

**CITY OF ISSAQUAH  
DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
MINUTES**

February 18, 2015

City Hall South  
Council Chambers

135 E. Sunset Way  
Issaquah, WA 98027

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT**

Randy Harrison, Chair  
Michael Brennan  
Raymond Leong  
Mel Morgan, Jr.  
Richard Sowa  
Carl Swedberg

**STAFF PRESENT**

Amy Tarce, Senior Planner  
Lucy Sloman, Land Development Manager  
Christopher Wright, Project Oversight Manager

**APPLICANT TEAM**

Steve Crawford, Issaquah School District  
David Mount, Mahlum Architects

**CALL TO ORDER**

HARRISON, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. He explained the process for reviewing the project application tonight, and invited audience members to sign up to give comments during the public comment period. He noted it is anticipated that the Commission will take a vote on recommending approval of this project to the City Council after all deliberations are complete.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

MOVED BY MORGAN, SECONDED BY SOWA that minutes of the Development Commission meeting on May 7, 2014 be approved as presented. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**PUBLIC HEARING: Issaquah Middle School Master Site Plan and Site Development Permit**

Approval for a Master Site Plan and Site Development Permit to construct a new Issaquah Middle School at the current site of Clark Elementary School. The new Middle School will include one, two, and three-story wings and provide about 131,161 square feet of academic, athletic, and performing arts space on 32 acres. The project involves circulation improvements for both the Middle School and the existing Issaquah High School. The School District property includes three parcels totaling 63 acres and is located at 500 2nd Avenue SE (site of existing Clark Elementary School and Tiger Mountain High School) and north of Issaquah High School.

**Staff Presentation**

Sloman introduced Senior Planner Amy Tarce, who made staff's presentation. She started with an overview of the project and the Commission's role in the review and approval process. She referred to the staff report criteria for a Master Site Plan (MSP) and Site Development Permit (SDP), and said she will not go through these in detail in tonight's presentation unless there are questions. She summarized the MSP and SDP requirements and said the proposal is generally compliant with all requirements. She said the applicant will give more details about the phasing of the project during the applicant's presentation.

She continued her presentation on compatibility with adjacent uses; vehicular traffic impacts; non-motorized transportation, access and connections; and critical areas and associated buffers. She gave details on all of these elements. She displayed the site location on a map and displayed an

aerial view of the site, and gave more details about the proposed project site, as described in the staff report. She displayed photos of existing conditions as well as drawings of the proposed buildings and views of the proposed site changes from various perspectives. She stated that staff has reviewed the proposal and concluded that the proposal is compatible with site use standards and regulations, and is compatible with adjacent uses. She noted that the building height for the proposed building is an expansion of a nonconforming condition, in accordance with IMC 18.7.60, under which the adjacent High School also exceeded the allowable building height.

She discussed transportation impacts and mitigation and noted that staff is working with the applicant on additional traffic impact analysis as part of the SEPA review. She clarified that the School District and not the City is the lead agency in the SEPA review. She continued with details about impacts to level of service standards at several impacted intersections, and staff's recommended condition (Condition S.1) to mitigate the operational and safety impacts at the intersections identified in the traffic mitigation study. She gave details about streets and sidewalks on 2nd Avenue SE and SE Evans Street, including existing conditions; and details about site circulation and vehicular improvements on 2nd Avenue SE as well. She discussed new retaining walls proposed for 2nd Avenue SE, noting that this was part of a previous Commission discussion of this project. She discussed staff's recommended conditions for addressing the retaining walls (Conditions C.3 and C.4), as provided in the staff report. She continued with existing conditions on SE Evans Street, including photos of current views. She provided details of proposed improvements on SE Evans, including six-foot sidewalks and ramps, a five-foot planter with street trees, curbs, buffers, and street lighting.

