

initiatives approved for circulation before they are duly qualified for the ballot. Their loyalty to the timber industry is strong and their maneuvers are calculated.

But what of Commissioners Pat Farr and Sid Leiken, strategically quiet and innocuously neutral? Are they keeping voters guessing until they can once again leave Pete Sorenson as the solitary moral compass?

Commissioners Farr and Leiken, you owe voters an answer: How will you vote when this proposed ordinance comes to the floor? Will you change the goal posts in the middle of the game, snatching three approved initiatives from the hands of residents engaged in the circulation of those petitions right now? Does it bother you to violate the people's constitutional right to pass laws without government interference? How about our First Amendment right to circulate petitions?

Lane County voters, let's demand some answers. Let's shine some light on the behind-the-curtain wizardry. Call, write and meet your commissioners!

Rita Fiedler  
Eugene

## BETTER WAYS

Theocracy. "What is wrong with a theocracy?" one might ask. It necessarily limits free speech. It does not allow for discussion outside of the dogma. Fortunately, there are ideas stronger than dogma, but those on the bleeding edge suffer, to wit: Isaac Newton, Copernicus, Wallace, et. al.

I read in the Activist Alert [7/21] about

the vandalism of the CALC office. This was an inexcusable barbaric act. There are better ways to present your perspective (this [letters] forum).

I am writing to correct an inaccuracy. Anti-Zionism is not necessarily anti-Semitic. The photo printed is anti-Zionism in its content (though not in its presentation). It equates Zionism to fascism. Nazism is, among other bad things, a theocracy in that it believes in an Aryan race to the exclusion of all others. Fortunately, that bad idea was dispelled through many sacrifices.

When we realize the subtle difference between anti-Zionism and anti-Semitic we get a new perspective on the issues facing Palestine and Israel. We take away the highly emotionally charged aspect of religion and get down to the brass tacks of creating an environment conducive to peace between two peoples.

We, in the United States, are fortunate that we have the First Amendment; that we can practice our faith and, at the same time, present our perspectives without fear of retaliation or intimidation.

People that contemplate barbaric acts have already failed. There are more peaceful and productive ways to present their perspective. Any cause is hurt with violence.

Gregg Ferry  
Corvallis

## I'M FOR STEIN

Burned by the Bern's burnout? Angry enough to bust? At the end of your rope

dangling between the Hillary option, aka no-Trump, or not voting at all? Well hang in there because there is a better choice, in fact a super one:

Jill Stein, a Harvard-educated physician, is the Green Party candidate for president. She shares the progressive values championed by Bernie Sanders: an economy that works for everyday people, living wages, union rights, health care as a human right and more. Jill wants to cut the military budget and end our endless wars, cancel student debt and — as the Green Party name suggests — create a society in harmony with nature.

While Hillary may be "likable enough" as a person, her political persona is hard to embrace. At best she represents business and politics as usual. We need something more to change this time around than just the nameplate on the White House door. Grudging incrementalism and a don't-rock-the-boat policy approach are simply not sufficient to turn our foundering Ship of State around.

Bernie Sanders' name won't appear on the Oregon ballot in November, but Jill Stein's will. Let's cast our votes for this Superwoman who stands for truth, justice and the NEW American way. Let's choose hope over fear and change over more of the same. Let's show strong support for true progressive values. Let's stand with Jill and be counted!

Benton Elliott  
Eugene

## REGRESSIVE PARTIES

The current political reality is that we are hampered by two regressive parties:

the we-won't-do-it Republicans and the we-can't-do-it Democrats.

John Adams, our second president, said: "There is nothing which I dread so much as a division of the republic into two great parties, each arranged under its leader and concerting measures in opposition to each other. This, in my humble apprehension, is to be dreaded as the greatest political evil under our Constitution."

Our first president, George Washington, agreed, stating "The alternate domination of one faction over another, sharpened by the spirit of revenge, natural to party dissension, which in different ages and countries has perpetrated the most horrid enormities, is itself a frightful despotism."

Democrat officials have insisted we must live under a cloud of fear for far too long, always asking us to accept their corporate candidate in the face of the dreaded Republican candidate. Republicans now operate from the bottom of the political barrel. Bernie Sanders has shown us that millions are tired of this dead-end approach. The major parties have nothing to offer us by way of any exit out of the current national and global chaos. We the people must think way past the next election and challenge politics as usual. Let's work to end Citizens United and consider a third party or an electoral system whereby voters rank candidates in order of preference (instant runoff voting). Voting under the current system changes next to nothing.

Christopher Michaels  
Eugene

# DESIGN MATTERS

BY JERRY DIETHELM

## Look Homeward City Hall

*City Hall can be a win if we are ready to think anew, act anew*

**B**ig changes are shaping up that could turn a faltering Eugene City Hall process into a real win for downtown. Perhaps it will yet turn out to be a good thing that the old City Hall was torn down prematurely before there was a solid master plan for the city's block or a true and reliable estimate for what a City Hall replacement was going to cost.

When something jarring and game-changing interrupts a design project, the most productive and professional response is, well, "It's a new program!" Abraham Lincoln had famously advised, "As our case is new, so we must think anew, and act anew." And that's where we find ourselves with our City Hall project. Two large elephants have entered into the project space.

**The first, of course, is cost.** As everyone now knows, the bids for the proposed building came in too high. Spending \$28 million or \$600 per square foot on a modest 30,000-square-foot headquarters office building has obviously become far too much for too little. An attempt to whittle back the price still remains a possibility, but reducing costs through value engineering often only results in the stripping away of too many of the pleasurable surface qualities of a project that touch on one's everyday experience.

So, appropriately: time out.

**The second was the unexpectedly large size of building needed for the new county courthouse.** It had been loosely hoped that the eastern half of the block would eventually become the site of a new Lane County Courthouse, but the shelf life of this master plan expired when the county began their serious courthouse program planning. It turned out that they would need the whole city block for their new consolidated courthouse, and the idea of a courthouse building wrapping around a City Hall sitting on the southwest corner was a non-starter for all but the

conceptually frozen.

The City Hall strategy had been to link the initial building to a future Phase II office building behind it. Phase II was to afford the eventual reconsolidation of city services when their downtown leases expired, although any serious acknowledgement of the timing, cost and financing of a Phase II building had been carefully avoided. The numbers just became too large if one admitted that the real cost of a new City Hall was Phase I plus Phase II, and that the building of a Phase I headquarters meant a commitment to a costly Phase II office building down the road. A larger courthouse eliminated any possibility of a Phase II behind the headquarters expansion.

**So, thinking and acting anew.** Never look a gift elephant (or two) in the mouth. Having the entire former City Hall block shovel-ready for new courthouse development would greatly enhance Lane County's chances for state funding. A new 250,000-square-foot consolidated courthouse would be a huge rock in the downtown pond economically and architecturally. And remodeling the old courthouse for the city's Phase II service needs would greatly benefit both parties.

**Look homeward City Hall.** It's not well known, but the original City Hall sat on the corner of the north Park Block at the corner of 8th Avenue and West Park from 1885 to 1914. Then in 1914, City Hall moved to 11th and Willamette for 50 years before it took over the whole block on 8th between Pearl and High in 1964.

Now, 100 years later, circumstances have aligned and conspired to return a new City Hall to its north Park Block home, a place it has always symbolically belonged, and where it can now become the leading partner in a market, park block and civic center renaissance.

*Jerry Diethelm is a Eugene architect, landscape architect and planning and urban design consultant.*