

## Advocacy Update August 8, 2008

Previous issues of the Advocacy Update available at: <http://historicseattle.org/inthenews.aspx>

### CONTENTS:

- **New AIA Seattle Web Site Launched August 4**
  - **Federal Government Passes Trust Fund**
  - **Visit the 1927 ArtHaus in Capitol Hill**
  - **1938 Streamline Moderne House open in Tacoma**
  - **University District Arts and Heritage Committee to Launch "Museum Without Walls"**
  - **Two temporary position openings for "Museum Without Walls"**
  - **AIA Seattle Tour: Footprint at the Bridge--Fremont Townhome (Formerly Bridge Motel)**
  - **Daily Journal of Commerce: Lorig wants to add 150 apartments on former school site**
  - **Mid-Career Grant Program 2008**
  - **Bank of America/IMLS American Heritage Preservation Program**
  - **HistoryLink Open House**
  - **Townhouses coming next door?**
  - **The Stranger: Trading Spaces**
  - **Ballard News-Tribune: Masonry buildings worry city**
  - **Daily Journal of Commerce Blog: Does incentive zoning help only the big developments?**
- 

### **New AIA Seattle Web Site Launched August 4**

On Monday, August 4, AIA Seattle launched a new web site at [www.aiaseattle.org](http://www.aiaseattle.org). New features include a fully searchable visual database of member firms, a rotating home-page gallery featuring member work, and an action center and feedback section to support member advocacy efforts.

\*\*\*

### **Federal Government Passes Trust Fund**

If you've been following Congress' action on housing programs, you are probably dizzy by now. Over the last month or so, multiple housing bills have been combined and shuttled between the House and Senate for successive approvals. At long last, Congress passed H.R. 3221, the American Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008 on Saturday, July 26th. President Bush signed the bill on Wednesday, July 30, 2008.

A highlight of the bill is the National Affordable Housing Trust Fund, the first new federal housing program targeting rental production specifically for extremely low-income families since 1974 when Section 8 was created. A historic preservation feature fought for by the National Trust comprises a provision requiring state qualified allocation plans (QAPs) take into account historic properties in the allocations of low-income housing tax credits, making it more lucrative for projects that twin the low-income housing and federal rehab tax credits.

As part of a compromise, funding set-aside for the trust fund will be diverted to cover potential losses from the bill's foreclosure prevention programs for the next three years. All funds will be diverted in 2009, half in 2010, 25% in 2011 and in 2012 the trust fund will receive all the intended funds. Using the bill's formula, the trust fund would have received \$557 million in 2007. HUD will administer the funds and has been tasked with developing an allocating plan.

\*\*\*

### **Visit the 1927 ArtHaus in Capitol Hill**

ArtHaus is a vintage 1927 brick building with Deco sensibilities located at 735 Federal Avenue on North Capitol Hill. Eden Development brought this classic structure with its period architectural details into the 21st century by giving it a 3-Star Built Remodel and infusing it with modern amenities to give it another 80+ years of life. The boutique community pays homage to the art and independent film community in the area with its screening room with art house films and permanent art collection from local artists. The building features

common areas with a permanent art collection containing over 30 art works, the body of which are from local artists like Yoram Bernet, Deb Casso, Christine Chaney, Doris Mosler, Jim Stoccardo, and Joseph Wackerman. There is a group, rotating show opening Tuesday, August 12 from 6-9 pm featuring numerous works from five local artists: Jason Lien, Doris Mosler, Jennifer Stenhouse, Jim Stoccardo and Uyen Phong Tran. For more information, please visit: [www.makinghistorymodern.com](http://www.makinghistorymodern.com)

\*\*\*

### **University District Arts and Heritage Committee to Launch "Museum Without Walls"**

The University District Arts and Heritage Committee has been awarded \$54,912 from the City of Seattle Department of Neighborhoods and \$6,000 from 4Culture to execute an interdisciplinary project known as "Museum Without Walls" that will draw together the history and cultural life of Seattle's University District.

