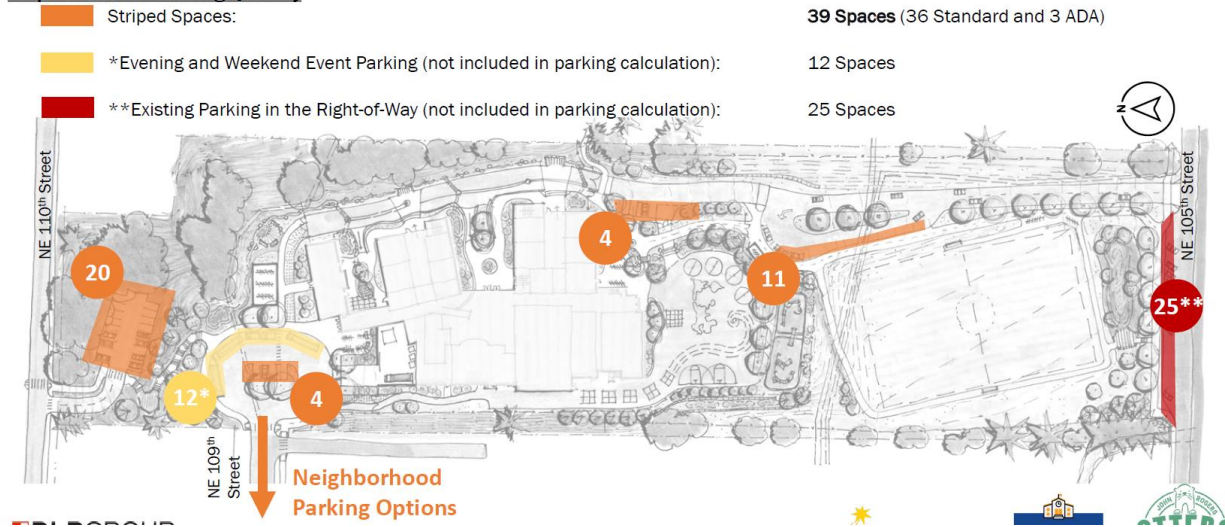
 *Informal Parking behind Existing Building No Striped Spaces

 **Existing Parking in the Right-of-Way (not included in parking calculation): 25 Spaces



Requested Departure #2 : Vehicular Parking Quantity

Proposed On-Site Parking Quantity



Requested Departure #2 : Vehicular Parking Quantity

The available site square footage for the construction of the new elementary school is limited as a result of topography, soil mitigation areas, steep slope buffers, utility easements, fire lanes and SPS Educational Specifications for outdoor play. Subsequently, the available square footage for on-site parking is also limited.

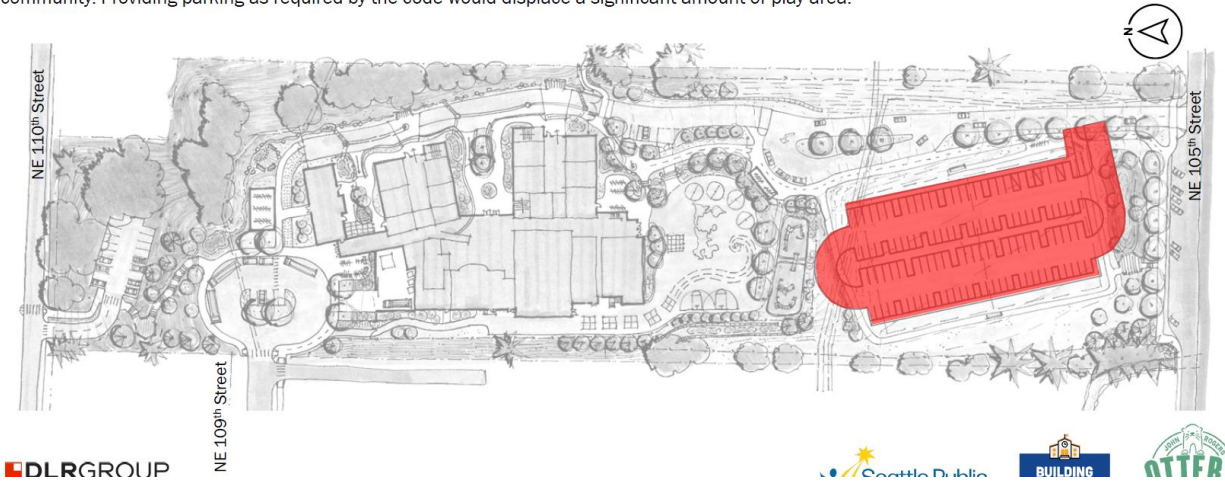
The proposed number of parking spaces is less than the code required number in order to maximize the amount of play and outdoor learning opportunities on the site, while meeting the SPS Educational Specifications to the greatest extent possible. Building placement and site topography further limit available parking areas on-site. Additionally, the School Design Advisory Team (SDAT) and results from Community Surveys, reinforced the desire that the new John Rogers Elementary School provide outdoor play and learning opportunities that supported both the school and broader neighborhood community. Parking quantities that meet the municipal code could be achieved but only at the expense of available student and community building and site amenities.

The code required number of parking spaces is derived from the number of spaces needed during a large assembly event, rather than a more typical day-to-day need. An on-street parking availability study, performed by Heffron Transportation, Inc., demonstrates that on-street parking capacity can easily support the code required parking demand for large assembly events. An additional 250 vehicles can be supported within an 800-foot walking distance during evening hours and remain under the rate at which the City of Seattle considers full capacity (85% of available spots filled).

The proposed quantity of striped parking stalls exceeds the current site's striped parking by four stalls while maintaining the parking quantity in the right-of-way immediately south of the school site. Further, bus queuing at the new John Rogers Elementary School will occur within the on-site bus loop in lieu of NE 109th St. As a result, additional street parking is available at loading and unloading times.

Requested Departure #2 : Vehicular Parking Quantity

If all code required parking were provided, a lot approximately the size of the U-12 soccer/play field would be needed. Throughout the School Design Advisory Team process, both the hard surface play area and play field were identified as desirable, neighborhood amenities that are heavily used by both the school and community. Providing parking as required by the code would displace a significant amount of play area.



Requested Departure #2 : Vehicular Parking Quantity

Previous Seattle Public Schools Departures:

Due to minimum play space requirements in the SPS Standards, every recently constructed elementary school has less than the code required parking in order to preserve playground and open play areas.

School Name	Enrollment Capacity	Site Area (Acres)	On-Site Parking Provided/Required	Departure
Arbor Heights Elementary	650	5.65	55 / 138	80
Genesee Hill Elementary	650	6.82	71 / 135	64
Loyal Heights Elementary	650	2.85	0 / 70	70
Magnolia Elementary	500	2.50	6 / 79	73
Queen Anne Elementary	500	3.00	32 / 118	86
Thornton Creek Elementary	650	7.66	91 / 162	71
Wing Luke Elementary	500	6.85	60 / 130	70
Kimball Elementary	650	4.78	40 / 140	100
Northgate Elementary	650	5.77	30 / 140	110
Viewlands Elementary	650	6.50	50 / 146	96
John Rogers Elementary	500	9.24	39 / 145 (proposed)	105

Requested Departure #2 : Vehicular Parking Quantity

Transportation and Parking Impacts Analysis Summary:

Elements Evaluated:

- **Replacement school** – Up to 500 students in grades K-5 plus two 20-student pre-K classrooms for total up to 540 students in Pre-K-5 (an increase of about 278 students compared to 2022 enrollment).
- **Number & time of added school trips** – Morning Arrival (7:15-8:15 A.M.) increase = 256 trips (143 in, 113 out); Afternoon Dismissal (2:15-3:15 P.M.) increase = 147 trips (61 in, 86 out).
- **Reconfigured site** – On-site school-bus & automobile load/unload
- **Traffic operations & safety** – Eight intersections; all forecast to operate at Level of Service (LOS) B or better overall. Shifts traffic to the south at NE 105th Street with increases in delay. No significant adverse impacts to study area traffic operating conditions. Collision data did not indicate any unusual collision patterns.
- **On-street parking** – Daily use & evening events. City considers occupancy of 85% or higher as effectively full. Currently, 17% to 18% occupied on school days (314 to 323 unused). With project, school-days to remain below 30%. During occasional large events (~1 per month) expected to remain below 75% occupied.
- **Construction traffic & Mitigation**

Source: *John Rogers Elementary School Replacement Transportation Technical Report*, Heffron Transportation, Inc., 2022.

Requested Departure #2 : Vehicular Parking Quantity

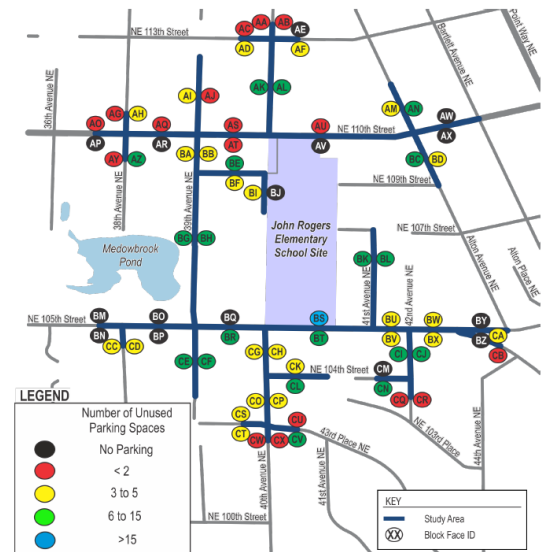
On-Street Parking Occupancy – Weekday Early Morning

Total On-Street Parking Spaces within
800-ft walking distance = 382 Spaces

- 59 to 68 cars (7:00 - 7:45 a.m.)
(15% to 18% occupied)*
- Number Unoccupied = 314 to 323

* Note: City of Seattle considers occupancy rates of 85% or higher to be effectively full.

