

**Advocacy Update**  
**August 13, 2007**

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**American Institute of Architects, Seattle Chapter, Community Survey**

To be a better resource for the design community and a leading advocate of well-designed, livable places, AIA Seattle needs to know what's important to our community—both members and non-members. There's never been a better time to influence the future of your local AIA. Your voice will make a difference in the way we work and communicate. Board members will use your input to guide major decisions about our priorities and programs and inform our new website and communications tools. Please take ten minutes to share your input. Then enter to win a \$50 gift certificate to Peter Miller books or \$50 in iTunes downloads. To complete the survey, visit [http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=Zv57KAAtSeCapIrNv\\_2ffhl4A\\_3d\\_3d](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=Zv57KAAtSeCapIrNv_2ffhl4A_3d_3d). We look forward to hearing your full, uncensored response. For more information, please contact Lisa Richmond, 206-448-4938 x 102.

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**Art Deco Bus Station in Olympia Endangered**

The 1930s Art Deco Greyhound Station in Olympia, WA is in danger of being demolished by plans for a mixed use office and underground parking development. This jewel box of a building is on Olympia's Sylvester Park which is surrounded by historic architecture. This bus station has been in continual use as a Greyhound Bus terminal since it was built and maintains all its original integrity. The building is on the City of Olympia's historic register, and can be saved either by incorporating the building into the developer's plans or by adapting it for some other use in keeping with the integrity of the site. Please send an email asking that the building be preserved to the entire Olympia City Council at: [Email to Olympia City Council](#), and also to Olympia City staff at:

Jeff Kingsbury [jkingsbu@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:jkingsbu@ci.olympia.wa.us)  
Doug Mah [dmah@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:dmah@ci.olympia.wa.us)  
Mark Foutch [mfoutch@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:mfoutch@ci.olympia.wa.us)  
Karen Messmer [kmessmer@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:kmessmer@ci.olympia.wa.us)  
Joe Hyer [jhyer@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:jhyer@ci.olympia.wa.us)  
Laura Ware [lware@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:lware@ci.olympia.wa.us)  
T.J. Johnson [tjohnson@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:tjohnson@ci.olympia.wa.us)

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**Crosscut Online Magazine**  
**August 6, 2007**

## **Growth and density: Let's do the numbers**

**By Richard Morrill**

Solutions seemingly abound for three key problems in Seattle: rapid growth, traffic congestion, and the need for more (or less) density. Time for a dose of reality, neighbors. There are no "solutions." Here as in Iraq, there are only some tolerable accommodations. Let me start with growth. First, there's no real way to stop or slow it, because the U.S. Supreme Court ruled (when Los Angeles tried to stop the influx of Okies in the 1930s) that the Constitution protects freedom of movement. We might stop stimulating economic development, but that will have little effect. If a place looks attractive to people and businesses, they can and will come.

But the growth is not flooding back into the central cities. Ninety percent of metropolitan growth is in the suburbs, which are gaining higher shares of less affluent families, singles, couples, and empty-nesters. Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels' goal of 350,000 more people in Seattle is not supported by demography or economic demand. Given this growth, what can we do about housing price inflation and other affordability issues? The key factor is supply and demand economics. Metropolitan Seattle has compounded the constraints on land caused by our geography by implementing urban growth boundaries. If we had not used urban growth boundaries as part of growth management, housing supply would be somewhat greater and prices still fairly expensive but perhaps 15 percent lower (comparing Seattle to less restrictive but also professional cities such as Denver, Minneapolis, and Dallas).

There are other factors besides the shortage of developable land driving up Seattle prices. Seattle is a high-cost metropolis in such factors as labor, materials, and levels of public services and amenities. Washington's nation-leading level of minimum wage is a good thing, but it does help drive up housing prices. Also, there are lots of people in Seattle (as in Boston, Washington, San Francisco, San Diego, and Los Angeles) willing and able to pay a premium for high-quality housing, and many of these people migrate here from other areas with even higher prices. Finally, local zoning and permitting tend to favor higher-revenue-generating housing and business.

So what could we do to put some downward pressure on housing prices? I have long advocated relaxing or abolishing urban growth boundaries and substituting subdivision performance standards that require moderately high densities. Another approach would be direct public construction of "social housing," as is done in Europe on a large scale. Requirements for inclusion of more affordable units in private developments, the current preferred strategy, are too insignificant to affect housing supply and prices. Some jurisdictions, normally pretty long commutes from the central city, may accept fairly high shares of lower-cost housing, as is happening in California's Central Valley, and this can make an important contribution.