A Department of Neighborhoods Large Projects Matching Fund will fund the University District Museum Without Walls project as it launches its first year of exhibits, events, and other projects. In spring 2009, Museum Without Walls will install a temporary exhibit on the outdoor plaza of the University Tower (formerly Safeco Tower) called Open to Question: Social, Political, and Community Activism in Seattle's University District. A number of associated programs, open to the public, will occur in conjunction with the exhibit that will encourage community participation in a discussion about the historical and contemporary meanings of activism in the University District.

The Department of Neighborhoods award will also fund the recording of a number of new oral histories with University District residents. The Museum Without Walls project will use oral histories to explore and showcase the diversity of the neighborhood and will capture some of the most interesting and hidden stories in the University District. The oral histories will be available online starting this winter at <http://museumwithoutwalls.udistrict.org/>.

4Culture has awarded \$6,000 to the Museum Without Walls project to create a set of collectible, tradable cards, highlighting the history of the Alaska Yukon Pacific Exposition. The cards will be distributed at AYP commemoration events and other community events in the spring and summer of 2009.

In addition to \$60,000 in grant money, the University District Museum Without Walls project has also raised \$7,500 from a generous donation by the University District Rotary Club. The Rotary money will be used to fund the oral history recordings and the collectible cards, as well as sculptural tribute to the AYP in summer 2009.

The University District Arts and Heritage Committee welcome volunteers to help with Museum Without Walls. Please contact [susancoleman2@aol.com](mailto:susancoleman2@aol.com) for more information.

\*\*\*

### **Two temporary position openings for "Museum Without Walls"**

Exhibition and Programs Project Manager

Duration: Approx. 9 months, start September/October 2008 to June 2009

Hours per week: Approx. 10-20

Compensation: \$12,000

Application Deadline: August 30th, 2008

Please send resume and cover letter to [wlarriamore@qwest.net](mailto:wlarriamore@qwest.net), subject "Exhibition and Programs Project Manager"

Museum Without Walls, an ongoing initiative of the University District Arts & Heritage Committee, is seeking a qualified project manager to coordinate all aspects of an upcoming, temporary historical exhibition in Seattle's University District.

The exhibition, "Open to Question: A History of Social, Political and Community Activism in Seattle's University District," will include an outdoor photo exhibit from April through May of 2009 on the outdoor plaza of the University of Washington Tower (formerly Safeco Tower). Associated events and programs include an

opening night reception, several brown bag lunch discussions, a youth poster competition and an oral history component.

The responsibilities of the Project Manager will include, but may not be limited to the following:

- Site coordination (with UW Office of Real Estate and Campus Art Program)
- Securing of rights of reproduction for copyright-protected photographic materials
- Community outreach and audience development (including preparation of press materials and media coordination, and coordination with all project participants)
- Coordinate with volunteers to staff the exhibition and associated events
- Coordination of exhibition design with UW School of Art design students; coordination of exhibition fabrication
- Coordination of graphics, such as announcement cards, website, signage and local advertising.
- Coordination of Youth Art Poster Competition with Sanctuary Art Center and YMCA.
- Work with the MWW oral history project manager to select oral history snippets for use with Guide by Cell” an audio guide to accompany the Exhibit.
- Work with the MWW Coordinator to manage the exhibit/programming budget.
- Attend monthly or semimonthly Museum Without Walls (MWW) steering committee meetings.

Required Qualifications/Experience:

- Minimum 2-3 years of exhibit and/or program planning for a museum or arts organization
- Minimum 3-4 years project management experience
- Familiarity and experience with press relations and media coordination
- Demonstrated interest in local history.
- Ability to coordinate multiple aspects of a project at once
- Ability to take initiative and work independently to complete a project. Ability to collaborate with a group to complete a project.

