
Planning Commission Meeting Date: April 16, 2009

**PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM
CITY OF SHORELINE, WASHINGTON**

APPLICATION NUMBER: 301561

AGENDA TITLE: Public Hearing on School Height Development Code Amendment

PRESENTED BY: Joseph W. Tovar, FAICP, Director PDS, *JWT*
Steven Szafran, AICP, Associate Planner *SS*

I. INTRODUCTION

At your next meeting you will hold a public hearing on the High School Height Development Code regulations. Staff discussed these with the Commission at the April 2 meeting.

II. BACKGROUND

The Shoreline School District is in the preliminary phase of site and building design for the renovation of Shorecrest High School and the complete rebuilding of Shorewood High School. Shorecrest High is in an R-6 zone (See Attachment 1), while Shorewood High's zoning is split between R-6 in the west and Industrial (I) and R-12 on its eastern portion (See Attachment 2). A high school in the R-6 and R-12 zones is a conditional use, while high schools in the Industrial zone are a permitted use.

The Shoreline School District has begun its process of public outreach and preliminary design work for the two public high schools in Shoreline; Shorecrest, located at 15343 25th Ave. N.E., and Shorewood, located at 17300 Fremont Avenue N. (See Attachments 1 and 2). After development of conceptual design elements, the next step will be schematic design development, prior to a bond issue anticipated in winter 2010. The bond issue approved in 2006 included funds for the design of both high schools.

In preliminary meetings with School District staff and project architects, City staff reviewed the existing zoning and permitting processes involved, which in both cases would be a Conditional Use Permit, an administrative review process. We also discussed the City's Environmental Sustainability Strategy. During those discussions, it became clear that the School District would like to build up to three story structures (similar to the existing Shoreline Historical Museum in height, but not necessarily in other ways). However, the existing R-6 zoning for Shorecrest, and most of Shorewood, would not allow that height (35 foot maximum). In addition, the customary height for a high school gymnasium ceiling or theater flyspace would need to be higher still.

In order to give the School District the flexibility to build high school buildings with a smaller footprint (Environmental Strategy Goal), the staff proposes to amend the height provisions of the R6 and I zones. We recommend that the allowed height for high

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school buildings in these zones be 50 feet, while the maximum height for gymnasium will be set at 55 feet and theater flyspaces set at 70 feet.

Staff believes that a 50 foot height for an institutional structure is appropriate, for example, the new (four story) City Hall presently under construction is 52 feet tall. The amount of building mass that would be above that height is limited to two uses: gymnasias and performing arts theatres. Further, the conditional use permit provides authority to direct that these taller elements be limited in extent and located further away from single family areas.

This proposal would apply to all high schools in Shoreline, both public and private. In addition to Shorewood and Shorecrest, there are two other high schools (See Attachments 3 and 4): King's (on the Crista campus) and Shoreline Christian School (K-12, located in Briarcrest).

III. CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING PROPOSAL

The City Council may approve or approve with modifications a proposal for the text of the Land Use Code if:

1. The amendment is in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan; and
2. The amendment will not adversely affect the public health, safety or general welfare; and
3. The amendment is not contrary to the best interest of the citizens and property owners of the City of Shoreline.

STAFF ANALYSIS

The amendment is in accordance with the three decision criteria for the following reasons:

- Shoreline is identified in the introduction of the Comprehensive Plan as having strong neighborhoods with excellent schools and parks. It goes on to identify schools as being a major employer within the City of Shoreline. Second, community resources such as schools and libraries foster learning and educational development, and help make the City a better place.
- PR 16 states "Continue to develop and coordinate, with public and private school districts, the use of school facilities for park and recreational purposes after school hours in order to maximize the public benefit from existing resources".

By allowing high schools to be built taller, they will likely have smaller building footprints. That will encourage more area to be used for open and recreation space.

- The Comprehensive Plan also states that the school district can expand facilities as long as playfields and parking are not affected. Allowing additional height provides flexibility to the School District to reconstruct schools and maintain playfields and parking.