She continued with a discussion of the Rainier Trail adjacent to the site, including existing conditions and current views at the trailhead and from the current High School site, and noted that the applicant has proposed non-motorized trail improvements including a five-foot wide gravel trail and two parking spaces (also gravel). She showed the applicant's proposed trail improvements on a diagram. She said staff's concerns are the location of the proposed trail crossing for safety reasons, and the unsuitability of the five-foot wide gravel trail as a replacement for the existing paved trail inside the School District property. She showed a view of the access road to the Issaquah Sportsmen's Club and described some of the parking situations that are occurring there now. She described staff's recommendation to site the trail crossing and said staff's recommended conditions (Conditions D.7 and D.9, as provided in the staff report) address staff's concerns about both the trail crossing and the width of the gravel path.

She noted that two items are included in the MSP that will not be constructed at this time, specifically the portable classrooms and future parking to be developed in the northeast corner of the School District property.

She showed a diagram of the proposed internal circulation and noted that multiple modes of transportation will use the same passages and roads. The applicant can answer any questions about that during their presentation, she added. She said the diagram can help illustrate the connection between visitor, parent, faculty, and student vehicles as well as bicycle, pedestrian, and bus circulation within the site, and gave examples of how the circulation will function. She noted that staff is recommending a condition (Condition D.3) to help delineate the four crosswalks on the site.

She continued her presentation on design harmony and compatibility, including addressing building height and noise from the adjacent Issaquah Sportsmen's Club. She discussed the issue of blank walls in detail, including where blank walls are less critical or are not visible from the public right-of-way and/or pedestrian areas. She showed where staff is recommending including a covered walkway on a diagram, which will mitigate a blank wall near the school entrance, as well as

examples of wall treatments. She showed drawings of building modulation and architecture, noting the compatibility of proposed styles and materials with the adjacent High School. She continued with a discussion of landscape buffers and the ways that impacts will be mitigated for pedestrians and for compatibility with adjacent uses. She referred to staff's recommended condition (Condition C.9, as included in the staff report) for fencing, specifically for screening of chain link fencing and the use of vegetative screening or an ornamental fence. Tarce continued her presentation with photos of the critical areas, including wetlands and steep slopes.

She concluded her presentation and reiterated that staff recommends that the Development Commission move to recommend to the City Council approval of the applications with the conditions of approval provided in the staff report and Exhibits 1 through 13; and to direct the Development Services Department to prepare findings and Facts and conclusions for approval by the Development Commission Chair.

### **Applicant Presentation**

David Mount, Project Architect, Mahlum Architects, 71 Columbia Street, Seattle, made the applicant's presentation. He introduced other members of the applicant team as well, and gave some introductory remarks about the project. He noted this is a multi-phased project that will create a new Middle School as part of a campus that will eventually include Issaquah High School, a new Middle School, and an Elementary School. He discussed the six main goals for the project, including the need to create a strong, distinct identity for the Middle School separate from the High School. He displayed an aerial photo of the project and explained how the project anticipates the expected growth for the City. He displayed a site diagram and described how the proposed project is designed to make the most efficient use possible of the property and site, including the use of a main entry point.

He described how the proposed project has been modified since it was last reviewed by the Commission, including how buses would circulate on and off the site to serve both the High School and Middle School. He noted the need for an orientation appropriate for a Middle School to the site itself, in contrast with the High School, which has an orientation to the "outside world." He continued with a description of the proposed parent/visitor/staff/student vehicular circulation patterns on the site, as well as the location of parking lots. He described where buses will enter the site to serve both schools, how they will circulate and students will be dropped off and picked up, and where they will exit the site. He also showed proposed routes for pedestrian and bicycle traffic.

He described the phasing of the project in detail, including the construction activities to take place during Phase 1 (April 2015 to October 2016); the Interim Phase (October 2016 to July 2017); and Phase 2 (July 2017 to December 2017). He described how circulation will be accomplished during the Interim Phase, and how fire and police access will be adequately maintained during the interim period.