Oral History Project Manager

University District Museum without Walls

Duration: 9 months, start September/October 2008

Hours per week: Approx. 10-15

Compensation: \$7,500

Application Deadline: August 30th, 2008

Please send resume and cover letter to [wlarriamore@qwest.net](mailto:wlarriamore@qwest.net), subject “Oral History Project Manager”

Job Description: The University District Museum Without Walls is looking for an Oral History Project Manager to coordinate and record video oral histories with residents of the University District neighborhood. Applicants must be comfortable working both independently and with a group and must provide their own workspace. Hours are flexible, but a commitment of approximately 10-15 hours a week for 9 months is required.

The responsibilities of the Oral History Project Manager will include, but may not be limited to the following:

- Implement steering committee plans for oral history project, while offering input and new suggestions as appropriate.
- Help identify and recruit interview subjects from the neighborhood, focusing on the diversity of the area. Working independently and, with the help of MWW volunteers, record and edit 10-15 video interviews.
- Manage previously recruited volunteers to help with oral history interviews.
- Work with MWW steering committee to manage oral history project budget.
- Work with MWW web manager to transfer video oral history recordings to the MWW website; host oral history video recordings on YouTube.
- Work with MWW exhibit project manager to select oral history audio snippets for exhibit “Open to Question: A History of Activism in the University District.”

- Attend monthly or semimonthly Museum Without Walls (MWW) steering committee meetings.

Required Qualifications/Experience:

- Demonstrated understanding of oral history methodologies and technologies. Previous experience interviewing oral history subjects or videotaping individuals or groups.
- Demonstrated proficiency with video recording equipment, microphones, etc.
- 2-3 years project management experience.
- Demonstrated interest in local history.
- Available time commitment of 10-15 hours/week for 9 months.
- Ability to take initiative and work independently to complete a project. Ability to collaborate with a group to complete a project.

Desired Qualifications/Experience:

- Access to video recording equipment and experience uploading videos to the web.
- Previous experience managing volunteers.

\*\*\*

**1938 Streamline Moderne House open in Tacoma**

Saturday, Aug 9, 2008, 12:00 pm - 6:00 pm

Cost: Free/Donation to Historic Tacoma

Location: Smyser House

4907 66th Ave. E, Puyallup

Join us to visit Tacoma's 1941 "House of Tomorrow" designed by Bert Smyser who began his career as a window dresser for the Kennedy Brothers Arcade in downtown Tacoma. His talents were quickly recognized and eventually he opened his own business, Smyser Display Services Inc. Among his more noteworthy projects was the construction and development of the State of Washington's displays for the 1939-1940 New York



World's Fair and the 1939 Golden Gate International Exposition in San Francisco. Smyser's best known project however might be the Coffee Pot Restaurant (Bob's Java Jive) constructed on Highway 99 in 1929. Other projects in the Tacoma area included a motel and two grand Exposition Halls. This Streamline Moderne house is currently for sale, allowing the opportunity to view this "Home of Tomorrow".

This Smyser design was a model home for the 1941 Tacoma Better Housing Exposition. Featuring all plywood construction, the home displays porthole windows, rounded corners, a flat roof, and smooth exterior features. Upgrades include hardwood floors, air conditioning, sprinkler system, water

filtration system, RV/boat parking, and fully landscaped all on .43 acres of creek front. Three bedrooms, 1-1/2 bathrooms, 2,156 square feet. Price \$299,950

Driving directions from River Road (Hwy 167, between Tacoma and Puyallup): turn south at the light at 66th Ave. E, the house is located approximately 150 feet on the left; please park on street shoulder.

\*\*\*

**AIA Seattle Tour: Footprint at the Bridge--Fremont Townhome (Formerly Bridge Motel)**

Footprint at the Bridge is an elegantly designed building situated in the vibrant urban junction of Fremont—one of Seattle's most dynamic and compelling neighborhoods. The homes and exterior spaces have been crafted to highlight the culmination of refined restorative design strategies. The essence of Footprint at the Bridge is high-

quality, aesthetically pleasing housing enveloped by an ecologically sensitive native garden sanctuary, all within the framework of the bustling, thriving Fremont community. With sweeping views of the Cascades, Lake Union and just blocks from the entertainment district, the 7 new townhomes are seeking a LEED Gold certification status through the implementation of sustainable building practices throughout the design process.