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- Since schools are a Conditional Use Permit in the residential zones, specific impacts of taller buildings can be mitigated by conditions assuring that higher buildings will not be a detriment to adjacent property owners.
- The City's Sustainability Strategy identifies objectives such as, "Decrease stormwater impacts through use of natural drainage techniques' and "Reduce impervious surfaces in new development". Encouraging high school to build taller will reduce the building coverage on-site making it more feasible to comply with the City's environmental goals. In addition, in terms of energy efficiency and life-cycle costs, it is less expensive to heat a building (with the same interior volume) that has several floors than one that is single-story and spread over a larger land area.
- The new Stormwater Manual encourages all redevelopment projects to look at low impact development techniques. One of the most basic ways of complying with LID requirements is to lessen the impervious surface on a site. Allowing high schools to develop taller buildings will in turn lessen the footprint making less impervious area.

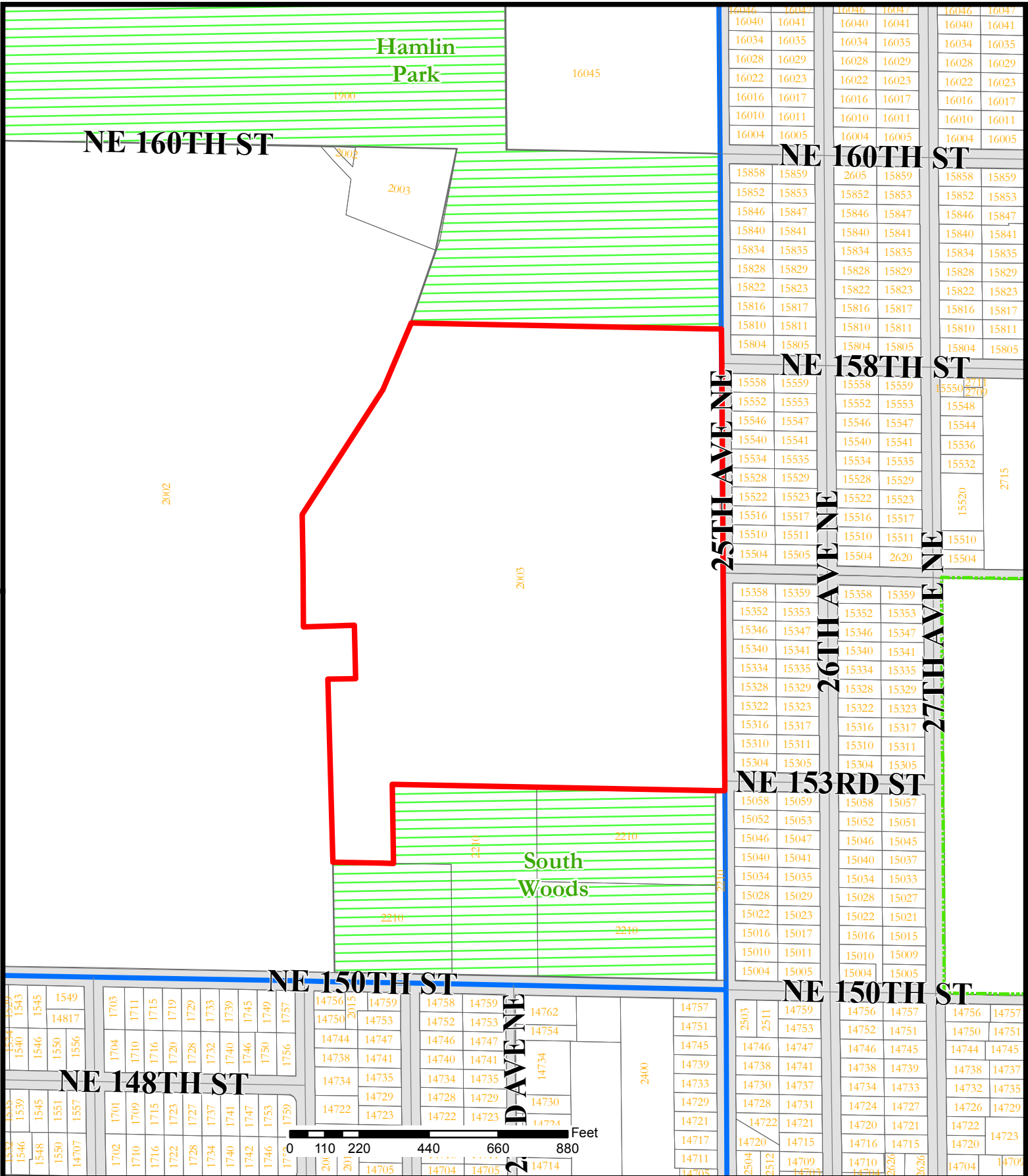
IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff concludes that this proposal merits approval because it meets the criteria listed in 20.30.350.

