

Seattle City Council
December 1, 2012

Divided Report – Clerk File 309092, Application of Seattle University to prepare a new Major Institution master plan (MIMP) for the Seattle University Campus, located at 901 – 12th Avenue

At the November 14, 2012 Planning, Land Use and Sustainability (PLUS) Committee, the Committee continued its evaluation of Seattle University's (SU) request for a new Major Institution master plan (MIMP), and the appeals filed on elements of the proposed MIMP. The committee was first briefed on the MIMP and the related appeals at its September 12, 2012 meeting, with oral argument on the appeals held on October 26, 2012. The committee allowed for supplemental briefs to be filed by November 9, 2012.

The appellants requested the following changes in the proposed MIMP:

1. Deny the Major Institution Overlay (MIO) expansion and rezones at the Photocenter Northwest site;
2. Deny the MIO expansion and rezones between 12th and 14th Avenue near East Marion;
3. Deny the rezone and development standards for the 1300 and 1313 East Columbia sites or remand for further analysis by DPD;
4. Require additional conditions related to replacement housing requirements in the MIO expansion areas;
5. Require that advance notice on any development plans be provided to the community, in a time and manner that serves the goals and purposes of the MIO provisions of the zoning code;
6. Do not allow student housing to qualify as replacement housing, as defined in SMC 23.34.124.B.7 (Citizen Advisory Committee recommended condition 19); and
7. Require that SU hold a public meeting to review its annual report 5 years after the adoption of the MIMP, and every 4 years thereafter (Citizen Advisory Committee recommended condition 3).

At the November 14 meeting, the Committee received a briefing on each of the appeal issues, including a summary of the record, the positions of the parties both in support and in opposition to the appeal issue, and relevant portions of the record. On appeal issue 1, Councilmembers Conlin and O'Brien voted to support the appeal, and thereby deny, the MIO expansion at the Photocenter Northwest site. Councilmember Burgess voted to reject the appeal issue and allow the MIO expansion at the Photocenter Northwest site.

The remaining appeal issues were unanimously rejected by the committee. Attachment A shows the site with the rezone while Attachment B shows the site without a rezone.

The proposed MIMP is subject to the City Council's quasi-judicial rules (Resolution 31001) and the State's Appearance of Fairness Doctrine (RCW 42.36). The Council's review is based on the record developed by the City's Hearing Examiner at a two-day hearing conducted May 2 and May 3, 2012. The record contains testimony and documents that include both the request for a new MIMP and the elements of that MIMP that the appellants have asked that Council overturn.

Majority position (Conlin, O'Brien)

SU has not made a persuasive argument to support their contention that the MIO expansion at the 12th and East Marion site (called the Photocenter Northwest site) is needed for the MIMP to be successfully implemented. SU does not own this site, and has acknowledged that it has no plans to develop there. If the site was within SU's, as is the case with the five dwelling units they own in the other MIO extension south of East Marion Street, the case for including it would be more compelling.

The Photocenter Northwest site could provide up to 75,000 square feet of development, which is only 3% of the 2,200,000 square feet of development potential sought by SU in the new MIMP. Much more development potential can be achieved in other locations within the existing MIO and within the MIO expansions on Broadway that would be approved by the MIMP.