The townhomes are equipped with features such as: re-use of storm water for toilet flushing and irrigation, rainwater collection and filtration, FSC certified wood and low-VOC emitting, non-toxic materials and finishes as well as a targeted 50% reduction over IECC (International Energy Conservation Code). Strategically arranged in a U-shape the townhomes provide for great southern exposure, an enclosed courtyard and easy access to the shared garage. A screen wall blanketed in vegetation wraps the community yielding both visual and acoustic privacy. The design strives to encompass all the aspects of both the natural and urban environments, while utilizing unique green practices. Footprint at the Bridge truly celebrates the Northwest weather and ties it into all aspects of the design.

August 14, 2008 - 12:00 PM through 02:00 PM

AIA Members/Associate Members/Students - \$5.00

Non-Members - \$25.00

For more information, contact: [spure@aiaseattle.org](mailto:spure@aiaseattle.org)

\*\*\*

## **Daily Journal of Commerce**

**August 6, 2008**

**Lorig wants to add 150 apartments on former school site**

**By Lynn Porter**

To make room for apartments, Lorig will have to demolish the wings on the east and south sides of the building. In 1986, Lorig Associates got a ground lease for the Lake City Elementary School site from Seattle Public Schools and turned the space into a medical office complex. Now the Seattle-based firm wants to turn a parking



lot behind that complex — the Lake City Professional Center — into a 150-unit apartment building. But to make room for the apartments, Lorig will have to demolish the one-story wings on the east and south sides of the Georgian-style former school, whose main building was constructed at 2611 N.E. 125th St. in 1931.

The Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board staff has recommended that Lorig apply for a landmark designation for the old school. If the board chooses to nominate the building and then names it a landmark, it will have say over whether it — or parts of it — are demolished, said Karen Gordon, Seattle's historic preservation officer. But Gordon said she wouldn't characterize Lorig's plans as demolition, but rather as "altering" the building. "Demolishing landmarks is rare," said Gordon. "But that's not what Lorig is proposing in this case. (Lorig) is proposing to alter (the building) to remove a portion of it. I don't call it demolishing a (perhaps future) landmark. I call it altering a landmark."

Lorig Project Manager Kim Orr said the south wing of the former school was a garage shed and portable out buildings. It was completely reconstructed by Lorig in 1986. The east wing is a 1945 brick addition of classrooms, offices and restrooms designed by architect William Mallis, who was involved in school projects locally between the 1940s and the 1960s, Orr said. "Those two wings were not original to the building," she said. "I think it will make a difference as to how Landmarks looks at the building."

Christine Palmer, a preservation advocate with the nonprofit Historic Seattle, said if a building or parts of it have been substantially altered, the Landmarks Preservation Board likely won't give it landmark status. "If it's really hacked up they won't try to save it," she said. But once landmarked, buildings need to be protected, she said, and "any new construction has to be compatible."

Lorig pays the Seattle school district about \$75,000 a year to lease the school building site, according to Ron English, the district's deputy general counsel and property manager. Lorig has proposed entering into another lease for the land where it wants to build the apartments. Both leases combined should garner the district at least \$225,000 a year once the apartment complex is fully occupied, English said. The same 75-year-term — given options — on the original lease would apply on the second one, he said. “The bottom line is it allows the property to be developed to its full potential for the benefit of both Lorig and the school district,” English said.

Lorig also needs a site-specific rezone from low-rise, which allows construction to 35 feet, to mid-rise, which permits it to 60 feet. Mithun is designing the apartment complex, which will be two blocks west of Lake City Way. It will have five levels of apartments above structured parking with 82 stalls. Lorig hopes to start construction in the summer of 2009 and finish about 14 months later. Orr said current zoning would allow 97 “skinny” town homes, “which we don't think is very elegant.” The apartments will offer more open space and landscaping, she said. Lorig plans brick on the first level to complement the former school building, she said.

