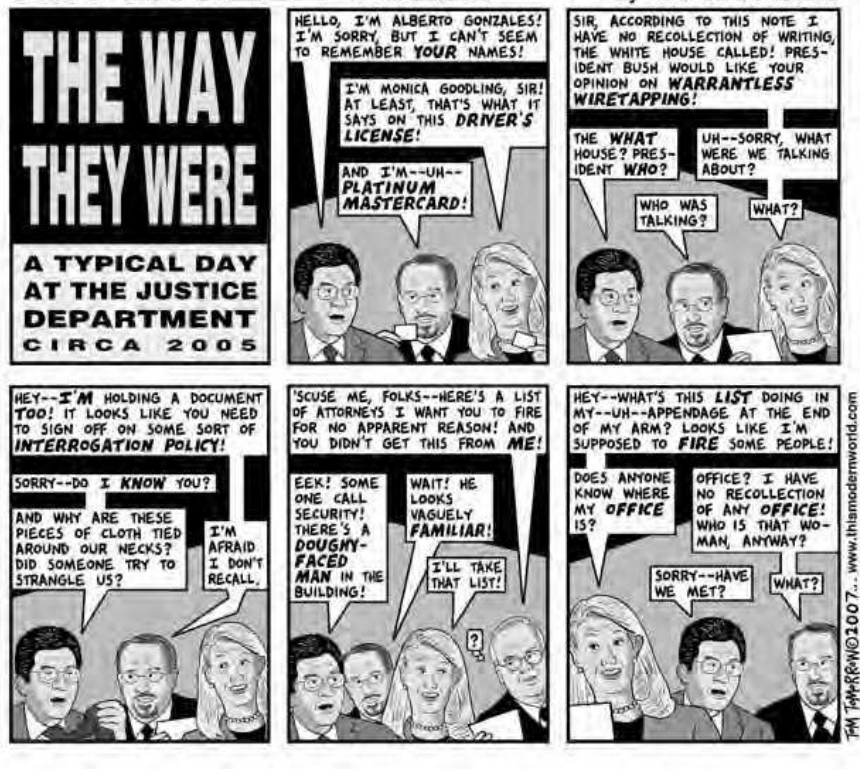


THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



news Briefs

FRANKLIN CORRIDOR UPDATE

Ideas for improving and developing Franklin Boulevard in Eugene, Glenwood and Springfield: How about removing the Mill Street viaduct in Eugene to restore visual access to the river from downtown? How about extending Eugene's Park Blocks to the river? Encouraging ODOT to build a truly spectacular I-5 bridge over the Willamette? Arching tree canopies over the boulevard? An expansive public waterfront? Mixed-use buildings lining a multi-way boulevard? A

big bell tower or clock tower at the eastern gateway to Eugene? A dramatic photovoltaic array along Franklin? A water park for kayakers at Judkin's Point?

The Franklin Corridor Riverfront Study is well under way, and dozens of ideas generated by the study are working their way into discussions in both civic groups and public agencies. Three local architects, Art Paz, Eric Gunderson and Mark Gillem, reported on the study's progress at City Club of Eugene June 8, and another public event is being planned for the Eugene Celebration in September.

"Right now is a pivotal time for Eugene and Springfield," said Gillem, "for transforming Franklin from an eyesore to an amenity." Gillem, an assistant architecture professor at UO, predicted that as many as 5,000 dwelling units will be built in the corridor in the next few decades, and coordinated planning is necessary to assure safety and access for pedestrians, bicyclists, drivers, public transportation and those who use the river for recreation.

Paz admonished the UO for not being more involved in the corridor planning. "It's time to step up as an iconic player," he said. "They need to demonstrate and illustrate



UO architecture students created this model of Franklin Boulevard looking east showing a clock tower and the new UO basketball arena on the right.

• **The Eugene police union** seems nervous following City Manager Dennis Taylor's resignation, turning to the always sympathetic R-G to defend the status quo and avoid accountability. Union VP Erik Humphrey, writing as a "private citizen," blasted progressives on the council in a Sunday op-ed for "suffocating our city manager form of government" by trying to rein in our all-powerful city manager position. Sounds like the military in a banana republic opposing democracy.