Jennifer Munde, Landscape Architect, Cascade Design Collaborative, 911 Western Avenue, Suite 210, Seattle, explained how landscaping for the project responds to some of the perimeter buffer requirements along 2nd Avenue SE and along all parking lot edges. She described the proposed buffer plantings; the use of native materials whenever possible; the need to provide a safe educational space and an appropriate educational environment; and how spaces will allow students and parents to interact, including a courtyard, an amphitheater, science porches, rain gardens, and demonstration gardens. She described how the project fulfills its goal of having a low environmental impact and how a water collection/treatment facility on Evans Street will also create a buffer. She continued with more details about how the eight proposed portables will be clustered

and landscaped to fit into the site. She noted the athletic field will be synthetic, and the site will be terraced to take advantage of the natural, gentle slope of the site.

Mr. Mount continued with more details about the features of the proposed buildings, including the gym, administrative offices, the performing arts space, commons, classrooms, kitchen areas and cafeteria, library, fitness area, and so on (levels one, two, and three). He noted the strong intent to use similar and compatible materials with the High School, and showed drawings of the proposed architectural style and features of the proposed Middle School. He showed a view from the northwest of the classroom wing; from the north of the courtyard; and samples of the proposed materials.

### **Public Comment**

HARRISON opened the meeting for public comment at 8:16 PM.

Leif Steffny, 385 E. Sunset Way, Issaquah, said he is representing the Issaquah's Sportsmen's Club and gave some background about the Club. He noted that, although it is known primarily as a shooting range, the Club is a community-oriented nonprofit organization that has been serving the community for nearly 100 years. He said overall the Club has only one main issue with the proposed plans, namely noise. Plans for the parking lot in the northeast corner will be problematic, he continued, as the trees there provide a natural sound barrier and the current plan calls for removal of a large number of trees at that location. He gave details about how the Club has reduced its noise output over the years and its commitment to reducing the level of noise produced by the Club. He said the Club feels that removing those trees will defeat the Club's efforts to reduce noise, and suggested other options such as building a wall to reduce noise. He gave more information about how reducing noise is important for the community at large. He also said reducing the trees will seriously impact the environment and that the City and applicant should consider building a multi-tier parking facility rather than removing more trees.

Michelle Gibson, SE Evans Lane, Issaquah said she has lived on SE Evans for over 20 years. She expressed her concerns about the plan, specifically the widening of SE Evans to accommodate 32 buses twice a day, faculty and visitor vehicles, and more high-school drivers. She spoke in favor of a tiered parking lot, and noted that this was suggested at the previous meeting when the Development Commission considered this project. She described the current problematic conditions that now exist on SE Evans Street as a result of student traffic, and said this proposal will make all those problems worse. She also noted that speeding is a problem there. She spoke in favor of more parking for trail access as well as better signage for people trying to access the trail.

David Kappler, 255 SE Andrews Street, Issaquah, commented on the lack of access to the Rainier Trail and Park Pointe in the proposed project. He described the current lack of parking and signage to access the trail. He continued his comments about a higher priority being placed on chauffeuring students to school and a lower priority on making it easy for students to use buses. He said the effort and money being put into arranging vehicular access should be put more directly into education, and spoke in favor of making buses a more attractive option for students. More kids riding the buses would result in more funds being available for educational purposes, he noted. He said the Commission doesn't have information yet about traffic mitigation or traffic counts, and he said he doesn't see how a decision can be made without that information. He suggested moving the readerboard to the other corner. He noted that SEPA is not yet complete. He agreed that a covered canopy in front of the school is needed. A lot of extra material from the site will be trucked offsite, he continued, and said it would be great to use that material for some additional berming, perhaps by the City on the Park Pointe property. He said the offsite trucking could be reduced by using the material produced by construction, although he realizes that not all of it will be re-usable.

Connie Marsh, business owner at 1175 NW Gilman Blvd., Suite B-11, Issaquah, and Issaquah resident, said at least the bus loop will be shared by the two adjacent schools. She referred to the gravel road with student parking along the road, and said she didn't understand how the gravel trail will work with the gravel road, saying that dust and lack of delineation will be a problem. She referred to the letter she sent to the Commission about her concerns, and referred to the noise from the nearby Sportsmen's Club. She said walking on the trail can be frightening if you aren't expecting the noises that are produced by the shooting range. She suggested some noise mitigation for the trail. Students do not use the pathways as described in the documents, she continued, and described the routes students take to access the High School. She said she is not sure why parking for the High School isn't located right next to the High School rather than down on SE Evans. She continued her comments about the dangers of mingling parents dropping off students with students accessing buses. She showed where separated parking could be located, bringing buses and parents into the campus on separate entrances on 2nd Avenue SE. She said doing so might be more expensive but the plan as it now stands creates an odd, suburban-style car system serving a very urban school. She said having 32 buses access the site twice a day is not addressed in the SEPA checklist, so she doesn't understand how that will be mitigated.