\*\*\*

### **Mid-Career Grant Program 2008**

The James Marston Fitch Charitable Foundation will award a research grant up to \$25,000 to mid career professionals who have an advanced or professional degree and at least 10 years experience in historic preservation or related fields, including architecture, landscape architecture, architectural conservation, urban design, environmental planning, archaeology, architectural history, and the decorative arts. Additional smaller grants, up to \$10,000, are made at the discretion of the Trustees.

The grants are intended to support projects of innovative original research or creative design that advance the practice of historic preservation in the U.S. These grants may be partially supported through the generosity of the Kress Foundation. For more information, visit the website at [www.fitchfoundation.org](http://www.fitchfoundation.org) or contact Erin Tobin, Executive Director, at [info@fitchfoundation.org](mailto:info@fitchfoundation.org). The application deadline is Friday, September 19, 2008 (postmarked).

\*\*\*

### **Bank of America/IMLS American Heritage Preservation Program**

Bank of America is partnering with the Institute of Museum and Library Services to provide grants to small museums, libraries, and archives. The grants will raise awareness and fund preservation of treasures held in small museums, libraries and archives. Grants will help to preserve specific items, including works of art, artifacts and historical documents that are in need of conservation. Applicants will build on completed conservation assessments of their collections, to ensure that the Bank of America/IMLS grants are used in accordance with best practices in the field, and underscore the importance of assessment planning.

Grant programs that provide assistance with conservation planning and assessment include the Institute's Conservation Assessment Program and the National Endowment for the Humanities' Preservation Assistance Grants. Some states also offer assessment programs.

Grant Amount: Up to \$3,000

Deadline: September 15, 2008

Eligibility: Institutions that fulfill the general criteria may apply. See program guidelines for special conditions of eligibility for this program. For more information, contact Christine Henry, Senior Program Officer, at 202/653-4674 or [chenry@imls.gov](mailto:chenry@imls.gov).

\*\*\*

### **HistoryLink Open House**

Friday, August 15, between 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m., [HistoryLink.org](http://HistoryLink.org) invites you to a small open house at our new downtown Seattle offices at 1411 Fourth Avenue, Suite 803. If you happen to be downtown at that time,

pop on in and say hi. We're located in the historic 1411 Building (the one with the Tully's on the corner) on the corner of 4th and Union, not far from our old offices in the Joshua Green Building.

\*\*\*

**Seattle Community Council Federation**  
**August 7, 2008**  
**Townhouses coming next door?**

The Mayor is proposing to amend the Seattle Municipal Code 23.34.013 to allow administrative reclassification of single family residential zones to multi-family as follows:

"B. multifamily-zoned areas are appropriately designated, especially when properties in the area are developed predominantly to the permitted scale, and if applicable density, of that multifamily zone.-

"D. Multifamily zoning is appropriate for areas that are generally within one half mile of existing or projected facilities and services used by residents, including retail sales and services, schools, parks and community centers."

In lay terms, Subsection B says up-zoning to townhouses is appropriate from single family zoning wherever the area is fully built up with homes. Subsection D says it's okay wherever the site is within half a mile of facilities, now or planned, for people to gather. (No single family site in Seattle is more than a half mile from a park, school, community center, church, mall or neighborhood shopping center or mall, or office building.) Under the scheme, developers could buy a house anywhere, apply for an administrative rezone, knock the house down, and build townhouses, and there would be no appeal to the hearing examiner. Since single family zoned lots sell for less than L-2 and L-3 lots, the change would be an incentive for developers to buy them and cram more townhouses into single family zones. No downzoning would be allowed. The overall plan is to make a "gradual transition in the scale and intensity of development." SMC 23.34.013 F.

