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DATE October 14, 2025
TO Mercer Island Community Planning and Development
9611 SE 36th Street
Mercer Island, WA 98040
PROJECT *Mercer Island 6427*

Citizen Design appreciates the opportunity to present this critical areas project narrative for our Mercer Island 6423 - West Lot project located at 9191 SE 64th Street. Note that this site is accessed from E Mercer Way rather than SE 64th Street. The following includes a brief description of how the project conforms to each of the applicable criteria from MICC 19.07.090, 19.07.160, 19.07.180 and 19.07.190.

Please feel free to contact our office if you have any questions. We look forward to working together.

Humbly Submitted,

Citizen Design

PROJECT NARRATIVE

The project consists of a single-family residence with attached garage. The residence is split-level. Its south wing includes one story above a daylight basement, and its north wing includes one story above a crawlspace. The north wing's floor elevation is approximately halfway between the south wing's basement and upper story floor elevations. The structure contains 4083± sf living area and 982± garage area for a total of 5065± sf. It also includes 442± of covered patio and a 366± sf pergola.

As a single-family structure, the project is primarily occupancy R-3 with a U occupancy in the garage. It is proposed to be Type VB construction using conventional light timber framing. Other proposed site improvements include utility services, a stormwater detention system and appurtenances, retaining walls, driveways, walkways and patios. A total of 68 trees are to be planted as part of the project.

During the project's preapplication conference [PRE24-084], the design team was advised that this project would require a Critical Area Review 2. Per the city's GIS, the subject parcel is in a potential slide area, seismic hazard area and erosion hazard area. Per the attached geotechnical report, the subject has been found to contain soils with a moderate susceptibility to erosion. The report also states:



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“Based on our reconnaissance and our understanding of subsurface conditions at the site, in our opinion a large, deep-seated type of slope failure is unlikely on the subject property. In our opinion, relatively shallow landslides at the site have the potential to occur due to the steep topography.”

[Evans, Stephen and Jon Rehkopf. *Geotechnical Engineering Report Proposed Single Family Residence 9191 SE 64th Street Mercer Island, Washington*. Seattle, WA. 2025.]

The subject does not appear to contain watercourses. As determined under CAO 20-002 in 2020, the mapped watercourse shown east of the subject in the GIS is erroneous. Please find attached a wetland biology report by Altmann Oliver Associates, LLC corroborating these findings. The biologist also determined that no wetlands are present on or near to the subject.

MICC 19.07.090

This section lists the required submittals and review process for various critical area reviews. Specifically, 19.07.090.B.2.b states the following:

“When development is proposed on a site containing only geologically hazardous areas, and applicant has the option of either:

- i. Applying for a critical area review 2 in advance of construction permits, using the procedures required for a Type 3 land use review; or*
- ii. Requested consolidation of the review of geologically hazardous areas together with construction permit review.”*

This project proposes the latter option, and a consolidated review request form is attached. Please also find attached a geotechnical engineering report, topographic survey and development application coversheet as required by MICC 19.07.090.B.3.

The other requirements of this section appear not to be applicable to this project.

MICC 19.07.160

This section concerns geologically hazardous areas and is applicable to the project. It contains six subsections. Subsection A appears introductory and is not further discussed here. Subsections B-F are discussed below.

B. General review requirements. Alteration within geologically hazardous areas or associated buffers is required to meet the standards in this section, unless the scope of work is exempt pursuant to section 19.07.120, exemptions, or a critical area review 1 approval has been obtained pursuant to section 19.07.090(A).

- 1. When an alteration within a landslide hazard area, seismic hazard area or buffer associated with those hazards is proposed, the applicant must submit a critical area study concluding that the proposal can effectively*



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mitigate risks of the hazard. The study shall recommend appropriate design and development measures to mitigate such hazards. The code official may waive the requirement for a critical area study and the requirements of subsections (B)(2) and (B)(3) of this section when he or she determines that the proposed development is minor in nature and will not increase the risk of landslide, erosion, or harm from seismic activity, or that the development site does not meet the definition of a geologically hazardous area.

The critical area study, stamped by the project geotechnical engineer, is attached.

2. *Alteration of landslide hazard areas and seismic hazard areas and associated buffers may occur if the critical area study documents find that the proposed alteration:*
 - a. *Will not adversely impact other critical areas;*
 - b. *Will not adversely impact the subject property or adjacent properties;*
 - c. *Will mitigate impacts to the geologically hazardous area consistent with best available science to the maximum extent reasonably possible such that the site is determined to be safe; and*
 - d. *Includes the landscaping of all disturbed areas outside of building footprints and installation of hardscape prior to final inspection.*

The geotechnical critical areas study addresses each of these items.