Ms. Marsh continued her comments about the lack of clarity in the staff report about the transportation facility, specifically how its intrusion into the wetland buffer will be mitigated. She said the wetland is located right next to the transportation facility, and while she would prefer to see some wetland repair in the project, at the very least she could like to see non-galvanized, decorative fencing specified in the conditions.

She concluded her remarks by saying that "lessons learned" from construction of Issaquah High School would seem to indicate that this project will be equally as colorless as the High School, particularly in winter. Some sort of visible locator is needed for moving from floor to floor within the building. Also the deciduous trees in front of the High School look desolate and would benefit from having more variety to break up the monotony. She referred to a suggestion in her letter to add a condition that any disturbed ground to be landscaped be completed within three months of the general finish of the project. She gave examples where other projects have resulted in bits of adjacent property just growing weeds unless a specific requirement was included to landscape them.

Hearing no additional requests to speak, Harrison closed the public hearing at 8:41 PM.

### **Commission Discussion**

In response to Ms. Marsh's comments, Tarce clarified that the proximity of the wetlands to the transportation center is addressed on page 30 of 201 in the staff report. The wetlands at the transportation center will not require mitigation because work will be outside the required 75-foot buffer, she added.

SOWA said the idea of moving from a car-driven orientation to a bus-oriented community makes a lot of sense to him, and said that is an issue that requires more discussion.

LEONG said this project is trying to squeeze a lot of things into this small spot, including the existing nearby Issaquah Sportsmen's Club, and he appreciates trying to put a busy school into a small lot. He referred to the parking and circulation issues as needing additional scrutiny, especially the drop-off area. He asked for clarification of having 32 buses access the site, twice a day. Is there enough holding area, he asked. Mr. Mount said 29 buses now access the site, and they all do fit into the drop-off area, using two lines. He explained how the buses will enter and exit

the site to accommodate student movement. He showed where the buses will stack on the site, noting that it is typical to have students all load onto them before the buses leave the site. He said it is also very typical for parent drop-off areas to be separated from the bus circulation site but all use the same entrances and exits.

Steve Crawford, Issaquah School District, gave more details about the District's transportation provisions for its students, and gave facts about how the School District provides bus service to its student population. Students are encouraged to ride the bus, he continued, but there are strong parental concerns about kids waiting at bus stops and/or walking to school, as well as scheduling conflicts, which result in many parents choosing to drop their child off at school.

LEONG asked where on the diagram students would be dropped off versus where students would catch a school bus. Crawford showed how the two patterns are separated in the proposed circulation plan. He showed where a retaining wall and a fence would help keep them separate. MORGAN asked additional questions about bus and parent circulation patterns being separated. Crawford showed where the parent drop-off zone would be, and noted that bus drivers are professional drivers. He said the District feels this provides the safest separation for students and especially student drivers.

HARRISON said would it help encourage people to put their kids on the bus if the buses had priority, especially if the drop-off zone was further away than the bus loading zone. He said he understands that the School District can't mandate that students ride the bus, but it does seem possible to reprioritize the movement and proximity of circulation plans in favor of buses rather than private vehicles. Crawford noted that both the Middle School and High School students ride the same buses, and by locating the bus loading area as it is in the proposal, we feel it best serves all the students who need to access those buses. In response to questions from MORGAN and SWEDBERG, Crawford gave additional details about where parents would drop off and pick up students, and where students would access buses. This configuration does limit crossings at the east and west ends of the zone, he noted, and plans call for four points on the intersection to be staffed for traffic control. SWEDBERG said if all the buses came in front of the school only, and did not enter the site, there would be no conflicts.