Source: *John Rogers Elementary School Replacement Transportation Technical Report*, Heffron Transportation, Inc., 2022.



Requested Departure #2 : Vehicular Parking Quantity

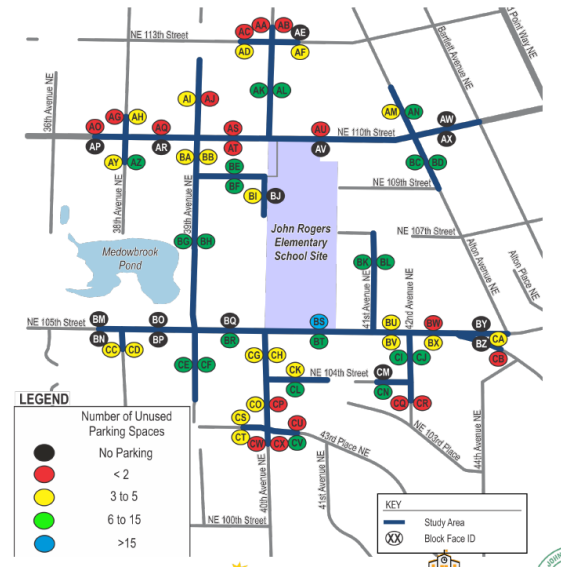
On-Street Parking Occupancy – Weekday Mid Morning

Total On-Street Parking Spaces within
800-ft walking distance = 386 Spaces

- 65 cars (10:30 - 11:15 a.m.)
(17% occupied)*
- Number Unoccupied = 321

* Note: City of Seattle considers occupancy rates of
85% or higher to be effectively full.

Source: *John Rogers Elementary School Replacement
Transportation Technical Report*, Heffron
Transportation, Inc., 2022.



Requested Departure #2 : Vehicular Parking Quantity

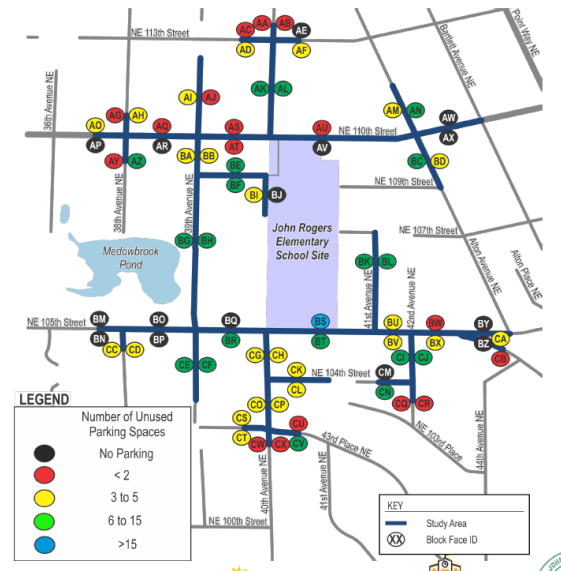
On-Street Parking Occupancy – Weekday Evening (No Event)

Total On-Street Parking Spaces within
800-ft walking distance = 386 Spaces

- 66 to 71 cars (7:30 - 8:15 p.m.)
(17% to 18% occupied)*
- Number Unoccupied = 315 to 320

* Note: City of Seattle considers occupancy rates of
85% or higher to be effectively full.

Source: *John Rogers Elementary School Replacement
Transportation Technical Report*, Heffron
Transportation, Inc., 2022.



Requested Departure #2 : Vehicular Parking Quantity

Transportation and Parking Recommendations to Provide:

- **School Construction Transportation Management Plan**
- **School Transportation Management Plan:** Access routing & load/unload protocols; encourage walking, biking, bus (for those eligible).
- **Update right-of-way & curb-side signage:** Work with SDOT to confirm removal of signage for the school-bus load zone on NE 109th Street.

Source: John Rogers Elementary School Replacement Transportation Technical Report, Heffron Transportation, Inc., 2022.

Proposed Departure Requested: The Code-required parking for public uses and institutions in neighborhood residential zones totals 145 spaces for John Rogers Elementary School. SPS proposes 39 parking spaces, for a departure of 106 spaces.

Departure #3 – Bicycle parking performance standards

Existing Standard:

SMC 23.51B.002 – Public Schools in Residential Zones;

SMC 23.51B.002.G – Parking quantity;

SMC 23.54 – Quantity and Design Standards for Access, Off-street Parking, and Solid Waste Storage;

SMC 23.54.015.K – Bicycle Parking

Requested Departure #3 : Bicycle Parking Performance Standards

Seattle Municipal Code Sections: SMC 23.51B.002 – Public Schools in Residential Zones
 SMC 23.51B.002.G. – Parking Quantity
 SMC 23.54 – Quantity and Design Standards for Access, Off-Street Parking, and Solid Waste Storage.
 SMC 23.54.015.K. Bicycle Parking

K.2. Performance standards. Provide bicycle parking in a highly visible, safe, and convenient location, emphasizing user convenience and theft deterrence, based on rules promulgated by the Director of the Seattle Department of Transportation that address the considerations in this subsection 23.54.015.K.2.

a. Provide secure locations and arrangements of long-term bicycle parking, with features such as locked rooms or cages and bicycle lockers. The bicycle parking should be installed in a manner that avoids creating conflicts with automobile accesses and driveways.

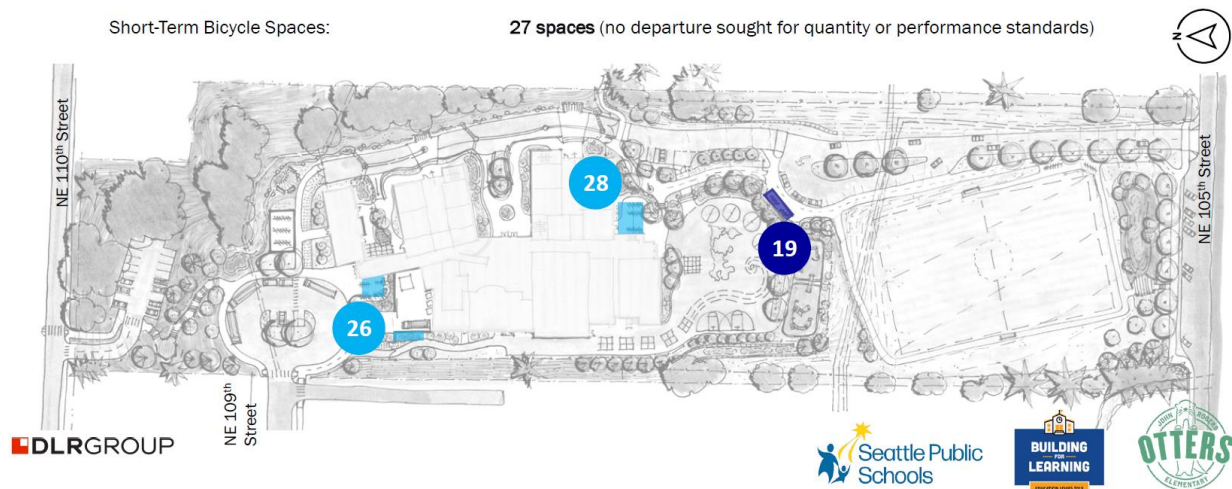
i. Provide full weather protection for all required long-term bicycle parking.

Departure Requested: The Seattle Land Use Code requires secure locations and arrangements for all long-term bicycle parking. Seattle Public Schools proposes secure long-term bicycle parking for 19 of the required 73 long-term bicycle parking spaces for a departure of 54 secure parking spaces (note: the remaining 54 long-term bicycle parking spaces are provided adjacent to the building, under entrance canopies).

Requested Departure #3 : Bicycle Parking Performance Standards

Required Bicycle Parking Quantity per 23.54.015 Table D:

Long-Term Bicycle Spaces:	73 total spaces provided (no departure sought for quantity or weather protection)
■ Secured	19 spaces
■ Not Secured	54 spaces
Short-Term Bicycle Spaces:	27 spaces (no departure sought for quantity or performance standards)



Requested Departure #3 : Bicycle Parking Performance Standards

Long-Term Bicycle Parking

Per Table C from SMC 23.54.015, 73 long-term bicycle spaces are required at John Rogers Elementary School Replacement. SPS is proposing to provide 19 long-term bicycle spaces that meet all the requirements of SMC 23.54.015.K. The remaining 54 long-term bicycle parking spaces will consist of unenclosed, non-secure racks under the building's north and south entrance canopies. All bicycle racks will meet SDOT Bicycle Standards.

Unenclosed, non-secure bicycle racks at the north and south entrance canopies will be located close to entrances, will have direct access from existing pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, will be separated from on-site vehicular traffic and will be protected from weather.

The code requirement for locked bicycle rooms, cages or lockers is intended for use by adults who have individual access to those locked spaces. The 2020 SDOT Bicycle Parking Guidelines indicate typical locations for these types of storage facilities as residential, workplace and transit stations. As the primary users of this facility are young children, it is not practical to provide access to enclosed and locked storage facilities in the same manner, at the code required quantity.

