



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

SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTMENTURE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

WILSON PACIFIC ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL DESIGN DEPARTMENTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

August 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 Wilson Pacific Elementary school and Middle School located at 1330 N 90th Street, Seattle, Washington

Middle School



Elementary School



Wilson Pacific Elementary and Middle Schools

Design Departure Advisory Committee

Final Report and Recommendations

Section 1. Background

1.1 General Departure Proposals

On October 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 Wilson Pacific School at 1330 N 90th Street, and the construction of two new schools on this site. The Schools would include: 1) a new 139,372 gross square foot, 1000 student middle school with an associated K-8 program, and a new 90,763 gross square foot, 660 student elementary school. .



Illustration1
Aerial View of the Existing School Site

The Seattle School District is proposing to demolish the existing seven building school shown above and replace it with a larger multi-story building. The existing site at 16.7 acres is one of the larger sited in the Seattle School District.

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 build new schools and upgrade and renovate existing aging school facilities to 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, and the Wilson Pacific project is the biggest BEX IV project.

The existing Wilson Pacific School has a long history. The school was initially constructed as part of a State and local district program to accommodate the major student population

increases associated with the first wave of the post-World War II baby boom. The school was constructed by the Shoreline School District and opened in 1952. As with many schools built at that time, it was a low-rise facility spread out over the site. The original school was economically built. In 1957 the area was annexed into the City of Seattle which undertook several additions and re-opened the school in 1957 as a grade 7 -9 schools. Enrollment peaked in the 1959-60 school year at 1,347. As with many schools in the north end of the City of Seattle, enrollment steadily declined during the late 60's and 70's reaching just over 550 students by the 1977-78 school year.

From 1979 on the school was re-purposed for a series of special programs, most notably the American Indian Heritage School which moved into a wing of Wilson Pacific in 1989.

1.2 Neighborhood Characteristics

The school site is located in the north portion of Seattle in the Licton Springs neighborhood. The broader neighborhood is generally zoned for a mixed single family and low-rise residential development. The eastern 40% of the site abuts SF 5000 zoning while the western 60% abuts LR 3 zoning (generally three story apartment development). The Aurora Avenue Commercial Strip lies about 600 feet west of the site

The Licton Springs neighborhood is a generally stable middle income area providing generally affordable housing. Median income is slightly lower than the City of Seattle average at \$49,815 vs the Seattle average of about \$61,000. The average home value in 2011 was about 60% of the City of Seattle average at about \$320,000. Over the last 20 years the neighborhood has seen a slow transition from entirely single family of a mixed single-family and low-rise apartment area. Nearly 400 apartment units and townhomes have been built in the area west of the school site between Stone and Aurora Avenues N. Some concerns have been raised from time to time related to crime along the Aurora Strip.

As with most areas in North Seattle, home maintenance is generally better than average and most homes show 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's 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 November 2013, the Department of Neighborhoods sent notices to residents within 600 feet of the proposed new schools and to a list of individuals and organizations that had shown interest in other community issues in the vicinity of Wilson Pacific 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

Brent Johnson	Person residing and/or owning property within 600' of Wilson Pacific School
Michael Carney	Person residing and/or owning property within 600' of Wilson Pacific School
Liz Kerns	Representative of the General Neighborhood(also residing or owning property within 600' of Wilson Pacific School)
Faye Garneau	Representative of the General Neighborhood (also residing or owning property within 600' of Wilson Pacific School)
John Lembo	Representative at large to represent city-wide education issues
David Smith	PTSA Representative
Rebecca Baiback-Penkals	PTSA Representative
Eric Becker	Seattle School District
Richard Min	Alternate #1
Gayle Herman	Alternate #2
Ellen Beck	Alternate #3 (For Licton Springs Community Council)

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



Illustration #2 Proposed School Site Plans

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 Building Height – The zoning code restricts the height of development on the site to 35-feet plus an additional 15-feet for a pitched roof, if pitched at a rate of not less than 4:12. The District requested a departure to allow the Elementary School to exceed this standard to a total height of 39 feet or 4 feet above the maximum allowed, and to allow the Middle School to exceed the standard to 58 feet or about 23 feet above the maximum allowed.

Departure #2 - 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 201 spaces for the middle and 141 spaces for the Elementary schools for a total of 342 spaces. The District requested a departure to allow 198 spaces on site or 144 fewer spaces than required.

Departure #3 - Continued On-street Bus Loading and Unloading – The zoning code directs that when a new school is built or an existing school expanded that bus loading and unloading occur on site and not on the street. Section 23.51B I-1 allows use of yards and setbacks for this purpose and Section I-3 stipulates that departures from the requirements and standards for bus and truck loading and unloading areas and berths may be granted or required pursuant to the procedures and criteria set forth in Chapter 23.79 only when departure would contribute to reduced demolition of residential structures. In many cases the District loads and unloads its buses on the street adjacent to the School. The District requested a departure to load and unload school buses along both Wallingford and Stone Avenues North.

Departure #4 - Illumination of Signage - The Code currently prohibits illumination of signs at the school from an exterior light source. The District requested relief from this requirement.

2.2 Committee Review and Recommendations

2.2.1 Process and initial Meetings

The Committee was convened in a public meeting held March 18, 2014 at North Seattle Community College. The meeting was well attended, and attendance overflowed the space available. Public testimony and comment dominated the meeting. Commenters mostly expressed concerns that: 1) designs presented were substantially changed from those available at prior public meetings held by Seattle Public Schools (SPS) at the Wilson Pacific site; 2) the local neighborhood was not well informed concerning the school design; 3) the School Board decision to build two schools with a combined enrollment of 1,660 students was too large for the existing site; 4) the programs located at the school (heavily oriented to a magnet Advance Placement Program) did not serve the local neighborhood needs; and 5) the departures should be denied. Few commenters spoke in favor of the proposal.

Following the meeting the Seattle School District requested a delay of the process to allow them to further engage the neighborhood. The District hosted a second community-wide meeting on May 13, 2014 at the Wilson Pacific Building to present the project to the wider neighborhood, but after the design specs had already been approved by the SPS School Board. Following that open public meeting the departure process was re-started with a meeting held on May 28, 2014. This meeting was advertised and formatted similarly to a first meeting. Comments at this meeting were similar to those received at the previous meeting with additional focus on the lack of adequate site access and issues related to the Native American cultural heritage of the site and building. The Committee determined that an additional meeting would be held.

2.2.2 Review Criteria

Section 23.79 of 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.

Section 23.51.002 contains further restriction related to single family and other low-rise residential zones.

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 Wilson Pacific Schools, the Seattle School District stated the location of two schools and the concomitant educational outdoor open space standards present significant challenges and that without granting the departures for greater height, less parking and on-street bus loading and unloading those standards could not be met. Some combination of greater heights, reduction in on site non-educational activities (parking and bus loading) would be 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.

The Committee struggled with this issue. Many in the neighborhood clearly questioned/opposed the decision of the Seattle School Board to locate two separate schools on this site. Some Committee members concurred with this position. However, it was noted that the authority of the Committee was limited to consideration of the departures for the proposed programs and not reconsideration of the original School District decisions concerning their overall facilities plans.

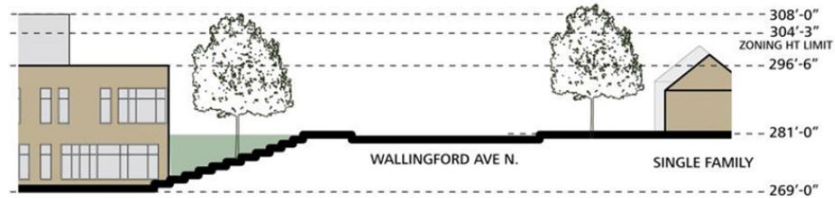
After considering the overall design and program requirements, the Committee generally determined that in the event that the proposed educational programs were located on this site some departures would likely be needed. This decision was not an open endorsement of the two-school program decisions, but instead a recognition that this decision lies with other jurisdictions.

Recommendation 1 - Given the Seattle School District's current proposed two-school program proposal, that some departures from the provisions of the underlying zoning would be needed in order to facilitate the construction of the Elementary and Middle Schools at the Wilson Pacific site.

b. Review of Departures against Departure Review Criteria 1 through 5.