BRENNAN said on the question of the logistics of moving people around campus, what is the impact of this arrangement on properties along SE Evans Street. Do buses now access Clark Elementary on SE Evans, he asked. Crawford showed where buses now access the site, and noted that there is currently no bus traffic on this part of SE Evans. He described the project's earlier circulation configuration as last discussed with the Commission. He noted that 32 buses represents fewer vehicle trips on SE Evans than parents and visitors entering the campus from SE Evans because that kind of traffic occurs all day long, including after school hours and in the evenings, as opposed to a short period in the morning and afternoon only. He spoke about the advantages of combining loops for each school into one loop that would serve both, which would reduce the number of bus trips on SE Second Ave. He said the current number of buses serving Clark Elementary School would be reduced to four or five, and explained how the student counts from the existing Tiger Mountain High School and Clark Elementary School will be included in mitigation for the project as a whole.

HARRISON asked what will be at the location of the present Middle School. Crawford explained the majority of that site will be the new Clark Elementary School, and gave more details about how the school will be configured. HARRISON asked will traffic from Clark Elementary School have the same access to Issaquah/Hobart Road that it currently has. Crawford said yes, and noted that the school will have a smaller footprint, and there will be only four or five buses serving the school.

HARRISON asked will the net result be reduced traffic on the Front Street/Sunset Way interchange. Crawford replied yes, and on First Avenue as well.

LEONG asked what are the plans for the portables on site. Crawford said typically we plan for portable space to accommodate expected increases in student population growth. City projections are for 2,800 additional students over the next decade or so, and portables would help accommodate that growth. LEONG said it might make sense to add space now to the classroom area, which would allow eliminating the portables and moving the complex to the west. Crawford said portables would be an interim solution for growth. There are no ten-acre parcels of vacant or unused land left anywhere in Issaquah, and as our school sites become significantly more dense in the future, we feel that portables give us the best solution with the least amount of impact to the neighborhood. In addition, he added, it would require millions more dollars to completely build-out the site now in anticipation of future growth.

SWEDBERG asked why the parking lot north of the High School field isn't closer to the High School itself. Crawford showed the parking lot options on a diagram. It might be physically possible, he continued, but would result in more trees lost and higher retaining walls.

SWEDBERG noted the Commission first reviewed this project 18 months ago, and then it was put on hold and redesigned. The original plan for the building indicated it would be only two stories. Crawford said that is correct, and explained changes in the building height and the relocation of the ballfield and access roads in this iteration. A third story allows for a more compact building, which in turn saves more trees in the northeast corner of the property, he added. SWEDBERG said the Commission was concerned about the potential for a dark courtyard created by the two-story building in the first review cycle. He asked whether the new configuration results in more classrooms. Crawford said one classroom was added. He continued the configuration originally had an angle that created a rather narrow space, which has been widened out in this version. SWEDBERG **said is asked if it is** possible that another floor could be added later on. Crawford replied no, but an addition could expand the building to the north, which could include more stories.

HARRISON said on page 51 of 201, it states that "sidewalks... will serve as a shared use trail for bike and pedestrian circulation," yet state law says that bicycles are to be considered vehicles and not allowed on sidewalks. Crawford explained that a section of 2nd Ave. SE currently has a shared bicycle lane. A wider combined lane would connect with the Rainier Trail, he continued, so that cyclists on the trail could use the new connector onto the shared use pathway without having to cross traffic.

LEONG asked ~~does the track have seating~~ **whether the small seating area provided for the track/football field is adequate**. Crawford replied yes, and showed the terraced seating on a diagram. It is typical of Middle School track facilities, he added. MORGAN asked about expected usage patterns for the track facility. Crawford said parking is typically open on weekends and evenings, and showed how users would access the playfield and parking lot for after-hour use.