Doubling up, often sub rosa, in the existing housing supply is the dominant "solution" to unaffordable housing in Los Angeles and San Diego, to give two examples. Especially for families, who prefer a patch of yard and homes rather than apartments, this is a reasonable course to follow. This informal utilization of existing housing stock, rather than more disruptive levels of apartment construction, may be the best way to minimize the pace of urban fringe expansion. It can keep families in the inner parts of the metropolis. If families are driven from the core, they will go to the edges and beyond.

Now, let's look dispassionately at the heated debate over density. Density is driven by demand and affluence, and it affects cities all over the world and all through history. Governments, through fiat or planning, have long tinkered with densities, but in the long run, the preferences of households and of businesses rule. Nor is there a level of density that is somehow "better." We have areas of very high densities, of low densities, and of all levels in between, simply because there is sufficient demand for those densities, driven by differing needs and preferences.

But, you counter, what about the costs of sprawl and lamentable suburban monotony? Studies of the costs of infrastructure and public services show only slight variation with density, with moderately higher costs at very low densities (under 1,500 people per square mile) and at very high densities (over 100,000 per square mile). Lower utilization drives up costs at the low density end, while high costs of construction and maintenance affect

highly dense areas. The most effective densities are in the middle range, 5,000 to 15,000 people per square mile, which happens to be where probably more than 90 percent of urban dwellers live. Impacts of cities on the environment are mostly a function of the sheer population size of the metropolis, not its density or urban form.

What about the impacts of sprawl or compactness on quality of life? There turn out to be no meaningful differences in quality of family life, health or exercise, diet, intellectual curiosity, and neighborhood sociability all across the spectrum from rural farm life to urban high rises, if you control for age, family status, education, job location, and so forth. There may be a slight edge for overall urban livability in the traditional urban family neighborhoods of 5,000 to 12,000 per square mile. That would describe the actual urban and suburban neighborhoods of the Seattle region, with apartments mainly along arterials and single-family houses in between.

This is not to deny that political conflict, often of an intense sort, happens as cities grow and market forces move urban development both up and out. At the urban edge, those enjoying a quasi-rural life will resist the tide of urbanity, and environmentalists will fight the conversion of resource land to urban use. In older, developed areas, the growing share of the population that is childless, single, or with empty nests creates a market for apartment rentals and condominiums, changing older neighborhoods and driving up prices.

Lastly, there is the conflict caused by gentrification, the replacement of the less affluent by the more affluent. This is not usually redevelopment or even densification, since most gentrifiers want older single-family houses. Sadly for the non-rich, the gentrifiers arrive with a potent combination of higher education, professional occupations, and financial assets. The only hope for the average household being pushed out is to live in areas not targeted by the gentrifiers, or to meet their bids by combining numbers.

*Richard Morrill is an urban demographer who taught for many years in the University of Washington's Department of Geography.*

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**Seattle Times**  
**August 4, 2007**  
**History's blueprint**  
**By Lauren McCroskey**

Recent moves to honor a number of Seattle's buildings with historical designation have drawn out a regressive streak in a city prideful of its progressive, world-class status ["38 properties eyed as historic," Times, Local News, July 12, "Let's not get hysterical about historic preservation," Lynne K. Varner editorial column, July 18, and "The landmark you save belongs to someone else," Bruce Ramsey editorial column, July 25].

Sadly, some have expressed contempt for expanding the city's list of landmark properties, stating that only a rarefied sample of historic buildings should be preserved. Setting an arbitrary standard for preserving historic buildings is elitist decision-making about what is important and meaningful about our past. It also denies us the opportunity to be fully educated about who and what have imprinted our landscapes. Property ownership is temporary; history is not.

Real history is about complete disclosure, and the past is captured in many formats — high-style, aesthetic buildings being only one. Modest buildings have stories too, and sometimes those stories are greater than their bricks and mortar. Even esteemed historic places hundreds of years old can be humble. Examine a piazza in Italy and you begin to see that the individual pieces are often remarkably common. But assembled as a whole, these buildings create remarkable and vibrant envelopes where modern people work and play, and the tourism dollars they draw have built robust economies. Many Americans — and it appears, some in Seattle — lack this ability to coexist with the past.