Departure #1 -Greater than Allowed Building Height

The District requested a departure to allow the Elementary School to exceed this standard to a total height of 39 feet or four (4) feet above the maximum allowed, and to allow the Middle School to exceed the standard to 58 feet or 23 feet above the maximum allowed.



**Illustration #3
Elementary School Height Departure**

The height departure request for the elementary school appeared to be relatively minor and related mostly to enclosing the mechanical equipment located on the roof. This equipment would be allowed and no height departure required if the mechanical equipment was not enclosed.

In evaluating this departure, the Committee noted the setbacks from the street and the topography changes on the site. Little concern was raised about this proposal.



Illustration #4 Middle School Height Departure

Concern about the height departure request for the middle school was more significant. The school would extend above the allowed height and would be clearly and visibly greater than the current development. The enclosed mechanical equipment would further extend above the building. There was public testimony that this height would block some views for neighbors to the north and west.

The Committee carefully considered this. Again, as with the elementary school site, topography and design somewhat mitigated these concerns to the north as shown in the top drawing of Illustration #4. To the west topography appeared to give little mitigation or relief. However, the larger setback and adjacency to nearly similar height multi-family buildings did appear to lessen the impact as shown below.



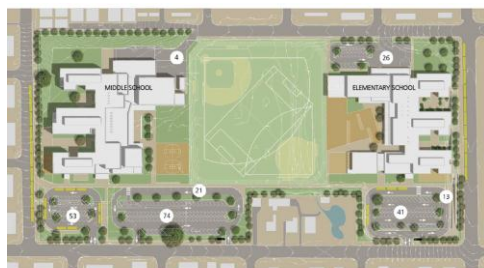
Illustration #5
Middle School Height in relationship to Multi-family
Development fronting Stone Avenue North

After consideration of the above, the Committee recommends

Recommendation 2 - That the departure to allow greater than allowed height for both the proposed elementary and middle schools be approved as requested by the Seattle School District without modifications and without conditions

Departure #2 - Less than Required Off-street Parking –

Under the Seattle Municipal Code the District is required to accommodate all required parking on site whenever a new school is built or existing school expanded or substantially renovated. The code in this case would require 201 spaces for the middle and 141 spaces for the Elementary schools for a total of 342 spaces. The District requested a departure to allow 198 spaces on site or 144 fewer spaces than required



Parking with Departures Granted



Parking without Departures Granted

Illustration #6
Parking Locations and Amounts

Committee members were concerned with the lack of parking and strongly considered either denying in total or recommending some additional parking with the total number still below code requirements. Both the public and Committee members noted that parking can spill over onto adjacent streets. Many noted that both schools on the site would be wholly or partially devoted to the District's Advanced Placement Program (APP). This would be a magnet program pulling students for far beyond the neighborhood. Parent and volunteer involvement, and other added staff might result in higher parking demand than at other neighborhood-serving schools. The Committee was concerned that associated traffic impacts might be considerable.

The District provided the Committee information in response to the concerns raised. It was noted that almost all other elementary and middle schools in the north end of Seattle currently provide considerably less parking. Even with the departures, Wilson Pacific would surpass all but Lincoln High School (currently used for the APP programs). Parking utilization surveys indicated that considerable on-street parking would remain available.

Accommodating required parking would severely impact the amount of open space (Criteria 5) The District noted that open space is already below the amount recommended by the educational standards. Committee members considered this unacceptable. Similarly, providing the required parking while retaining the open space might so constrain the site that purchase of adjacent property either to the west of Pilings Pond or along North 90th Street might be required to accommodate the combination of require on-site parking and bus loading and unloading.

The district also provided some preliminary re-striping and re-configuration plans that might slightly increase the number of spaces that could be accommodated within sites allocated to parking in the proposed site plan.



Illustration # 7 Parking Locations and Amounts

The Committee was intrigued by this option and advises incorporation of this or a similar, denser parking configuration to the extent possible.

After reviewing those conditions members concluded that they would be effective.

In consideration of the above, the Committee recommends that:

Recommendation 3 - That the departure to allow less than required on-site parking (a minimum of 198 stalls to be provided) be approved on condition that:

- a) In order to improve safety, a loop arrangement (in and out) is utilized for ingress and egress from all three lots along 90th Avenue North
- b) The special education bus loading and unloading zones located in both the southeast and southwest lots along North 90th Street are striped to allow use as parking for events and for parent drop when not used for special education buses and that any spaces added from this condition be in addition to the minimum 198 spaces that would be authorized if the departure is granted.
- c) That the Seattle School District formally request, and if done fully participate in, a joint City/District study to develop plans and programs to discourage traffic associated with use of the Wilson Pacific Parking lots, and parent drop-off and pick up, from using residential non-arterial street, with specific considerations of speed control devices, speed bumps, traffic circles, etc.
- d) That signs directing users from the elementary school lot and middle school lots located at the intersections of N 90th Street and Stone Avenue North and North 90th Street and Wallingford Avenue North to the larger Central lot are installed.
- e) That the lots provided be approximately the size shown the departure request presented to the Committee, and that to the extent possible, the District incorporate a denser parking configuration either as shown or similar to that show to the Committee at its meeting, and that any spaces derived from this reconfiguration be in addition to the minimum 198 spaces that would be authorized if the departure was granted without conditions. (See Illustration # 7 Above)

Departure #3 - On-street Bus Loading and Unloading

The zoning code directs that when a new school is built or an existing school expanded that bus loading and unloading occur on site and not on the street. Section 23.51B I-1 allows use of yards and setbacks for this purpose and Section I-3 stipulates that departures from the requirements and standards for bus and truck loading and unloading areas and berths may be granted or required pursuant to the procedures and criteria set forth in Chapter 23.79 only when departure would contribute to reduced demolition of residential structures.

The Seattle School District requested that bus loading and unloading occur along both Stone Avenue North and Wallingford Avenue North as shown below



Illustration # 8 Proposed Bus Loading and Unloading

The Committee struggled with this departure request. Members noted that the nature of the programs allocated to the school results in a high number of buses accessing the site. In addition, the area arterials often are backed up at key intersections and 90th Avenue North in particular. Members noted that regardless of whether the buses were on or off site, the increased number of buses would further burden the already stressed arterial system in the neighborhood, and lead to pedestrian/bicycle/vehicle conflicts.

However, as with the departure for parking, the Committee balanced the effects of allowing on-street bus loading and unloading against the need to preserve critical open space. The District indicated that accommodating bus loading and unloading on-site would be the biggest factor leading to loss of open space. The District noted that open space is already below the amount recommended in educational standards. Committee members considered this unacceptable. Similarly, providing on-site bus loading and unloading while retaining the open space might so constrain the site that purchase of

adjacent property either to the west of Pilings Pond or along North 90th Street might be required to accommodate the combination of require on-site parking and bus loading and unloading.

In consideration of the above, the Committee recommends:

Recommendation 4 - The departure for on-street bus loading and unloading be approved on condition that:

- a) If technically feasible, the street configuration of Wallingford Avenue North be designed to provide bus loading and unloading pull-outs within the right of way for bus loading associated with the Elementary School.
- b) A traffic access plan be developed for the site including: identification of bus routes that avoid any left turns, and other measures to reduce the impacts of both bus loading and unloading and parent pick-up and drop-off.
- c) To avoid bicycle and pedestrian conflicts, a pedestrian and bicycle pathway connecting Stone Avenue N to N 92nd Street at Ashworth Avenue, be developed utilizing the School District property north of the proposed new middle school.

Editor's Note: At the time the Committee determined its recommendations, the City had not determined whether the requested departure for on street bus loading met the criteria in the Code directing that such a departure request was allowable only in the event that it led to the avoidance of the demolition of housing. Committee members concluded that this determination was within the purview of the City, and not the Committee. Members therefore decided to offer a recommendation and identify conditions related to possible on-street bus loading and unloading in the event that the City Department of Planning and Development determines that the Code would allow the District to request this departure.