3. *Alteration of landslide hazard areas, seismic hazard areas and associated buffers may occur if the conditions listed in subsection (B)(2) of this section are satisfied and the geotechnical professional provides a statement of risk matching one of the following:*
 - a. *An evaluation of site-specific subsurface conditions demonstrates that the proposed development is not located in a landslide hazard area or seismic hazard area;*
 - b. *The landslide hazard area or seismic hazard area will be modified or the development has been designed so that the risk to the site and adjacent property is eliminated or mitigated such that the site is determined to be safe;*
 - c. *Construction practices are proposed for the alteration that would render the development as safe as if it were not located in a geologically hazardous area and do not adversely impact adjacent properties; or*
 - d. *The development is so minor as not to pose a threat to the public health, safety and welfare.*

The geotechnical report addresses Criterion C on page 10.

- C. *Development standards—Landslide hazard areas. Development is allowed within landslide hazard areas and associated buffers, when the following standards are met:*



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1. *A critical area study shall be required for any alteration of a landslide hazard area or associated buffer;*
2. *Buffers shall be applied as follows. When more than one condition applies to a site, the largest buffer shall be applied:*
 - a. *Steep slopes. Buffer widths shall be equal to the height of a steep slope, but not more than 75 feet, and applied to the top and toe of slopes;*
 - b. *Shallow landslide hazard areas shall have minimum 25-foot buffers applied in all directions; and*
 - c. *Deep-seated landslide hazard areas shall have 75-foot buffers applied in all directions.*

The required geotechnical report is attached. As the entire subject parcel is composed of steep slopes and their buffers, development in the buffer area is necessary to develop anything on the property. The proposed development is located per the geotechnical engineer's recommendation, and the geotechnical report addresses how to mitigate the landslide hazard.

D. Development standards—Seismic hazard areas. When development is proposed within a seismic hazard area:

1. *A critical area study shall be required and shall include an evaluation by a qualified professional for seismic engineering and design, a determination of the magnitude of seismic settling that could occur during a seismic event, and a demonstration that the risk associated with the proposed alteration is within acceptable limits or that appropriate construction methods are provided to mitigate the risk of seismic settlement such that there will be no significant impact to life, health, safety, and property.*
2. *Identification of seismic hazard areas. Seismic hazard areas shall be identified by a qualified professional who references and interprets information in the U.S. Geological Survey Active Faults Database, performs on-site evaluations, or applies other techniques according to best available science.*
3. *When development is proposed on a site with an active fault, the follow provisions shall apply:*
 - a. *A 50-foot minimum buffer shall be applied from latest Quaternary, Holocene, or historical fault rupture traces as identified by the United States Geological Survey or Washington Geological Survey map databases or by site investigations by licensed geologic professionals with specialized knowledge of fault trenching studies; or*
 - b. *Mitigation sequencing shall be incorporated into the development proposal as recommended based on geotechnical analysis by a qualified professional to prevent increased risk of harm to life and/or property.*

The geotechnical report addresses these items on page 11. No onsite or nearby fault is identified; thus, a fault buffer is not required.



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- E. *Development standards—Erosion hazard areas.*
 - 1. *All development proposals shall demonstrate compliance with chapter 15.09, storm water management program.*
 - 2. *No development or activity within an erosion hazard area may create a net increase in geological instability on or off site.*

The geotechnical report addresses these items on page 9. Please refer to the attached civil engineering drawings for the required stormwater design.

- F. *Development standards—Additional criteria for specific activities.*
 - 1. *Trail building within geologically hazardous areas shall be subject to the following:*
 - a. *Trail surfaces shall be constructed of pervious materials and may not be wider than five feet; and*
 - b. *Trails shall be located to minimize the need for tree removal.*
 - 2. *Land clearing, grading, filling, and foundation work within: (a) an erosion hazard area, when 2,000 square feet or more of site disturbance is proposed, and/or (b) a landslide hazard area are not permitted between October 1 and April 1.*
 - a. *The code official may grant a waiver to this seasonal development limitation if the applicant provides a critical area study for the site concluding that:*
 - i. *Geotechnical slope stability concerns, erosion and sedimentation impacts can be effectively controlled on site consistent with adopted storm water standards; and*
 - ii. *The proposed construction work will not subject people or property, including areas off site, to an increased risk of associated impacts.*
 - b. *As a condition of the waiver, the code official may require erosion control measures, restoration plans, an indemnification, a release agreement and/or performance bond.*
 - c. *If site activities result in erosion impacts or threaten water quality standards, the city may suspend further work on the site and/or require remedial action.*
 - d. *Failure to comply with the conditions of an approved waiver shall subject the applicant to code compliance pursuant to chapter 6.10, code compliance, including but not limited to civil penalties and permit suspension.*

Item F(1) is applicable to trails, and this project contains no trail construction. Recommendations for wet weather construction are included in the geotechnical report beginning on page 26 should it take place between October 1 and April 1.

MICC 19.07.180

This section concerns watercourses, and no watercourses are present on or near to the subject. Thus, it is not applicable to the project.

MICC 19.07.190

This section concerns wetlands, and no wetlands are present on or near to the subject. Thus, it is not applicable to the project.