A mere sprinkling of historic oddities throughout a landscape of transient modern buildings is not historic preservation, nor is it good stewardship of our heritage. Those who would sieve out what they believe to be

"lesser" buildings will leave us with a weak and incomplete record of Seattle's rich history. Future generations deserve more than this selective view of how our cities originated and who contributed to the larger story. A city that touts diversity, tolerance and environmental sustainability should extend those same principles to its curation of history as reflected in the built environment.

Historic buildings are diverse by nature. Some project high drama and ornate fabric, others tell their stories in modest clothes. Some are ordinary, and the history they embody sometimes unglamorous or unpleasant. But isn't that the point if you want to be honest about your past?

No historic preservationist believes that every older structure can or should be saved, but don't we owe the future a balanced accounting of the past and the forces and ideals that have shaped it?

*Lauren McCroskey of Auburn is chair of the King County Landmarks Commission.*

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### **WA State Legislature and Historic Preservation**

The state legislature will convene in January 2008 for a short, 90-day session. Now is the time to contact your local legislators to begin the vital process of relationship building while they are in their home offices. Additionally, the WA State Legislature's Heritage Caucus is gearing up for another legislative session. The Caucus meets weekly during the session to discuss heritage policy, initiatives and budget; heritage representatives statewide offer presentations, updates and thoughtful analysis.

Visit <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/DistrictFinder/Default.aspx> to find your elected officials and their contact information.

Visit <http://www.leg.wa.gov/WorkingwithLeg/effectiveparticipation.htm> for suggestions on how to communicate with your elected officials.

Are you an articulate advocate for historic preservation and the work of Historic Seattle? We will offer a training workshop on local, state, and national preservation on April 26, 2008 at the Good Shepherd Center in Wallingford. Please help us expand the number of our trained advocates so we can continue to be a strong voice for preservation in Seattle. Please contact Historic Seattle at [www.historicseattle.org](http://www.historicseattle.org) to request brochures and other promotional materials to share with your neighbors and with your elected officials.

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### **Fremont neighborhood tour**

Join the Fremont Historical Society for a free and interesting tour along one of the former streetcar routes in Fremont.

When: 7:00 p.m. Thursday August 16

Where: Tour starting point: N. 34th St./Phinney Ave N.

Cost: Free.

The tour will start off with a show and tell about historical streetcar artifacts in front of the former Fremont Trolley Barn at N. 34th and Phinney Ave N. and then will follow N. 34th St. east to Woodland Park Ave N., then north to N.39th, highlighting historical sites. The tour will meet up at 6:45 p.m. and will depart shortly after 7:00 p.m. The tour will last approximately an hour. For more information, contact [fremonthistory@comcast.net](mailto:fremonthistory@comcast.net).

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### **Livable South Downtown Progress Report**

August 10, 2007

Release of the Draft Environmental Impact Study is anticipated in September 2007. Project staff is planning a 30-day comment period. The Final EIS is scheduled to be complete in early 2008. Please stay posted through the project web site for other opportunities for public comment planned within the anticipated project schedule:

September 2007: Draft EIS published

January 2008: Final EIS published

2nd Quarter 2008: Land Use Recommendations completed for non-industrially zoned areas within the South Downtown study area

Public Benefits/Development Incentives - The Department of Planning and Development is working with the Office of Housing to develop an incentive zoning program proposal that would apply to several areas of the city, including South Downtown. The program would require developers to include public amenities in projects that take advantage of bonus development capacity per Resolution 30939. That resolution can be viewed online at the Seattle City

Clerk website at: <http://clerk.ci.seattle.wa.us/>. A draft proposal for the program will be prepared for Council consideration late this year. Future public meetings will be scheduled to address this important topic.

Industrial Lands - A portion of the South Downtown study area is located within the Greater Duwamish Manufacturing and Industrial Center. The Mayor's land use recommendations for all industrial areas within the City will be submitted for Council consideration in August of 2007. Information about that effort can be found at: [www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/IndustrialLands/Overview/](http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/IndustrialLands/Overview/)

Economic Analysis - The Chinatown/ID/Little Saigon economic study has been completed and is now posted on the Livable South Downtown web site at:

[www.seattle.gov/DPD/Planning/South\\_Downtown/Planning\\_Study/index.htm](http://www.seattle.gov/DPD/Planning/South_Downtown/Planning_Study/index.htm).