For the record, Eugene has a council/manager form of government, and some councilors and citizens are seeking not to abolish or "suffocate" it, just make it more democratic and accountable with a few checks and balances. Judging by the Magaña/Lara cop sex scandal, there's a lot of room for improvement. After the manager failed to do it, citizens voted to create an independent police auditor to watch over the cops. The city should also create an independent performance auditor to watch over taxpayer money. A performance auditor is a common sense feature of many council/manager governments.

• **The cop union is also filing a labor grievance** over the city auditor doing her job and processing complaints about the police. This petty complaint is idiotic from a PR point of view. We know there are cops on the street who really care about their public image and understand the importance of public support and cooperation. We advise these officers to instruct their union officials to back off and shut up. The EPD has a long way to go to restore the confidence of the people of Eugene. Fighting oversight and accountability is a big, ugly step in the wrong direction.

The grievance also points to another failing of the current council/manager system in need of reform. The manager, who opposes the independent police auditor, will now negotiate with the union, which opposes the auditor, on whether the supposedly independent auditor will get to do her job. Sounds crazy. Elected officials need to step in and make sure the will of the voters isn't bargained away in a cozy contract deal behind closed doors.

• **Doug Harclerod is on his way out** after way too many terms as Lane County's DA. He announced this week that he won't be seeking re-election in 2008 for a seventh four-year term. His chief deputy prosecutor Alex Gardner is already seeking to run for the job, state Sen. Floyd Prozanski has voiced an interest and lawyer Dan Koenig ran a strong campaign against the DA in 2000. Harclerod claims he's not a politician, but he has stayed in office and survived numerous scandals by currying favor with political power brokers statewide. The scandals? Taping a confession between an inmate and priest, declining to prosecute a vigilante shooter, exonerating a police officer who "accidentally" killed an unarmed suspect, standing by while the civil rights of protesters were violated, the infamous Boots and Proctor wrongful murder convictions, taking a six-month-long sabbatical after his last election, etc.

Harclerod has had a long history of selective prosecution and intimidation (including trying to shut down the Oregon Country Fair), but unseating an entrenched DA is difficult, as attorney Clayton Lance discovered in 1996. After announcing his candidacy, Lance found himself under state investigation for his billing practices. He was cleared, but the audit was so time consuming that he dropped out of the race. We hope at least two candidates come forward in this open race so we can have a lively debate about the issues surrounding this powerful position.

• **The Pit to Pit Walk** that we wrote about last week in our News Briefs is starting at 5:30 pm Friday, June 15, outside the downtown Eugene Public Library. The free tour will look at the blocks targeted for redevelopment on and near West Broadway, including the two big excavated pits. We expect to hear some provocative questions. How do we incorporate public spaces in the new development downtown? Some little "pocket parks," please. Do we really need more parking garages at \$80,000 a space? Will Eugene's downtown nightlife benefit or suffer from redevelopment? How can we protect and support the existing local businesses that are already established downtown? Where will the "street people" go when Broadway is rebuilt and hundreds (perhaps thousands) more people are living downtown? What public benefit will come from public investment in developer subsidies and tax breaks? What could the block across from the library look like? What downtown design standards are already in city regs, and will they be enforced? How about energy-efficient construction and other issues of sustainability? Not every question can be answered, including big ones about city policy, but an impressive crew of architects, designers, planners and business people are expected to show up for this tour organized by Citizens for Public Accountability. We might even see some of the 11 members of the mayor's new downtown advisers group: Dan Bryant, Stacy Bierma, Harriet Cherry, Mike Coughlin, Rob Handy, Ann Delaney, Greg McLauchlan, Fatima Mora-Flores, Jean Tate, Kaz Oveissi and Eric Stillwell.

SLANT includes short opinion pieces, observations and rumor-chasing notes compiled by the EW staff. Heard any good rumors lately? Contact Ted Taylor at 484-0519, editor@eugeneweekly.com