HARRISON asked does the City or the School District enforce the existing parking requirements at this location, noting that he personally sees violations every day at this site despite clear signage. Allowing parking violations to continue sends a poor message about responsibility to students, he added. Crawford said he is not sure exactly who is responsible for enforcement of parking requirements at this location. HARRISON asked whether parking by patrons of the Sportsmen's Club ever overflows onto SE Evans. Mr. Steffny replied that SE Evans is typically completely filled by student parking, making it impossible for Sportsmen's Club members to find street parking on SE Evans. HARRISON said a good place to start might be providing consequences for those who

violate parking regulations, including determining whose responsibility it is to enforce the regulations.

HARRISON asked what would be **the** impact on the existing trees if the parking lot planned for the future was put into place. Crawford noted that is not an area of old growth forest; **it was part of the gun club shooting range**. Putting in parking would require the removal of some trees. He referred to the tree survey information in the staff report.

HARRISON asked whether one readerboard will serve both the Middle School and the High School. Crawford replied yes. HARRISON said his opinion is that readerboards in general are a planned distraction, and the location of this one is particularly problematic. Crawford noted that all Issaquah School District schools have readerboards that provide information about activities and events at the facility on a limited scroll basis.

BRENNAN asked clarifying questions about the proposed design compatibility of the new Middle School with the High School while also maintaining a stand-alone presence. Mount said the proximity of the two campuses requires that the design create a cohesive campus, but we also want to ensure an age-appropriate environment for each school. BRENNAN asked about the blank wall conditions at the building's entry, noting that the last rendering shows trees, but trees without leaves would result in a rather stark wall there. Mount referred to the presence of a canopy as a possible modification to the blank wall issue. He said we also see trees as a significant element here, and a canopy would mean the loss of trees. He said we have had discussions with City staff about adding patterns to the walls that would give them interest. Relative to the High School, he continued, this wall is smaller in scale than the High School gym wall. He added there is also the question of the value of a canopy that would have to serve a 900-student school, what size it should be, and so on. **Tarce responded by noting that before staff included an option for a covered walkway, she stated**, we measured whether or not such a walkway could be accommodated, and determined it was possible to put in a five-foot wide canopy and include trees, particularly columnar trees.

HARRISON asked whether embossing a pattern on the ~~concrete surfaces of the~~ **blank walls of the gym, similar to what WSDOT uses for freeways**, would be an acceptable way to mitigate them. Tarce replied **yes-no, because the cement fiber board material does not lend itself to bas relief treatment**. She noted that **for the 13-foot concrete retaining walls near the tennis courts, however, this would be appropriate.** **will be Hardi-Plank (fiber cement board) and embossing isn't possible on that kind of material.**

MORGAN said the blank walls shown in the diagrams in the staff report don't really represent what the walls will look like. If this were a commercial building, he continued, he doubts the Commission would allow these blank walls to be part of a recommendation for approval, he noted. He continued blank walls are a big issue, and he doesn't want to see commercial buildings be discriminated against by allowing blank walls on public projects. Tarce referred to page 71 of 201 in the staff report, and noted that staff has included a Condition (C.5) that would mitigate blank walls on all facades using either Alternative A or Alternative B. MORGAN said **he agrees** that a proposed canopy would not provide enough to mitigate a blank wall. Crawford said other vertical elements, such as columnar trees, could help. We have also had discussions about making the 13-foot wall a green wall.

BRENNAN said the proposed building exceeds the height restrictions for the zoning, and said staff referred to this in the presentation as a nonconforming condition. He said he recalled that an

Adjustment of Standards was required when the proposed High School exceeded the building height restrictions. Wright clarified that the same clause in the code that allows for a non-conforming building height that was used for the High School also applies to this proposed building. The code does allow for an existing non-conformity to be expanded in Community Facilities zones if there is a public benefit in doing so.