Departure #4 - Illumination of Signage

The Code currently prohibits illumination of signs at the school from an exterior light source. The District requested relief from this requirement for both the Elementary and Middle Schools. For the elementary school the District requested that the sign be externally illuminated. For the middle School the District requested both external illumination and reader-board capability. The District committed to limits on hours of operations.

The Committee considered these requests reasonable and therefore recommends:

Recommendation 5 - The departure for external illumination of the signs at both the elementary and middle schools and reader-board capability at the middle school be approved on condition that for the reader-board sign its hours of operation be restricted to no later than 10 PM during the school year only.

For the Committee

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Steve Sheppard".

Steve Sheppard
Non-Voting Chair

**Wilson Pacific Elementary
School Design Departure
Committee**

Members

Brent Johnson
David Smith
Liz Kearns
Faye Garneau
Gayle Herman
John Lembo
Michael Carney
Mike Cuadra
Rebecca Baiback-Penkala
Richard Min

Ex-Officio Members

Steve Sheppard – DON
DON Holly Godard – DPD

**Wilson Pacific Development Standards Departure
Advisory Committee
Meeting #1
Meeting Notes
March 18, 2014**

Members Present:

Brent Johnson
David Smith
Liz Kearns
Gayle Herman
John Lembo
Michael Carney
Richard Min

Staff Present

Eric Becker
Steve Sheppard (DON)

Others Present

See Attendance Sheet

I. Opening of Meeting and Introductions:

The meeting was opened by Steve Sheppard from City of Seattle, Major Institutions and Schools Program. Mr. Sheppard welcomed all in attendance and noted that he would facilitate the meeting tonight and there are handout packets available for tonight’s meeting. Brief introductions followed.

II. Brief Description of the Process:

Mr. Sheppard stated that this process is governed by the Seattle Municipal Code Section 23.68 which specifies how the meeting is run. He noted that Seattle does not have a school zone; instead, the city allows schools in all zones, subject to the development standards of the underlying zone. Since most schools are in residential neighborhoods and are zoned “single family”, this can present challenges. The schools are not single family homes and cannot meet the underlying zoning requirements. Thus, the Land Use code contains provisions that allow the Seattle School District to request exemption from the provisions of the Land use Code. They may request exemptions or “departures” from many of the provision of the code.

Mr. Sheppard stated that the committee is meeting for the purpose of developing a recommendation concerning the School District’s request for departures or exemptions from several provisions of the Seattle Municipal Code related to land use. The process for considering the District’s requests included meeting before a committee composed of represents residing within 600 ft. of the site, two representatives at the general neighborhood

that does not to be residing within the 600 ft. of the site, two people who represents the parents of the students of the school, a representative from the Seattle School district, and a representative at-large who is involved with the school district and with the school's city-wide education issues.

The Committee will take public testimony; after which the Committee will begin its deliberations. The Committee may do one of the following: 1) recommend granting the departure as requested; 2) recommend approving the departures but with either modifications or specific conditions, or 3) recommend denial of the departures. Mr. Sheppard noted that any conditions identified must be clearly related to the requested departure and enforceable on the District.

Mr. Sheppard emphasized that the Committee's decision is a recommendation only. The recommendation of the committee will go to the director of DPD (Department of Planning and Development) who will issue the decision. That decision is appealable both to the Hearing Examiner and from the Hearing Examiner to the Superior Court because the type of decision involves changing the Land Use law.

Following the Districts presentation and public comments, the Committee will develop its recommendation. The Committee may develop recommendations at this meeting, or if either time does not allow, or if there is additional public testimony desired or additional information needed, the Committee may hold up to two additional meetings. If the Committee concludes, they have enough information from the school district and no further benefit from having any public testimonies or public meetings; the Committee can determine to move forward at the end of this meeting in establishing their general recommendations; in that case this would be the only public meeting/hearing.

III. Presentation on Departures Being Requested:

Erick Becker from the Seattle School District introduced Susan Fore, the architect and consultant for the district to outline the departures being requested.

Ms. Fore noted that the levy for this project is for two schools - an elementary and middle school. The elementary school building will be 90,700 sq. ft., accommodating 650 students; the middle school will be 139,300 sq. ft. accommodating 1000 middle school students. The program for this school is 850 middle school students and 150 K-8 students that are currently at Pinehurst. The community field that is currently along Wallingford will be rebuilt at the center of the site; the baseball, softball and soccer field still exist.

Ms. Fore presented five departure issues for both schools to the committee; parking count; parking location for the middle school; bus drop; signage; and building height.

A. Parking count

The School District is asking for a departure for 70 stalls less than required under the code for the middle school. This does not count the 21 stalls for parent pickup and drop off stalls that can be used for after hour events, and also for special education buses that has an additional 27 parking stalls, this results, in theory, about 179 stalls for after hour events but only 131 stalls for day to day parking, and the departure request is 70.

The school district is asking for a departure for 74 stalls less than required under the code for the elementary school. For child care pick up and drop off, it is required to have 3 dedicated stalls, in addition to that, there are 10 stalls for parent pick up and drop off, an additional 16 stalls for special education buses that were not there for after hour evening events. The zoning requirement is 141 stalls, and providing 67, and requesting for a departure of 74 stalls. The district is providing 96 stalls for evening and after hour school events.

B. Middle school parking lot location

The current parking lot at the south east corner is anywhere from 10 ½ ft. down to 9 ft. The zoning for a low rise residential code needs to be 10 ft. from the property line. The district is requesting for a departure of 9 ft. instead of 10 ft. from the parking line.

C. General education buses

The District is requesting the authority to load and unload busses on the adjoining streets rather than on-site. There would be 10 buses on Stone Ave. N to serve the middle school; about 10 buses along Wallingford to serve the elementary school. There was discussion with the traffic consultant and the district that the load and unload will be during school hours and it will be open for afterschool hours for neighborhood parking. In addition, there are special education buses for both middle and elementary schools, the zoning code requires that all buses be provided on site; the departure request is to have half of the buses be offsite.

D. Signage

The two zones allow either a non-illuminating sign or an electric sign. An electric sign has wiring and provides only a little bit of light itself. The departure request for the elementary school is to have fixed sign letters and have a light shine on the sign to light in order to be able to read at night; for the middle school, the departure request is to have a reader board with a scrolling text in addition to having a light to illuminate it.

E. Building height

The District is requesting greater than allowed height both at the middle and elementary schools. The departure request for the elementary school is 39 ft. instead of the 35 ft. the zoning code allows. The baseline is 33 ft. with a mechanical penthouse for equipment that is 4 ft. tall. For the middle school departure with similar condition but since it is a three story building and it does not slope more to the south, the departure request is for 58 ft. to the top of the mechanical penthouse; it is 12 ft. taller and the mechanical penthouse is 10 ft. taller. The school is not much taller to the neighbors closer to 90th or 92nd.

Marty Hefron, the principal from Hefron Transportation and the traffic engineer for this project was introduced to give a brief summary about parking and traffic issues. Ms. Hefron reminded the committee that the parking requirement is based on assembly space, this is a parking need generated by large evening events and demand on site. Most of the everyday and middle of the day parking demand, it can be accommodated by most of the demand. Ms. Hefron commented the demand for more parking will be for very large events; and one of the mitigation features is having the school to announce the neighborhood when will these large events will occur.

Ms. Hefron noted that a full traffic analysis was undertaken which took into account analysis in the broader area including along Aurora, 85th, and Wallingford. She noted that the School District has committed to having staggered start and end time; in order to reduce congestion at peak hours. The biggest issue on traffic for the middle school that was identified was during the morning period because it overlaps with the peak morning commute. A drop off activity test was conducted to identify what could occur on the lot or driveway, and one of the mitigation is to provide safe crosswalks.

Ms. Hefron commented that bus activity in the morning will be a drop and go operations; buses will pull on the curb and pull off once it is empty. In the afternoon period, buses will be stack up and will using the full end of the lot for staging; all other times, for example, evening events, all other area will be available for parking.

IV. Committee Clarifying Questions:

Mr. Lembo asked if the traffic study is available to the public. Ms. Hefron mentioned that the study is available and will be made available to the committee.

