

A TRAVESTY AND A WASTE

The direction our public officials are taking is the worst mistake made since the 1970s Urban Renewal Renovation of downtown Eugene.

The unfortunate direction on the table will outweigh the 40-year scars of urban renewal.

- Wasting the existing City Hall building, discarding at least \$40 million of equity, spending \$11 million to replace it with a smaller version. Total: \$51 million.

- Leasing space at \$1.2 million a year for 10 years (\$12 million) to support developers. Total: \$63 million.

- The city's goals for a "zero energy use building" ignore the value of energy embedded in the existing structure and the cost to demolish City Hall; this will take 40 years to recover.

- The "swap" is an attempt to circumvent council ordinances and goals to promote density and prohibit large downtown on-grade parking lots, which is what is proposed. The swap to benefit the Farmers Market is the circumvention "honey." The swap will move the courthouse off "Courthouse Square" — not acceptable.

- We have met individually with council members, mayor, manager and commissioners with developed alternative "swap" opportunities and have gotten the famous "thank you very much" response. See wkly.ws/1rt.

The current approach is a travesty, and a waste of money and community resources. It's like council shopping for a new car — we just don't like the old one anymore.

Councilors: Examine the math and "real" total energy use (wasting is not "green"), and promote density. We expect and deserve much better.

*Otto P. Poticha, FAIA
and seven colleagues*

AN URBAN VILLAGE GREEN

I agree with Otto Poticha that tearing down the existing City Hall doesn't make good dollars or energy sense. It turns out that earthquake repair costs to the building are actually modest and not prohibitive to another lease on life.

But what I'd really regret is Eugene missing its chance to build a strong, iconic city-county center around a reclaimed north Park Block. My constant and consuming image is of a "green" urban-village green becoming the vivid center of Eugene civic life.

There would be adequate room alongside the reclaimed Park Block for the city and county to share space. A remodeled Public Service Building and County Courthouse building could consolidate county and municipal courts and the offices that serve them. The street level of the remodeled buildings could be opened out into the new public space, alive with Farmers and Saturday markets and other civic events.

The north end of the present butterfly lot, the part along 7th above the Skinner donation, is the perfect site for a new City Hall — or even perhaps some city-county complex. The Park Block area beneath a restored North Park Street is the perfect

site for a Farmers Market and Skinner Market Square.

It is not too late to reconsider the present path for City Hall. It is not too late to rally around a civic North Park Block renewal and build the green governmental and market center that would make Eugene proud.

*Jerry Diethelm
Eugene*

A MOVING PERFORMANCE

On opening night, the Oregon Bach Festival under Matthews Halls offered a glorious and astonishing performance of the Monteverdi *Vespers of 1610* that engaged me spiritually in a way I have never experienced in a concert hall. Quite an introduction to our new OBF artistic director.

*David Wade
Eugene*

WRONG TO BLAME WOMEN

Annie Kayner's letter [6/26] blaming the UO basketball players' sexual assault on the victim is an important reminder of how persistently many Americans continue to blame women for being sexually assaulted by men. The old "boys will be boys" mantra is tragically alive and well in America, including, apparently, Eugene.

This kind of victim blaming is frighteningly similar to the practice in too many other (backward) countries where families disown and even kill female relatives who are raped, absurdly claiming

it is their fault, their shame. Surely we are more evolved than that?

If women are to be and feel safe in our country, victim blaming must stop. It's wrong and dangerous, and it lets men off the hook for unacceptable, anti-social, harmful behaviors that are rightfully against the law.

Asking women to avoid dangerous men by walking a different sidewalk, taking a class that meets at a different time or wearing a different dress is not at all the answer. Put simply, women should not be asked to change their lives to prevent men from sexually assaulting them. Period. Instead, we as a society need to let boys and men know — loudly, clearly and often — that THEY are responsible for their own actions and THEY will be held accountable for them.

So thank you, Annie, for this important reminder of how far we have to go in America (and Eugene) to create a culture where men are expected not to rape rather than to rape, and where female victims of male sexual violence are just that: tragic victims, plain and simple.