BRENNAN said he is concerned about construction impacts and mitigation, particularly on SE Evans Street. Will construction access be from SE Evans, he asked, and what are the plans to mitigate construction traffic. Mount replied access will be from both the Clark Elementary School entrance and SE Evans Street. BRENNAN asked will construction work be staged, and/or will the contractor be required to operate in such a way that impacts are minimized. Crawford replied yes. He noted that the contractor, Cornerstone, is part of the applicant team and has been on board as this project has moved through the planning process. HARRISON asked for people living on SE Evans, what they can expect in terms of large construction equipment versus other project vehicles using SE Evans during construction. Will construction access to the site from SE 2nd Avenue and from SE Evans be split 50/50 between the two types, for example, he asked. Crawford said he is not sure how the traffic will be distributed, and it will depend largely on the phase of work under way. BRENNAN noted sensitivity to the adjacent residential neighborhood is very important on a project like this.

MORGAN referred to page 16 of the Design Standards (page 93 of 201) and asked about the second item (staff comment about exterior of library/administration wing in Appendix 2, Design Standards). Tarce said that appears to be an error, and made a note of it.

MORGAN asked will the Council make its decision without having the results of the traffic study. Tarce replied yes. HARRISON asked staff to explain how the Development Commission can be asked to recommend a project without having the traffic studies or SEPA completed. Wright explained the Council is the final decision-maker on this project, unlike the last project the Development Commission reviewed. This project is somewhat unusual in that the Issaquah School District is the lead on SEPA, not the City. Because of the condensed time frame, the School District did not want to issue the final SEPA before tonight's meeting was held because of the possibility of having to reissue it as a result of action taken tonight. The SEPA should be issued before the Council is scheduled to take action, however, and the Council can decide whether or not they feel they have adequate information to make a final decision, he stated.

LEONG asked whether energy efficiency measures, such as solar panels, were considered. Crawford replied yes; we looked at many energy-saving measures. The project meets or exceeds the state's energy efficiency protocols for public schools, he continued, and described the project's energy efficiencies and green-building measures. Mount added some energy-saving measures don't pencil out in terms of using tax dollars; the rate of return in term of cost savings is either nonexistent or very low. He described energy-savings measures in the design, including the selection and use of materials, heating and heat recovery systems, LED lighting, and so on.

LEONG asked whether or not the building has an elevator. Mount replied yes, and showed it on a diagram.

HARRISON asked for additional comments from the Commission and there were none. He clarified that the Commission will now proceed to go through the "green sheets" (Design Standards checklist) section by section. He asked Commissioners to indicate "Acceptable" (the project meets the standards) or "Not Applicable" (the standards do not apply), and to offer any additional conditions to be considered. Tarce noted that all the conditions staff is proposing are included on pages 55 to 65 of the staff report, and also in a handout that includes the conditions included

directly onto copies of the green sheets. Sloman added that the design standards with the conditions incorporated into them begins on page 79 in the staff report. Tarce clarified that “acceptable” by the Commission indicates acceptance of the proposed conditions. HARRISON replied that is correct.

The Commission addressed each section in the Design Standards, and indicated “Acceptable” or “Not Applicable” with the following exceptions.

On item 6, page 83 of 201, MORGAN suggested changing “Design Commission” to “Development Commission.”

BRENNAN said the language about plant materials on page 87 of 201, item 5c, does not specifically address not using noxious and invasive species in disturbed areas. He said he thinks the language should be stronger, and suggested adding a condition that groundcover and landscape plantings be of adequate depth and density to eliminate noxious and invasive species in all disturbed areas. Other Commissioners agreed to add a new condition that addresses this issue.

In discussing item 3, page 90 of 201 about noise mitigation, HARRISON expressed his concern that the use of walls to mitigate noise can potentially send sound upward. In this case, people living on Tiger and Squak Mountains could hear more noise if sound walls are constructed to mitigate noise from the Issaquah Sportsmen’s Club.

On Condition C.5, page 95 of 201, MORGAN expressed his concern that architectural treatments to alleviate blank walls for this project are not yet identified, and asked whether perhaps the Commission’s recommendation should go forward with a notation that the Council should specifically look at this item to be sure a new design is acceptable to them. He continued this is a big enough issue that he would feel more comfortable that the Council has more than just a recommendation that the applicant “do something” to modify the blank walls. The Commissioners discussed how their role in the review of project design standards has changed and whether adding such a notation in their recommendation would set a precedent. Sloman noted this is not the final plan for the building, and in fact the plans that will be presented to the Council for approval are unlikely to be at that point. She used the plans for the building at 7th and Gilman as an example of the Commission approving a general concept rather than specific elements.