If you have questions prior to the meeting, please contact Steve Szafran at 206-801-2512 or email him at sszafran@shorelinewa.gov.

V. ATTACHMENTS

1. Map of Shorecrest High School and vicinity
2. Map of Shorewood High School and vicinity
3. Map of King's High School and vicinity
4. Map of Shoreline Christian School and vicinity
5. Proposed Ordinance modifying Tables 20.50.020(1) and 20.50.230
6. School District memo dated April 9, 2009



Property Name:
SHORECREST HIGH SCHOOL

Address: 2003 NE 160TH ST

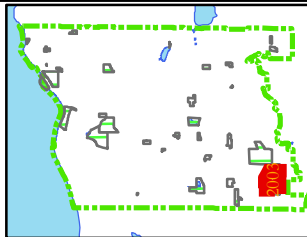


Tax Parcel selection



Tax Parcel

Right of Way

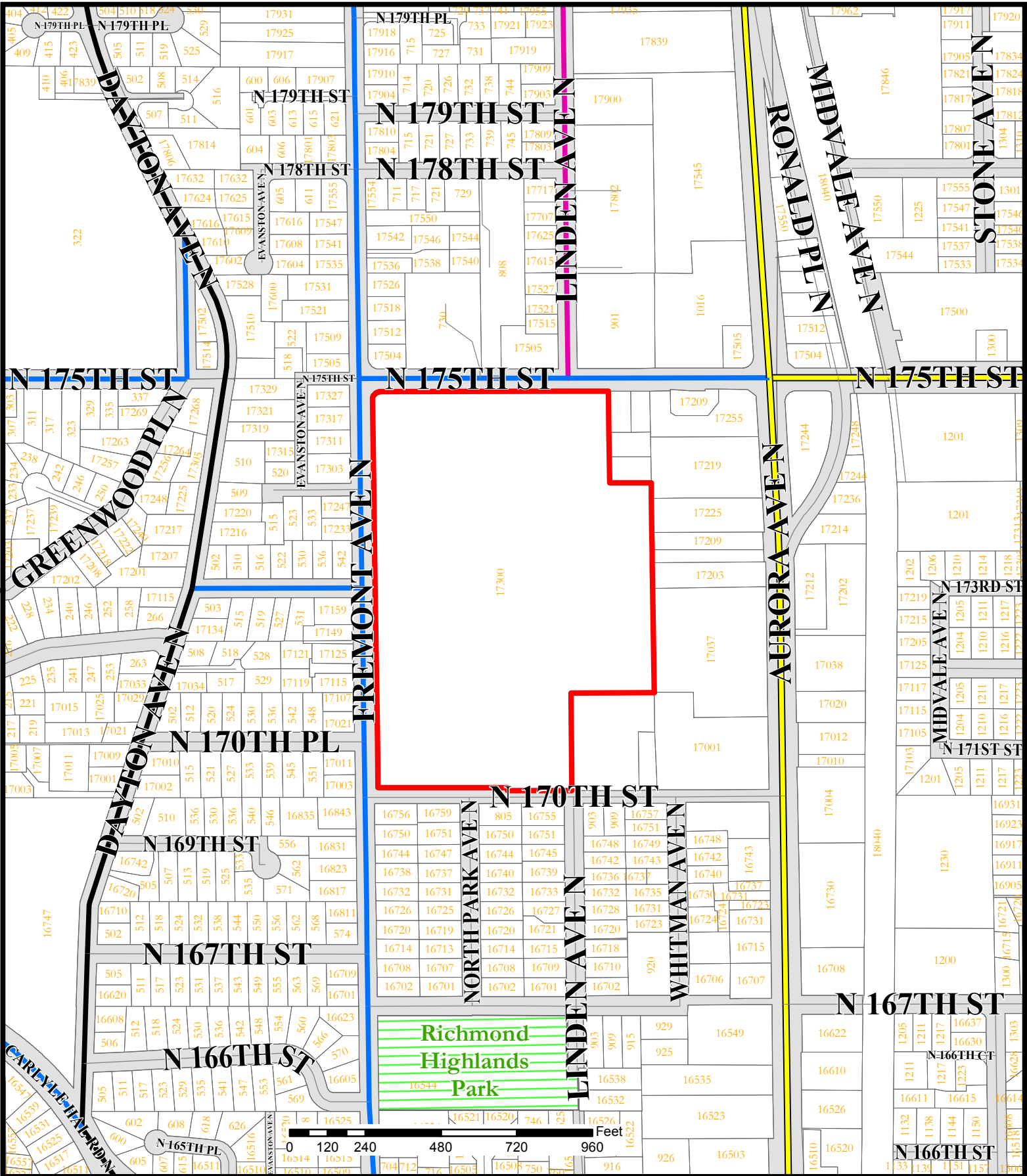


No warranties of any sort, including accuracy, fitness, or merchantability, accompany this map.