Ms. Hefron noted that the traffic studies looked at various mitigation measures. There is a committee set up that will review all safety protocols before the school opens including crosswalks, crossing guards for elementary schools, analysis for an always stop intersection. SDOT needs to decide whether a traffic signal is safer than an always stop intersection. Ms. Hefron mentioned that they recommended safety studies and measures as well.

Ms. Kearns stated that with the staff and students and the enrollment as well as volunteers that will be following, there will be a tremendous volume of people on site that will result in a great deal of parking pressure throughout the neighborhood. Ms. Hefron responded that her firm did a detailed parking survey during middays and weekends and that there are 1000 spaces available within 800 ft. of the site. More than half of those spaces are typically vacant and can be used by support staff parking.

Ms. Hefron also noted that they did a parking analysis for larger events but did not evaluate traffic associated with those events. A suggestion was made to regulate the start time of events.

Mr. Sheppard noted that he did not hear from the District's overall rationale for the departure. Mr. Sheppard stated that he assumed that the departures being requested are to preserve the central open space. District staff agreed.

And service loading docks. It is about a balance and preserves socialization.

V. Public Comments and Questions:

Mr. Sheppard opened the discussion for public comments and questions.

Comment from Chris Jackins: Mr. Jackins stated that he is a coordinator for the Seattle Community State School. He provided copies on conditions regarding the departure that includes the following: preserve history of the site due to its historical and archaeological impacts, native murals should be preserved and respect Indian heritage. He urged that the departures be denied.

Comment from Donovan Leo: Mr. Leo asked for clarification concerning the heights and specifically the relationship between the need for the height departures and the enclosing of the rooftop mechanical equipment. He noted that this equipment can be very noisy.

Ms. Fore responded that mechanical equipment includes heat pumps and ventilation equipment and that it is enclosed in a mechanical penthouse to minimize the noise pollution and are working with SPU to figure ways co-locate some of that capacity.

Comment from Chris Foster - Mr. Foster stated that the general idea of more schools is great; would like to know what is the timeline and when this school will be going to be built. Ms. Fore responded that construction will begin in spring 2015 with the school opening in fall of 2017. Mr. Becker mentioned that the funding is in place and it is funded through a levy that was recently passed.

This ended the list of persons who had signed up on the speakers list. Mr. Sheppard then opened the floor to comments from those who had not signed up to speak. These individuals generally spoke anonymously without providing specific names and addresses.

A variety of meeting attendees noted that the designs being presented at the meeting were substantially changed from previous iterations and expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of prior engagement by the Seattle School district. They generally called for additional School District meetings and many suggested that the two-school model for the site was seriously flawed. Several persons noted that the two school model would result in the loss of open spaces and the needs to pursue departures without significant benefits to the neighborhood.

Mr. Sheppard noted that most of the comments being raised are about the general design. These design questions should have been dealt in the design meetings, and encouraged the public to keep the comments to the terms of the desirability of the departure.

Mr. Lembo made a comment that they were unaware of the design meetings and the previous design meetings he attended are totally different from what is being presented.

Comment from Erin Morris: Ms. Morris noted that this is an advanced placement schools, not a neighborhood school. This will result in greater impacts to the neighborhood while neighborhood children will generally go elsewhere. Mr. Becker responded that the middle school is partially a neighborhood with advance placement program; K-8 from Pinehurst. The, elementary school is for advanced placement only but is not specifically designed for this program.

VI. Committee Deliberations:

Mr. Sheppard opened the meeting to committee deliberations. He briefly went over the criteria for evaluation of the District's requests.

Mr. Sheppard noted that there appeared to be many questions and issues being raised, He asked committee members whether they felt that they had either sufficient information of time to proceed with deliberations at the meeting.

Members stated that they did not feel comfortable proceeding without additional meetings. After brief discussion it was moved:

That this process be considered sufficiently complex to warrant more than one meeting and that at least one additional meeting be held.

**Wilson Pacific Elementary
School Design Departure
Committee**

Members

Brent Johnson
David Smith
Liz Kearns
Faye Garneau
Gayle Herman
John Lembo
Michael Carney
Mike Cuadra
Rebecca Baiback-Penkala
Richard Min

Ex-Officio Members

Steve Sheppard – DON
DON Holly Godard – DPD

**Wilson Pacific Development Standards Departure
Advisory Committee**

**Meeting #2
Meeting Notes**

May 28, 2014

Members Present:

Brent Johnson
David Smith
Liz Kearns
Gayle Herman
John Lembo
Rebecca Baiback-Penkala

Staff Present

Eric Becker
Steve Sheppard (DON)

Others Present

See Attendance Sheet

I. Opening of Meeting and Introductions:

The meeting was opened by Steve Sheppard from City of Seattle, Major Institutions and Schools Program Brief introductions followed.

II. Description of the Process:

Mr. Sheppard stated that this process is governed by the Seattle Municipal Code Section 23.68 which specifies how the meeting is run. He noted that Seattle does not have a school zone; instead, the city allows schools in all zones, subject to the development standards of the underlying zone. Since most schools are in residential neighborhoods and are zoned “single family”, this can present challenges. Schools are not single family homes and cannot meet the underlying zoning requirements. Thus, the Land Use code contains provisions that allow the Seattle School District to request exemption from the provisions of the Land use Code. They may request exemptions or “departures” from many of the provision of the code.

Mr. Sheppard noted that this is the second meeting of the committee but since the District choose to delay the process to hold a broader community meeting, this meeting would be run similarly to a first meeting. The School District will present the specifics of the departures being requested, the committee with then take public testimony; after which the Committee will begin its deliberations. The Committee may do one of the following: 1) recommend granting the departure as requested; 2) recommend approving the departures but with either modifications or specific conditions, or 3) recommend denial of the departures. Mr. Sheppard noted that any conditions identified must be clearly related to the requested departure and enforceable on the District.

III. Presentation on Departures Being Requested:

Mr. Eric Becker of the Seattle School District introduced the team that will be managing and facilitating this building project; this includes teams from Mahlum Architecture, Shiels Obletz Johnson, Inc. (SOJ) management group, Hebron Transpiration and the general contractor team. Mr. Becker is the project manager for this construction.

Ms. Fore summarized the needs and mitigations for the following departures:

A. Less than required on-site parking

The School District is asking for a departure for 70 on-site spaces less than required for the middle school. This does not count the 21 stalls for parent pickup and drop off stalls that can be used for after hour events, and also for special education buses that has an additional 27 parking stalls, this results, in theory, about 179 stalls would be available for after hour events but only 131 stalls for day to day parking,.

The School District is also asking for a departure for 74 stalls-on-site spaces less than required for the elementary school. For child care pick up and drop off, it is required to have 3 dedicated stalls, in addition to that, there are 10 stalls for parent pick up and drop off, an additional 16 stalls for special education buses that were not there for after hour evening events. The zoning requirement is 141 stalls, and providing 67, and requesting for a departure of 74 stalls. The district is providing 96 stalls for evening and after hour school events.

The current parking lot at the south east corner is anywhere from 10 ½ ft. down to 9 ft. The zoning for a low rise residential code needs to be 10 ft. from the property line. The district is requesting for a departure of 9 ft. instead of 10 ft. from the parking line.

B. On-street bus loading and unloading

The District is requesting that buses load and unload on-street. There would be 10 buses on Stone Ave. N to serve the middle school; about 10 buses along Wallingford to serve the elementary school. Bus loading and unloading will be limited duration and will be available at other times for neighborhood parking. In addition, there are special education buses for both middle and elementary schools, the zoning code requires that all buses be provided on site; the departure request is to have half of the buses be offsite.

C. Signage

The District is requesting signage for both schools. The two zones allow either a non-illuminating sign or an electric sign. An electric sign has wiring and provides only a little bit of light itself. The departure request for the elementary school is to have fixed sign letters and have a light shine on the sign to light in order to be able to read at night; for the middle school, the departure request is to have a reader board with a scrolling text in addition to having a light to illuminate it.

D. Building height

The departure request for the elementary school is 39 ft. instead of the 35 ft. the zoning code allows. The baseline is 33 ft. with a mechanical penthouse for equipment that is 4 ft. tall. For the middle school departure with similar condition but since it is a three story building and it does not slope more to the south, the departure request is for 58 ft. to the top of the mechanical penthouse; it is 12 ft. taller and the mechanical penthouse is 10 ft. taller. The school is not much taller to the neighbors closer to 90th or 92nd.

