

By KATHY CRAFT
Of the Emerald

The future of the Community Center for the Performing Arts (CCPA), alias the WOW Hall, may be in danger again.

If the recommendations of John Blayney, a San Francisco economic consultant hired by the city to study developmental alternatives for the downtown westside, are implemented, relatively quiet, tree-lined Lincoln Street may metamorphosize into a four-lane "boulevard" filled with automobiles emerging from the I-105 off ramp, traveling directly beneath the building's windows and over the proposed site of the Community Health and Education Center (CHEC) as well.

Furthermore, the building may disappear completely if its current site at 8th Avenue and Lincoln Street is displaced by a parking lot for a proposed shopping mall across the street.

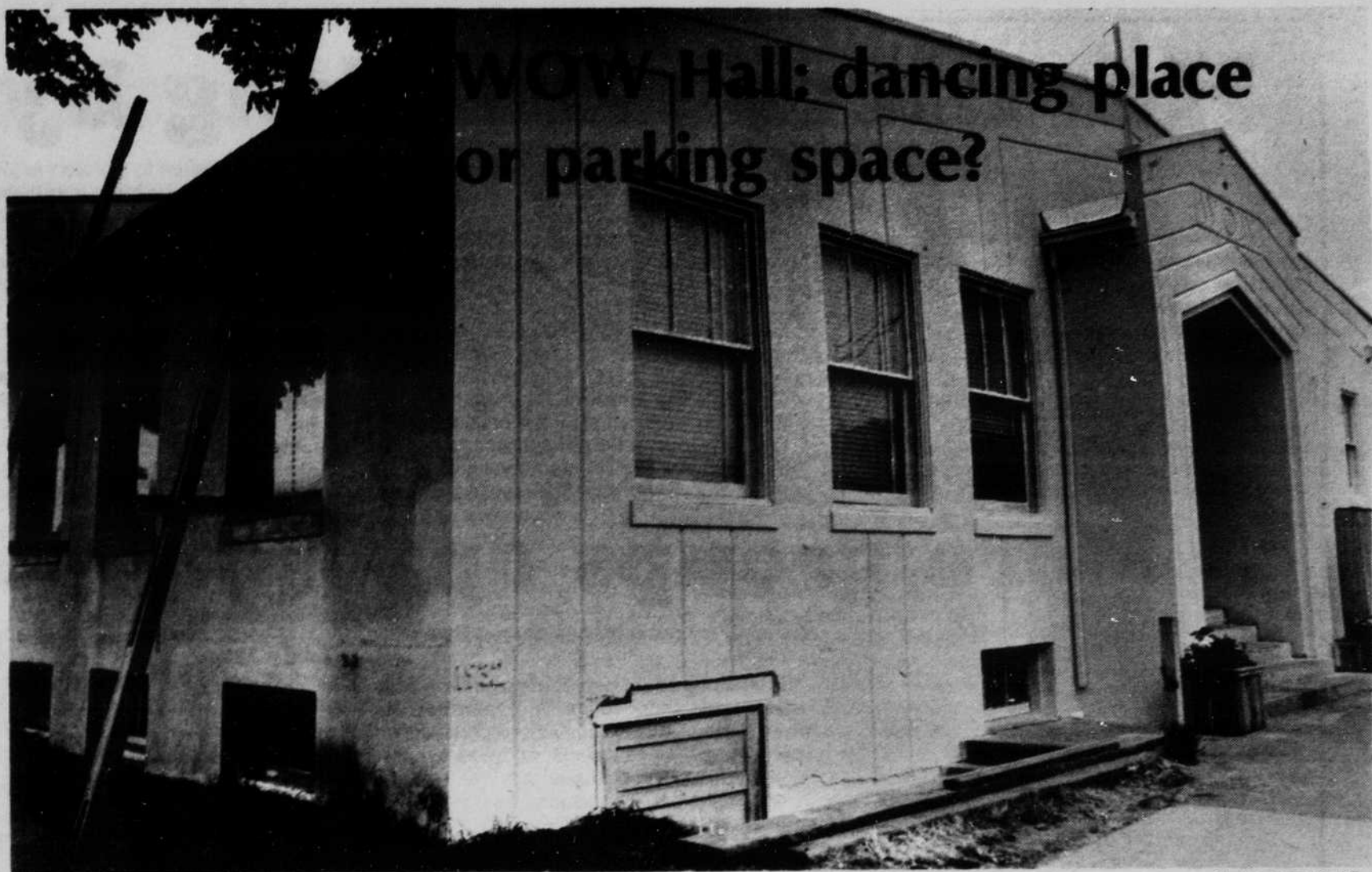
According to Blayney, even if the plan is adopted, actual construction won't begin for another five years. Nevertheless, supporters of the CCPA, CHEC and many residents of the neighborhood — particularly those with a countercultural orientation — are already banding together to protect their interests.