Proposed Departure Requested: The Code requires secure locations and arrangements for all long-term bicycle parking. SPS proposes secure, long-term bicycle parking for 19 of the required 73 long-term bicycle parking spaces. The remaining 54 long-term bicycle parking spaces would be provided on-site but would not be fully enclosed or secured. The requested departure pertains to the unsecured nature of those 54 bicycle parking spaces.

Departure #4 – Signage/Changing Image sign

Existing Standard:

SMC 23.55 – Signs;

SMC 23.55.020 – Signs in Single Family Zones

B. No flashing, changing-image or message board signs permitted.

D. The following signs are permitted in all single-family zones:

7. For elementary or secondary schools, one electric or nonilluminated double-faced identifying sign, not to exceed 30 square feet of area per sign face on each street frontage, provided that the signs shall be located and landscaped so that light and glare impacts on surrounding properties are reduced, and so that any illumination is controlled by a timer set to turn off by 10 p.m.

Departure Requested:

The Seattle Land Use Code does not allow flashing, changing-image or message board signs. Seattle Public Schools requests a Departure to allow for (1) Changing Image Message Board Sign.

- The proposal is limited to one double-faced sign which may change images.
- The sign shall be set to turn on no earlier than 7am and turn off no later than 9pm; the sign may be used on weekends during these times.
- The sign is limited to be lit using one color with a dark background.
- No video, flashing, scrolling, tumbling or moving images allowed.

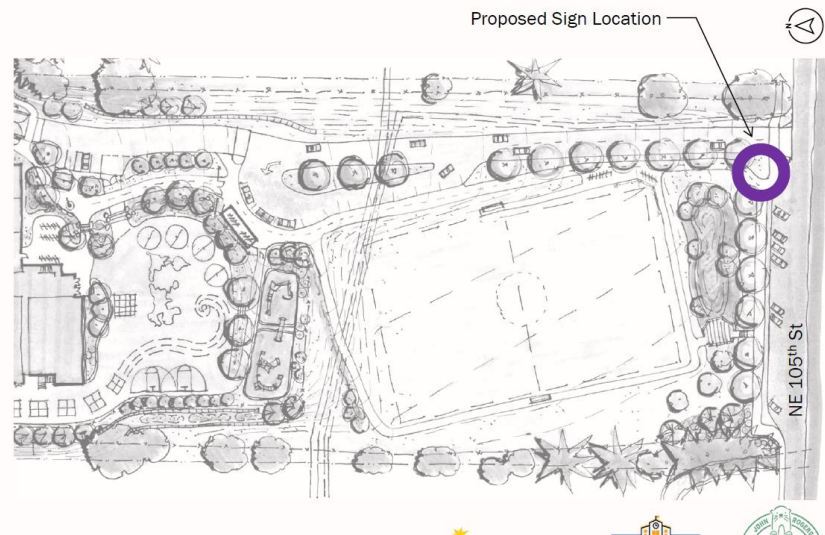
Requested Departure #4 : Changing Image Sign

The proposed location along NE 105th St will help reinforce the south entry as the primary parent and visitor entrance, helping to limit the use of the north drive to buses, service vehicles and childcare access. NE 105th is also the most prominent road for access to the school.

SPS would use the message board sign to alert families and the community to events taking place at the school. Messages could be displayed in multiple languages, which a fixed message sign would not allow.



Sign Example



Proposed Departure Requested: The Code does not allow flashing, changing image or message board signs in neighborhood residential zones. SPS requests a departure to allow for one electric changing message board sign at John Rogers Elementary School.

2.2 DON Review

2.2.1 Public Comment

The public comment period began via a press release issued by DON on June 23, 2022. The press release was sent to media outlets and postcards soliciting public comments were mailed to addresses within approximately 600 feet of the school property.

DON also created a webpage where the public could submit their comments and instructed SPS to post signs about the public comment period at the perimeter of the school property. The departure information and public comment notice was also published in the City's Land Use Information Bulletin (LUIB). The public comment period ran through August 12, 2022.

DON received 13 public comments via email, 9 postcards, and 1 comment letter via fax. In total, DON received 23 public comments about the requested departures.

2.2.2 Review Criteria

In lieu of an Advisory Committee process, Section 23.79 of the Code currently allows the DON Director to evaluate requested school departures for consistency with the general objectives and intent of the Code, and to 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

Code departures may be granted to accommodate the educational needs of public-school programs located in residential-zoned neighborhoods. For John Rogers Elementary School, SPS has demonstrated that it cannot accommodate the necessary educational programs and vision for this area without granting development departures for: 1) greater than allowed building height, 2) reduced vehicular parking quantity, 3) bicycle parking performance standards, and 4) an electric changing image message board sign.

2.2.4 Need for Departures

The public comments submitted to DON expressed a range of support and concerns regarding the departure requests. This includes comments received by DON that expressed opposition to all four departures without further explanation. DON also received several comments that were outside the scope of the departure process and unrelated to the requested deviations from the Code.

In response to the concerns raised in the received comments, SPS and the Design Team provided a response letter to DON to clarify the potential impacts of the proposed departures on the surrounding neighborhood.

Per SMC 23.79.008, the DON Director evaluates the departure requests balancing the interrelationships as enumerated in SMC 23.79.008C1 a 1-5. Per SMC 23.79.008C1 b and upon further review of all public comments and response letter received, the DON Director recommends and considers the need for the departures as described in the following results below.

3. DON Recommendations

Departure #1 – Greater than allowed building height

- 1) **Appropriateness in relation to the character and scale of the surrounding area** was considered and DON did not have concerns about the school's greater than allowed building height having an impact on its relationship to the surrounding neighborhood.
- 2) **Presence of edges (significant setbacks, major arterials, topographic breaks, and similar features) which provide a transition in scale** was considered and DON did not have concerns about the school's greater than allowed building height having an impact on the transition in scale.
- 3) **Location and design of structures to reduce the appearance of bulk** was considered and DON did not have concerns about the school's greater than allowed building height having an impact on the appearance of bulk.
- 4) **Impacts on traffic, noise, circulation, and parking in the area** was considered, and DON did not have concerns about the school's greater than allowed building height having an impact on traffic, circulation, and parking in the neighborhood.
- 5) **Impacts on housing and open space** was considered and DON did not have about the school's greater than allowed building height having an impact about housing and open space.

DON received a few comments related to the departure request associated with increased building height. One individual commented the new building would likely block sunlight into her yard and cast shadows on her house and side yard.

SPS and the Design Team noted in their departure's presentation and their response to public comments that property constraints such as liquefiable soils, steep slopes and utility easements reduce the buildable area of the site. To meet SPS' teaching and learning program requirements, a 3-story structure became necessary.

The Design Team also noted that the three-story wings are intentionally located along the eastern edge of the site, where they are largely adjacent to a steep slope hillside and trees. To help mitigate the building height, large mechanical units are located within the western side of the building, on each of the three building levels, eliminating the need for mechanical penthouses on top of the 3-story structure and minimizing the requested departure height.

The Design Team also noted that the design implements lower canopy structures at the eastern side of the three-story wings to help reduce scale and provide outdoor learning opportunities for students.

After consideration of the public comments received and SPS' response, DON recommends:

Recommendation 1 – That the departure to allow greater than allowed building height to be GRANTED as requested by Seattle Public Schools.

Departure #2 – Reduced vehicular parking quantity

- 1) **Appropriateness in relation to the character and scale of the surrounding area** was considered and DON did not have concerns about the reduced vehicular parking quantity impacting the 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** was considered and DON did not have concerns about the reduced vehicular parking quantity affecting the presence of edges which provides a transition in scale.
- 3) **Location and design of structures to reduce the appearance of bulk** was considered and DON did not have concerns about the reduced vehicular parking quantity affecting the location and design to reduce the appearance of bulk.
- 4) **Impacts on traffic, noise, circulation, and parking in the area** was considered and DON did have concerns about the reduced vehicular parking quantity impacting on traffic, noise, circulation, and parking in the area, which were addressed in the SPS response letter.
- 5) **Impacts on housing and open space** was considered and DON did not have concerns about the reduced vehicular parking quantity impacts on housing and open space.

DON received several comments expressing concerns regarding the parking departure. SPS and the Design Team noted that the school site is particularly constrained by liquefiable soils, steep slopes, utility easements and SPS' program requirements for teaching, learning, and/or outdoor play.

To balance the various site constraints and program requirements, the project team proposed striped parking stalls exceeding that which is currently provided at the school. As the team continued to refine the design, additional daily and event parking were added to what was shown in SPS' earlier presentation. These include:

- Three additional striped parking stalls, for a total of 42 striped parking stalls (39 were indicated in SPS' earlier presentation); and
- Space for 20 additional overflow and event parking stalls at the hard surface play area, for a total of 32 event parking stalls (12 were indicated in the presentation).

These changes result in a total of 74 parking stalls that could be made available for large events at the school (51 were indicated in the presentation).

SPS also noted that a transportation analysis prepared for the site by Heffron Transportation Inc. found the proposed design included in SPS' earlier presentation would not result in significant adverse impacts to neighborhood traffic operations or parking. The addition of 23 more permanent and overflow parking stalls should help further reduce perceived impacts to the neighborhood. The site access and parking design was also reviewed and fine-tuned through multiple meetings with SDOT (including their Safe Routes to School group), SPS' Department of Transportation and SPS' Risk Management team with the goal of maximizing site circulation and safety.