Urban Design - Staff continues to work on urban design elements of South Downtown planning. Staff will post urban design study materials on the Livable South Downtown web site by the end of August.

Advisory Group Schedule - Advisors have been asked to place a hold on their calendars for advisory group meetings during the early evenings of September 27, October 25 and November 29 of this year.

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### **Persistence Of Memory: Stewardship Of Digital Assets**

Seattle, November 28-29, 2007

A conference on digital preservation presented by the Northeast Document Conservation Center and co-sponsored by the OCLC Western Service Center. Taught by a faculty of national experts, this two-day conference on digital longevity provides information about the latest developments in digital preservation to help you with the life-cycle management of your institution's collections. The conference fee has been set at \$350. Check the NEDCC website for full conference details. E-mail [jcarlson@nedcc.org](mailto:jcarlson@nedcc.org) to receive a conference brochure.

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### **Crosscut online magazine**

**August 9, 2007**

**The Clise Challenge: a great chance for public enhancements**

**By David Brewster**

Cities are planning grandly these days, so much that there's a new term for it: Big Urbanism. Atlanta, for instance, has purchased a quarry for a 300-acre park with a big belt-line corridor of trails. New York City has huge projects on the boards in Yonkers and the Atlantic Yards. Vancouver, thanks to access to large parcels left over from railroad yards and Expo, is the closest example of development on a large, unified-design scale. But

just about the biggest piece of land for sale in any downtown is in Seattle. That would be the 13-acre parcel put on the market early this summer by the Clise family and spread over seven full blocks and six partial blocks.

The property consists today of parking lots and low-lying buildings, reflecting the family's penchant to hold onto property rather than develop it. It is bounded by Westlake, Fifth, and Denny, forming a pie-shaped triangle. The City recently upzoned the area, hoping it would stimulate development, and was surprised when the Clises instead decided to sell. According to a New York Times story this week, owner Al Clise has fielded 69 requests for tours of the land, lying just north of downtown Seattle. Deadline for offers is October. The Clises, a family with deep roots in Seattle and lots of land in the Denny Regrade, say they are looking for a buyer with a grand vision for the property, which might fetch \$1 billion. It might accommodate 13 million square feet, and its zoning, recently upgraded by the City to try to get the reluctant Clise to develop the underused land, allows for offices, condominiums, hotels, commercial, retail, and rental apartments. The property, rare for any downtown American city, is expected to draw the interest of major international developers, who might bring very high design standards to the project.

It's also a huge opportunity for public, urbanistic benefits. Beyond the zoning incentives for low income housing and open space already in place, the City might offer various carrots to induce the developer to add some missing public pieces to the downtown fabric. The standard list would be affordable housing, a downtown school to induce more families to live downtown, a community center with recreational courts and gyms, a library branch, and more open space.

In an effort to get the public discussion going, Crosscut asked several people to produce their wish list. Here's a sampling, and feel free to make comments and add your ideas. There will probably never be such a huge opportunity again for Seattle.

From Gordon Bowker, co-founder of Starbucks: Replat the streets, providing the developer the benefit of larger blocks. The streets become narrower and the retail more pedestrian friendly. In exchange for the larger blocks, the alleys are increased from two to four, bisecting each other. This might be done either parallel and perpendicular to the main streets, or by creating "X"-shaped blocks, with one-way alleys. Or perhaps alleys created only for emergency and delivery vehicles at certain hours. This could be broken up by a central square or oval (like the one in Lucca, Italy) which would become a natural gathering place for the new community.

From Bruce Chapman, former Seattle City Councilmember: A large resort complex, including spas, big indoor and outdoor pools, tennis courts, gardens, etc. It will transform the appeal of Seattle for many visitors. We have a great urban resort location, but nothing really geared to resort visitors, such as the Grand American Hotel in Salt Lake City. I would also like to see us develop something like the Viennese wine garden, which could be combined with a beer garden, where you have coziness in winter and outdoor enclosed dining in summer, and always music. We should also have some walkable shopping spaces that are not just national mall stores but interesting, personal, boutique-size shops selling music, specialty books, clocks, art, woodcraft furniture, real delicatessen items, etc. We have a great many interesting and unusual shops in the city, but not collected in any density anywhere. (There's a district in Munich like this.) The streets should be outstanding examples of street design in paving, benches, plantings, lighting, etc.

