MICA
MERCER ISLAND CENTER FOR THE ARTS

Mercer Island Center for the Arts
SEPA Submission 1.23.2017 revised 2.16.17
Additional Information; Response to Public Comments and Peer Reviews

1. Response to Perrone Consulting Inc Report dated 10.4.16 regarding Geotechnical Engineering SEPA Review.

   **No action/modifcations required.**
   Perrone comments on the following will all be addressed in the construction process:
   - Compliance with Geotech recommendations for temporary shoring and excavation slopes
   - Best management practices to control soil erosion
   - Evaluation of the impacts of dewatering if any deep excavations are required on the groundwater table

2. Response to ESA Memorandum to Scott Greenberg dated 9.20.16 regarding Wetland Buffer Impacts and Mitigation Review

   The following was prepared in coordination with MKA civil engineers. In addition, please reference SEPA Checklist Attachment and . Note that the plans and SEPA checklist that were reviewed by ESA have been modified since their review. The current version of the Site and Paving Plan is shown as Attachment L to the SEPA.

   *Comment: Concern regarding grading within the wetland /wetland buffer*

   **Response: The existing wetland has been categorized as a Class III with a 50-foot buffer. There will be no grading within the wetland.**

   **The project proposes to reduce the buffer on the north end as well as the northeast corner to 25 feet. The reduced buffer area has been calculated and will be mitigated through buffer averaging by adding to the buffer in areas to the south. Disturbance within the buffer will include removal of the asphalt paving, minimal grading and planting of native species according to the wetland mitigation plan prepared by The Watershed Company. No grading will occur in the wetland.**

*Comment: Concern regarding stormwater discharge*

**Response: With respect to stormwater discharge, the current design proposes to intercept the hillside runoff slightly uphill from the fire access path west of the building. The southern half of the swale will be directed to the south. After the swale passes the southwest corner of the path it will follow the existing topography that slopes toward the wetland. In the existing condition, the wetland drains north onto the asphalt pavement where the water sheet flows to a catch basin. As the new building is situated on top of the existing catch basin, a new catch basin is proposed in the buffer north of the wetland. Where the buffer has been disturbed as a result of installing the catch basin and storm drain pipe, it will be restored according to the wetland mitigation plan. Wall drainage will either tie into the foundation drainage system or be tightlined to the storm drain system and an underground stormwater detention vault without impacting the wetland buffer.**

The following was prepared by the Watershed Company. In addition, please reference SEPA Checklist Attachment I: Tree Assessment, Attachment J: Critical Area Study, and Attachment K: Mitigation Plan

*Comment: A proposed storm drain connected to the existing storm drain system will pass through a new underground stormwater detention vault and discharge to a new bioretention cell located at the south end of the proposed building. The proposed bioretention cell is partially located within the 50-foot wetland buffer. MICC does not restrict the placement of bioretention cell in wetland buffers; however, buffer impacts associated with the bioretention cell have not evaluated or mitigated. The applicant should describe wetland buffer impacts, and detail how impacts will be mitigated. Further, an access road "stub" north of the bioretention cell area is shown on Sheet C502 Offsite Storm Drainage Plan which also encroaches on the 50-foot wetland buffer.*

**Response: Stormwater facilities (bioretention is no longer proposed due to high water table and soil conditions) and the access road 'stub' mentioned in the comment are to be positioned outside of the reduced buffer area. As mentioned elsewhere, buffer reduction is proposed consistent with MICC 19.07.080.C.2 and will include the enhancement of a significant portion of the reduced buffer.**

*Comment: The project would remove multiple trees, requiring a tree removal permit (MICC 19.10.020). The applicant should include a description of proposed tree removals and provide a restoration/protection plan per MICC 19.10.080. This documentation*

*should also include a discussion of trees that will be removed within the wetland buffer (a tree within 25 feet of the wetland boundary is considered a "critical area tree") and any landmark trees. Trees removed from the wetland buffer will need to be replaced.*

**Response: A tree assessment report has been prepared that details proposed tree removal activities. A key finding of the report is that, although still standing, most of the trees proposed for removal are dead. In addition, the prepared mitigation plan set includes tree protection measures for those trees that are to be retained, as well as replacement trees for those that are to be removed.**

*Comment: Sheet C502 (Offsite Storm Drainage Plan) indicates the proposed swale will continue into the wetland and the wall drain will be located within the wetland boundary. The applicant should confirm that no grading is proposed within the wetland and no fill material will be placed within the wetland boundary. If grading is proposed within the wetland buffer, these impacts (temporary and permanent) should be described.*

**Response: No grading is to occur within the boundaries of the wetland for any component of the proposal. All grading to occur within the buffer will be restored to a natural condition following construction.**

*Comment: Sheet W1 of 1 shows a buffer reduction at the north end of the wetland. The buffer will be reduced from 50 feet to 25 feet, which is the minimum width allowed MICC 19.07.080(C)(1). Buffer reduction would reduce the buffer area by 4,997 square feet. Proposed buffer reduction activities should be documented in a buffer mitigation plan. The proposed buffer reduction must account for the bioretention area and access road "stub" as described above.*

**Response: A detailed mitigation plan has been prepared concurrent with this response letter. The plan includes details regarding areas of enhancement, as well as maintenance and monitoring protocol. All stormwater facilities (bioretention is no longer proposed due to high water table and soil conditions) and the access road 'stub' mentioned in the comment are to be positioned outside of the reduced buffer area.**

*Comment: To mitigate for buffer reduction, the applicant proposes to enhance 5,996 square feet of buffer located about 80 feet south of the reduction, adjacent to the east side of the wetland (Sheet W1 of 1). Buffer enhancement is an approved mitigation activity that offsets loss of buffer functions associated with buffer reductions MICC 19.07.080(C)(2). To better understand if the proposed mitigation complies with MICC, the applicant should provide a more detailed mitigation plan. ESA recommends a buffer mitigation plan that provides applicable information listed in MICC 19.07.050(C).*

**Response: The submitted plan was prepared only to a conceptual level and was not intended to be a final permit-ready plan. A detailed mitigation plan**

**has now been prepared concurrent with this letter. The plan details areas of proposed enhancement and includes applicable information required by MICC 19.07.050.C. In addition, a critical area study has been prepared that documents compliance with the buffer reduction criteria in MICC 19.07.080.C.2.**

3. Response to Public Comments not included in original 1.23.17 Response

   **Issues raised in comments from Gehrig, Chong, Morrison, and Dunbar have all already been addressed in Attachment Q: Citizen Question Responses**

   a. Gehrig: B.8.2 Zoning
   b. Chong: B.14.1 Parking, B.14.2 Transportation Impact Analysis
   c. Morrison: B.14 Transportation (includes Parking)
   d. Dunbar: B.8.2 Zoning, B.14 Transportation