HARRISON said the Commission is saying that we are concerned about a misunderstanding about something as critical as treatment of blank walls, and whether using a notation in its recommendation to the City Council that the Commission has not yet seen the proposed treatment would amount to “cherry picking” what the Council needs to review. BRENNAN agreed, and said without seeing the elevation views, what level of detail are we really recommending. If we aren’t seeing the proposed elevation views and saying the final result needs to follow this concept or at least be close to it, then where is the value in our review. Sloman said this is an important point in the new review role for the Commission, and a clear departure from how the Commission has reviewed projects in the past. After additional discussion, the Commission agreed to modify Condition C.5 to “The building design shall incorporate architectural treatments revised and acceptable to the City Council to mitigate the blank walls.”

On Condition D.9, MORGAN and SWEDBERG suggested adding language that would require review and approval of the final Rainier Trail design by the City of Issaquah Parks and Recreation Department before the landscape or site work permit is issued. The other Commissioners agreed.

HARRISON said he assumes that the Fire Department has reviewed these plans and approved them. Crawford replied yes, we have been working with the Fire Department and will continue to

do so as we move through the process. Tarce added due to the complexity of phasing this project, staff has included Condition Ph.3 requiring the provision of fire access during both the interim phase and during construction.

MORGAN recommended to staff that the City Council receive “before and after views” from the street level at SE Evans and 2nd Avenue SE. That would be especially helpful for them in visualizing the proposed retaining walls, he noted.

HARRISON asked what is the schedule for providing Council with the Commission’s recommendation. Sloman replied the agenda bill will be sent forward tomorrow, and described the steps leading to Council’s final decision scheduled for its March 16 meeting.

MOVED BY MORGAN, SECONDED BY SWEDBERG that the Development Commission recommend the approval of the Master Site Plan and the Site Development Permit to the City Council for the Issaquah Middle School project, file Numbers MSP14-00002 and SDP14-00001, as described and evaluated in the Staff Report dated February 18, 2015 and project drawings (revised on February 4, 2015) received on February 11, 2015, Exhibits 1-13, and subject to the conditions therein (and as amended tonight), as follows:

- Revised Condition D.9: The existing section of the Rainier Trail in the school district property will be replaced with a 6-foot wide gravel path, to be located from the point where the Trail forks, extending north up to the access road for the Issaquah Sportsmen’s Club, then connecting back to the Rainier Trail north of the access road. Crosswalks will be provided where the trail crosses the access road. The applicant will work with City staff to identify final alignment of the gravel path and any additional parking for trail users along the access road. Final approval of the trail design by the City Parks and Recreation Department shall be required prior to approval of Site Work or Landscape Permit.
- New Condition: Provide groundcover and landscape planting of adequate depth and density to minimize noxious and invasive plants.
- Revised Condition C.5: The building design shall incorporate architectural treatments revised and acceptable to the City Council to mitigate the blank walls.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOVED BY MORGAN, SECONDED BY BRENNAN that the Development Commission direct the Development Services Department to prepare Findings of Fact and conclusions for review and approval by the Development Commission Chair, affirming the Development Commission’s decision to recommend approval of the Issaquah Middle School project, file Numbers MSP14-00002 and SDP14-00001, subject to the conditions listed in the Staff Report dated February 18, 2015 and project drawings received February 11, 2015, Exhibits 1-13, and subject to the conditions therein (and as amended tonight).

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

HARRISON thanked the public for their comments and participation in tonight’s public hearing. MORGAN thanked the School District, applicant team members, and particularly Tarce for their excellent work and for providing a great presentation tonight.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS/ADJOURNMENT**

Wright noted that the next Development Commission meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 4, 2015.

With no further business to conduct, HARRISON adjourned the meeting at 10:40 PM.

Development Commission  
02-18-15

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Lowe  
Recording Secretary

DRAFT