

Project Narrative

Permit No:	To be assigned	Date Prepared:	May 9, 2025
Pre-App:	N/A		
Owner(s):	Mika Yamamoto		
Project:	Mercer Island House: Sauna Addition		
Site:	5245 Forest Ave SE, Mercer Island, WA 98040		
Subject:	Project Narrative		

Project Overview:

- Address: 5245 Forest Ave SE, Mercer Island, WA 98040
- Parcel Number: 1410300005
- Zoning: R-15
- Acres: 0.41 (18,002 SF)
- Existing 4,450 SF, 2-story main residence with detached garage
- Site access via private shared road with moderate grade.

Project Team:

- Owners: Mika Yamamoto
- Architect: Office of Ordinary Architecture
 - Sandy Wolf, Founder and PM
- Structural: Natosha Norlin, Carter Quinn Norlin
- Geotechnical Engineer: Michael Xue, PanGEO Incorporated
- Arborist: Corinne Hollister, Earth Dance Design
- Contractor: Thomas Jacobson Construction

Draft Project Schedule: Simultaneous Review

- May 2025: Land Use Permit Submittal – Critical Area Review Type 1
- May 2025: Building Permit Submittal

General Information:

The project site is located along the west-central shoreline of Mercer Island and features waterfront access to Lake Washington. The property slopes predominantly from east to west, with the highest elevation situated along the eastern boundary. Vehicular access is provided via Forest Avenue SE, a shared private drive serving multiple residences.

The site contains two existing structures: a primary residence and a detached garage. Both structures are in excellent condition and are to remain untouched as they fall outside the scope of this project. Additionally, the property includes an existing dock extending into Lake Washington.

A geotechnical report has been prepared and is included with this submittal. Both the geotechnical engineer and the project arborist have been actively involved in the design process, providing input on site conditions and design intent. The primary objective of the proposed work is to repurpose the existing hot tub structure as the foundation for a new sauna, while ensuring minimal disturbance to the site and its natural features.

Building Overview:

The proposed development involves the adaptive reuse of an existing hot tub structure, which will be modified to accommodate a new sauna. By working within the existing footprint, the project aims to minimize site disturbance while fulfilling the intended scope of work. The new sauna is proposed to be 112 square feet, well below the 200 square foot addition threshold for Critical Area Review 1.

This approach significantly reduces the impact on both the surrounding landscape and existing hardscape elements, as the majority of construction activities will be confined to the footprint of the current hot tub structure and existing paving. This strategy supports a low-impact development objective and preserves the site's existing character to the greatest extent possible.

Site Overview:

The existing site is fully landscaped, actively maintained, and regularly utilized. There are no current maintenance concerns or site conditions that would impede the proposed development or its intent to remain minimal and efficient.

The property features a series of gently terraced levels, achieved through a combination of retaining and rockery walls. These terraces are integrated with a mix of hardscape patios and established plantings, contributing to both functional and aesthetic aspects of the landscape.

Landscape Overview:

The landscape approach prioritizes the preservation of existing trees and plantings, in alignment with guidance provided by the project arborist. All proposed work has been developed with consideration for the existing vegetation, and efforts will be made to maintain the current landscape character.

Any necessary trenching or excavation activities will be carefully planned and executed in accordance with the arborist's recommendations to ensure the protection of root zones and overall plant health. This coordinated approach supports the project's goal of minimizing environmental impact while achieving the intended design objectives.

Code Compliance:

Code compliance has been analyzed and can be located on SA0.01. Code diagrams related to lot coverage, hardscape, and gross floor area are provided on SA0.02.

Site Photos:



Figure 1: Existing hot tub structure to be modified.



Figure 3: View from existing lawn looking towards existing hot tub.

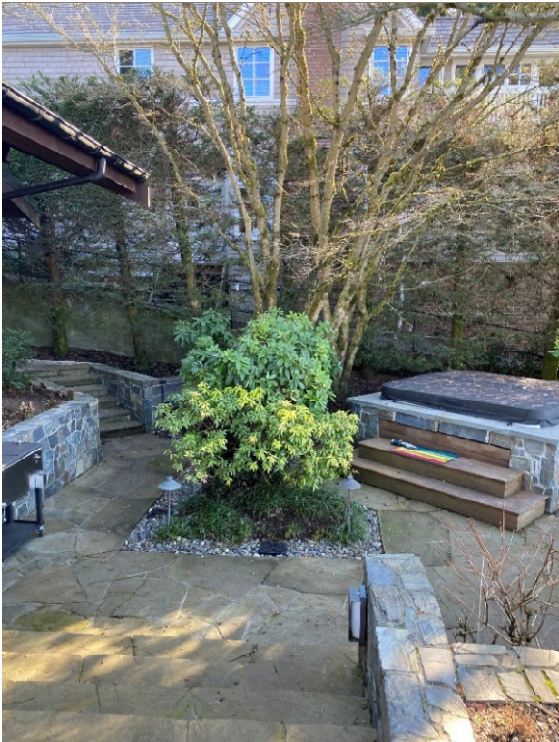


Figure 2: Existing landscape and hardscape surround existing hot tub.



Figure 4: Real estate photo (2021) showing backyard and existing landscape with existing hot tub.