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Richmond
Highlands
Park

Property Name:
SHOREWOOD HIGH SCHOOL
Address: 17300 FREMONT AVE N

- Tax Parcel selection
- Tax Parcel
- City Limit
- Right of Way



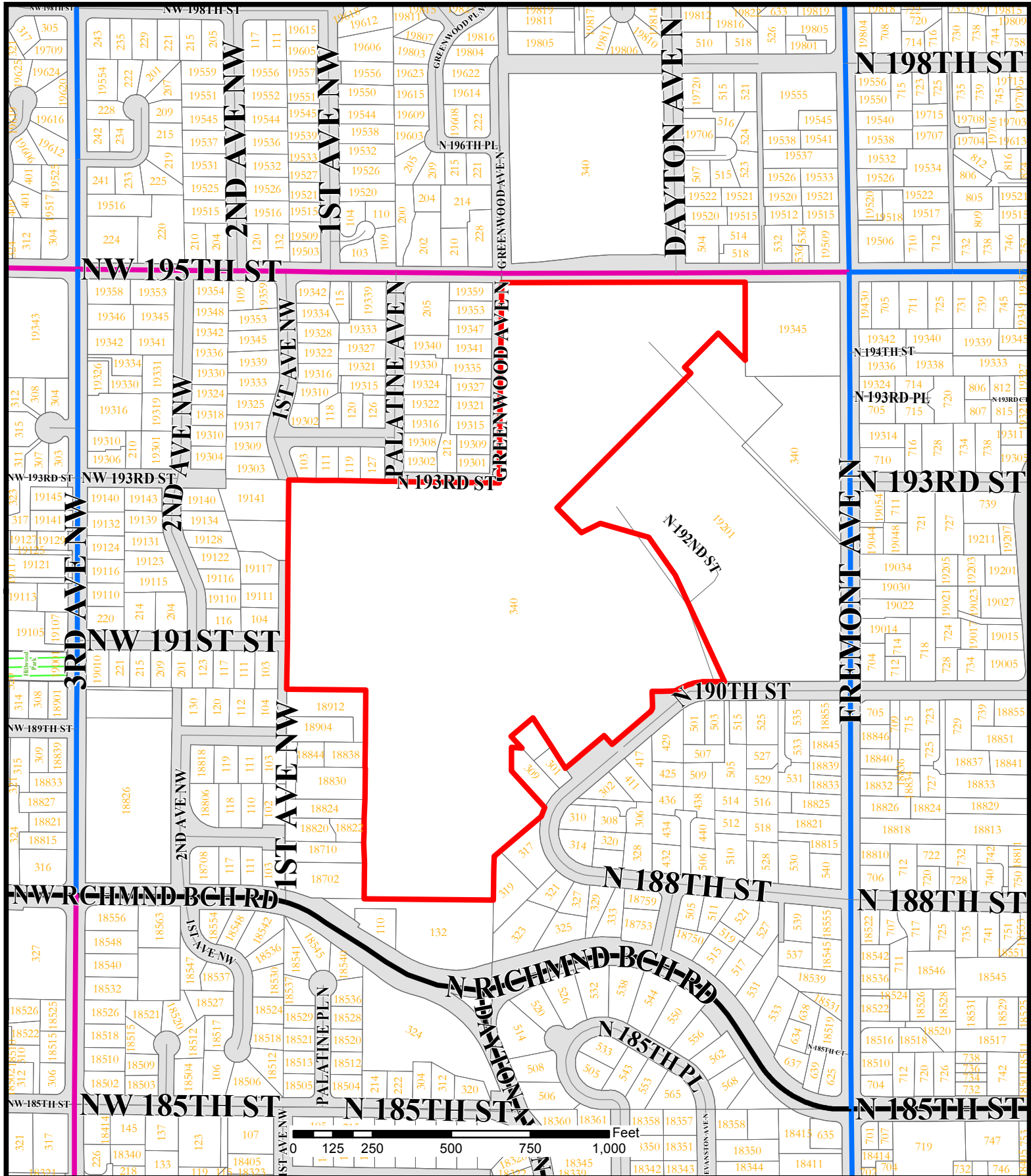
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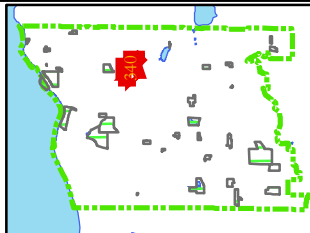
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Property Name:
KINGS HIGH SCHOOL
 Address: 340 N 190TH ST