After consideration of the public comments received and the SPS response, DON recommends:

Recommendation 2 – That the departure to allow reduced vehicular parking quantity to be GRANTED as requested by Seattle Public Schools with the following conditions:

- 1) Transportation Management Plan (TMP):** Prior to the school reopening, The District and school Principal should establish a TMP to educate families about access load/unload procedures for the site layout. They should require the school to distribute information to families about onsite as well as travel routes for approaching and leaving the school.
- 2) Engage Seattle Safety School Committee:** The District should continue the ongoing engagement with the Seattle School Safety Committee (led by SDOT), Risk Management Office to review access if any changes should be made to crossing paths with school buses, traffic control to help encourage pedestrian and non-motorized flows at designated crosswalk locations.
- 3) Neighborhood Communication Plan for School Events:** The District and school administration should develop a neighborhood communication plan to inform nearby neighbors of large events each year. The plan should be updated annually (or as events as scheduled) and provide information about the dates, times, and magnitude of large-attendance events. The communication would be intended to allow neighbors to plan for occasional increase in on-street parking demand that would occur with large events.
- 4) Update right-of-way and curb-side signage:** The District should work with SDOT to confirm locations, extents, and signage (such as times of restrictions) of the school bus and/or school load zones on NE 109th St.

Departure #3 – Bicycle parking performance standards

- 1) **Appropriateness in relation to the character and scale of the surrounding area** was considered and DON did not have concerns about bicycle parking performance standards having an impact on 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** was considered and DON did not have concerns about the bicycle parking performance standards having an impact on the presence of edges.
- 3) **Location and design of structures to reduce the appearance of bulk** was considered and DON did not have concerns about the bicycle parking performance standards having an impact on the location and design of structures to reduce the appearance of bulk.
- 4) **Impacts on traffic, noise, circulation, and parking in the area** was considered and DON did not have concerns about the bicycle parking performance standards having an impact on traffic, noise, circulation, and parking in the area.
- 5) **Impacts on housing and open space** was considered and DON did not have concerns about bicycle parking performance standards having an impact on housing and open space.

DON received a few comments related to bicycle parking performance standards. These included one comment from an individual who considered the proposed quantity and type of bicycle parking to be sufficient and another comment from an individual who found the current bicycle parking standards in the Code to be excessive.

DON considered these specific comments not in opposition to the requested departure.

After consideration of the public comments received, DON recommends:

Recommendation 3 – That the departure to secure long-term bicycle parking for 19 of the required 73 long-term bicycle parking spaces for a departure of 54 secure parking spaces be GRANTED as requested by Seattle Public School.

Departure #4 – Electric changing image message board sign

- 1) **Appropriateness in relation to the character and scale of the surrounding area** was considered and DON did not have concerns about the electric changing image message board sign having an impact on 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** was considered and DON did not have concerns about the electric changing image message board sign having an impact on the presence of edges.
- 3) **Location and design of structures to reduce the appearance of bulk** was considered and DON did not have concerns about the electric changing image message board sign having an impact on the appearance of bulk.

- 4) **Impacts on traffic, noise, circulation, and parking in the area** was considered and DON did have concerns about the electric changing image message board sign an impact on traffic, noise, circulation, and parking in the area.
- 5) **Impacts on housing and open space** was considered and DON did not have concerns about the electric changing image message board sign having an impact on housing and open space.

DON received comments expressing concerns about a changing image message board sign and stating it would be unnecessary and/or intrusive to the residential neighborhood. SPS and the Design Team noted that the sign would not include video, flashing, scrolling, tumbling, or moving images and would only operate during specific times (7am to 9pm).

The sign would also enable SPS to alert families and the community to events taking place at the school and allow for the display of messages in multiple languages.

The proposed sign would be set back from NE 105th St. beyond the unstriped right-of-way/gravel parking area. Nearby residences are generally set back from the right-of-way and/or visibly separated from the school property by significant foliage.

After consideration of the public comments received and the SPS response, DON recommends:

Recommendation 4 – That the departure to allow an electric changing image message board sign to be GRANTED as requested by SPS with the following conditions:

- 1) **The electric reader board may only be turned on between 7am to 9pm.**
- 2) **No video, flashing, scrolling, or moving images; however, messages can change to show content.**
- 3) **Sign illumination should be limited to one color with a dark background.**

Recommendation Summary:

Departure #1	Building Height	Granted
Departure #2	Parking Quantity	Granted with conditions
Departure #3	Bicycle Parking Performance Standards	Granted
Departure #4	Electric changing image message board	Granted with conditions

Per SMC 23.790081C1 b, the DON Director has considered the need for the above departure requests. DON has determined that for the Seattle Public Schools to meet the educational specifications, the above departures are required at this site. The physical requirements of the specific proposal and the project's relationship to the educational needs are balanced with the level of impacts on the surrounding area.

Nelson Pesigan,
Department of Neighborhoods

From: [Adam Hoyos-Marré](#)
To: [Pesigan, Nelson](#)
Subject: Public Comment | John Rogers Elementary
Date: Thursday, August 11, 2022 8:31:29 PM
Attachments: [John-Rogers-Departure.jpg](#)

CAUTION: External Email

Hello Nelson!

I live at 4007 NE 105th St, which is right across the street from the baseball park.

First - thank you for investing in our schools and surrounding infrastructure. It is clear, even without kids of our own in the school system that operating out of 2 or 3 trailers and an incredibly old school seems less than ideal. For our (hopefully soon) future children, we're excited that they'll have a new school.

It is critical to my family and surrounding community that the field remains intact and can continue to host both the dogs and the various extracurricular activities for children as it currently does. It has brought us tons of joy being across the street to a public green space that the community very much uses both for sports and play. I find that the departure that allows the drop off and fire lane (attachment below my signature) makes the most sense. We love how you have incorporated retaining the green space for the community to continue to leverage. Our only ask is if you could add more trees along the east side of the fire lane and drop off as well.

For the school height, we have no issues. Again, better than the trailers. Same goes with biking - no issues.

For the signage, having a back-lit LED sign does not seem ideal. I'll be weird and say why can't we incorporate some neon and stick with Seattle history. That said, so long as the rules that are set up in the departure remain true and the signage turns off at a reasonable time (9pm), it makes sense to have a dynamic announcement board for families to stay engaged with their community. Preference would be to keep it to one or two colors vs. a whole TV screen.

One aspect that we're concerned with is our mailboxes. Currently these are living right within the parking lot of the baseball field. We're hoping to see if the project has incorporated working with the post office and the 4 affected neighbors with replacing these and ensuring the Post Office is also notified. Our preference would be to break apart the 4 combined mailbox and have the neighbors maintain their own.

Again, really excited we are investing in our local school, happy you have incorporated the locally loved and heavily used green space, and hoping you can help ease any concerns with our mail and working with the post office.

Thank you so much for your time and go Otters!

Adam Hoyos-Marré
a@ahq.org
+1 (973) 902-8845



From: [candace conte](#)
To: [Pesigan, Nelson](#)
Subject: John Rogers Elementary School Departure Recommendations
Date: Thursday, July 7, 2022 6:12:37 PM
Attachments: [IMG_7243.jpeg](#)
[IMG_7240.jpeg](#)
[IMG_7370.jpeg](#)

CAUTION: External Email

Greetings. I am writing as a neighbor of John Rogers Elementary and would like to comment on the proposed car and parking situation at the school.

The playfield at John Rogers is a wonderful asset of the neighborhood, used by the surrounding community and our resident wildlife. Its proximity to Meadowbrook Pond brings rabbits, turtles, eagles, osprey, butterflies, and other wildlife and shelters them from surrounding traffic. I am attaching three pictures: one of a baby rabbit and two of a large turtle passing through the playfield, all taken in the past couple weeks. In addition to a home and byway for the animals, the space surrounding the field provides some greenery for the neighborhood, which means cleaner air and heat/cold regulation. I am especially concerned that the natural habitat of these creatures will be negatively affected by the destruction of this green space and construction and cars/traffic in this space.

In addition to providing habitat and a natural environment for wildlife, the playfield provides a safe, fenced area for neighbors to gather and enjoy walking the path while others enjoy frisbee and other sports during non-school hours. I hope that a safe, fenced walking path will remain around the field for the enjoyment of the school as well as the neighborhood.

In short, there is much to be lost by the addition of more cars/traffic/parking in this wonderful green neighborhood space and I hope you will carefully consider the impact on our human and non-human neighbors.

Thank you for considering this input.

