



MEMORANDUM

02 December 2022 (*revised 13 December 2022*)

To: Nelson Pesigan – Department of Neighborhoods
From: Rebecca Hutchinson – Mahlum

**RE: Alki Elementary School – Departure Comment Responses
3039297-SD**

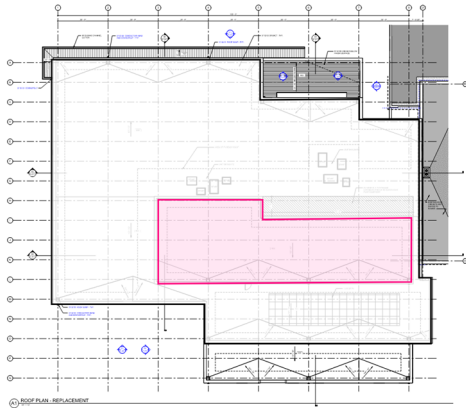
We received several emails and postcard comments related to our requested Departures from the City of Seattle Land Use Code. Some comments supported the Departures request and some comments raised concerns over the proposals. There were also several comments outside of the scope of the Departures process that are unrelated to the requested deviations from the Land Use Code. Mahlum and Seattle Public Schools will continue to work to address these comments in forums outside the Departures process, such as communications through the Lets Talk program and dialogue in Community Meetings like the one held on June 14, 2022. This letter is intended to clarify the Seattle Public School's thinking related specifically to the proposed Departures from the Land Use Code.

Departure for Building Height SMC 23.51B.002.D

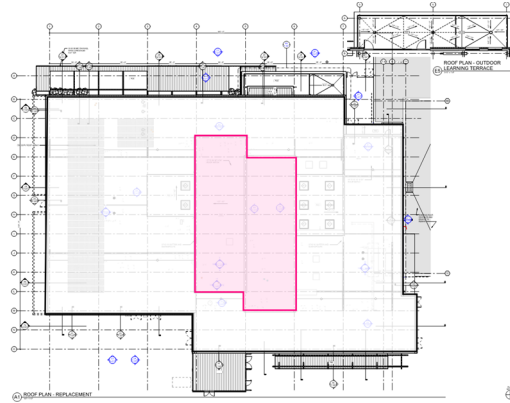
Several comments expressed concern over the requested Departure for building height stating the proposed design results in a building out-of-scale with the surrounding residential neighborhood and with potential adverse impacts to adjacent residences including views, shadowing, and noise from the rooftop mechanical units.

The proposed design calls for this Departure in order to meet the Seattle Public Schools' educational program specifications. A 500-seat school facility for the Alki Elementary School community accommodates potential growth, provides flexibility for changing program needs and demographics, and provides students with a safe and positive learning environment. SPS's planning approach balances the projected future regional and city growth with historical trends. The portions of the building that exceed the maximum height include the third floor of the main school building, the main school building roof parapet, and the mechanical penthouse, which is an enclosed room that protects equipment on the building roof. Enclosing the equipment increases longevity, reduces maintenance needs, allows for more energy-efficient equipment, and helps to reduce mechanical noise. The project team has progressed the design further since the Departure's presentation was completed a few months ago. As you can see from the updated roof plan on the following page, the long-side of the mechanical penthouse has been rotated away from the adjacent neighbors to the south.

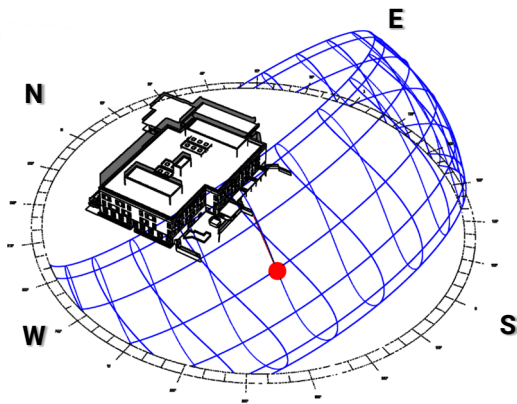
The building's interior lighting will be tied to occupancy sensors as required by the Seattle Energy Code so that lights are not inadvertently left on to disturb neighboring residences after hours. The sun path diagram below illustrates that shadowing from the building will fall primarily on the playfield and will not impact these homes to the south.



Above Left: Roof Plan with highlighted Mechanical Penthouse, oriented east-west, as illustrated in the Departures Presentation dated August 2022



Above Right: Updated Roof Plan with highlighted Mechanical Penthouse, oriented north-south, dated December 2022



Above Right: Sun path study

Departure for Vehicular Parking Quantity SMC 23.54.015 Table C

Several neighbors expressed concern over the lack of vehicular parking on site. Currently, there is no striped vehicular parking at the school, although some staff informally park on the paved area south of the school.

The proposed design maintains the existing conditions related to striped vehicular parking. Due to the limited area of this site, providing on-site vehicular parking would result in sacrificing educational program and outdoor learning space. The tables on the Departures' presentation slides 59 and 60 demonstrate the consistent approach that SPS has taken towards the allocation of site area for educational programming over the private vehicle. Results of a traffic study conducted by Heffron Transportation, Inc. indicated that on street parking space utilization is below levels considered full capacity and that there is sufficient

available on-street parking to accommodate daily parking. Transportation and parking recommendations for large events are provided within the above-mentioned traffic study. Those recommendations are also included on slide 63 of the Departures' presentation dated August 2022.