- Tax Parcel selection
- Tax Parcel
- City Limit
- Right of Way



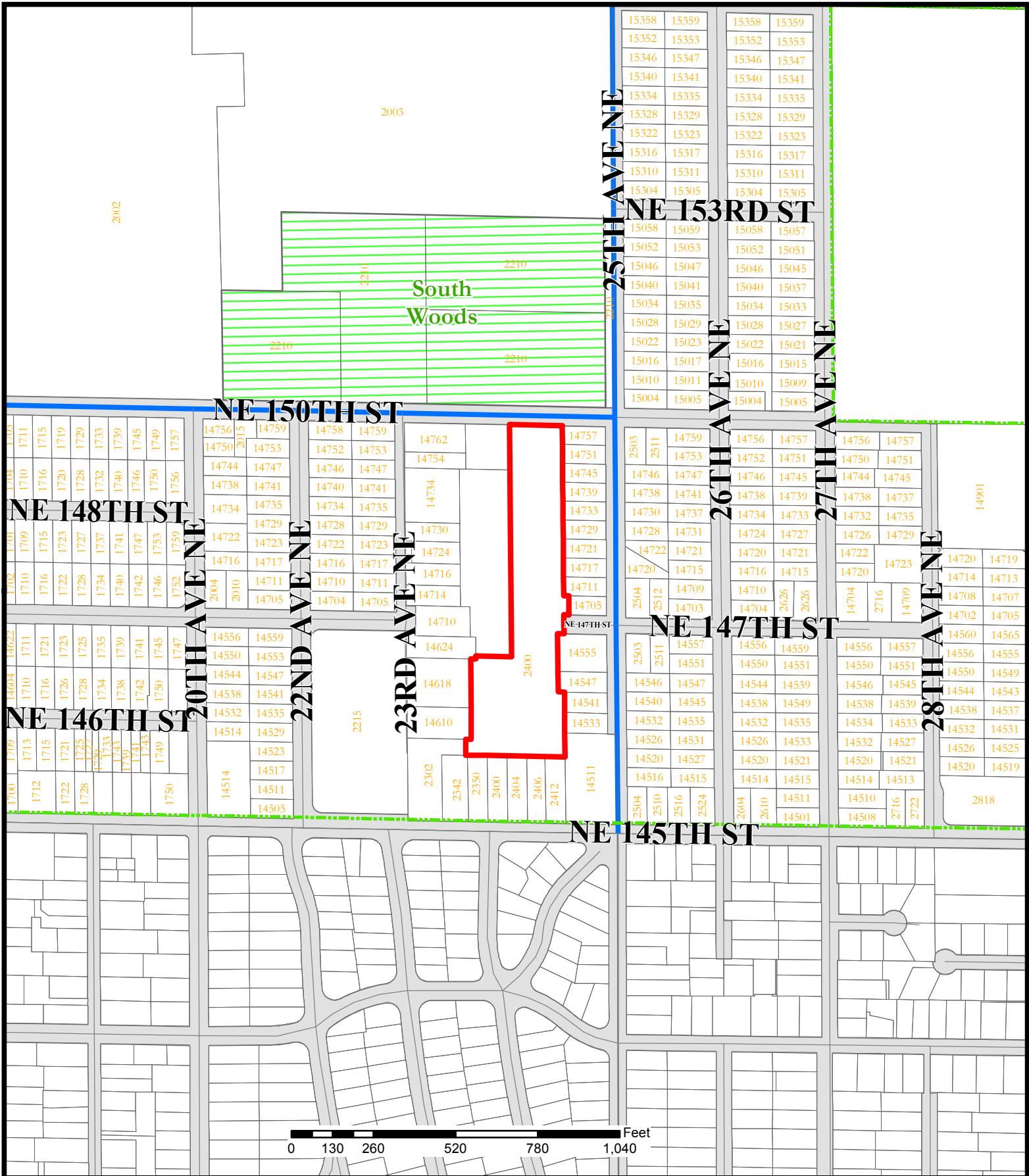
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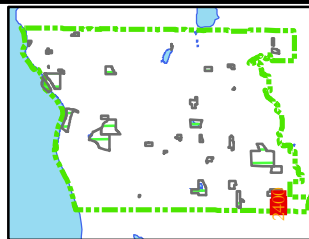




Property Name:
SHORELINE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Address: 2400 NE 147TH ST

- Tax Parcel selection
- Tax Parcel
- City Limit
- Right of Way



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ORDINANCE NO. 536

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF SHORELINE, WASHINGTON, AMENDING THE PERMITTED HEIGHT FOR HIGH SCHOOLS; AND AMENDING SMC TABLE 20.50.020(1) AND TABLE 20.50.230.

WHEREAS, the Shoreline School has raised concerns with Development Code height restriction for high schools during the design two new high school renovation projects; and

WHEREAS, the current building height limit may limit the programmatic needs of the District on the parcels selected by the District in locations determined to best serve its student populations, especially athletics and theatre programs; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission _____

WHEREAS, a Determination of Non Significance was issued for this proposed ordinance on _____; now therefore,

THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SHORELINE, WASHINGTON, DO ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Amendment. Th following exceptions are added to Table SMC 20.50.020(1) and Table 20.50.230 and the Exceptions subsection to these sections are amended as follows:

- A. Exceptions to Table 20.50.020(1):
 - ...
 - (9) Base Height for High Schools in all zoning districts except R-4 is 50 ft. with 55 ft for gymnasium and 70 feet for theatre flyspace structures.