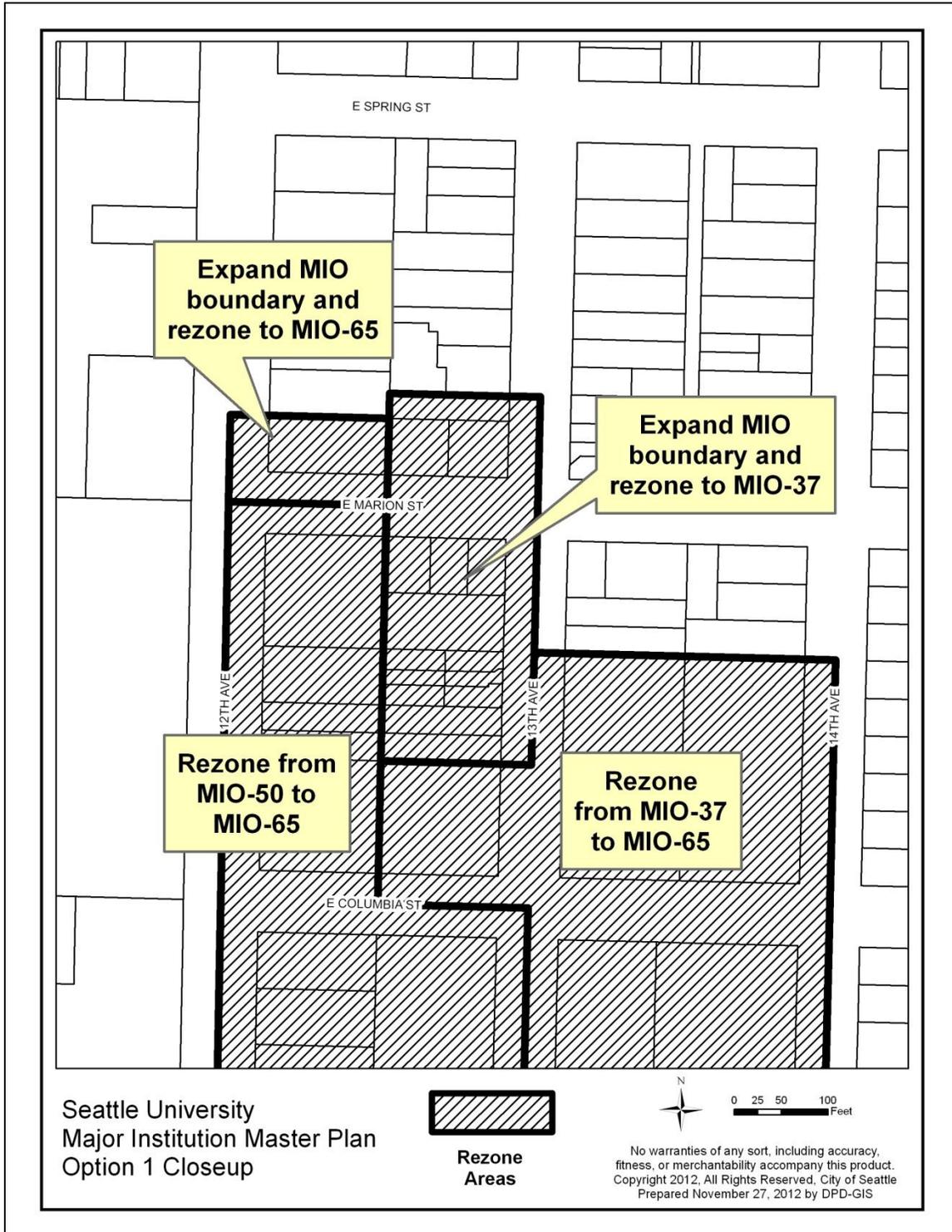
SU has acknowledged that the purpose of this proposed MIO extension is to reinforce a "gateway" to its 12th and Marion Street entrance, since the site would comprise the fourth corner of the MIO at this intersection. However, it is already quite clear where SU's boundary is along 12th Avenue.

The site's minor contribution to the MIMP as a "gateway reinforcement" is outweighed by the need to control the expansion of the MIO adjacent to residential neighborhoods.

Minority position (Burgess)

The MIO expansion at the Photocenter Northwest site provides SU with a needed foothold in an area that is reasonable for future expansion. They have developed and redeveloped buildings along 12th Avenue with sensitivity to the neighborhood and its goals. Their MIMP includes thoughtful and clear direction on how the site would be redeveloped if SU decides to acquire and redevelop the site. The MIO extension at this site is the companion to the proposed MIO expansion south of East Marion, which was not opposed by my fellow committee members.

ATTACHMENT A



ATTACHMENT B

