



December 21, 2020

Abby Weber
Seattle Department of Construction & Inspection
700 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2000
P.O. Box 34019
Seattle, WA 98124-4019
Via e-mail: abby.weber@seattle.gov

Re: Seattle Pacific University Citizens Advisory Committee EIS Scoping Comments

Dear Ms. Weber,

The Seattle Pacific University (SPU) Major Institutions Master Plan (MIMP) Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) is charged with advising the City and SPU concerning the development of the new Seattle Pacific University Major Institutions Master Plan (MIMP). The CAC has the opportunity to comment on the Scope of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The CAC offers the following comments:

Height, Bulk and Scale

The increase of height limits, as well as the added potential for development sites that are larger than the prevailing pattern of the surrounding neighborhood, may result in adverse height, bulk, and scale impacts between areas of less intensive zoning and more intensive zoning.

1. Analyze the impacts of orienting development on W. Nickerson St. toward the South Ship Canal Trail.
2. The proposed MIO boundaries increase all MIO-50 to MIO-65. Impacts on properties adjacent to the MIO boundary, specifically around the southwest portion of campus (7th Avenue W including W Cremona St., W Dravus St., and W Barrett St., and 5th Ave W between W Barrett St. and W Dravus St.) need to be analyzed. Mitigation measures, such as extending the MIO-37 buffer, and including landscape buffers, building setbacks, and buildings stepping up, need to be considered to create adequate transitions from the campus to these properties.
3. There are significant topographic changes on campus and the surrounding neighborhood. Consequently, the taller campus zoning heights will impact surrounding properties differently, depending on where each sits on the high and low points of the slope. For example, the area south of Hill Hall sits at the high end of the valley and should be assigned a lower building height.

Land Use

Increasing the capacity for institutional uses by expanding the SPU MIO district may result in adverse land use impacts, including incompatibility with the surrounding residential uses; influence on the surrounding commercial land use pattern and availability of commercially zoned land; and creation of inconsistencies with the adopted goals and policies of the Seattle Comprehensive Plan.

4. Analysis of the expansion of the MIO Boundary into non-residential areas needs to be provided to ensure future uses are compatible with adjacent properties and explicit transparency with the current property owners is needed. Specifically, the area north of W. Nickerson St. and west of 6th Ave. W.

and the area bounded by the triangle formed by W. Nickerson St., W. Dravus St., and Queen Anne Ave N.

5. Impacts due to the reduction in the amount of commercial/industrial/light industrial property should be analyzed.
6. If the Ashton Hall parking lot and entrance that are proposed for housing were to become future student housing, the inevitable increase in students loud conversations and laughter late at night, sitting in groups on the front steps of houses on the south side of West Etruria Street, talking loudly, eating, smoking, and leaving cigarette butts and sometimes food wrappers would be seriously detrimental to the neighborhood. Compatibility of student housing with residential uses should be analyzed.

Parking

The increased parking demand associated with the growth of student, faculty and staff populations, and more intensive development may result in adverse impacts on availability of parking in the surrounding neighborhood.

7. Analysis of the on-campus parking supply and the rate charged to park on-campus needs to be analyzed. Supply should meet the needs of students and staff who choose drive to the campus as well as encourage students and staff to park on campus, as street parking in the neighborhood is very limited. This is of particular concern in areas where new on-campus housing is proposed close to residential streets.
8. Only some streets impacted by the University are Restricted Parking Zones (RPZ). The University will need to work closely with the committee and SDOT to develop Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) methods and parking demand management strategies to reduce the number single occupancy vehicle (SOVs) trips to the campus. Increasing the number of RPZs could be an option – and if that happened, the impact be on parking further away from campus should be analyzed.

Traffic and Transportation

Increased trips and traffic volumes, and revised traffic patterns associated with increased students, faculty and staff populations, more intensive development, and right-of-way closures, may result in adverse impacts on motorized and non-motorized transportation facilities, including streets, intersections, sidewalks, and bicycle infrastructure; which has the potential to undermine the stability, safety, and character of the surrounding neighborhood.

9. Analysis and attention need to be paid to plans for enhancing pedestrian and vehicular safety, especially at 3rd Ave W, West Bertona St., W. Nickerson St., and future “Campus Gateways.” Analysis on enhancing pedestrian and vehicular safety to accommodate more frequent pedestrian crossings, and discourage mid-block crossing, particularly if there are attractive mixed-use elements that draw students across these streets needs to be included.

Shadows on Open Space

The campus is located to the south of West Ewing Mini Park. The increase of height limits and potential for larger development sites may result in adverse impacts in the form of light blockage and shadows on this public open space.

10. Light and shadow impacts should not be limited to the West Ewing Mini Park. Impacts due to light and shadow need to be analyzed for proposed development sites on all public spaces.

The following elements of the environment should be included in the environmental analysis:

Historic and Cultural Preservation

11. Provide an inventory of Historic structures and landscapes and plans to preserve/rehabilitate those proposed to be impacted by development.

Plants & Animals

12. Provide an inventory of significant trees on and adjacent to the campus, paying particular attention to the deciduous trees near the President’s residence, and plans to preserve those proposed to be impacted by development.

Noise

13. If the Ashton Hall parking lot and entrance that are proposed for housing were to become future student housing, the inevitable increase in students loud conversations and laughter late at night, sitting in groups on the front steps of houses on the south side of West Etruria Street, talking loudly, eating, smoking, and leaving cigarette butts and sometimes food wrappers would be seriously detrimental to the neighborhood and needs to be analyzed. Areas where Major Institution uses are adjacent to residential uses should also be analyzed for noise impacts.

For the Committee,

Patreese Martin & Nancy Ousley,

Committee Co-chairs