*Kristin Teigen, board president,
Oregon Chapter of the
National Organization for Women
(NOW)*

NOT-SO-GREEN PIPES

In the land of no plastic bags and 5-cent paper bags, it seems odd that non-biodegradable glass pipes containing silver nitrate and gold chloride are idolized in our "New Economy" ("The Glass Menagerie,"

VIEWPOINT

BY CHARLES STEWART

A Highly Flawed Plan

STOP THE SEAVEY LOOP INDUSTRIAL ZONE

In an urban growth boundary expansion, the city of Springfield is studying location of a 362-acre industrial zone on Seavey Loop. This plan threatens farms, businesses, residences, property values, species, public recreation, sustainable development and a way of life at the gateway to Mount Pisgah.

Local residents have launched a website NoIndustrialPisgah.org to campaign against this destructive and expensive plan. I urge *Eugene Weekly* readers to immediately tell Springfield City Council (mayor@springfield-or.gov) and Lane County commissioners (Faye.Stewart@co.lane.or.us) to stop the Seavey Loop Industrial Zone because it is:

Not compatible with agriculture.

- The zone would degrade local food security by removing farmland. It would generate noise, light, air, water and soil pollution, with additional risk during construction and floods. It would be disastrous for horse farm and cattle operations. Emissions and reduction of habitat could also harm bees and other pollinators, making farming difficult.

- The stormwater would drain into the Oxley Slough, polluting the water source for many farms.

- The concerns regarding air, water and soil pollution are real. One nearby company planning to expand was

recently fined \$147,788 by the Environmental Protection Agency for excessive emissions of the toxic substance xylene in violation of the Clean Air Act.

- The zone would spoil Seavey Loop as a location for U-pick and on-farm sales. Customers will not buy farm-fresh food across the street from industry.

Not compatible with residences. The area has more than 600 homes. Many would be severely affected by noise and light pollution. Any groundwater pollution would be disastrous since most of the homes are on wells.

Not compatible with the park. Seavey Loop is the sole urban gateway to Mount Pisgah. The zone would deface this gateway by extending 30th Avenue, rezoning farmland for industry along one side of Seavey Loop Road, and placing a large wastewater station at the corner with Franklin. It would also disrupt land use on the remaining farms.

Harmful to species and ecosystems. The runoff will impact the Oxley Slough and Coast Fork Willamette River, which are essential salmonid habitats. Millions are being spent at the Willamette Confluence and Turtle Flats to restore habitat. Critical species confirmed at the Oxley Slough in the past 15 months include the Western painted turtle and the Western pond turtle. Their ecosystem will be inundated.

Not economical or feasible.

- The city's own analysis says the area has poor public safety (worst access for police), poor fire and life safety (cannot be served at the urban level even with a new fire station), questionable infrastructure (wastewater, transportation and stormwater services "may be feasible") and flood plain issues.

- The zone would cost over \$76 million not including police or fire services or works at I-5 (water facilities — \$21.5 million, extension of 30th Avenue — \$8 million, reconfiguration of Seavey Loop — \$1 million, Hwy. 58 intersection — \$1.5 million, internal roads and water — \$34.5 million, etc.).

Not compatible with safe transport. Pedestrian and bicycle connections to Mount Pisgah will enable safe commutes and carbon-free recreation for thousands. Millions have been invested to expand the Ridgeline Trail System to LCC. The industrial zone would impede the critical final connections linking to the park.

The worst possible location. Seavey Loop is the worst location for industrial development in terms of the economic, social and environmental consequences. It has dozens of farms large and small that supply local markets, hundreds of residences and a fragile ecosystem, and it is the entrance to Lane County's largest park.

Please exercise your democratic rights today. Public comment is 24/7, 365 days a year. The above reasons are considered just cause under Oregon law, and your voice will make a difference. Thank you.

Charles Stewart owns certified organic agricultural land on Seavey Loop Road. Different farm businesses on that property produce fruits and vegetables, honey, bamboo and seeds.