From Doug Raff, chair of the board of Harbor Properties: First be certain the development is pedestrian friendly: wide sidewalks, walk-through pedestrian ways and green connections mid-block, active uses on the street fronts. Next, some pocket parks, with perhaps one larger than pocket-size, designed for the residents of the area. One could be a playground, another a green pocket with a fountain and lots of places to sit, another a community garden, and yet another a place for flowers designed more for strolling and admiring than for sitting. These parks should not reduce the density but make more room for vistas and breathing spaces, and bonuses should be given for dedicating space for them.

From Larry Rouch, architectural writer, teacher, and builder: Take a cue from Holland, in the process of planning for 10 million housing units. After the government acquires tracts of land, it invites architect/developer/contractor teams to submit complete schemes, with bids for construction and long-term maintenance for the development. The programs include a full mixture of housing types, from single story to

mid-rise, intermingled. One criteria for winning one of the contracts is design excellence, which attracts Holland's most notable architects. One project will typically have three or four of the country's finest architects designing different portions of the development. Let's use the Clise property to allow a grand experiment in truly progressive social, environmental, and architectural excellence along the lines of the Dutch model.

From Matt Griffin, developer and consultant: When the owner applies for the necessary permits, which I would expect to be block by block, the City should require responsible development with great pedestrian streets. If the City wants a big park, a closed transaction should give the City the market price, and the City should buy that parcel.

From a few folks who do not wish to be named:

Create an arts zone, rather like that around the Brooklyn Academy of Music, with emphasis on dance studios, rehearsal space, and other places that are generating art, not just displaying it.

Create two or three London Squares, perhaps using Denny Park, immediately to the north, as one of them. London Squares are small (a block or less), lined with buildings of modest height, permit traffic to circle the perimeter, and are an amenity for those living nearby as well as the general public.

A large, multiblock park, along the lines of Chicago's Millennium Park, with significant contributions, including for maintenance and safety, by the developer and nearby residents. This would help create a "Parks District," with linkages to Olympic Sculpture Park, Lake Union Park, and Seattle Center. Denny Park might be included in the new park.

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## **Portland Tribune**

**Aug 10, 2007**

### **Key land-use case unsettled - Dorothy English can build, but wants \$1.15 million**

**By Nick Budnick**

As a November ballot fight approaches over whether to modify Oregon's Measure 37 land-use law, the case that started it all – that of Multnomah County resident Dorothy English – still lingers in court. The persnickety grandma, now 95, was the poster child for the 2004 campaign ads asking voters to let landowners file claims against state and local government if land-use regulations had impacted their property values. Since then, thousands of claims have been filed around the state under the law she spearheaded, causing local government officials to raise the specter of rampant unintended development as well as enrichment of private concerns from public coffers.

Opponents of Measure 37 persuaded the Legislature to put a measure on the November ballot that would curb what they say are excesses allowed under the property rights measure. Just as the fight over Measure 37 is unsettled, so is English's fight – at least, as far as the lawyers are concerned. She bought land in 1953, and since has sold off two plots. English filed a Measure 37 claim in December 2004 on her remaining land to create eight parcels on which to build homes. Since her land is not within the urban growth boundary, she did not have that ability before the measure passed.

A Measure 37 claim forces a local government to choose whether to waive regulations that affected the property value, or to reimburse landowners for the effect of those regulations on their land. The county has made a series of concessions to English since her filing, arguing that it cleared the way for her to build. But Multnomah County Circuit Judge Douglas Beckman entered a judgment against Multnomah County to pay English \$1.15 million to compensate her for lost development rights. Later, Judge Jerry Hodson awarded English attorney fees of \$438,000. The county has appealed the attorney fees, calling them "clearly excessive and patently unreasonable." At first the county appealed the \$1.15 million judgment as well. Then it withdrew the appeal.

Now, county officials argue that rather than paying money, the county can merely waive all regulations that serve as obstacles to development. In May, the county issued a new order granting English the right to build on eight parcels. “She can build whenever she wants. As of this date, she has chosen not to do so,” Multnomah County Chairman Ted Wheeler said, adding that English seems to want monetary payment more than she does the development rights she originally asked for. “Now what we hear is that they not only want the right to build but they want the money...they’re after the money.”

