

200 turn out to discuss downtown renovation

By Cami Swanson
Of the Emerald

About 200 Eugene citizens got a chance to air their opinions on the expansion of the Urban Renewal District and the reopening of Willamette Street between Eighth and 10th avenues in a forum held Thursday.

The forum, sponsored by both the Downtown and the Eugene Planning commissions, allowed citizens to express ideas and opinions on the programs before each commission submits its own recommendation to

the City Council in the spring.

Each participant was assigned to one of 18 tables at the forum. At each table was a trained facilitator to guide the discussion, a recorder to take note of the comments and a member of either the Planning Commission, Downtown Commission or the City Council.

At the end of the night, a summary of each table's opinions on the new Urban Renewal Plan, which has not been updated since 1968, was presented to the entire forum.

Most of the concern focused

on the commission's recommendation to reopen the area of Willamette between Eighth and 10th avenues, an area that currently is closed as a part of the city center mall. The commissions also recommended opening Broadway Street between Oak and Willamette streets. The total cost of the project is estimated at \$900,000.

According to both commissions, the reopening of these areas would provide better access to downtown, encourage private investment and invite more people downtown.

With the intersection of Willamette and Broadway open to traffic, they believe that a plaza area could be maintained on the street's east side. The intersection could be closed off to traffic for events such as the Eugene Celebration.

Other benefits of the project suggested by the forum participants included an improved sense of safety and security. One table was concerned with the amount of transients present in the mall area, and another table said the large amount of teenagers who frequent the area

at night tended to be intimidating. Both tables concluded these problems would be resolved with a greater influx of traffic.

Despite these benefits, the majority of the participants tended to oppose the recommendation to reopen Willamette. Many believed the money could be better spent elsewhere such as enhancing the mall itself or providing more parking space.

Most participants described the area as a peaceful and comfortable place that serves not only as a place to shop but also as a playground for children. They expressed fear that by opening Willamette to two-way traffic, the area would lose its sense of being part of the neighborhood and would instead be a place of increased pollution, noise, injury and congestion.

Although most small businesses in the area support the street's reopening, some citizens questioned whether an increase in traffic would actually increase sales as well.

The section of Broadway extending from Willamette to Charnelton Street will remain closed to traffic and will be enhanced as a pedestrian mall, according to the commissions' recommendations.

The forum also dealt with the commissions' recommendation to expand the boundaries of the Urban Renewal District in a northeasterly direction.

Fifty-seven percent of the buildings within the recommended expansion area are in poor condition, the commissions said in information provided to the participants. Thirty percent of the property is now vacant.

By including this area in the Urban Renewal District, the commissions hope to be able to provide the tax dollars necessary to renovate the highly visible area, which is adjacent to the Hult Center for the Performing Arts and surrounds one of the major entrances to the downtown section.

Reaction to the recommendation was varied. Most forum participants considered the expansion premature and were concerned that an expansion would take away from the development of the downtown core.

Others said the area was bound to develop on its own in time, although they acknowledged it would happen faster with an expansion of the district's limits.

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Continued from Page 1

work in the past, teaching, has given her the kind of contact with students and children that she enjoys.

Other types of work also give the kind of human contact that makes life full without children, she said.

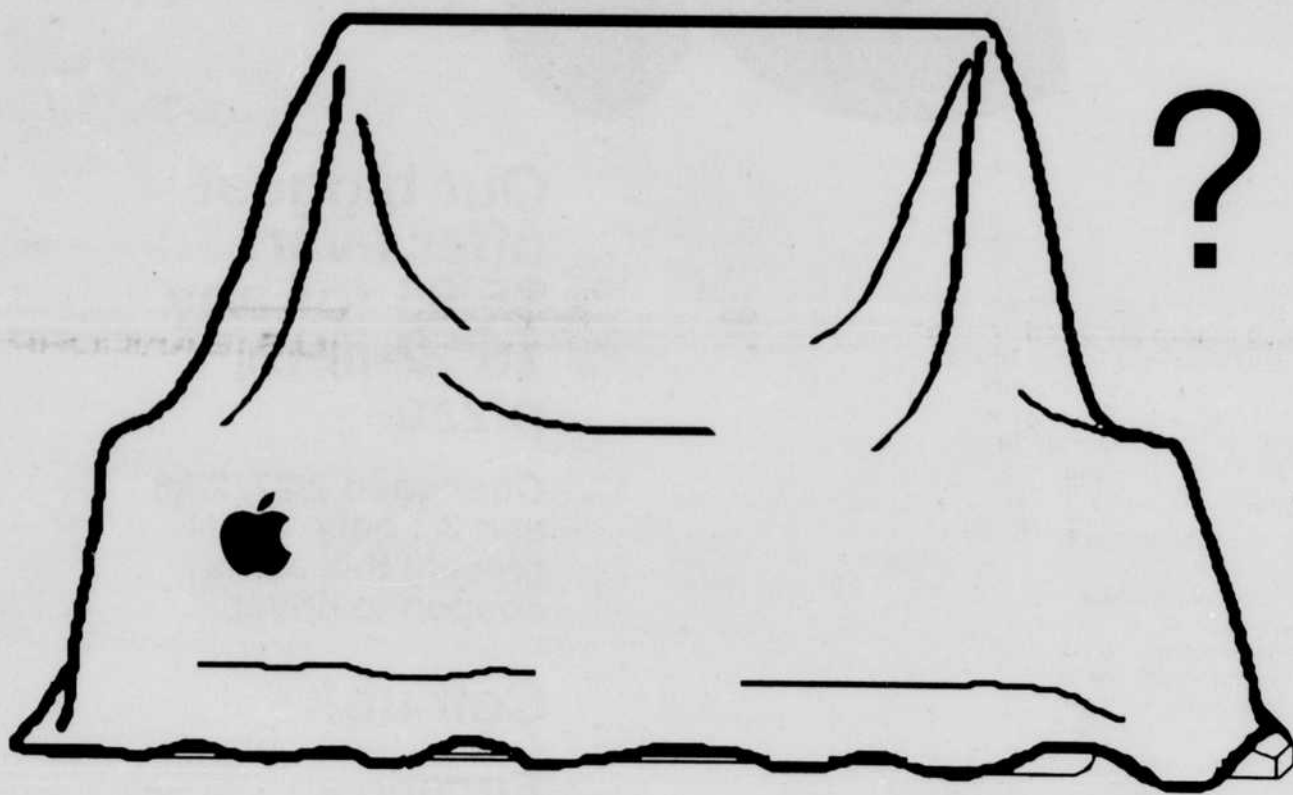
"I enjoy my work. I feel that they give me more than I give them," said Sister Katherine of the pastoral care unit at Sacred Heart General Hospital. Sister Katherine works with critically ill or dying patients and their families on various wards of the hospital.

Sister Katherine felt her calling at age 9 and entered the order of the Sisters of Saint Joseph when she was 16.

"I have never regretted my decision," she said.

Friday, February 27, 1987

We're unveiling the New Macintosh Products Monday, March 2



On March 2, Apple will announce new products, including the long-awaited new Macintosh models, at the AppleWorld Conference in L.A. By special arrangement, these products will be introduced simultaneously at the University of Oregon.

Monday, March 2 • Room 167 • EMU

9:30-10:30 Formal Announcements
10:30-12:00 Products on Display

Apple Computer  University of Oregon Computing Center