IV. Committee Clarifying Questions:

Mr. Sheppard began to open the discussion for committee's clarifying questions.

Mr. John Lembo made a comment that if the height restriction departure that was presented will be voted on separately. Ms. Fore mentioned that the vote will be discreetly.

A comment was made regarding the departure of the buses for the elementary school and would like to know the path of the child where it will be coming off from the bus. Ms. Fore provided a diagram that shows the path (widened sidewalk, steps that go down to the front of the school).

Mr. David Smith asked about parking, traffic studies and methodology used for these studies. Ms. Fore mentioned that Tod McBryan from Heffron Transportation will provide a presentation to answer these questions.

A comment was made about the special ed buses that in the last meeting, these buses would offload not directly to the curb adjacent to the school building, but in the middle of the parking lot and the children would cross from there. Ms. Fore mentioned that special ed buses are not part of the departure process, but there are options in discussion with the School District about special ed bus drop offs. Ms. Fore noted that parent pick up and drop off will stay on site.

Mr. Lembo asked where would the kids that will be coming from the north of the site be walking to the school. Ms. Fore answered that in the elementary school there is a public sidewalk walkway that goes to the central hallway which connects to the main entrance of the school. There are also gate along the fields that will be available, but not a separate back door.

Mr. Lembo made a comment about having the kids walk through the field when it rains, and he is not excited about this option. Ms. Fore mentioned that this is not a departure issue but will look into this.

A comment was made regarding any information that is available on how this facility provides parking compared to the rest of the schools in the district for an urban site. Ms. Fore responded that these questions will be answered from the transportation studies presentation.

Mr. Sheppard introduced Tod McBryan from Heffron Transportation to provide a brief overview about the transportation and traffic studies that was conducted in this site.

Mr. McBryan mentioned that most of the information that he will be presenting were presented at the last departure meeting. Mr. McBryan informed the committee that he has been preparing and evaluating transportation, traffic and parking studies and issues in many school districts in the last twenty five years. The Wilson Pacific report is available in the SEPA package. Mr. McBryan mentioned that the analysis made include evaluating and determining the time of day, number of school trips, traffic operations at night, sign access, bus loading, pedestrian crossings, on-street parking during school days and evenings as well as construction traffic and mitigation. There was a chart presented that shows traffic peaks during school peak time periods; this counts the total volume of transportation on the streets.

Mr. McBryan also mentioned that an analysis was made regarding mitigations on certain area intersections. The City of Seattle and SDOT are responsible to address these mitigations; this include having the City at its discretion, having the intersections signalized or un-signalized and also formally striping the lanes in the intersections.

Mr. McBryan noted with regards to on-street parking utilization studies, the City uses a Tip #117 methodology.

Mr. Smith asked about Tip #117 whether it is 400 ft. required for walking distance. Mr. McBryan mentioned that for school projects the City asks for 800 ft.

A comment was made regarding zone parking if it will extend to the neighborhood as parking congestion is a concern and that a request to the City needs to be extended for RPZ. Mr. Sheppard made a comment that this is established by the North Seattle Community College Master Plan.

Mr. Lembo asked about traffic flow and what type of reference standard that was used for this type of school and whether traffic flows includes after school activities, sports and band practices, etc.

Mr. McBryan responded that the traffic flow studies represent average conditions for a particular type of school, i.e. elementary, middle school, and K through 8.

A comment was made if the data reflects to a Magnet-type school. Mr. McBryan responded that the rate is based on a variety of different types of schools.

V. Public Comments and Questions:

Mr. Sheppard opened the discussion for public comments and questions.

Comment from Chris Jackins: Mr. Jackins stated that he was the coordinator for the Seattle Committee to Save Schools. He stated that the impacts on the neighborhood are too great. He stated that the departure process is ongoing when the district has not completed its environmental process. The Landmarks board has voted 8-0 to designate this building as an historic monument. This puts the process in question. He noted that the number of students allocated to both sites is too great.

Comment from Trina Harmon: Ms. Harmon noted that she was representing the Native American Tribes. She stated that this site is significant for the Native American community. These departures will greatly impact the neighborhood especially the historical archaeological significance of this site and especially the Duwamish tribe. She briefly read a letter from the Chief of the Duwamish tribe speaking to the great significance of this site and urged denial of the departures.

Comment from Michael Kabalin: Mr. Kabalin stated that he was a resident along Wallingford Avenue North closer to North 92nd. Street. He stated that he appreciated more parking and parking availability. He noted that he experiences problems with parking now. He also questioned the adequacy of setbacks. He noted the District's maintenance of its open space is currently deficient and stated that he was concerned that this might continue as a problem.

Comment from Jim Padeaux: Mr. Padeaux lives along Wallingford and made a comment about how disappointed he is about the setback that is north of the school. He noted that traffic is currently heavy on Wallingford Avenue North and that this proposal will only make it significantly worse.

Comment from Kim McCormick: Ms. McCormick stated that she was a parent of a student. She stated that she was concerned with parking especially during evening events, the amount of volunteers in the elementary school and the number of kids that will be coming to the school; she mentioned about how SDOT did a school road safety workshop meeting that covers street safety and safe walk tours and routes; she would like to have no parking in front of the school.

Comment from Richard Aramburu: Mr. Aramburu stated that he is an attorney that represents the Wilson Pacific One coalition of neighbors and interested citizens. He directed member's attention to the letter provided by him. He noted that the committee's deliberations should be guided by the Seattle Municipal Code. He outlined those criteria that are noted in the code as follows: 1) impact on neighborhood character, traffic, open space; and 2) why there is a need for the departure.

Mr. Aramburu stated that the departures are being requested solely because the site is simply too small for the programs proposed. He noted that these departures that were presented need to be denied because it does not meet and follow the code. The Seattle City Council passed these series of rules and codes and the School District should follow these rules.

He noted that the code intends that all school activities be on site. The code is very clear that the only way that buses are allowed off-site only is if it will contribute to the reduced demolition of residential structures. There are no homes on site and therefore this departure is not allowed. He further stated that the District is underestimating the need for busses.

He also noted that the District's transportation consultants used a series of standard criteria. However, this is a magnet school and those criteria are therefore suspect.

Comment from Bob Messina: Mr. Messina asked if there was an existing bus route plan and safe routes.

Mr. McBryan responded that they currently do not have a plan, but once a plan has been developed; it will look at the safest routes available.

Comment from Rene Amuallos: Ms Amuallon stated that the open space is critical and that this proposal is too intensive..

Comment from Lory Benhoff: Ms. Benhoff stated that she opposed granting any of the departures being requested. In addition she noted the severe flooding problems in the neighborhood. Flooding occurs multiple times and that the flooding issue has not been addressed. She further stated that the lack of a full EIS for this project is a major deficiency. She stated that she initially supported the proposal when it was intended for neighborhood children, but since it is not proposed as a APP program campus, she no longer supports this proposal. She noted that on-street parking is already almost impossible during the school day and that with all of the app parents, staff and visitors from these two schools it would become even worse. The District should refurbish the American Heritage School and the other current building, including retention of the historic murals instead of tearing it down.

This concluded comments from those who had signed in to speak. Mr. Sheppard noted that there appeared to be others who still wanted to speak and briefly opened the floor to additional comments.

Comment from an anonymous person: made a comment about the AP program at the elementary school; and noted that there will be no neighborhood students will be coming in to this school.

The School District commented that AP program is a decision made by the School Board

Comment from an anonymous person: made a comment about if the studies include the Northgate traffic link and there are a lot of traffic along Wallingford and 92nd and if an analysis is done during peak hours.

Comment from Michael Grassley: Mr. Grassley made a comment about parking and the requirement and greater need for more parking spots; there are approximately eight times a year of events happening in the school

Comment from Joyce Crandall: Ms. Joyce lived in the neighborhood for 55 years and would like to know why there is a need for a grade school if we already have Bagley; kids can go to Bagley.

Comment from Dave Anderson: Mr. Anderson asked if the athletic field will be lighted.