Her lawyer, Joe Willis of Schwabe, Williamson and Wyatt, argues that the county did not clear the way for development fast enough – and therefore the monetary judgment is appropriate. “They only had 180 days to do it, and they failed miserably,” he said. Told of the county’s perspective, he said, “They still spew all this stuff to the public, and it’s not accurate.” Specifically, he said the county still proposes that English’s subdivision plan go through public hearings – something not required when she bought the land in 1953. Willis also suggested in court filings the county has used delay tactics to extort a cheaper settlement from English, whom he said gets only \$543 a month in Social Security, as well as assistance from her family.

To critics of Measure 37, the English case is an example of how the law is hammering local government as well as the public at large. Liz Kaufman of the Yes on Measure 49 campaign said that the measure the Legislature put on the November ballot will curb consequences that voters did not intend when they approved Measure 37 – without hurting people like English. “Nothing is stopping Dorothy English from developing eight houses (currently),” Kaufman said. “And nothing would stop her from developing eight houses under Measure 49.”

Measure 37 proponent Dave Hunnicutt of the group Oregonians in Action said that the case shows how government picks on individual landowners like English. “They continue to horse her around as far as the rights that we believe she’s entitled to under the measure,” he said. “We want to get her something before she passes on.” Both sides are filing briefs on whether the county owes English \$1.15 million, in preparation for an Aug. 31 hearing scheduled by Hodson.

The county’s Wheeler said: “It seems no matter what steps the board of county commissioners takes to resolve this matter, there is just one more issue that her attorneys attempt to bring up. ... I think all of us would like to see the whole Dorothy English matter resolved once and for all.”

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**Seattle Weekly**  
**Aug. 8, 2007**  
**Land Rush**  
**by Rick Anderson**

The uproar years back was that part of Pike Place Market was being handed over to New York investors. Now it's the whole town - once named, you'll recall, New York - Alki. It wasn't enough that Tishman Spyer Properties of New York bought the Marketplace I and II buildings on Western Avenue for \$56 million a year ago; it has now sold the four-story and seven-story structures for \$83 million - or a city record \$655 a square foot. The buyer, by the way, is BlackRock, a New York investment firm with a \$1.2 trillion management fund - one of many NY firms investing in Seattle. (Boston owns a big chunk as well: Beacon Capital Partners of Beantown is considered Seattle's biggest landlord after recently buying 14 buildings from the Blackstone Group - of NY).

But the biggest deals are yet to come, with the Clise Properties' premium 13-acre Denny Regrade slice up for grabs. The parcel, strung out over seven blocks, is expected to fetch up to \$1 billion for the buyer who agrees to Clise's theme-park conditions - the properties have to be developed along the lines of, say, the Rockefeller Center complex. That's in NY by the way. And there are plenty of suitors, the New York Times reports today. Al Clise says he's fielded 69 requests for tours since he put the property on the market in June - the biggest piece of land for sale in any downtown in the country, brokers say.

You really can do anything you want with it" because it is already zoned for a wide variety of uses, said Mr. Clise, chairman and chief executive of Clise Properties and the fourth generation to run the company. "It'll have a major impact and reshape the city." A buyer could put as much as 14 million square feet of offices, condominiums and rental apartments on the parcel.

Seattle, the Times notes, is on every investor's shopping list; the city is considered the best place in the country to buy and sell office buildings - new or old: Ken Alhadeff, chairman of Elttaes Enterprises, says he received a dozen bids for five historic buildings downtown last fall. "We got 20 percent higher than we had anticipated only six months earlier," Alhadeff said. That's Seattle today: Get rich quick, wait.

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### **Seattle Post-Intelligencer**

**August 6, 2007**

### **Preserving and growing a great city**

**By Joe Follansbee**

Walking from Ivar's on Pier 54 along the central waterfront to the Seattle Aquarium on Pier 59, it's easy to imagine 19th-century sailing ships and mosquito fleet steamers docked at each pier, taking on passengers and unloading cargo to serve a booming city. The shape and configuration of the piers have hardly changed since the 1800s, making that stretch of Alaskan Way one of the best-preserved historic waterfronts on the West Coast. Though the warehouses and steamers have evolved into restaurants, shops, offices and tour boats, the continuity of present with past is as tangible as the sound of water lapping against pilings and the cry of hungry seagulls. This experience makes the district a core element of our city's heritage. Its loss would kill the city's heart.

