

Time Bomb *continued from page 2*

Now the debate centers around whether Olum's wording is clear enough and enforceable or whether an all-out ban on classified research such as the University enforces on campus should be extended to the proposed park. John Mosely, acting Vice-President for Research at the university, has said, "But I can't believe companies whose purpose it is to do classified research would come to Eugene—there are other cities actively pursuing weapons and military research." And Olum said, "I'm quite convinced we're not going to get companies we don't want;" and "... extending the ban [on classified research] would effectively kill the research park project. . . . David Carley [the master developer of the park] has indicated he would have to back out as developer with such a ban [on classified research]."

Frank Stahl is a professor of biology and member of the Institute of Molecular Biology on campus. His response to Olum's proposal is that it is "unenforceable." "The words 'purpose' and 'directed' refer to intent. Rules that require the reading of minds do not work. . . . he should add to it a ban on classified research. . . . It should go without saying that on an issue as important as this we must not allow a developer, or anyone else, to make our decisions for us."

And physical chemist and professor Paul Engelking writes, "These terms [referring to Olum's proposal] lack a clear meaning and a ban against them could not be stated with bold certainty. Nor could a ban against them be plausibly enforced. . . . In contrast 'classified research' currently has a unique, operational meaning. . . . It is simple to determine if a contractor has followed the numerous bureaucratic procedures necessary for conduct of classified research."

It appears contradictory that Olum and Mosely can say the Park won't attract classified research because of the nature of the Eugene community on the one hand, but on the other hand, they agree with

Carley who says the project won't go if classified research is banned.

Another point of view on the ban from Frank Stahl is that County Commissioner Jerry Rust approved the re-zoning only if the research were "governed by the same rules which govern research elsewhere on campus at the University." On these grounds, Stahl points out, the commissioners could re-consider their position on the re-zoning which could throw a monkey-wrench into the process.

And local writer and activist Betsy Brown speaks for some of the community when she writes in the newsletter of CALS (Citizens Action for Lasting Security): "In Eugene, a good way for us to start is down by the riverside—by refusing to take our piece of the war industry pie. . . . Disarmament, like charity, should begin at home."

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CALS, surprisingly, is the only group among 16 in a local peace and justice network that has taken a public stand on the issue of classified research.

Financing

What would the financial outlay for such a development be? The estimates are that \$16-20 million would be spent by the City of Eugene. It would be spent on streets, lights, sewers, water lines, parks, plazas, bike paths, loan and administrative costs as well as debt service (interest). Although the city will ask the voters for an income tax on November 5, it would not use this tax money for the Riverfront development.

The City Council did not find consensus among those polled this summer for using income tax money for this project. So

where will the money be found? An initial \$1 million might be borrowed from the Lane County Road Fund. This idea was presented by the city, it seems, even before they asked the county, however! According to the *Register Guard*, county commissioners Rust and Ball "expressed discontent at not being consulted by city officials and at having to learn about Eugene's proposed financing measures through the news media."

If and when the city finds the \$1 million, it would only be for "front-end costs." The city would eventually sell bonds and use the revenue for building the infrastructure of the development. This is a normal way for a city to finance development. The means by which they will finance the debt is by a "tax increment district" which is basically a two-tiered tax system in the area of the development. The present value of the land is the basis for one set of property taxes which will be spent as now—mostly by the city and

the 4-J School District. If and when the value of the land increases after the proposed development, the taxes on the increased value only (the "increment") will be used to pay back the bond debt.

Who Benefits

Some Eugene taxpayers are asking themselves: What will we get out of these expenditures? If the development fails, won't we taxpayers be totally responsible for the debt? If these property values are frozen, doesn't that increase my taxes because the frozen values take those taxes out of the general pool? For \$16-20 million, how many jobs will be created and what kinds of jobs?

So far, there has been no prediction about the number of jobs created. The types of jobs fall into two main categories—

scientific researchers (UO professors and graduates in science) and light manufacturing, very likely micro chips or other high-tech products.

David Carley said this summer he had no specific companies in mind who might rent Riverfront space. He wouldn't even give a hint of possible renters. It appears the touted economic development and jobs are quite speculative. It is difficult to pin down just what kinds of benefits the citizens of Eugene will reap. Yet they will be the "lenders of last resort"—if the project fails to generate the necessary taxes, city taxpayers will have to cover the bond debt.

UO student body president Lynn Pynckney says it's too bad the "chance for input is over" regarding the lease conditions Olum has proposed. She feels the students still can have something to say about the look, the aesthetics, the safety and public access to the river. "We will be using everything we've got" to influence the shape of the development, she adds. "There are many details to be worked on."

State-Level Action

Is the public process really over? Can the State Board of Education be lobbied? "Well, yes," said Lynn, "but they'll probably accept whatever is proposed."

The amendment to the Metro Area Plan must also be approved at the state level by the Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC). According to Alvin Urquart, this amendment would violate five state-wide planning goals, in particular, Goal #15. It deals with the Willamette Greenway system. Supposedly, the Greenway regulations do not allow for any further development within its boundaries.

Will the debate about the basic value of the Riverfront Research Park continue? Public officials moved swiftly this summer while Eugenians vacationed and students went home. The face of Eugene along the Willamette River could change forever, yet some citizens feel there has been little public input into the process. Will they take a stand, or will the bulldozers soon start digging up the riverfront?

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