The School District responded that the field will not be lighted.

Comment from an anonymous person: made a comment not to approve offsite bus loading.

Comment from an anonymous person: made a comment that he has been living in the neighborhood for 40 years across the street from Wallingford; would like to get rid one of the schools and rebuild the playfield instead.

Comment from Mike Taylor: Mr. Taylor commented that there were deceptive tactics involved on how these two schools are on the same site.

Comment from Kelly LaRue: made a comment about how the Seattle Schools are growing and that there are a lot of concern citizens about this bad plan that does not make any sense; there are a lot of variance and why are we rewriting Land Use policies.

Mr. Sheppard ended the public comment period but informed the audience if they have any questions that needs to be answered is to email him and will forward them to the School District.

VI. Committee Deliberations:

Mr. Sheppard noted that during the first meeting, there were a lot of questions that came out for the School District. The School District responded with community meetings to discuss these questions. Mr. Sheppard emphasized that tonight's meeting is not intended to answer questions about the nature of the school programs, SEPA and MUP issues. The scope of the committee is very limited. The committee's task is to give recommendations to the City regarding the departure request.

A comment was made about where to get updated information regarding the SEPA and other school programs so the community and the neighborhood will be well informed. The School District responded that the information is available in their website.

VII. General Discussion of other Issues:

Mr. Sheppard noted that the meeting had already extended far beyond the scheduled adjournment time and that there will clearly need to be a third meeting. Members agreed. Mr. Sheppard stated that there will be no School District presentations at the next meeting since it has already been presented in the previous two meetings. There will be opportunities for committee members to speak, make comment and ask questions about the specific departure request that will lead to the committee's recommendations. Mr. Sheppard mentioned that issues regarding the school programs in general can be taken into account in developing the recommendations, but emphasized that the committee's role is limited.

Mr. Sheppard noted that the normal meeting notification process will proceed, and the committee members will be notified via survey to determine the date for the next meeting. Once the date is determined, the meeting notice will be sent via email or through mail to any citizens who attended or signed the tonight's attendance sheet.

VIII. Adjournment:

No further business being before the Committee the meeting was adjourned.

The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

The committee proceeded to develop a list of information that requested be provided prior to the next meeting. These included:1) full traffic studies, 2) greater clarification on the design including general floor plans and elevations;3) identification of alternatives that might involve no departures with identification of the impacts of the denial of the departures; 4) a comparison of departures requested at other similar schools.

VIII. Adjournment:

No further business being before the Committee the meeting was adjourned.

**Wilson Pacific Elementary
School Design Departure
Committee**

Members

Brent Johnson
David Smith
Liz Kearns
Faye Garneau
Gayle Herman
John Lembo
Michael Carney
Mike Cuadra
Rebecca Baiback-Penkala
Richard Min

Ex-Officio Members

Steve Sheppard – DON
DON Holly Godard – DPD

**Wilson Pacific Development Standards Departure
Advisory Committee**

**Meeting #3
Meeting Notes**

June 25, 2014

Members Present:

Brent Johnson
David Smith
Liz Kearns
Gayle Herman
John Lembo
Michael Carney

Staff Present

Eric Becker
Steve Sheppard (DON)

Others Present

See Attendance Sheet

I. Opening of Meeting and Brief Discussion of Agenda and Format:

The meeting was opened by Steve Sheppard from City of Seattle, Major Institutions and Schools Program. Mr. Sheppard mentioned that this is the third departure meeting; there were three previous meeting held, two by this committee and one by the School District.

Mr. Sheppard noted that all three previous meetings were run essentially as public hearings with substantial public testimony. At those meetings, public comment was taken until all who wished to speak had done so. It was important that the committee members need to hear what the community's issues and concerns; emails, phone calls, and comments has been received. Many people spoke leaving little time for the committee to get its work done.

Tonight's meeting is structured as a working committee meeting. The agenda will include a brief introduction; an opportunity for committee members ask the School District questions, ; Public comments will take in order potential commenters signed the attendance sheet and there is a time limit of only 20 minutes, 2 minutes per person.

After the public comment period, the Committee will begin deliberations and discuss each departure.

II. School District Responses to Specific Questions Raised by the Committee at the Previous Meeting:

Ms. Susan Fore, from the Seattle School District, handed out a presentation packet that summarized the departures that was presented in the previous meetings for use as reference. Ms. Fore briefly outlined each departure with an emphasis on answering questions previously raised by committee members

II. School District Responses to Specific Questions Raised by the Committee at the Previous Meeting:

Ms. Susan Fore handed out a presentation packet that summarized the departures that was presented in the previous meetings for use as reference. Ms. Fore also mentioned about some details that the committee requested from the last meeting is also included.

Concerning the elementary school:

Height - The height departure for the elementary school is to enclose the equipment in a mechanical penthouse. This will result in height about four feet above the code requirements. If the departure is not granted the District would leave the equipment open in which no departure would be required.

Parking - The code requires 141 stalls and the district is providing 67 stalls. The departure is for 74 less than required. If the departure is not granted then the fields will be reduced with parking on a portion of the field space along 92nd Avenue North.

Bus loading - On-street bus loading is proposed along Wallingford Avenue. If the Departure is not granted then additional bus loading would be in the area proposed for added parking off of 92nd Avenue North which would further reduce field size

Signage - A departure is being requested for exterior illumination. If the departure is not granted then the sign would be internally illuminated.

Concerning the middle school

Height - The proposal is a three story building which required height departures. IN the event that the departure is not granted, then the floor plan would be greatly extended and further extend into the play field.

Parking - 201 stalls are required and the District is proposing a total of 131 on site. The estimate is that total staff and visitor demand will be about 100 so that there is still capacity.

Bus loading - Bus loading is proposed along Stone Avenue North. If the departure is denied then the busses would be located in the same area as for the elementary school.

Mr. Richard Best, capital projects director for the Seattle Public School encouraged the committee to approve the four departures. Mr. Best mentioned that he has worked with four different school districts and that the parking departure being requested is not unreasonable and from his experience, the end result functions exceptionally well. Mr. Best noted tht denial of the departures would have negative consequences related to educational standards for open space. Denial of the departures would result in open spaces less that required by the educational program. This might result in considerations of acquisition of more property. However as there does not appear to be vacant property available, this would be difficult or impossible.

Ms. Lori Dunn, educational programs manager for the Seattle Public Schools further clarified the need for open space. She stated explained that having 660 projected elementary school students and 1000 middle school student population, having these departures denied will result in decrease in fields in playfields and teaching space. It is important having these 2.5 acres of fields because it promotes curriculum and academic focus, physical education, lifetime activities before and after school, social and cultural interaction and teaching space.

II. Committee Clarifying Questions:

Mr. John Lembo noted that the traffic studies have been done are not robust enough. He stated that further attention to the broader parking situation in the neighborhood is needed. Mr. Dave Smith noted tht the evaluations appeared to treat the schools as typical neighborhood serving schools when they are District magnet School. District staff responded that the traffic studies were based on the

programs components to be located at the two schools. Members asked if the school would be used primarily by neighborhood children. District staff responded that many of the students would be from outside of the neighborhood associated with the advanced placement programs, but that some neighborhood children would attend the school programs. Some members expressed dissatisfaction with then. District staff noted that the degree of departures would be similar regardless of the nature of the programs located in the schools.

A comment was made if these proposals for more parking on site for elementary and middle school are comparable to other Seattle schools; Mr. Sheppard noted that parking requirements remain the same while bus loading and unloading are estimates the School District makes.

A comment was made with regards to stacked buses along Wallingford. The School District responded that they are working with Metro about the existing bus stops.

III. Public Comments:

Mr. Sheppard opened the discussion to formal public testimony.

Comment from Chris Medina: Mr. Medina noted that he was the president of the North Seattle Baseball Association, an organization of 600 kids for baseball. Local children use these playfields heavily. He noted that there is a critical lack of similar space and urged retention of the open playfield space. He noted tht there were many in attendance that wanted the fields retained.

Comment from Chris Jackins: Mr Jackins stated that he is the coordinator of “Save Seattle’s Schools”. He noted that it appears that the bus loading departure may not be allowed by the code. IN addition the district did not complete and environmental impact statement for this project.