Candace Conte
10762 Alton Ave. NE

206-817-7386

July 8, 2022

File John Rogers letter on departures

TO: Nelson Pesigan, Departures
Seattle Dept. of Neighborhoods (DON)
P.O. Box 94649, Seattle WA 98124-4649
FAX 206-233-5142; Nelson.pesigan@seattle.gov

FROM: Chris Jackins, Coordinator
Seattle Committee to Save Schools
P.O. Box 84063, Seattle WA 98124
206-521-3288

REGARDING: Comments on proposed zoning departures for John Rogers Elementary School project
Comments due by Friday, August 12, 2022

Dear Nelson Pesigan, Departures at DON,

1. I have concerns about the Seattle School District's request to allow the John Rogers Elementary School project to not meet City zoning code. I oppose granting any of the requested departures.
2. The District is asking for four departures from the zoning code [page 4, John Rogers presentation posted on DON website]:
 - A. Higher than allowed buildings (55 feet planned, maximum allowed by City zoning code is 35 feet);
 - B. Less than required on-site parking (39 spaces planned, City code requires 145 onsite spaces)
(Note: District says it actually plans only 28 daytime spaces, not 39 – See page 36, section B.14.c, Environmental Checklist);
 - C. Less than required secure long-term bicycle parking (19 spaces planned, City code requires 73);
 - D. An electronic changing-image reader board sign (not allowed by City code).
Bright electronic night-time signs are not consistent with residential neighborhoods, and many school neighborhoods have successfully rejected allowing such signs.
3. There are so many problems that the project does not make sense and is plain "wrong" for this neighborhood.
 - A. Playground / recreation / open space will shrink by 56,250 sq. ft., or 34% (a third), going from 164,450 sq. ft. to 108,200 sq. ft. [page 31, B.12.b, Environmental Checklist]
 - B. Too-large-sized school.
 - a. This is an example of a standardized, cookie-cutter-sized school with capacity increasing from current enrollment of 262 students to 540 students (and later plans to go to 650) [page 4, A.11; page 2, A.7, Checklist].
 - b. Building square footage will greatly increase, demolishing the long-time 40,350 sq. ft. 1-story school (with portables) to build a new 88,000 sq. ft. 3-story building that is less compatible with the neighborhood. [page 3-4, A.11, Checklist]
 - C. Less on-site parking. School day current 61 on-site spaces would shrink to 28 [page 36, B.14.c, Checklist], while student capacity would greatly increase.
 - D. Loss of trees. Large numbers of significant and exceptional trees on the site would be removed, including from exceptional groves. [page 15, B.4.b, Checklist]
 - E. Wetlands, natural grass field, and the layout of the site itself are at risk:
 - a. Wetlands including Thornton Creek, [page 10, B.3.a, Checklist].
 - b. A wonderful natural grass field that is likely to become artificial turf [page 16, B.4.d, Checklist].
 - c. The site itself, with plans for a major remake of the topography involving importing 39,000 cubic yards of fill to raise the level of the site including the field. [page 7, B.1.e, Checklist] [page 2, EZ-1 Form, Appendix F]
 - F. Native American cultural resources. No subsurface cultural resource surveys were done at the north end of the site. [page 33, A.13.b, Checklist]
 - G. Noise. Construction activities "are allowed to exceed the maximum noise levels between 7 AM and 10 PM on weekdays and 9 AM to 10 PM on weekends." [B.7.b(2), pages 21-22] During construction, workers will be "arriving between 6:30 and 6:45 AM". [page 28, section 3.8, Appendix F, Transportation Report] There would be 3 months of excruciating noise from drilling geothermal wells. [page 21, B.7.b.2; page 23, B.7.b.3, Checklist] There will be traffic noise from a new access drive from NE 105th Street along much of the eastern edge of the site. [page 2, EZ-1 Form, Appendix F] [page 47, Figure 3, site plan]
4. The proposed departures from Code are too large, they would harm the neighborhood, and the impacts on the neighborhood are out of balance with the need for the departures. These impacts cannot be satisfactorily mitigated within the current design. By SMC 23.79.C1.a and b, no departures should be allowed. Public meetings should be held regarding the requested departures. – if not in-person, then remotely. Please include me on the list of people to be notified and consulted about the zoning departures, including required public meetings.
5. The project seems at odds with regard to the character of the surrounding area, including its Native American history. An attempt by the District to show respect to Indian Tribes appears on page 2 of the District / DON presentation. But the attempt leaves out any mention of the Duwamish Tribe, which is at odds with the District's own policy as expressed in the October 12, 2016 School Board Resolution 2016/17-1 supporting Treaty rights and benefits for the Duwamish Tribe. This raises further doubts about the proponents' ability to properly weigh issues and argues for rejecting the requested departures.

Sincerely,



From: colleenmarcyw@gmail.com
To: [Pesigan, Nelson](#)
Subject: John Rogers Elementary-DEPARTURES
Date: Tuesday, July 5, 2022 10:57:32 AM

CAUTION: External Email

Hello Nelson,

I am a neighbor and past parent of children who attended John Rogers elementary school. It is very exciting to see the impending new construction of this school. We have resided in this neighborhood for 17 years and know it very well hence my outreach to you today regarding the proposed departures requested by SPS. I support departures 1,3 and 4 however I do not support departure 2 which reduces vehicular parking quantity. In 2020/21 the John Rogers staff numbers were 50, the current proposed parking spaces will not even accommodate the current levels of staff and with a larger school being constructed on this site I can only anticipate there will be additional staff. I assume parking studies were conducted during the pandemic when volunteers were not allowed within school building and when neighbors were not experiencing typical numbers of gatherings. If studies had occurred during 'normal' years I guarantee the amount of parking on site and within the neighborhood would indicate a lower number of available spaces for parking both at the school site itself as well as distributed throughout the neighborhood. I believe it is irresponsible for the school district to force parking into neighborhoods particularly when the infrastructure to support safe walking and cycling within the neighborhood is non-existent. The lack of sidewalks and narrow streets make parking and two way traffic challenging. I strongly urge the city to require additional parking at the school for daily staff and visitor use.

Thank you,
Colleen Weinstein

From: [Erik Stockdale](#)
To: [Pesigan, Nelson](#)
Subject: Thornton Creek buffer
Date: Wednesday, June 29, 2022 9:31:24 PM

CAUTION: External Email

Hi Nelson:

When the ball field was improved at John Rogers the City designated a buffer adjacent to the creek in the southwest corner of the property that was never planted or managed as required. It continues to be mowed to this day, thus not serving the function stipulated by the city's critical areas regulations.

Have you seen the approved site plans for the ball field, and if so can you tell me how the buffer will be affected by the proposed school improvement?

As a neighbor who lives on 105th Street I am concerned about the significant increase in vehicle trips that will result on 105th when the primary access point to the school is moved. As you know 105th is not a signaled intersection at 35th. The signal is at 110th, which is the road that parents and buses currently travel to and from the school. Can you tell me what the traffic study is indicating with respect to the plan to shift traffic to 105th?

Thank you,

Erik Stockdale
4215 NE 105th Street
Seattle wa 98125

From: [JEANIE HAINES](#)
To: [Pesigan, Nelson](#)
Subject: John Rogers renovation
Date: Monday, July 18, 2022 10:41:47 AM

CAUTION: External Email

I want to register my concern about how few parking places are included in the design for the new school. As a neighbor of the school I know how many cars need to park at the school on a regular basis and it is more than is being proposed. That means the extra parking will be on residential streets without consistent sidewalks making it even more difficult for those parking as well as the neighbors. As it is right now, parents picking up their kids park in front of driveways and even directly on the crosswalk. In sections without sidewalks, they are often putting kids in and out of cars on the street side. It is hard to believe that a school that is actually increasing enrollment (in a time of declining enrollment no less) is going to have fewer parking spaces. How does that even make sense? Please add more parking.

Sincerely,
Jeanie Haines

From: [JOE RINALDI](#)
To: [Pesigan, Nelson](#)
Subject: Renovation to John Rogers Elementary School
Date: Tuesday, June 28, 2022 3:10:28 PM

CAUTION: External Email

I have been living in this neighborhood for 49 years as of this writing. For the most part I have always supported elementary education as I see it as the rudimentary foundation of a good education. While I have very little objection to the building requirements including allowing greater building heights I do have some objections as follows. With regard to reducing vehicular quantity I feel that is not a sound idea. I am not sure whether this proposed reduction is regarding on street parking adjacent to the school or actual egress to picking up and dropping off students? I very much object to increasing bicycle parking standards. While I have nothing against bicycling I feel that bicyclists should be required to secure a license to use the streets. I believe the said license should be far less than an automobile but they should contribute something since they use the roads. I don't believe the city ever canvassed the opinion of automobile users before they installed special biking lanes. Yet we all pay for them and I feel the users ought to have some minimal contribution in that regard. Lastly, the issue of signage/changing image sign. Currently, there is a huge Black Lives Matter sign on the building. This organization is admittedly Marxist. I do not feel displaying this sign has either a helpful or healthy impact on young minds.

From: [Lee Storgaard](#)
To: [Pesigan, Nelson](#)
Subject: John Rogers Elementary School Replacement.
Date: Tuesday, August 2, 2022 4:38:42 PM

CAUTION: External Email

Greeting Nelson,

Was just looking over the Departures Presentation for John Rogers. All the requested departures seem to be well thought-out and quite reasonable. The electronic sign was a little concerning but the hours of operation proposed should mitigate any concerns I had.

One thing that does concern me about the project is the significant change to the traffic pattern for drop-off and pick-up. I think the move to NE 105th ST makes a great deal of sense, the NE 109th ST entrance looks like a mess on the best of days. The additional traffic on NE 105th ST isn't really a concern either, but I can see an existing bottleneck becoming more problematic if traffic patterns shift. Parking is not permitted along the north side of NE 105th ST which insures unimpeded two-way traffic all except the last section just before 35th AVE NE. When cars street park on the north side of roadway in the 3500 block it blocks traffic from leaving the area and forces traffic to share a single lane. Cars turning off 35th AVE NE, especially northbound, have a very limited sight distance and all drivers have a very short distance to make corrections to avoid a collision. That coupled with the high utilization of the roadway by bicycles (either shuttling kids to school or heading for the Burke Gilman Trail) makes that section of 105th very tricky to navigate safely when school is in session. My recommendation would be to eliminate curbside parking on the north side of the 3500 block on NE 105th St.

This concern is obviously outside the scope of the departures request so let me know if there is a different avenue for me to submit this comment.

Thanks,
Lee Storgaard
lee@destinationtiki.com
4022 NE 104th ST, Seattle, WA 98125

From: [Marc](#)
To: [Pesigan, Nelson](#)
Subject: John Rogers ES Rebuild
Date: Friday, August 12, 2022 4:27:16 PM

CAUTION: External Email

Nelson Pesigan et al

The comments I submit here also reflect the concerns of my wife Tammi Mack (who is an elementary school teacher at a different SPS location).