Livable Seattle has shown that Seattle's Land Use Code allows more housing than three times the growth anticipated by 2020 and probably 4 to 5 times it. The City is micro-permitting, i.e. issuing a series of permits piecemeal to let developers avoid SEPA environmental analysis, design review, and putting in public improvements; The townhouses have shorter setbacks (as little as 5 feet), cover more of a lot than an apartment house would, and by their closeness, shadow neighbor's lots. More lot coverage leaves less room for natural vegetation and speeds up storm water runoff.

Although townhouses often have party walls, no sprinklers are required for fire safety; narrow driveways restrict access, especially for fire trucks. Many lack turning radii and turn-arounds; often overhangs are too low for larger family vehicles. Designs frequently follow a monotonous pattern. Many times abutters don't get notice and see their trees and shrubbery near the boundary damaged during construction, and utilities may trespass. The proposed interim ordinance would stop issuance of new permits until the excessive crowding is remedied. It sets development standards on height, set backs, lot coverage and drainage that would correct the worst abuses. See <http://www.liveableseattlemovement.org/>. Communities need to get involved as soon as possible.

\*\*\*

**The Stranger**  
**July 22, 2008**  
**Trading Spaces**  
**by Erica C. Barnett**

On Wednesday, July 23, after The Stranger went to press, a city council committee met to discuss a proposal that would let developers build taller throughout the city in exchange for funding affordable housing and other public benefits. The council probably won't decide how to divvy up those benefits until this fall, but interest groups—from historic preservation activists to arts advocates to rural conservationists—are already lining up for a slice of the pie.

One smart idea that shouldn't get shoved to the back of the line is transferable development rights (TDR), a wonky term for programs that allow landowners in rural King County to sell off the right to develop and subdivide their property to developers in cities like Seattle, enabling those developers to build taller buildings than allowed under existing rules. Once the right to develop a piece of land is sold, that land can never be subdivided and turned into suburban sprawl, which is in the process of engulfing rural King County.

Expect neighborhood groups to scream that preserving land in rural King County does nothing to compensate for added density in Seattle neighborhoods; already, community councils are gearing up to oppose height increases around the city. "If you live in Greenwood and you get stuck with density, it's going to be hard for Seattle politicians to say, 'We made you take this density, but we saved this farmland out in Enumclaw,'" says Roger Valdez, a land-use consultant who supports TDR.

It may be a tough sell, but it's an important one. Keeping rural parts of King County from devolving into hintersprawl actually helps all Seattle neighborhoods, by reducing congestion, preserving rivers that provide Seattle's water, and reducing carbon emissions throughout the region. And King County's rural land is disappearing fast. With farmland and forests being converted to five-lots-per-acre suburbs at a rate of between 4 and 5 percent a year, King County's rural lands could be gone within the next 20 years.

Tim Hatley, a lobbyist for the Cascade Land Conservancy, calls TDR the ideal sprawl-prevention tool because "It's a market-based solution," not a taking. So far, Seattle has participated in just one TDR program, which enabled three developers, including Vulcan, to build above the height limit in Denny Triangle. But that program expired last week, and Mayor Greg Nickels has opposed replicating it elsewhere, preferring to invest in things like parks and historic preservation.

Those are worthy causes, of course—who would argue against preserving buildings threatened by development?—but the city has to prioritize. Once rural lands are gone, they're gone forever. That will impact all of Seattle unless the council steps up to prevent it from happening. 🌱

\*\*\*

## **Ballard News-Tribune**

**August 4, 2008**

### **Masonry buildings worry city**

Numerous un-reinforced masonry buildings in Ballard could be damaged in an earthquake, according to a study by the city. Ballard is not considered one of the most vulnerable areas of the city, but officials have released a long list of 53 addresses on Northwest streets that are unreinforced. The buildings in question are brick structures not strengthened with steel bars. In an earthquake, the brick walls can separate from the building and collapse.

Buildings on the city's list are identified as being built with bricks prior to 1933, before modern earthquake-resistant designs were developed. Some are in the landmark district. They include buildings on Ballard Avenue, Northwest 54th Street, Northwest 56th Street, 22nd Avenue Northwest, Leary Way, Russell Avenue and 20th Avenue. The earliest buildings date back to 1900 and the latest 1928.

