

DON'T TRUST YMCA

I appreciate the valuable services the YMCA contributes to the community. However, they should not be entrusted with development of valuable public lands like Civic Stadium.

The Y's 60-year history of development along Patterson Street includes sell-offs to unintended uses and conflicts with the residential neighborhood. Half the land between 20th to 24th avenues, acquired in 1953 from 4J School District, was later sold to developers for apartments and professional offices. Required parking was never constructed. And an unsightly, sun-blocking tennis barn was imposed on the neighbors. Today, the present grounds and buildings are marginally maintained, and the back alley remains a neglected mud hole, inviting transients and vandalism.

Neighbors protested to no avail at city hearings throughout development. Often struggling for money, dependent on volunteers, the Y pursued its own economic interest over the neighborhood's. Giving it complete discretion over the Civic Stadium property could not be in the best public interest.

We should encourage the Y's participation in a broader community service development at Civic Stadium, however.

The city should buy the entire property from 4J with dedicated parks money, lease *some* to the Y for its uses, with maintenance obligations, form a Civic Stadium board to fund, restore and operate the sports field, and devote the rest to community valued income ventures — like a wave park and an inviting restaurant. Something for everyone, too much for none, keeping the public in.

Loren Sears
Eugene

COLLABORATION NEEDED

While I have compassion for the difficult decision the Eugene District 4J School Board must soon make, and appreciate the financial needs of school districts, I cannot sit idly by and allow the sellout of my community to a corporation such as Kroger. Accepting the tantalizing offer from a huge corporation such as Kroger, #4 on *Yahoo Financial's* list of large U.S. corporations that pay their employees the least (behind #1 Walmart, #2 McDonald's, and #3 Target) may bring in quick and future cash, and create a number of non-living wage jobs; yet it may also cause long-term collateral damage for the surrounding community.

There will be greatly increased, almost constant traffic to and from the area; unnecessary zoning changes to the far-sighted Eugene Metropolitan Plan; great expenditure of time and money for the city of Eugene to bring about these changes; a decrease in property values in the area; potentially economically damaging competition for many locally owned and operated businesses along Willamette; as well as the tragic loss of a historically recognized landmark devoted to recreation and the public good.

Personally, I would love to see a cooperative venture between the city of Eugene, Friends of Civic, soccer organizations and the YMCA. In the meantime I urge all concerned citizens to

Large concentrations of capital exert proportional power over the economic and political arrangements of the social formations they dominate.



let the School Board know how you feel about a Freddy's on Willamette, reminding them that their fiduciary responsibilities include nurturing the public trust for the passage of future bond measures.

Rebecca La Mothe
Eugene

WHO'S CRAZY?

In the latest issue [1/23], Rick Levin paired Alley Valkyrie's excellent article with one on homeless insanity. He quoted Whitebird's Ben Brubaker as estimating that a quarter to a third of homeless people are mentally ill (a definition Brubaker himself challenges as nebulous). Lauren Regan of CLDC is quoted as saying "Nobody chooses to live on the streets who are in their right minds."

The latter statement is simply not true. Young people, fed up with bourgeois, suburban society, often test themselves by living very simply, keeping their wits about them as a daily exercise in meeting reality head-on. Others are forced out of more comfortable situations by divorce, job loss, felony conviction or other unfortunate circumstances. Not all of them are crazy.

As to the one-quarter to one-third statistic, yes, some lash out at "ghosts in Kesey Square." But are one in four people on the street more crazy than *you*? I mean *you, the reader*. Since the 1980s, some folks have received advanced degrees in creating complex forms. Others have got degrees in sifting the information to exclude those who might not fit a desired pattern. Others have developed networking skills and technical competence, enabling them to answer an alarm clock and rush off for eight hours in a tiny cubicle, focused on a telephone and a computer screen — five days a week for 30 years.

Who's crazy? Those who succeeded at filling in the forms and occupying the cubicles? Or those to whom these conditions were unacceptable? People

who cannot cope with the modern world are considered crazy by default. But more alcohol and drugs are consumed, per capita, by housed, employed people — and at least the homeless are not bombing Pakistani wedding parties.

It's a mistake to denigrate a whole class of people, different than ourselves, and herd them like animals. Legalize homelessness.

Christopher Logan
Eugene

A REAL WIN-WIN DECISION

We're endangered by ongoing ripoffs of Eugene's resources and livability such as the loss of Amazon and Westmoreland low-income housing while allowing Hyundai and now Capstone. That's why I oppose Fred Meyer's plan to demolish and replace the publicly owned and historically significant Civic Stadium with another store. As a YMCA member, I also oppose the Y proposal to replace Civic with 60 single-family homes supposedly selling for \$300,000 each. Given the obvious glut of new housing and the demise of big box stores, allowing either my private nonprofit club or a corporate chain to benefit from selling Civic, our "heart of Eugene," to the highest bidder is shortsighted, risky and irresponsible.

A real win-win option for all parties serving the public interest is for the city to buy the land from 4J using park funds and allow the Y and Civic Stadium to share the site. Such strategic collaboration and vision from our civic leaders could result in a new Y next to a renovated and covered Civic Stadium with dynamic soccer, track, football, baseball and music programs benefiting the entire community year around. Let's lobby the 4J board to do their civic duty and accept the city's offer.

David Zupan
Eugene

ADVOCATE FOR WHOVILLE

I was raised by two parents in Atlanta, Ga., who worked directly with Martin Luther King Jr., risked their lives for racial integration and educated me about the Civil Rights Movement. I was about 4 or 5 years old when they participated in the sit-ins. I was in the first grade when my mother marched with James Reeb (one of the three people killed in the Selma March).

Part of the way I was educated was when my mother had me watch a film on MLK. From the film, I learned of King's involvement with the rights of poor and working-class people. He said that the problem of poverty is a systemic problem that needs to be addressed. If we lived in a society where everyone's needs were met, we would have less fear of those we view as "criminal," poor and black people. See wkly.ws/1od.

I have a compassionate understanding of homeless people not only from my background. If I did not have friends helping out I would be homeless. I have been a hard-working citizen (with no substance abuse) for many years and still do what I can to pull my own boot straps. I have a debilitating disease that is keeping me from working enough to be able to support myself. It is a long wait to see if the judge from my court hearing will grant me disability. There are many people like myself who are on the streets. I wish I could do more to advocate Whoville and the homeless.

Ceila "Starshine" Levine
Eugene

UNRESOLVED CONCERNS

Oakleigh Meadow Co-Housing (OMC) is not approved to break ground soon, as they state on their Facebook page. Neighbors on Oakleigh and McClure Lanes have appealed OMC's PUD application and it is now in the hands of the Oregon Land Use Board of Appeals (LUBA).

OMC's project is too large for our community to be compatible and harmonious, as required by a PUD, Oakleigh Lane does not meet the minimum city of Eugene street requirements to handle the additional traffic flow, and OMC drivers have already proven to be fast and unsafe to our community during their monthly site visits.

Neighbors have tried to compromise with OMC about terms since the summer of 2010, only to be repeatedly ignored! Neighbors have tried many times to mediate with OMC over the past 110 days when the public hearing was scheduled. No compromise! OMC will not respond to neighbors or other concerned citizens when we approach them.

In addition, we are very concerned about neighbors and citizens of Eugene being held responsible for additional costs from this project. EWEB will have to upgrade the water lines along Oakleigh and McClure, which will require expensive road improvements. These costs will be passed on to Eugene EWEB customers.

This project has too many unresolved concerns to be breaking ground anytime soon, and OMC needs to be honest with all affected individuals before making such