- B. Exceptions to Table 20.50.230:
 - ...
 - (5) Except as further restricted by SMC Table 20.50.020(2), Exception (2), the following structures may be erected above the height limits in all zones:
 - a. Roof structures housing or screening elevators, stairways, tanks, ventilating fan, or similar equipment required for building operation and maintenance, fire or parapet walls, skylights, flagpoles, chimneys, utility lines, towers, and poles; provided, that no structure shall be erected more than 15 feet above the height limit of the district, whether such structure is attached or freestanding;

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b. Steeples, crosses, and spires when integrated as an architectural element of a building may be erected up to 18 feet above the height limit of the district.

c. High Schools may be constructed to a base height of 50 ft. with 55 ft. for gymnasium and 70 feet for theatre fly space structures in all zoning districts except R-4.

Section 3. Publication; Effective Date. A summary of this ordinance consisting of its title shall be published in the official newspaper of the City and the ordinance shall take effect and be in full force five (5) days after publication.

PASSED BY THE CITY COUNCIL ON _____, 2009

Mayor Cindy Ryu

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Scott Passey
City Clerk

Ian Sievers
City Attorney

Date of publication: _____, 2009
Effective date: _____, 2009

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Board of Directors
Deborah Ehrlichman
David Wilson
Mike Jacobs
Maren Norton
Richard Potter
Sue Walker
Superintendent
Secretary to the Board

April 9, 2009

Shoreline Planning Commission
17544 Midvale Ave N
Shoreline, WA 98133-4921

Re: High School Building Height Development Code Amendment

Dear Commissioners:

The Shoreline School District respectfully asks the Shoreline Planning Commission to recommend approval of the High School Building Height Development Code Amendment ("Amendment"). The Amendment will allow the proposed Shorewood and Shorecrest high school projects to be 50 feet in height, with 55 feet allowed for gymnasias, and 70 feet allowed for theater flyspaces.

The Amendment successfully addresses the educational needs of the District's students and furthers the City's environmental objectives. The Development Code's conditional use criteria will ensure that buildings are sited and designed for compatibility with surrounding neighborhoods.

Educational Needs of the District's Students

Fifty years ago, one-story sprawling high school campuses, often with multiple buildings, constituted the educational norm. Since that time, this design paradigm has become outdated. Under current conditions, educators have found that more compact, multi-level high school structures provide students with significantly greater educational sense of community, cohesiveness and security. A three-story building with a 50 foot height limit will result in a substantially improved educational environment for the District's students.

By the same token, the current 30 foot height limit in the R6 zone is insufficient for a school gymnasium, which requires 55 feet, and theatrical flyspaces, which require 70 feet. The current Shorecrest High School theater flyspace is 68 feet and the district's design plans include continuing to use this theater (built in 1986) with minor modifications as part of the Shorecrest modernization project.

Planning for the new Shorewood High School includes a goal of constructing a comparable theater for use by west side students and the community. It is important to know that a high school theater fly loft and the gymnasiums comprise a very small percentage of the entire high school's footprint.

Administrative Offices, 18560 1st Ave NE, Shoreline, WA 98155-2148, Office (206) 361-4366, Fax (206) 361-4204

Environmental Objectives

A three-story high school building will occupy less land than a one-story structure. A one-story structure, with a considerably larger footprint is an inefficient use of scarce land resources, increases impervious surfaces, reduces open space and increases energy usage.

Conditional Use Permit Criteria Ensure Compatibility

The City requires that high schools obtain a conditional use permit, the purpose of which is “to ensure compatibility with nearby land uses.” SMC 20.30.300. Before such a permit may be approved, the applicant must demonstrate, among other things, that the use is designed in a manner compatible with the character and appearance of neighboring property. The City is authorized to impose conditions on such permits to ensure compatibility. Conditions can include matters relating to the location, size and height of buildings.

Accordingly, the City’s conditional use permit criteria and processes will ensure that proposed high school projects are designed in a way to minimize impacts on surrounding neighborhoods and to maximize compatibility with those neighborhoods.

The School District appreciates the Planning Commission’s consideration of the Amendment.

Sincerely,

Marcia Harris
Deputy Superintendent

cc: Joe Tovar, Planning Director
Doug Nichols, CSG