1. **BUILDING HEIGHT.** While the departure is out of character for the neighborhood, it is of only MODERATE CONCERN to us, partially because of both heavy tree coverage locally and the school location in a hollow.
2. **REDUCED VEHICULAR PARKING QUANTITY.** This is of HIGH CONCERN to us. A reduced school parking availability will inevitably result in the surrounding neighborhood becoming the school parking lot, especially on the north side closest to the building. The neighborhood is happy to host the school but not dozens of cars with no where else to park. The proposed parking would not even be enough for expected staffing levels. It is unrealistic to assume that staff will commute via bicycle, foot or bus despite what we might like to see. While perhaps a few may be fortunately located such that taking a bus from the U district or Northgate is reasonable, the rain season and the need to transport "stuff" to and from school will work against regular use of public transportation. And then there are the school parents... I think that a compromise, like halfway between number of staff and the code requirements (ie 105-110) should be considered.
3. **BICYCLE PARKING STANDARDS.** This is of LOW CONCERN to us. The proposed 19 long term storage spaces seems like plenty. See comments above on likelihood of alternative commuting. The should of course have enough short term bicycle parking for the occasional use by school community members.
4. **SIGNAGE/ CHANGING IMAGE.** This should NOT BE ALLOWED. The local model for this is Nathan Hale HS. The HS is a) across the street from another school, not residences b) has sports teams that people do come to watch and c) hosts a track and field that is used by the wider community. None of these seem to apply to John Rogers.

Sincerely

Marc Hause
Tammi Mack

10907 39th Ave NE

From: [Megan Watzke](#)
To: [Pesigan, Nelson](#)
Cc: [Kristin Crymes](#)
Subject: traffic concerns from planned John Rogers construction
Date: Tuesday, June 28, 2022 2:03:50 PM

CAUTION: External Email

After watching the virtual presentation on June 1 regarding the proposed John Rogers construction, I reached out to Amanda Fulford to express some concerns.

We live on Alton Ave NE, just north of the intersection of 105th. With the proposed changes to make 105th the main entrance to the school, I imagine that there will be a significant increase in traffic on this road. My main point is this: **The traffic configuration at the intersection of 105th and Alton is poorly designed and dangerous for pedestrian and vehicle traffic.**

Please have SDOT look at the placement of the traffic mediation infrastructure and the lack of sidewalks. There is both a blind corner traveling south on Alton as well as a forced frequent "cutting" of the turn onto Alton from 105th heading north. This area should absolutely be remedied as soon as possible and especially before traffic increases.

As a side note, we are great supporters of this new project. We have had two kids go through John Rogers and look forward to the new building and surrounding campus. We strongly encourage you to make the entire project a success by addressing this issue.

Thank you,
Megan and Kristin Watzke

From: [Michael Arndt](#)
To: [Pesigan, Nelson](#)
Subject: FW: John Rogers Elementary School Replacement Comments
Date: Sunday, July 17, 2022 10:31:43 PM
Attachments: [image005.jpg](#)
[image006.jpg](#)

CAUTION: External Email

Dear Sir,

To further my previous email complaint about the potential signage. I have 5 other items listed below. Please respond to my original email and this one on how these will be addressed.

1. It has come to our attention that there is plans for geo-thermal drilling and construction in the evenings and weekends.

This is unacceptable being a direct neighbor to the school.

It is bad enough that we have to put up with the regular fireworks throughout the summer months but to endure this for over a year is salt on an open wound. The animals domestic and natural will be greatly affected by this.

This is a site for migratory birds, otters, turtles, heron, raptors, deer.

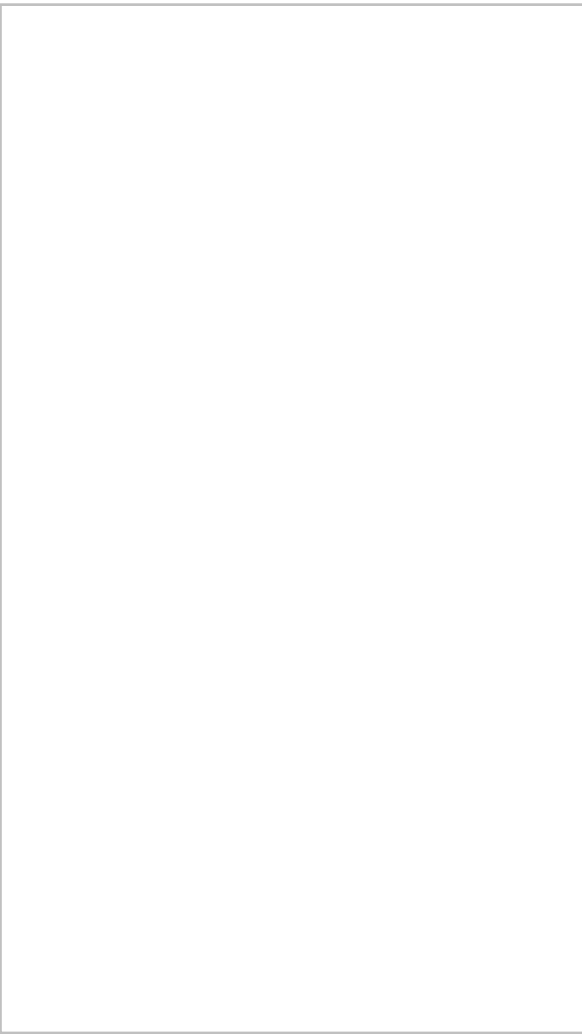
We see that there is plans for artificial turf to be installed now which will have major impact on all these native animals. Introduce micro-plastics to the native environment which this site is a direct part of.

See below email below

From: Michael Arndt
Sent: Sunday, July 17, 2022 9:43 PM
To: SEPAcomments@SeattleSchools.org
Subject: John Rogers Elementary School Replacement Comments

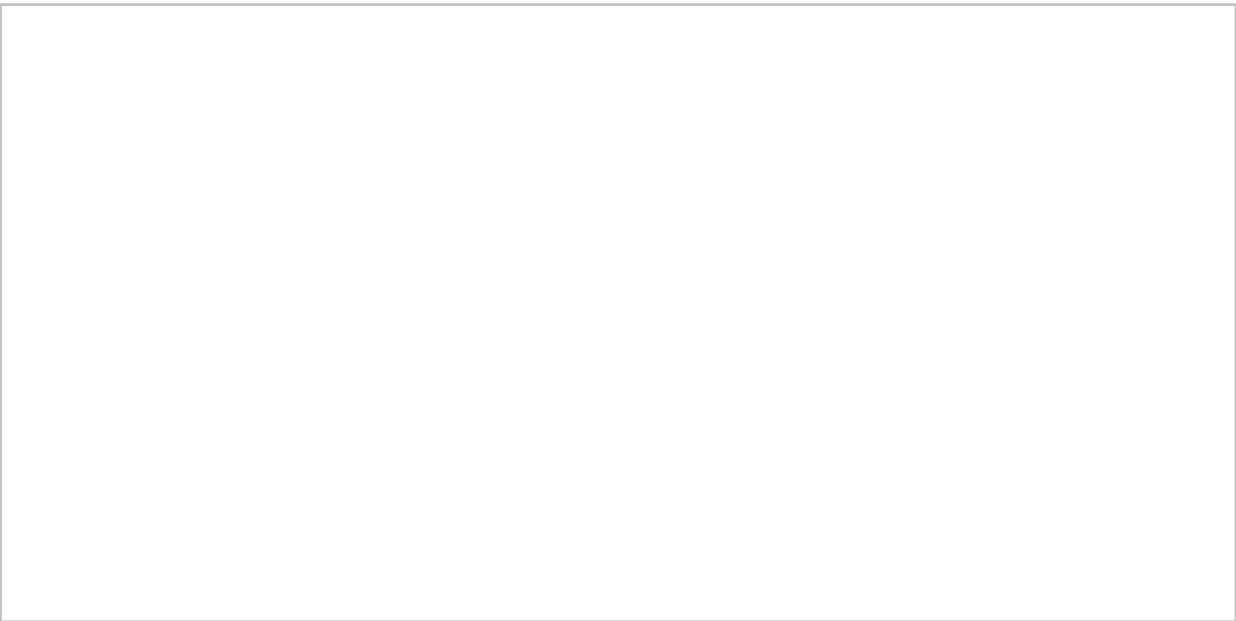
To Whom it may concern,

It has come to understanding that there has NOT been a EIS done for this project. Which is very concerning as this is a nesting area for the Native Painted Turtles. Over the weekend we have documented one laying her eggs in the lower play field. See photo.



Not only that this is a nesting area, it is also a play area for the native river otters in the early hours of the morning before the area is taken over by the humans.

We have lived here since 2005 and saw the 1000's of crows that would congregate at this playfield before sunset as they made their way around the lake to Bothell. When the field was updated about 10 years ago or so that number of crows dropped to only 100's nightly. See photo.



2. There was no consideration that 41st Pl NE will be changed to a one lane road with significantly reduce parking. But the Planning shows that need for parking will be double or triple of what it currently is. Where are all these folks going to park? Currently when there is ball games at the playfield the parking fills up at both sides of 105th and then move up on the sides of 41st Pl NE. With the loss of all that parking for the storm water swells we are expecting more of the local community being overwhelmed by the hordes of vehicles looking for parking on our side streets.
3. Also, there was no consideration for the renewal/replacement of the bridges at Thornton Creek, which are in progress and likely to start for the one at 105 in 2023. Shows the lack of the planning committee knowledge of this neighborhood.
4. The significant amount of soils that are to be trucked in at 105th will cause serious disruptions to the traffic flow of the neighborhood. No consideration for these roads only being a tar pitch and gravel base and will be substantially damaged with the amount of trucking traffic on our local roads. Let alone the amount of noise and pollution they will bring.
5. I have not seen any consideration from the committee on the local history of the Duwamish Tribe and where the local historical sites in Meadowbrook are and the concerns of any artifacts that maybe on this site.