That's why the city's plan to designate these piers along with more than two dozen other downtown structures as historic landmarks is the right thing to do. These structures are tangible connections with the city's early growth, and irreplaceable opportunities to tell the story of Seattle's development to tens of thousands of residents and visitors. According to a recent report by the Pike Place Market Development Authority, approximately one-third of Seattle's residents -- about 166,000 people--did not live in the city before 1995. Preserving historic buildings encourages a sense of rootedness that contributes to a vibrant and vital community life and a feeling that the city believes enough in itself to preserve a part of the built environment for future generations.

All affected property owners should welcome this plan. Seattle City Council members Peter Steinbrueck and Jean Godden have demonstrated a proactive vision that gives property owners certainty and predictability about the future of these structures. They no longer need to worry that a proposed change could provoke a reaction from neighbors that delays or derails improvements that achieve highest and best use. Over the next year or so, the city's historic preservation program, the Landmarks Preservation Board and forward-thinking property owners will work through each of the expected nominations, including the wooden piers. They will follow a professional, well-understood, time-tested and orderly public process that has its roots in the preservation of Pioneer Square and the Pike Place Market, which has become the single-most identifiable Seattle icon to the rest of the world. In exchange for city authority to review proposed changes to the buildings, the owners will receive significant financial incentives encouraging them to maintain and improve the buildings in accordance with their historic character while reducing their property taxes. It's a classic "win-win" for the public and for property owners.

The Association of King County Historical Organizations, a 30-year-old coalition of museums, historical societies, ethnic heritage groups and individuals, also supports a proposed Central Waterfront Historic District, which is contained in the Department of Planning and Development's "Waterfront Concept Plan," released in 2006 with the blessing of a citizens advisory group as part of the Alaskan Way Viaduct replacement studies. The district would cover piers 54 to 59, which are labeled historic in city planning documents. A waterfront historic district, linked with other maritime-related historic structures downtown, creates an exciting new opportunity for educational programs and tourism activities that create jobs and increase tax revenues.

Seattle expects to welcome tens of thousands of new residents to its downtown core in the coming years. The city needs to grow to accommodate these new neighbors, but not at the expense of its identity. The built environment is part of a legacy that our parents and grandparents have asked us to manage wisely and responsibly for their descendants. The preservation of significant buildings honors this obligation.

*Joe Follansbee is vice president of the Association of King County Historical Organizations. He lives in Seattle.*

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## **North Seattle Herald Outlook**

**August 8, 2007**

### **SRO crowd for City Council candidates forum**

**By Rick Levin**

How to plan and manage urban growth might be the most pressing issue facing development crazy Seattle, and it was certainly the big question confronting a panel of city council candidates at last week's growth and development forum at the Yesler Community Center. The Aug. 2 forum featured a series of hard hitting and unusually sophisticated questions posed by a moderator, followed in turn by minuteto90secondlong answers by the panel, which featured both incumbents and challengers for various city council positions.

The Candidate's Forum on Growth and Development - cosponsored by a handful of community based organizations including Hate Free Zone, Real Change, Community Coalition for Environmental Justice (CCEJ) and the Tenants Union - revealed few significant rifts among the candidates, and at times presented an almost unified front in the candidates' proclaimed desire to protect the city and its citizens from the more negative aspects of booming urban growth.

"A lot of people are getting ridden on the red carpet of density right out of town," said council candidate Joe Szwaja, who is challenging incumbent Jean Godden for her seat at Position 1. Szwaja, who lives in the Ravenna neighborhood, explained that public officials need to protect their constituents - especially the most impoverished - from the displacement resulting from rampant growth. He suggested one-to-one replacement for low income housing lost to development, protection from predatory lending and a strengthening of renter's rights. Godden did not attend the forum.

Challenger Venus Velazquez, one among four candidates at the forum vying for Position 3 on the city council, said she supports the idea of one-to-one replacement of low income housing. At one point, Velazquez - who argued that Seattle's housing boom "displaces the lowest people on the pole" - told the audience that "we all need to take a big 'growth' time out," an assertion that received a burst of applause from forum attendees.

Addressing a question about the root causes of gentrification, Velazquez said that many residents get "priced out" of particular neighborhoods by people with access to more and better resources. "It's about poverty, it's about class and it's about race," the candidate stated.

Position 9 incumbent Sally Clark said the issue of gentrification is a huge one, especially in the South End. "It's ripping neighborhoods apart," Clark said, adding that the arrival of light rail in the Rainier Valley is a "double edged sword" in terms of the transit project's impact on regional development. "It's going to continue to push people farther south and out of our city," Clark said of growth spurred by light rail. She added that the new transit option will make the South End look attractive to developers who had not considered the area previously.