Mr Jackins noted that the Seattle Historic Commission recently approved historic designation of the site on a unanimous vote. The District’s threat to take homes to allow offsite parking should not be taken seriously. Their environmental documents do not reference any housing impacts and if such were to be done a full environmental review would be needed. In conclusion Mr. Jackins stated that the

Comment from Kate Martin: Ms. Martin stated that it was difficult for her to look at these plans and envision two schools sharing the same campus. She noted that the current school accommodated many more students. She noted that preservation of the existing school would be preferable and that it is better to have this site to go to a historic preservation as it is quite possible to accommodate 1,600 students in a renovated school while retaining the critical open spaces.

Comment from Tricia Juhnke: Ms. Juhnke stated that she was the president of the Woodland Soccer Club, and stated that these play fields are very valuable. She further stated that she the departures are reasonable.

Comment from Edwin Laport: Mr. Laport agreed with Chris Medina’s comment; look forward for having the kids play ball, and open playing space.

Comment from Richard Aramburu: Mr. Aramburu stated that he represented the Wilson Pacific One Coalition. He noted that he had provided a letter to the committee addressing some of the information presented by the Districts layers related to bus loading. He noted that the code allows departures only to further educational needs and contains restrictive conditions on granting departures for bus loading and unloading that do not appear to be met by this proposal. He stated that if the District is dissatisfied with the code provisions, they it should changes to the Code through the City Council, not through this process. He stated that there is not enough space to accommodate these two schools on this site and; urged the committee to review these departures according to the codes already in place.

The proposal to locate the buses on -street is not allowed under the code and not subject to a departure. Stand-alone parking lots are simply not allowed. He stated that the bottom line is that there is simply insufficient space for this proposal and urged the committee to deny the departures

Comment from Loren Hill: Mr. Hill stated that she has two daughters and the athletic fields are very important to them; it is better to build up.

Comment from Ayeda Kwal: Mr. Kwal stated that she was concerned about the murals and what will happen to them. He asked if the Duwamish tribe was represented on the committee and; asked how many indigenous students are coming into this school. He urged preservation of the existing school and that the committees deny the departures.

Comment from Alex Johnson: Mr. Johnson made a comment about the transformation of the school and parking and that the School District's departure efforts are as good as this school to be; this is a one-time opportunity; would like to preserve open space.

Comment from Bill Farmer: Mr. Farmer made a comment that this athletic field serves the neighborhood and the surrounding community; it is a valuable field space for other sports group.

Comment from Joyce Crandall: Ms. Crandall. made a comment about Stone Avenue and its multiple dwellings; her concern is about where would the bus park and where the bus would go.

Comment from Kelli Power: Ms. Power made a comment about what she notices the glaring pattern of the Seattle School District; she would like to take a look back at the proposed plan; instead of introducing a plan that "we can't do that" have the mindset of "here's how we can solve the problem" instead.

Comment from Jim Miller: Mr. Miller lives on Wallingford and made a comment about where would the kids be offloaded; he is concern about the safety for the kids.

Comment from Jan Brooker: Ms. Brooker endorsed Ms. Martin's comment about recognizing this site as a historical significant.

Mr. Sheppard stated that the time allotted for public comment had ended and asked that those who were not able to speak, indicate their approval or disapproval of the departures. He noted that about two-thirds of the public in attendance appeared to be opposed to granting the departures.

IV. Committee Deliberations on Departures:

V.

Mr. Sheppard opened the meeting to committee deliberations on departures. He noted that the roll of the committee is not to make a recommendation on whether members agree with the specific design or with the District's decisions to locate two rather than one school, with District program decisions. Instead the committee is charged with making specific recommendations concerning the departures requested. He noted that the Code contains the criteria for making these recommendation and directed member's attention to those provisions. The committee needs to look at the relationship, and evaluate the surrounding areas, the character of the areas, edges, use and height, etc.; the design of the structure and its impacts on housing, open space, traffic, noise and safety as you look at the need for the departure; is it physically required to grant increase height, lot coverage, in order to get the proper design of the school?; those are the criteria this committee needs to look at.

Mr. Sheppard also emphasized that this committee is not the decision making body; this committee is making a recommendation to the City. Mr. Sheppard is in charge of writing the final report and gets forwarded to the City of Seattle, Department of Planning and Development (DPD). The Director of the DPD may or may not agree with the committee's recommendations, but it carries substantial weight in the decision making process. Mr. Sheppard mentioned that the decision is appealable both to the Office of the Hearing Examiner (OHE) and from the OHE to the Superior Court because the type of decision involves changing the Land Use law.

The committee may do one of the following: 1) recommend granting the departure as requested; 2) recommend approving the departures but with either modifications or specific conditions; or 3)

recommend denial of the departures. Mr. Sheppard noted that any conditions identified must be clearly related to the requested departure and enforceable by the District.

A comment was made that majority of these departures are acceptable and that there are few departures that are significant and be accepted as they are.

A comment was made that there should be a coordinated effort to accommodate future growth of other entities in the area and that the traffic, safety and bus plan needs to be seriously addressed.

Mr. Sheppard emphasized that the committee's role is grant, deny, or allow the departures or have conditions attached.

Mr. Sheppard began to open the discussions to committee deliberations on departures in the following order #1 (signage); #2 (height); #3 (parking); #4 (bus loading).

Departure #1: Signage (Elementary and Middle School).

Members noted that the signage departure seemed acceptable and that there appears to be little opposition to granting that request. Following brief discussion, Ms. Rebecca Baiback-Penkala moved

That the departure for external illumination of the signs at both the elementary and middle schools and reader-board capability at the middle school be approved on condition that for the reader-board sign its hours of operation be restricted to no later than 10 PM during the school year only

The motion was seconded by; Mr. David Smith.

No further discussion occurring, the question was called. The vote was

7 in Favor

0 opposed

1 abstaining

A quorum being present and the majority of those present having voted in the affirmative, the motion passed.

Departure #2: Height -Elementary and Middle- School.

Elementary School

Members noted that the height departures appeared relatively minimal. Members noted that both topography. Landscaping and the location of the buildings on the site appeared to reduce the impact of the height departures.

Members asked for clarification concerning the grade of the elementary school related to the adjoining streets and fields. Staff responded that the first floor is at elevation 269 and is similar to the existing school. Wallingford Avenue is 12 feet above the grade. This results in that structure appearing one-story from those homes on the east side of Wallingford Avenue. Members noted that with only 4 feet above the code it appears that all of this is related to the decisions to enclose the mechanical equipment. Therefore both the grade and enclosure of the duct work appear to adequately mitigate this change. In addition, members expressed a preference for enclosed mechanical equipment rather than open equipment to reduce noise. Steve Sheppard noted that DPD has indicated that if the screening was eliminated tht equipment could be on the roof and extend to the same height without the need for a departure. DPD staff Agreed. A comment was made regarding if there are any provisions being done with the underground water. Mr. Becker mentioned that this project addresses the drainage and water management concerns regarding whether it is a 2 or 3 story building. The

District is working with Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) to address the issue and flooding concerns on the north side.

Following further discussion, Mr. John Lembo moved:

That the height departures for the elementary school be approved without conditions

The motion was seconded by Mr. Michael Carney.

No further discussion occurring, the question was called. The vote was

7 in Favor

0 opposed

1 abstaining quorum being present and the majority of those present having voted in the affirmative, the motion passed.

Middle School

Discussion then proceeded to consideration of the height departure for the middle school. Departures are required for both mechanical penthouse on the two story sections of the building and for the third story portion of the building. Staff clarified that for the third story portion this would be a total of 57 feet 6 inches for the northern portions of the building. Members noted that there are three story building across the street with some elevation changes to help mitigate impacts, but that this departure was somewhat more troubling than for the elementary school as some properties to the north along 92nd Avenue North might be affected. They noted that there was continuing advocacy for a two-rather than three story building, but that retention of open space was a considerable factor as the three story building allowed a lesser footprint.