SDOT, the Seattle School Traffic Safety Committee, and Safe Routes to School Committee support the proposed site plan. Strategic planning decisions that align with their published best practices include: locating the new school entrance near the crosswalks connecting to SW Stevens Street; prioritizing space for education and community over that for private car infrastructure; providing safe and convenient bicycle access; and locating the school bus loading separate from the parent pick-up area. Recent coordination with SDOT has confirmed the ability to add an accessible loading zone within the right of way along 59th Ave SW.

Through the Transportation Management Plan, SPS will work with SDOT and the Seattle School Traffic Safety Committee and Safe Routes to School to confirm access routes and drop off / pick up protocols with a focus on encouraging walking, biking, and bus (for those eligible) prior to opening the new school.

Departure for Bus Loading and Unloading SMC 23.51B.002.I.4

Several neighbors expressed concern over traffic from buses and the school's arrival and departure operations. Currently, school bus loading and unloading occur on-street in front of the mid-block entrance along 59th Ave SW. This area is currently a designated bus loading zone.

The proposed design maintains the existing bus loading zone along 59th Ave SW, with replacement of the curb, sidewalk, and street trees, and the relocation of the speed hump to accommodate the accessible loading zone and a more efficient, safer bus staging arrangement. No change to the number of school buses that have historically served the site is anticipated with the proposed project, which is why the existing on-street school-bus load/unload is adequately sized for the demand. Due to the limited area of this site, providing on-site bus loading would either require the removal of educational program and outdoor learning space, or would require the site to expand into the residential neighborhood.

Through the Transportation Management Plan, SPS will work with SDOT and the Seattle School Traffic Safety Committee and Safe Routes to School to confirm access routes and drop off / pick up protocols with a focus on encouraging walking, biking, and bus (for those eligible) prior to opening the new school.

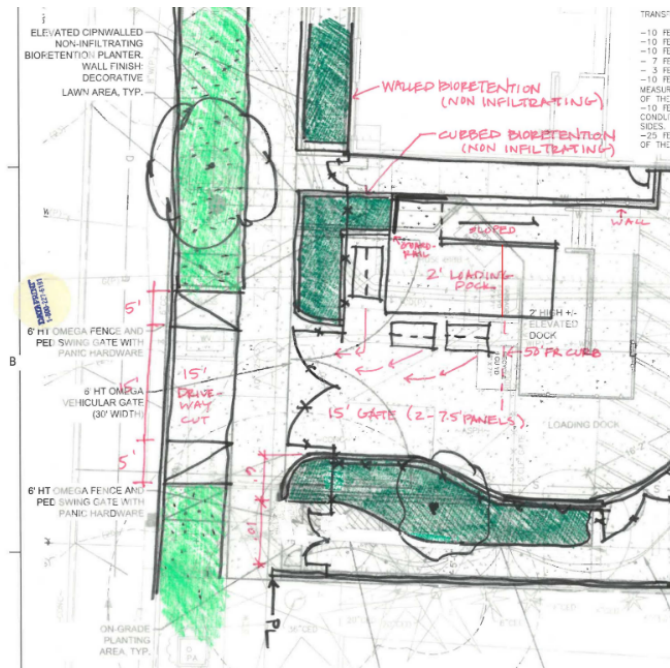
Departure for Curb Cut to Service Area without Vehicular Parking Spaces SMC 23.54.030.F.2

No comments were received regarding this Request for Departure.

Departure for Curb Cut Width SMC 23.54.030.F.2.b.3

Departure for Curb Cut Flare SMC 23.54.030.F.2.b.3

There were a few people expressing concern about the requested Departure for Curb Cut and Curb Cut Flare Width, stating that wider vehicular driveways are in conflict with pedestrian safety. The proposal maintains that this driveway does not pose a risk to pedestrians because it would only be accessed by professional drivers for either waste collection or deliveries during non-active hours. We are actively working on a new plan with SDOT that would reduce the curb cut and/or flare widths per the preliminary sketch below. While it is our hope to not exceed the allowable widths, conversations are ongoing with SDOT and we request the Departure in order to give them and the team flexibility in finding a solution.



Above: Site Plan Sketch illustrating reduced curb cut and curb cut flare widths

Departure for Bicycle Parking (Long-Term) Quantity SMC 23.54.015 Table D

Comments were received regarding the requested Departure for long term bike parking quantity, citing the City's commitment to be more bike friendly and the opportunity for bike transportation to offset vehicular travel to/from the site. The proposed design provides 40 long-term bicycle spaces whereas the current site does not provide any bike parking that meets the standards for long-term bike parking. SPS is in conversation with Seattle Parks and Recreation to provide additional bicycle parking stalls for joint use on the Parkway north of the new main entry. Additionally, SPS is in conversations with SDOT to locate stalls within the right of way along 59th Ave SW, without impact to vehicle parking spaces. Through these partnerships, the intent is to increase the number of bicycle parking stalls located at and around Alki Elementary School by 38 stalls in order to meet the code-required quantities.

Departure for Bicycle Parking Performance Standards SMC 23.54.015.K.2

No comments were received regarding this Request for Departure.

Departure for Changing-Image Message Board Sign SMC 23.55.020

Several comments expressed concern over the Departure to allow a changing image message board sign, stating that it would be unnecessary and/or intrusive to the residential neighborhood. As indicated in the Departures request, the sign will be one-side and will not include video, flashing, scrolling, tumbling, or moving images and will operate during specific times (7am to 9pm). The sign allows SPS to alert families and the community to events taking place at the school and allows for the display of messages in multiple languages. The proposed location of the sign faces north towards the Park, therefore there are no direct

lines of sight between it and the surrounding residences. As such, the sign will not be of significant impact to the adjacent neighbors.

Notifications

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

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