Neighbor at John Rogers
Michael Arndt
206-890-0952

From: [Michael Arndt](#)
To: [Pesigan, Nelson](#)
Subject: John Rogers Elementary School Departures
Date: Wednesday, June 29, 2022 12:53:45 PM

CAUTION: External Email

Hi Sir,

We are long time neighbors of the school.

We received the door hanger notice about the various departures that they are looking to achieve for the school rebuild.

We are ok with all but the digital sign, This is still solidly single family and this sign would be very intrusive to our neighbor's and the local wildlife. The local pond and creak bring various animals throughout the year to this space. The 105th roadway is very limited to through traffic currently and therefore limited traffic flow is our normal. This sign would only be more of a detraction and nuisance to our neighborhood.

We ask you to stay with the current code for signage at this time.

Thank you,
Michael Arndt

From: [Paul Witt](#)
To: [Pesigan, Nelson](#)
Subject: Opposition to Residential Street Parking as part of John Rogers Re-Build and Expansion
Date: Friday, August 12, 2022 11:29:17 AM

CAUTION: External Email

To: Nelson Pesigan, Nelson.pesigan@seattle.gov,

City of Seattle, Department of Neighborhoods

Re: Opposition to Proposal for School Parking on Residential Streets as part of John Rogers Re-Build and Expansion

Dear Mr. Pesigan,

We oppose the proposal to provide only 39 parking spaces in the rebuild of John Rogers Elementary School. The code requires 145 vehicle parking spaces. The plan asks for an exemption (departure) of 106 spaces. 39 parking spaces is simply not enough parking at the school.

The proposal is to more than double the present enrollment (from 222 to 500 students) and to seek an exemption to limit parking at the school and to utilize parking on neighboring residential streets.

Parking is needed every day for teachers, administrators, other staff, school specialists who work at more than one school, deliveries, service vehicles, visitors, many kinds of volunteers, parents and families. Evening meetings, open houses, festivals, or other special events will need even more parking.

Since there will not be enough parking at the school, the proposal is to force people to park in the neighboring streets that are within an 800-foot walking distance of the school.

- More than 39 parking spaces should be provided at the school itself. The school need not be built for 500 students. Numerous articles in the Seattle Times published in July 2022 indicate that district enrollment is declining for many reasons which means not as many buildings are needed. Fewer buildings frees up land at the school for parking.
- Forcing school parking on neighboring streets is *unsafe*. No recognition or consideration seems to take into account that there are no sidewalks on

residential streets around the school, so people parking there and going to and from the school will be walking in the streets. And people will be walking even more in the street if more cars line the streets than now. Moreover, many of the streets north and east of the school are very steep making walking difficult and even more unsafe.

- Forcing 250 more cars to park in the neighborhood immediately adjacent to the school is *not* compatible with the character and use of the surrounding quiet neighborhood with no sidewalks and narrow streets. (“Departures shall be evaluated for consistency with the general objectives and intent of the City's Land Use Code, including the rezone evaluation criteria in Chapter 23.34 of the Seattle Municipal Code, to ensure that the proposed facility is compatible with the character and use of its surroundings.” (Page 11)

The announcement says that there will not be a public meeting about the school proposal but the Director of Seattle Department of Neighborhoods (DON) will take into consideration the public's comments and can recommend to grant, grant with condition, or deny the requested departures.

We urge you to deny the requested departure which forces school parking onto neighboring residential streets.

Paul Witt and Lynn Winnemore

August 11, 2022

11021 40th Avenue East

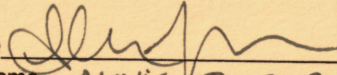
Seattle, WA 98125

Regarding: Proposed zoning departures for the John Rogers Elementary School Project

Dear City of Seattle Dept. of Neighborhoods;

I do not favor the Seattle School District's request to allow the project to not meet City zoning code with regard to: (a) Higher than allowed buildings (55 feet planned, maximum allowed by City zoning code is 35 feet); (b) Less than required on-site parking (39 spaces planned, City code requires 145 onsite spaces) (Note: District says it actually plans only 28 daytime spaces, not 39 - See page 36, section B.14.c, Environmental Checklist); (c) Less than required secure long-term bicycle parking (19 spaces planned, City code requires 73); (d) An electronic changing-image reader board sign (not allowed by City code).

Please include me on the list of people to be notified and consulted about the zoning departures, including required public meetings.

Signature 

Printed name Alexis Jonson

Address 10571 40th Ave NE, Seattle, WA 98125

Email alexella20@gmail.com Phone 206-919-9971

Further comment:

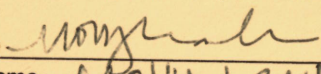
I live within eyesight of the school, my property borders the school and I'm very concerned about parking and the electronic reader board sign.

Regarding: Proposed zoning departures for the John Rogers Elementary School Project

Dear City of Seattle Dept. of Neighborhoods;

I do not favor the Seattle School District's request to allow the project to not meet City zoning code with regard to: (a) Higher than allowed buildings (55 feet planned, maximum allowed by City zoning code is 35 feet); (b) Less than required on-site parking (39 spaces planned, City code requires 145 onsite spaces) (Note: District says it actually plans only 28 daytime spaces, not 39 - See page 36, section B.14.c, Environmental Checklist); (c) Less than required secure long-term bicycle parking (19 spaces planned, City code requires 73); (d) An electronic changing-image reader board sign (not allowed by City code).

Please include me on the list of people to be notified and consulted about the zoning departures, including required public meetings.

Signature 

Printed name Molly Leach

Address 10701 41st Pl NE

Email cmmsfleach@gmail.com Phone 206-895-3613

Further comment:

New height would block out sunlight to my yard

Regarding: Proposed zoning departures for the John Rogers Elementary School Project

Dear City of Seattle Dept. of Neighborhoods;

I do not favor the Seattle School District's request to allow the project to not meet City zoning code with regard to: (a) Higher than allowed buildings (55 feet planned, maximum allowed by City zoning code is 35 feet); (b) Less than required on-site parking (39 spaces planned, City code requires 145 onsite spaces) (Note: District says it actually plans only 28 daytime spaces, not 39 - See page 36, section B.14.c, Environmental Checklist); (c) Less than required secure long-term bicycle parking (19 spaces planned, City code requires 73); (d) An electronic changing-image reader board sign (not allowed by City code).

Please include me on the list of people to be notified and consulted about the zoning departures, including required public meetings.

Signature M E Word
Printed name MARY E. WORD
Address 10524 39th Ave NE Seattle WA 98125
Email _____ Phone 206 839 6048
Further comment:

Regarding: Proposed zoning departures for the John Rogers Elementary School Project

Dear Nelson Pesigan, City of Seattle Dept. of Neighborhoods;

I do not favor the Seattle School District's request to allow the project to not meet City zoning code with regard to: (a) Higher than allowed buildings (55 feet planned, maximum allowed by City zoning code is 35 feet); (b) Less than required on-site parking (39 spaces planned, City code requires 145 onsite spaces) (Note: District says it actually plans only 28 daytime spaces, not 39 - See page 36, section B.14.c, Environmental Checklist); (c) Less than required secure long-term bicycle parking (19 spaces planned, City code requires 73); (d) An electronic changing-image reader board sign (not allowed by City code).

Please include me on the list of people to be notified and consulted about the zoning departures, including required public meetings.

Signature Tammi Mack Marc Hause
Printed name Tammi Mack
Address 10907 - 39th Ave NE Seattle, WA 98125
Email Tammi - Mack@yahoo.com Phone (206) 941-5042
Further comment:
marchause01@gmail.com (206) 941-5037
(Tammi)
(Marc)

Regarding: Proposed zoning departures for the John Rogers Elementary School Project

Dear City of Seattle Dept. of Neighborhoods;

I do not favor the Seattle School District's request to allow the project to not meet City zoning code with regard to: (a) Higher than allowed buildings (55 feet planned, maximum allowed by City zoning code is 35 feet); (b) Less than required on-site parking (39 spaces planned, City code requires 145 onsite spaces) (Note: District says it actually plans only 28 daytime spaces, not 39 - See page 36, section B.14.c, Environmental Checklist); (c) Less than required secure long-term bicycle parking (19 spaces planned, City code requires 73); (d) An electronic changing-image reader board sign (not allowed by City code).

Please include me on the list of people to be notified and consulted about the zoning departures, including required public meetings.

Signature MS

Printed name Monie Sherwood

Address 3817 NE 105th St, Seattle, 98125

Email monie.sherwood@gmail.com

Phone 603-507-0089

Further comment:

11000-0011

Regarding: Proposed zoning departures for the John Rogers Elementary School Project

Dear City of Seattle Dept. of Neighborhoods;

I do not favor the Seattle School District's request to allow the project to not meet City zoning code with regard to: (a) Higher than allowed buildings (55 feet planned, maximum allowed by City zoning code is 35 feet); (b) Less than required on-site parking (39 spaces planned, City code requires 145 onsite spaces) (Note: District says it actually plans only 28 daytime spaces, not 39 - See page 36, section B.14.c, Environmental Checklist); (c) Less than required secure long-term bicycle parking (19 spaces planned, City code requires 73); (d) An electronic changing-image reader board sign (not allowed by City code).