There was discussion of plantings and how they might help soften the impact of the increased heights. Members briefly discussed possible conditions related to plantings to further screen the heights. Others noted that both the setbacks and the articulation of the facades greatly mitigate the height. Others noted that for those uphill to the north the lesser rooftop of a three versus a two story building might actually be less impactful.

Following further discussion, Ms. Baiback-Penkala moved:

That the height departures for the elementary school be approved without conditions

The motion was seconded by Mr. Eric Becker.

No further discussion occurring, the question was called. The vote was

4 in Favor

0 opposed

3 abstaining

A quorum being present and the majority of those present having voted in the affirmative, the motion passed.

Mr. Sheppard informed that the committee that whenever there is a member that votes not in favor or abstain will have an opportunity to write a dissenting opinion. Upon hearing the explanation, Mr. Lembo changed his vote from abstain to oppose. Therefore the final vote was

4 in favor

1 opposed

2 abstaining

Departure #3: Parking (Elementary and Middle School)

Steve Sheppard suggested that the parking for all of the schools could be considered as one departure. Members briefly discussed this and decided to consider them separately

Elementary School

Members noted that several of the alternatives appear to achieve different numbers of spaces within the same area and suggested that a dense striping pattern be used. District staff noted that this might pick up a few spaces but would not eliminate the need for a departure. Members also noted that the Special Education bus loading areas might be made available at some times for general parking. There was considerable discussion of the issue of use of parent drop-off and Special Education bus parking for events. Members concluded that use of both of this area should be available for general parking for events.

Discussion then proceeded to discussion of access in and out of the lots. Members suggested that there be a loop arrangement in and out of the lot along 90th Avenue North. Members did not feel that they had the expertise to design this, but concluded that they wished to direct the District to work with traffic engineers to develop a loop arrangement if at all possible. There was considerable discussion of this issue. Members also stated that there needs to be restrictions on right turns out of the lot.

A comment and further discussion was made regarding to the testimony from the last meeting regarding Seattle Department of Transportation's (SDOT) presentation on school safety and practices for school design to prevent injuries and fatalities. A comment was made that it will be worse putting a parking lot in front of the school and its concerns to safety. Members noted that the area to the south of the school and those special provisions need to be considered to reduce through traffic and direct parent movements to the arterial streets.

Mr. Sheppard noted that the committee has the option to deny the departure and have the School District provide a model that addressed safety specifically or grant the departure that are dependent upon the following conditions set forth by the committee. Mr. Sheppard reiterated that improvements on the general neighborhood streets are not a condition on the departure.

Following further discussion, Steve Sheppard summarized those conditions that he believed had been offered. Initial conditions offered were:

- 1) That a loop arrangement be utilized for the Southeast lot to improve safety
- 2) That the Special Education bus spaces be striped to allow use for general parking when not used for that purpose
- 3) That signs directing users from the elementary school lot and middle school lots located at the intersections of N 90th Street and Stone Avenue North and North 90th Street and Wallingford Avenue North to the larger Central lot are installed
- 4) That the District participate in a wider City effort to develop plans and programs to discourage traffic associated with use of the Wilson Pacific Parking lots, and parent drop-off and pick up, from using residential non-arterial street, with specific considerations of speed control devices, speed bumps, traffic circles, etc.. There was considerable discussion of the wording for this possible condition.

Members also noted that the motion was to approve the parking departures approximately in the configuration and with no fewer spaces that shown in the proposal of the district. Members instructed that this be combined with use of the denser parking arrangement as a fifth condition.

Following brief additional discussion, Ms. Baiback-Penkala moved:

That the departure to allow less than required on-site parking (a minimum of 198 stalls to be provided) be approved on condition that:

- a) In order to improve safety, a loop arrangement (in and out) is utilized for ingress and egress from all three lots along 90th Avenue North
- b) The special education bus loading and unloading zones located in both the southeast and southwest lots along North 90th Street are striped to allow use as parking for events and for parent drop when not used for special education buses and that any spaces added from this condition be in addition to the minimum 198 spaces that would be authorized if the departure is granted.
- c) The Seattle School District formally request, and if done fully participate in, a joint City/District study to develop plans and programs to discourage traffic associated with use of the Wilson Pacific Parking lots, and parent drop-off and pick up, from using residential non-arterial street, with specific considerations of speed control devices, speed bumps, traffic circles, etc.
- d) Signs directing users from the elementary school lot and middle school lots located at the intersections of N 90th Street and Stone Avenue North and North 90th Street and Wallingford Avenue North to the larger Central lot are installed.
- e) The lots provided be approximately the size shown in the Code compliant departure request presented to the Committee, and that to the extent possible, the District incorporate a denser parking configuration either as shown or similar to that show to the Committee at this meeting, and that any spaces derived from this reconfiguration be in addition to the minimum 198 spaces that would be authorized if the departure was granted without conditions.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Eric Becker.

No further discussion occurring, the question was called. The vote was

4 in Favor

0 opposed

2 abstaining

A quorum being present and the majority of those present having voted in the affirmative, the motion passed.

Discussion then proceeded to the Middle School Parking Departure.

Ms. Baiback-Penkala made a motion to grant parking for the Middle School.

The motion was seconded.

No further discussion occurring, the question was called. The vote was

5 in Favor

0 opposed

A quorum being present and the majority of those present having voted in the affirmative, the motion passed.

Departure #4: Bus loading and unloading

Members noted that it was preferable to have the bus loading on street rather than loose additional green open space on site. A comment and discussion was made regarding buses on the street and that as the population of the area increases may result in even greater shortages of green space in the area.

There was considerable discussion of bus travel patterns including discussion of connecting 92nd Avenue North east to Stone Avenue North. It was noted that this would be too steep to do. Discussion then focused on use of District property to extend a bicycle pathway to connect 92nd Avenue North to Stone Avenue North. Members agreed that this was a very desirable action and that it should be recommended as a condition.

Members then determined tht the bus-loading locations appeared reasonable for both schools with the least discussion or concern regarding the loading locations for the elementary School. Other's disagreed and suggested that consideration be given to curb pull outs.

Following further discussion, Ms. Baiback-Penkala moved:

The departure for on-street bus loading and unloading for the elementary school be approved on condition that:

- a) If technically feasible, the street configuration of Wallingford Avenue North be designed to provide bus loading and unloading pull-outs within the right of way for bus loading associated with the Elementary School.
- b) A traffic access plan be developed for the site including: identification of bus routes that avoid any left turns, and other measures to reduce the impacts of both bus loading and unloading and parent pick-up and drop-off.
- c) To avoid bicycle and pedestrian conflicts, a pedestrian and bicycle pathway connecting Stone Avenue N to N 92nd Street at Ashworth Avenue, be developed utilizing the School District property north of the proposed new middle school.

The motion was seconded by Mr.David Smith.

No further discussion occurring, the question was called. The vote was

5 in Favor

0 opposed

1 abstaining

A quorum being present and the majority of those present having voted in the affirmative, the motion passed

Members noted tht for clarity they wished to vote on the middle school parking departures.

Ms. Baiback-Penkala moved that, **In-Favor – 6; Oppose – 0; Abstain -0, motion passes.**

The departure for on-street bus loading and unloading for the middle school be approved on condition that:

- a) If technically feasible, the street configuration of Wallingford Avenue North be designed to provide bus loading and unloading pull-outs within the right of way for bus loading associated with the Elementary School.
- b) A traffic access plan be developed for the site including: identification of bus routes that avoid any left turns, and other measures to reduce the impacts of both bus loading and unloading and parent pick-up and drop-off.
- c) To avoid bicycle and pedestrian conflicts, a pedestrian and bicycle pathway connecting Stone Avenue N to N 92nd Street at Ashworth Avenue, be developed utilizing the School District property north of the proposed new middle school.

No further discussion occurring, the question was called. The vote was

6 in Favor

0 opposed

0 abstaining

A quorum being present and the majority of those present having voted in the affirmative, the motion passed

Mr. Sheppard informed the committee that he will write up the report along with three sets of meeting minutes in the coming weeks. Mr. Sheppard suggested to put some rationale on each of the conditions. The report gets forwarded to DPD and issues their final recommendation.

VI. Adjournment and Scheduling of Next Meeting if Needed:

No further business being before the Committee; the meeting was adjourned.