Position 3 candidate Bruce Harrell said city officials should ensure that light rail be surrounded by "good, healthy development," and he suggested the creation of a sort of "Walk of Nations" up and down the light rail line - something that would celebrate the ethnic diversity of the city through a mixture of different small business franchises. "How we deal with this issue will define us as a city," Harrell said of light rail.

Al Runte, another Position 3 challenger, said that in terms of growth, development and transportation Seattle is "moving closer and closer to the phenomenon of Europe - more people, less land." As for solving the city's vast and ingrained transportation problems, Runte said he supports rebuilding the Alaskan Way Viaduct rather than replacing it with surface streets. "The problem with the surface option is you're going to have a lot of stop-and-go traffic," he said, adding that "we should have solved this problem years ago."

Runte, a historian with a strong populist bent, also came out strong in support of protecting public open space in the face of development; one of his suggestions was that developers pay for public parks through the implementation of impact fees. He warned against the city selling public lands or property to private developers, lamenting the fact that many public institutions are being forced to seek private funding to survive. "How would you like to visit Starbucks' Yellowstone," Runte quipped.

Harrell also came out in support of creating and protecting open, public space in the city. "I think people want open space," he said. "They want to see smart development. We're trying to get people out of cars. Embracing density is going to be very tough if we don't do it in an aesthetically pleasing way."

Candidate Tim Burgess, a Queen Anne resident, said several times during the proceedings that as a councilmember he would make sure Seattle does not become a city of only "the wealthy and the childless." He cautioned against the dangers of "rampant" growth, adding, however, that gentrification is not always a bad thing. "The problem we have is when the market reigns supreme, and there are not proper checks and balances," Burgess said.

"One of the things that the city should be doing very aggressively is protecting the historic character and diversity of our neighborhoods," said Burgess, who added that one of the ways officials can protect neighborhood diversity is to "promote, nurture and encourage" small businesses - especially immigrant businesses.

Councilmember David Della, being challenged by Burgess for Position 7, said he is a big supporter of small, immigrant businesses, having spent his four years on the council working to ensure Seattle is a "city of opportunity for people of all incomes." Della said that such franchises are supported by the promotion of mixed use development as well as access to equitable and fair funding by lending institutions.

"We need to recognize that the majority of businesses in Seattle are small businesses," noted councilmember Clark, who said that the city needs to be aware of the challenges facing immigrant businesses - language barriers, for instance. Clark said small business owners can seek assistance through such city offices as the Department of Economic Development, and in turn politicians should work to ensure there is always "a place at the table" for the city's diverse immigrant communities.

Burgess said that, as a community activist of some 20 years, he also has been concerned with the "process" by which particular neighborhoods engage with the city bureaucracy. As a councilmember, he said he would "make sure that every neighborhood in the city gets to share their opinion" in what he called a "transparent process." To that end, Burgess argued that what the city councils needs right now is "members who have been in the trenches in the neighborhoods."

Della said he's often been frustrated by the way the city interacts with neighborhoods when it comes to addressing growth and development. "Many times we don't listen to the voices that need to be heard when looking at development," Della said. "We have to change the way we work with people to get their participation."

Runte also addressed the problem of bureaucratic communication. "I think the big problem for all the residents of Seattle is access," he said, adding that folks who place phone calls to a city office too often encounter a computerized switchboard with a dizzying array of extension choices. Runte made a "radical" idea: installing in government "people who actually answered the phone."

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### **Share your "Insider Information" on Seattle's History and Architecture**

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Examples include: Where is Seattle's oldest existing building? What happened to the original Fraternal Order of Eagles headquarters? Where did our stone Romanesque building legacy in Pioneer Square originate? What's so special about the Banana Republic downtown? Who designed the Space Needle? How many triangle-shaped buildings are in Seattle? Where can I take elevators and escalators to get from the Waterfront to First Hill? Which are the landmarked buildings in Columbia City? Where did the Beatles, Elvis, and Duke Ellington stay when they visited Seattle? Which high school did Jimi Hendrix attend?

We want your authenticated stories (no rumors or hearsay) to stimulate greater interest in preserving Seattle's architectural heritage. Please e-mail your suggestions, phrased in a question and answer format, to:  
[christine@historicseattle.org](mailto:christine@historicseattle.org).

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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)  
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