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Necessary Restrictions

ARE CITY DEPARTMENTS TALKING TO EACH OTHER?

I read with great interest this past week about the city agreeing to sell the "triangle site" east of the new U.S. Courthouse. A great deal of the comments centered on the relocation or suspension of the "garden." Gardens are moveable items and should be considered in this matter. The source of this concern is the uses and designs proposed for the Northwest Community Credit Union Building and the restrictions, if any, placed on the developer by the city (the current owner of the site).

This is a very important site and plays a very important role for the city's past and recent plans, statements and goals. The "Great Street," (one of the only master plan items for the City), The "Return to the River" studies, the "Envision Eugene" efforts, the EWEB and city master plans for the riverfront all rely on this site and other sites along 8th Avenue for success.



It is often that the different agencies or departments of the city do not communicate with each other when examining proposals that should support the established and approved goals of these previous studies.

It is of interest to see that the proposed new owner and developer for this site is called the Northwest Community Credit Union. The word "community" implies that they intend to incorporate, make these community studies a part of their development and support those previous community goals and statements.

A three- to four-story building does subscribe to the future of this area. However, the word "partial" underground parking implies much more of the parking will be on grade and landscape screened which is not acceptable. It will also be important to see what uses will be included on the ground floor of this building other than just a bank lobby that is supported by a parking lot, I hope this means more than a coffee shop. This site is the entrance to the downtown, faces three important streets, can connect and should play a very important role to 8th Avenue and the connection to the river. It will probably eliminate the other studies that have occurred which is the possible reconnection of the Millrace to the river or small pocket parks or public squared on the journey to the river unless the city has reserved a portion of the site for these important uses.

I want to support this development. I want and expect the developer to understand their responsibilities for this important development and expect the city to place the necessary restrictions to make this development responsible to the previous goals and studies and help to make this development be a community-responsible development as their name implies. ■

Otto P. Poticha is a longtime Eugene architect and adjunct associate professor of architecture at UO.

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