How well a building will survive an earthquake depends on the individual structure said Gene Morris, an architect who rehabilitated a Ballard Avenue building with his business partner Gordon Lagerquist in the late 1980s. Some buildings, and the ground they are built on, in old Ballard are pretty solid. "Good brick walls will do ok," said Morris. Buildings with disintegrating and degraded mortar are susceptible. "It depends on the individual building and quake," said Morris.

Seattle's last big tremor was the 6.8 magnitude Nisqually earthquake on Feb. 28, 2001. The next earthquake, if it occurs along the fault going through the city, could be larger. The city's study said "estimates of a Seattle fault earthquake predict two to three times the maximum ground acceleration as compared to the Nisqually, likely causing significantly more damage." Morris said a 9.0 magnitude quake would flatten many buildings. "Most of

the Seattle un-reinforced masonry buildings appear to be concentrated in areas that are expected to be subjected to the highest forces during earthquakes," the study said.

During the 2001 earthquake, 31 of the 20 red-tagged buildings, considered to be unsafe to enter after partial collapses, were in Pioneer Square, the International District and SoDo area. Two thirds of the buildings closed were unreinforced masonry buildings. Capitol Hill was another hard hit neighborhood. The city of Seattle's Department of Planning and Development has briefed the City Council on unreinforced masonry buildings.

The study was done by the Reid-Middleton engineering company, which reports there are up to 1,000 unreinforced masonry buildings in the city. Most have not been seismically retrofitted. The Morris and Lagerquist Architects office building has metal rods connecting the outer brick walls to the floor plate, along with steel supports inside. Several California cities that issued new requirements for reinforcing buildings were studied. Those cities passed new laws during the last 20 years and gave property owners 10 years to meet the new requirements. "This is a public safety issue," said Mayor Greg Nickels. "No one's rushing into this decision and we will deliberate over the coming months before reaching any conclusions. But Seattle is in earthquake country and unreinforced masonry buildings are our most vulnerable structures. We need to address the issue of safety in these structures in a major quake."

Buildings going through substantial alterations or increased numbers of occupants are required to be seismically retrofitted. The Department of Planning and Development is putting together a technical committee to write new seismic standards for unreinforced masonry buildings. They will come up with guidelines on how much time to give building owners to meet the new requirements, which structures it will apply to, and the penalties for non-compliance. Providing funding support to owners for the changes will also be discussed, particularly for buildings offering low-income housing, human services and landmark structures. If new seismic guidelines are passed, Seattle would be the only city outside of California with such laws.

\*\*\*

## **Daily Journal of Commerce Blog**

**August 6, 2008**

**Does incentive zoning help only the big developments?**

**by Shawna Gamache**

As you may know, Seattle officials are trying to decide whether to extend the city's incentive zoning program beyond downtown. The program gives developers more building capacity in exchange for earmarking affordable units. Expansion plans had a bit of a setback last week when city consultant Greg Easton of Property Counselors presented his analysis to city council's Planning, Land Use and Urban Development Committee. His numbers showed the program wouldn't yield much in increased profits in Seattle neighborhoods.

The picture got even bleaker for mid-rise developments, where several scenarios showed razor-thin increases in profit margin for incentive zoning. "Why would a developer take that?" asked council member Tim Burgess. "From a public policy perspective, it would seem like we should develop a program where most people would want to do it." Council members asked Easton to crunch the numbers with some outliers removed, and to include more comparative analysis.

\*\*\*

**Christine Palmer, Preservation Advocate**

**HISTORIC SEATTLE**

**Dearborn House, 1117 Minor Avenue**

**Seattle, WA 98101**

**206.622.5444 x 226, Fax 206.622.1197**

**e-mail: [christine@historicseattle.org](mailto:christine@historicseattle.org)**

**website: [www.historicseattle.org](http://www.historicseattle.org)**

***Educate, Advocate, Preserve***