In his study, which cost the city approximately \$60,000, Blayney examines a variety of alternatives for the development of the downtown westside area, the neighborhood between Jefferson Street on the west, Charnelton Street on the east, 7th Avenue on the north and 13th Avenue on the south. He recommends the area be rezoned from its present C-2 status (community-commercial) to a high density residential designation (R-4), in order to achieve maximum residential use and development for the neighborhood, the goal mandated by the city's 1990 Plan.

Although Blayney admits this plan may result in displacement of some older residences and perhaps in higher rents, he also thinks that with utilization of the state tax-abatement program, it will encourage property owners to rehabilitate housing and construct new dwellings in the area.

Blayney also studied 10 alternatives for solving the traffic problems of the area, particularly those confronting residents of car-clogged Washington and Jefferson streets. Of those 10, Blayney considered only three realistic. In Blayney's assessment of the situation, the three feasible alternatives are:

- essentially doing nothing, which, according to Blayney, will eventually lead to a widening of both Washington and Jefferson streets to accommodate increasing traffic predicted for the future.
- extending freeway ramps over 7th Avenue to 8th Avenue and removing the jog on Jefferson Street at 13th Avenue. Blayney



The fate of the Community Center for the Performing Arts, also known as WOW Hall, is in question again. If the recommendations of a city-

hired consultant are adopted, the building may be replaced by a parking lot.

believes this alternative will alleviate traffic congestion somewhat but adds it won't help residents of Jefferson and Washington streets who suffer from a steady stream of noisy traffic in their front yards.

- implementing the Lincoln Boulevard proposal. Under this plan automobiles entering and exiting I-105 will avoid Washington and Jefferson streets completely, instead traveling along the new boulevard. Blayney believes this plan, which he recommends, will accomplish three goals — eliminate traffic problems on Washington and Jefferson streets, facilitate better access to the proposed shopping mall (to be located between Lincoln and Charnelton streets and 8th and 11th avenues), and establish a definite westward boundary to commercial development in the downtown area.

Although Blayney admits definite drawbacks to his recommendation, he believes its implementation is necessary to preserve peace and quiet on Washington and Jefferson streets and to assure downtown Eugene its position as a commercial-metropolitan center, a position many believe is threatened by such suburban developments as Valley River Center.

But at a meeting Wednesday at Lincoln School, at which over 200 persons gathered to question Blayney on the study, members of the occasionally antagonistic crowd challenged the validity of

those goals ("Who needs another goddamned shopping center?" one man asked) as well as Blayney's belief that changes are required for improvement for the area.

Audience members also accused the city council and Blayney of failing to devote any serious attention to recommendations of the Westside Neighborhood Quality Project. The question also arose as to what will happen to the traffic utilizing the proposed Lincoln Boulevard once it reaches 13th Avenue. Blayney admitted further study was necessary to determine an answer to that question.

The question and answer process on the study will be continued at another public meeting Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. in the City Council Chambers at City Hall. Questions submitted beforehand in writing to the planning department will be addressed at the opening of the meeting before other questions are answered.

The Eugene Planning Commission will hear its first public testimony concerning the issue at a meeting tentatively scheduled for Aug. 17 at 7:30 p.m., also at the council chambers.

Blayney recommended the city not decide definitely on any of the alternatives at least until an update on the Eugene-Springfield Area Transportation Study is completed (scheduled for this fall). City officials generally agree no formal action will be taken on the issue until winter or spring of 1977.

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