



**Legislative Department
Seattle City Council
Memorandum**

Date: October 22, 2012

To: Councilmember Richard Conlin, Chair
Councilmember Tim Burgess, Vice Chair
Councilmember Mike O'Brien, Member
Planning, Land Use and Sustainability Committee (PLUS)

From: Michael Jenkins, Council Central Staff

Subject: Council land use action to allow a new 19,800 square foot two-story clubhouse and driving range structure, a new 4,100 square foot cart storage structure, and 20,000 square feet of paving improvements, including a request to waive development standards to allow field lighting up to 90 feet in height and netting and net poles up to 140 feet in height (Clerk's File 312119, Project No 3012845, Type V).

The Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) has proposed to redevelop the Jefferson Park golf clubhouse and driving range facilities. The proposal requires the demolition of an existing 7,200 square foot clubhouse and 3,800 square foot driving range structure, to be replaced with a combined two-story 19,800 square foot clubhouse and driving range structure. DPR's proposal includes extending existing netting on 115 foot tall steel poles placed around the driving range with 25 foot extensions for a total height of 140 feet; netting height would also be increased to 140 feet. DPR has also proposed mounting new field lighting on these new poles, oriented downwards onto the driving range, at up to 90 feet in height. Finally, the proposal includes the construction of a new 4,100 square foot golf cart facility. These proposed construction activities require up to 20,000 square feet of grading and paving.

Jefferson Golf Course is located in a Single Family 5000 (SF 5000) zone. Public parks facilities are permitted outright in a SF 5000 zone. Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) section 23.76.064 authorizes Council to waive or modify development standards for City facilities. When Council waives or modifies development standards for a City facility, it also includes concept approval of the facility.

DPR has requested that Council approve the following four development standards modifications:

Development Standard	Requirement	Proposal	Modification Request
Allowed height of field lighting SMC 23.44.012	30 foot height limit	90 feet	Exceed height limit by 60 feet
Allowed height of netting for driving range SMC 23.44.012	30 foot height limit	140 feet	Exceed height limit by 110 feet
Allow an existing driveway to remain less than the minimum required width SMC 23.44.030.D.2	22 feet	17 feet 11 inches	Retain existing 4 feet 1 inch reduced width
Allow an existing curbcut to remain greater than the maximum allowed SMC 23.54.030.F.2.	25 feet	38 feet 5 inches	Retain existing 13 feet 5 inch additional width

On September 12, 2012, the committee held a public hearing on the proposal; testimony was given both in support and in opposition to the proposal. The testimony opposing the proposal focused on the loss of the existing golf structure; photographs of the structure are attached (Attachment A). Prior to seeking approval from the Department of Planning and Development (DPD), the proposal to demolish the existing clubhouse was reviewed by the City’s Landmark Preservation Board to determine if the structure should be nominated as a City of Seattle landmark. The Landmark Preservation Board denied the landmark nomination.

Following the public hearing, PLUS Committee members raised two questions:

1. What are the costs to rehabilitate the existing structure, instead of proceeding with the proposed development; and
2. What are the additional costs to provide netting at the proposed 140 foot height instead of replacing netting at its current 115 foot height.

1. Costs to rehabilitate versus new construction

In 2009, DPR prepared a Golf Master Plan that was adopted by the Council with the 2010 budget; Council also approved implementing the plan through the 2010 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). The master plan included two options - 1) retaining the existing Jefferson Park clubhouse and 2) the current proposal. As reflected in excerpts from that plan (Attachment B), DPR estimated that rehabilitation of the existing structure would cost \$3.65 million, while a new structure would cost \$4.54 million, or a difference of approximately \$890,000.

However, the reduced costs of rehabilitating the existing structure did not consider other factors that would affect the City’s golf program. CIP projects related to the Golf Master Plan assumed that increased revenues from new golf facilities, including the new driving range at Jefferson Park, would fund other City golf course improvements. For example, the proposed new driving range will include 50 tee stations, more than doubling the 23 tee stations in the existing one story structure. The increase in tee stations will create additional revenue from added player capacity. DPR’s planning efforts have also assumed increases in revenue from

the new café and banquet facility in the proposed clubhouse. Without the increased revenue from an updated facility at Jefferson Park, DPR would have to find new revenue sources to fund improvements in the adopted Golf Master Plan.

DPR's proposal includes replacing the existing one story driving range with a new two-story structure. If the existing clubhouse structure is retained, it would not be attached to the new two story driving range structure; this would reduce efficiencies for staff and patrons. DPR staff indicated that the renovation option was eliminated as a viable proposal early on in the planning process, as the new driving range could not be integrated with the existing clubhouse structure. DPR also indicated that rehabilitation costs would exceed their initial estimates, which did not include a complete evaluation of the building's structural integrity. DPR staff also indicated that approximately \$700,000 in design fees for the new facility would be lost if Council does not approve the new facility.

2. Additional cost for netting at the proposed 140 foot height

As described above, DPR's proposal assumes the development of a new two-story driving range structure. DPR's plans also assume new netting of up to 140 feet and light poles at up to 90 feet in height. To support the request, DPR worked with its architects – Bassetti Architects – to develop a lighting and ball trajectory study. The study's conclusions indicated that at the current 115 foot pole and netting height, approximately 5% of the balls shot from the proposed driving range structure would clear the existing 115 foot net height. Given the proximity of Beacon Avenue S. to the driving range, and the number of pedestrians and park patrons in the area, the study recommended that netting of up to 140 feet be installed around the driving range. Raising the netting by 25 feet would reduce balls clearing the netting to approximately 1.5%.

DPR has budgeted \$223,000 for the proposed lighting and netting. DPR also indicates that if Council does not approve the proposed clubhouse and driving range structure, the existing netting or lighting are sufficient for the existing driving range.

Recommendation

Based on DPD's recommendation and the testimony provided at the public hearing, I would recommend that the committee approve both the facility and the requested modifications to development standards.

If the committee agrees with this recommendation, there are two options:

- 1) return to the committee with a draft Findings Conclusions and Decision (FCD) document; or
- 2) vote the action out of Committee, with the draft FCD approved by full Council prior to full Council vote.