

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATION
OF THE HEARING EXAMINER FOR THE CITY OF SEATTLE

In the Matter of the Application of

FIRE STATION NO. 13

APPLICATION NO. CC-8504052
C.F. NO. 294210

for a council conditional use
pursuant to the provisions of
Title 23, Seattle Municipal
Code, (Zoning Ordinance 86300,
as amended)

Recommendation: The application should be GRANTED.

Introduction

No correspondence or testimony in opposition was entered in the record. The file, however, contains a letter of comment requesting more information.

For purposes of this recommendation, all section numbers refer to the Seattle Municipal Code, Title 23, unless otherwise indicated.

The Director's report, submitted by the Department of Construction and Land Use (DCLU), recommended that the application be conditionally granted.

This matter was heard before the Hearing Examiner on September 20, 1985.

After due consideration of the evidence presented by the applicant, the information provided by the Director's request and all evidence elicited during the public hearing, the following findings of fact and conclusions shall constitute the recommendations of the Hearing Examiner on this application.

Finding of Fact

1. The subject site is located in Single Family 5000 zone (SF 5000) at the southwest corner of the intersection of Beacon Avenue South and South Spokane street in the Beacon Hill area of Seattle. Legally described in the record, the description is incorporated by reference herein.

2. The property is developed with a one story, 4,047 sq. ft. fire station and the proposal is to construct a 983 sq. ft. addition to the southwest portion of the fire station to provide additional sleeping space for the firefighters.

3. The irregularly shaped lot has 84.8 ft. of frontage along Beacon Avenue South and 122.5 ft. of frontage along Spokane Street. The Hearing Examiner finds through credible testimony that the site abuts a recreation area to the south, a large elevated water reservoir to the southwest and west. Across South Spokane Street to the north and northeast are single family residences and apartment buildings and across Beacon Avenue South to the east is the Jefferson Park Golf Course.

4. Through credible testimony of the representative of the Department of Administrative Services the Hearing Examiner finds that the addition is primarily intended to provide accommodations for female firefighters and their needs, to reconfigure the fire station's interior and to improve utilization of space to allow easier accommodation of possible newer apparatus, i.e., a large fire engine.

5. The Hearing Examiner finds through credible testimony that the addition is oriented away from the residential usage in the vicinity in that the present existing fire station structure will be a buffer between the addition and the residential usage along South Spokane Street.

6. The elevated water reservoir will further shield lighting on the addition, and the lighting will be directed away from the residential usage.

7. The Hearing Examiner finds that landscaping will be planted to enhance existing shrubbery, and buffer both the addition and in particular, the parking lot to the rear along South Spokane Street from the residential usage.

8. From the record the Hearing Examiner finds that the fire station has been in operation since 1927 and will continue to operate at the same service response level after the addition is completed as no new firefighter apparatus is to be added.

9. Through credible testimony the Hearing Examiner finds that, although in a residential zone, the automobile traffic is rather intense in that both Beacon Avenue South and South Spokane Streets are heavily travelled arterials. South Spokane Street provides access to both I-5 and the West Seattle Freeway. Beacon Avenue South is 126 ft. wide and can accommodate parking in the median strip that is in the middle of Beacon Avenue South.

10. With regard to the State Environmental Policy Act of 1971 (SEPA) and Ordinance 105735, as amended, Chapter 25.05, Seattle Municipal Code, the action proposed in this subject application has been determined by the responsible official to be categorically exempt pursuant to the provision of WAC Chapter 197-11.

Conclusions of Law

1. Relevant provisions for expansion of a public facility in single family zones are found at Sections 23.44.34 and 23.44.22.

2. Section 23.44.34 requires that expansion of a public facility must satisfy public necessity. The Hearing Examiner concludes that the addition meets the public necessity requirement in that the needs of female firefighters and the accommodation of possible newer and larger apparatus can be achieved.

3. Section 23.44.22 requires dispersion, non-destruction of residential structures for expansion of a public facility and that concerns of noise/odor, landscaping, lighting/glare, bulk and siting and parking have been met.

4. The addition is concluded to meet the dispersion criteria for expanding a public facility because lot lines are 600 ft. and more from any lot line of any other institution in the residential zone. In that no residential structure will be changed or demolished in the construction of the addition, it is concluded that the requirement of non-destruction of a residential structure is met.

5. The Hearing Examiner concludes that impacts from the noise and odors resulting from the expansion of the fire station would be negligible as the addition is to be utilized as sleeping quarters. Noise and odors during construction will not be significant, short term in nature and will be during normal working hours.

6. The landscaping requirement will be met in that existing landscaping will be maintained and enhanced by the planting of new shrubs to screen the parking lot and by trees and hedge being planted around the addition.

7. Shielding of exterior lighting will be effected by the elevated water reservoir, by the existing fire station structure and by directing lighting away from the residential use across Spokane St. The intensity, area, location and angle of illumination will be limited and non-reflective surfaces will be utilized.

8. The addition is concluded to meet the remaining requirements in that the addition will not exceed the height limitation, the appearance of bulk is minimized, the addition provides modulation to the east and west facades, and meets the requirements for yards, lot area, and parking.

9. The signage requirement was not addressed but the Hearing Examiner expects no more than that which is appropriate to other fire stations in residential zoned areas.

Recommendation

For each of the above reasons, the recommendation of the Hearing Examiner to the City Council is as follows:

The application is granted.

Entered this 3rd day of October, 1985.

Roger H. Shimizu
Roger H. Shimizu
Hearing Examiner Pro Tempore

NOTICE OF RIGHT TO PETITION

Pursuant to section 23.80.10(E), Seattle Municipal Code, any person substantially affected by or interested in this recommendation further consideration. The petition must be filed with in fourteen days of the date of this recommendation and should be addressed to the City Council, Land Use committee, Municipal Building, Seattle, Washington 98104.

The petition should clearly identify specific objections to this recommendation and the relief sought; however, the petitioner should not include any additional evidence or exhibits as the Council's consideration will be based upon the record of the Hearing Examiner's hearing. If the Council determines that a factual error exists in the record or that important information is missing, the Council may have the record supplemented pursuant to Section 23.80.10.E.3 or 23.80.10.E.4. At its public meeting the Council may allow oral or written arguments based on the record.