Please include me on the list of people to be notified and consulted about the zoning departures, including required public meetings.

Signature Eric O'Brien

Printed name Eric O'Brien

Address 10553 41st Pl NE

Email ericob@extramendy.com

Phone _____

Further comment:

Relying on "Neighborhood" parking is insanity! Supply the proper amount of parking on site & do not dump the problem on the neighbors!

Input from the Duwamish
Also want a cultural suburban survey done

Regarding: Proposed zoning departures for the John Rogers Elementary School Project

Dear City of Seattle Dept. of Neighborhoods;

I do not favor the Seattle School District's request to allow the project to not meet City zoning code with regard to: (a) Higher than allowed buildings (55 feet planned, maximum allowed by City zoning code is 35 feet); (b) Less than required on-site parking (39 spaces planned, City code requires 145 onsite spaces) (Note: District says it actually plans only 28 daytime spaces, not 39 - See page 36, section B.14.c, Environmental Checklist); (c) Less than required secure long-term bicycle parking (19 spaces planned, City code requires 73); (d) An electronic changing-image reader board sign (not allowed by City code).

Please include me on the list of people to be notified and consulted about the zoning departures, including required public meetings.

Signature Wendy Helman
Printed name Wendy Helman
Address 10544 41st Pl. N-E Seattle WA 98125
Email helmanw1@hotmail.com Phone 206-818-7761

Further comment:

Very concerned and not supportive of departure requests. Supportive of a new school, but not this draft. Concerns on parking impact on nearby streets and significant increase of #students.

Regarding: Proposed zoning departures for the John Rogers Elementary School Project

Dear City of Seattle Dept. of Neighborhoods;

I do not favor the Seattle School District's request to allow the project to not meet City zoning code with regard to: (a) Higher than allowed buildings (55 feet planned, maximum allowed by City zoning code is 35 feet); (b) Less than required on-site parking (39 spaces planned, City code requires 145 onsite spaces) (Note: District says it actually plans only 28 daytime spaces, not 39 - See page 36, section B.14.c, Environmental Checklist); (c) Less than required secure long-term bicycle parking (19 spaces planned, City code requires 73); (d) An electronic changing-image reader board sign (not allowed by City code).

Please include me on the list of people to be notified and consulted about the zoning departures, including required public meetings.

Signature Kathy Kelly
Printed name Kathy Kelly
Address 10525 41st place NE 98125
Email kkellyseattle@gmail.com Phone 206 3670328

Further comment:

See my email to SEPAComments@SeattleSchools.org for my detail of concerns. dated June 26, 2022

Regarding: Proposed zoning departures for the Montlake Elementary School Project

Dear City of Seattle Dept. of Neighborhoods;

I have concerns about the Seattle School District's apparent request to allow the project to not meet City zoning code with regard to: (a) Lot coverage greater than allowed; (b) Higher than allowed buildings; (c) Less than required setbacks; (d) Less than required on-site parking; (e) Less than required bicycle parking; (f) Allowing buses to load on the street; (g) Truck loading / unloading; (h) An electronic changing-image reader board sign.

Please include me on the list of people to be notified and consulted about the zoning departures, including required public meetings.

Signature Kim Akers
Printed name Kim Akers
Address 2004 E 17th St
Email KimAkers@rickwoodst.com Phone 206-709-9890

Further comment:

I am really concerned about the lack of parking, loss of trees & reduction in playground and space. In addition the proposed building height will alter the neighborhood feel

From: [Walt Bubelis](#)
To: [Pesigan, Nelson](#)
Subject: John Rogers comments
Date: Sunday, July 3, 2022 7:44:16 PM

CAUTION: External Email

Dear Nelson Pesigan:

I happen to live just above the school in the n.e. corner of the school property. I sat on the planning committee this year as it was of particular interest to myself and my wife ever since our two boys went through John Rogers ages ago.

I noticed the map showing parking spaces around the school and want to point out that there are no parking spaces along 110th from 40th to Alton. Spaces that had been there vanished when concrete sidewalks were installed in 2019.

More importantly, there arose concern about the name of the school citing earlier history of John Rogers himself. I was surprised to learn that an earlier but short-lived name was given to the school, namely Matthews after John Matthews, an early resident of the area and for whom Matthews Beach is named. It would befitting to rename the school on his behalf rather than someone who has less than sterling credentials.

If a name change were to occur, I would still advocate that a plaque be placed in the school lobby giving a short explanation of why Rogers was chosen for the school for over 50 years and why it is not fitting to continue as such. I value history and think that it important for people to know the facts and not try to bury them. If we forget even unsavory facts, we are doomed to repeat such events in the future.

Thank you, Walt Bubelis



DLR Group inc.
a Washington corporation
51 University Street, Suite 600
Seattle, WA 98101

October 18, 2022

Nelson Pesigan
City of Seattle Department of Neighborhoods
PO Box 94649

Re: John Rogers Elementary School – Departures Comments
3039302-SD

Dear Mr. Pesigan,

We received several emails and postcard comments related to our requested Departures from the City of Seattle Land Use Code. Some comments supported and/or expressed a level of low concern for the Departure requests while others raised concerns. There were also several comments outside of the scope of the Departures process that are unrelated to the requested deviations from the Land Use Code; DLR Group and Seattle Public Schools will work to address these comments. This letter is intended to clarify the Seattle Public Schools' thinking related specifically to the proposed Departures from the Land Use Code.

There were a few people expressing concern over transportation and site access. While transportation and site access are not required to be included in the Departures request, the proposed design is intended to improve site circulation, especially as it relates to site access. The current John Rogers Elementary School site circulation creates an unsafe bottleneck of parents, buses, and service vehicles off a single-entry point at NE 109th St. The proposed design aims to safely separate parents and buses by introducing an additional entry point and parent drop-off at NE 105th St, thus reducing the congestion and vehicular burden at NE 109th St.

There were several comments expressing concerns regarding the parking departure. The John Rogers Elementary School site is particularly constrained by liquefiable soils, steep slopes, utility easements and Seattle Public Schools program requirements for teaching, learning and indoor/outdoor play. To balance the various site constraints and program requirements, the project team has provided striped parking stalls exceeding that which is currently provided at John Rogers Elementary. As the design team has continued to refine the design, we have been able to add additional daily parking and event parking from what was shown in the Departures presentation. An additional three parking stalls have been provided for a total of 42 striped parking stalls (39 are indicated in the Departures slide deck). Further, the design now allows for overflow and event parking at the hard surface play providing an additional 20 parking stalls for a total of 32 evening and event parking stalls (12 are indicated in the Departures slide deck). All in all, 74 parking stalls are available for large events (51 are indicated in the Departures slide deck).

ELEVATE *the*
HUMAN EXPERIENCE
THROUGH DESIGN

The site access and parking design was reviewed and fine-tuned through multiple meetings with SDOT, including their Safe Routes to School group, Seattle Public Schools Department of Transportation as well as SPS Risk Management with the goal of maximizing site circulation and safety. Further, as outlined in Heffron Transportation Inc's Transportation Technical Report, the proposed design, included in the original Departures slide deck, will not result in significant adverse impacts to traffic operations or parking. The additional permanent and overflow parking stalls will help reduce perceived impacts to the neighborhood.

There were a couple of letters expressing concern over the Departure to allow a changing image message board sign, stating that it would be unnecessary and/or intrusive to the residential neighborhood. As indicated in the Departures request, the sign will not include video, flashing, scrolling, tumbling, or moving images and will operate during specific times (7am to 9pm). The sign allows SPS to alert families and the community to events taking place at the school and allows for the display of messages in multiple languages. The proposed location of the sign is set back from NE 105th St. beyond the unstriped, right of way gravel parking and is located across the street from residences with significant foliage and homes similarly set back from the right of way. As such, the sign will not be of significant impact to the adjacent neighbors.


There were few comments related to the Departure seeking additional building height. However, one individual did indicate that the building would likely block out sunlight to her yard. It appears that the new building will cast shadow on the homeowner's house and side yard, though a large stand of trees will continue to provide shade and maintain visual separation from the homeowner's backyard. As described earlier in this letter and outlined in the Departures presentation, site constraints such as liquefiable soils, steep slopes and utility easements greatly reduces the buildable area of the site. To meet Seattle Public Schools teaching and learning program requirements, a 3-story structure became necessary. However, the 3-story wings are intentionally located along the eastern edge of the site, where they are largely adjacent to a steep slope hillside and tall trees. To help mitigate building height, large mechanical units are located within the western side of the building, on each of the three building levels, eliminating the need for mechanical penthouses on top of the 3-story structure and minimizing the requested Departure height. Further, the design implements lower canopy roof structures at the eastern side of the 3-story wings to help reduce scale and provide outdoor learning opportunities for students.

Similar to additional building height, there were few comments related to the requested Departure seeking fewer secure long term bicycle parking stalls. In general, opposition to this Departure was included in postcard responses where each of the four Departures were opposed, without further explanation. However, one comment considered the quantity and type of bicycle parking to be sufficient and another individual considered the current bicycle parking standards of the Seattle Land Use Code to be excessive. Neither of these specific comments represents opposition to the Departure being requested.

Lastly, there was a comment requesting to be included on the notification list for public meetings related to the departures process. We assume you will notify individuals regarding further opportunities for public comment, whether that be virtual or in-person.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to comments on the proposed design.

Sincerely,
DLR Group


Mike Janes
Principal