

ACCESSIBLE DANCE

Rachael Carnes' article "Stop Motion" in the Sept. 8 "Spin" issue really nails the two key problems faced by emerging dancers — the lack of both financial and logistical resources.

In my work, marketing performing arts, I see so much creative potential going unrealized due to a lack of adequate resources — rehearsal space, performance venues, production skills and the money to pay for it all. And most small dance companies and solo artists, even if given these resources, lack access to the aggressive type of business management it takes to survive, much less prosper, in today's arts environment.

Carnes presented great ideas for giving dancers access to the resources they need: great ideas that need to be implemented. Personally, I'm in favor of any solution that includes educating potential audiences to understand and appreciate the art, and want to experience it. By growing our audiences,

demand is created, and we will be back on the path to making more dance — local, national and international — available and accessible right here in Eugene.

John Watson
Northwest Screendance Exposition
Eugene

EW REBUTTAL

I used to be a software engineer, and I am now retired. I have come to recognize and accept the feeling of being out of date and not up to speed with current developments (although I'll admit that the car programming not recognizing the broadside of a semi-truck was not surprising). But it is still a shock to find out that I am out of date and evidently incompetent in other areas — particularly in one in which I took pride in being *au courant*.

I have been delighting in reading the articles in the *Weekly*. I have been amazed at their depth (OK, not the Springfield

article, and I skipped the doughnuts), thoroughness and research. I enjoy the columnists and their "what can they do to me?" attitudes.

Being able to read Dan Savage and his sane sex-ed is on par with the 1936 Sanger ruling reversing the illegality of parental prophylactics. I thought.

But now I find that I've got it all wrong again. Stefan Strek's letter [Letters, 9/1] says that all the *Weekly* is good for is toilet paper, packing material and barbecue starting. He took entire stacks of papers intended for wider distribution than just his behind or his packing boxes (is that the solution to the missing papers puzzle?).

I guess I am way behind on what constitutes good local reporting and writing. I'm going to have to double down and scrutinize the paper more carefully — and read more of the advertising and ask my friends to do the same — just to check.

Elena Rae
Eugene

AWESOME ELLIOTT

In my opinion, the Elliott State Forest should not be sold. I am 9 years old. I just learned that the Elliott is getting sold. That makes me mad. I've been going to the Elliott since I was a baby and want to keep going there. But that won't happen if the Elliott gets sold.

Also think about how good the forest is for the environment. It has habitats for lots of creatures. It supplies us with fresh, clean air. Also it's just really awesome.

Oliver Gonzales
Walton

ARTWALK SUCCESS

Thank you Jessica and the Lane Arts Council for the best ArtWalk ever!

In the 30 years I've lived here, that was the best downtown has ever been. I mean, that's what I've dreamed our town could be like. But I was amazed to actually walk into it last night. Kids and old folks, people drawing with chalk

VIEWPOINT BY BONNY BETTMAN MCCORNACK

DupliCity

The South Willamette Special Zone destabilizes

The city of Eugene has morphed a neighborhood initiative to improve pedestrian and traffic safety on south Willamette Street into an intrusive rezone of neighborhoods in that area. They call it an "up-zone." From the perspective of many who live there, it is more appropriately called a "down-grade" — of property values, the environment and their quality of life.

According to city projections, it needs to accommodate 15,100 housing units (HU) over 20 years. It assumes enough room in the city for 13,500 HU. The city plans to rezone 122 acres of an established neighborhood to locate a portion of the remaining 1,600 HUs. That tiny area, comprising a mere 0.43 percent of the city's total square acreage, is slated to receive at least 16 percent of those HUs. It's the "South Willamette-Special Area Zone."

The city is making liberal use of rhetoric like "affordability" and "density" to rationalize this action, even though "affordable" is undefined and not mandated in the SW-SAZ code. And, there is no substantiation that rezoning this neighborhood of existing, affordable and relatively dense housing will result in more affordable housing. There is plenty of evidence from other cities that demolishing homes and displacing residents results in pricier housing.

Increasing density is the city's other excuse for this game-changing action. Densifying within the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) is a laudable goal intended to: reduce sprawling onto farm and forestland, conserve spending on new infrastructure and accommodate changing population demographics. In reality, achieving those goals demands a comprehensive approach to all facets of development and redevelopment and would require city-wide regulation including: mandatory design standards,

containing commercial sprawl like big box stores, strip malls and surface parking, and converting residential property to commercial uses.

But the city has no stomach for regulating the development industry, especially commercial development.

City policy is to densify along "Major Transit Corridors"; tearing up existing, already dense neighborhoods is not adopted policy. Lane Transit District has invested about \$200 million to build two "major transit corridors," Franklin/11th and the newer EMX out 6th. That is where higher density is supposed to go — not Willamette Street, which is narrow and has limited capacity for widening.

It is a waste of taxpayer's money to build the "Transit Corridors" and then undermine that investment by failing to implement the necessary density which makes them useful. If the city were serious about densifying within the UGB, they would be focusing additional density along the EMX corridors.

The city is already planning to expand the UGB over 900 acres. And there are myriad alternatives for densifying within the UGB that would not negatively impact existing neighborhoods, like minimum density requirements on undeveloped land.

So, why would the city aggressively pursue more density in this small, established neighborhood, while permitting new sprawling neighborhoods and exempting established expensive sprawling neighborhoods?

What is gained and who will benefit by destabilizing this neighborhood?

To understand why, you only have to look as far as the fact that the city plans to extend the vastly unpopular Multiple Unit Property Tax Exemption (MUPT) to the SW-SAZ. This area has already achieved the goals of diverse housing, affordability and close-in services. It is one of densest areas in the city. Property values are stable, but not expensive. It is a desirable place

to live, work and play — making it a ripe target for gentrification. Speculators and developers can make lots of money by consolidating lots, demolishing homes, building high-density/high-rent projects — while at the same time, displacing residents, denuding the area of trees and gardens, blocking solar access, wasting resources and polluting the air. Tax breaks are just more gravy for the cronies on this gravy train.

It is a violation of fiduciary responsibility for the city to continue giving tax breaks, like MUPT, to build housing when they are planning to increase housing stock by 15,100 units. With such robust demand over 20 years, housing does not need subsidies unless it is low, or very low-income.

The city has employed the rhetoric of "sustainable," "green" and "affordable" housing, but it has not employed the practices. To add insult to injury, the city and its surrogates are pushing back on opponents by trying to "enviro-shame" them with propaganda labels like "nimby" and "no-growthers." Our condescending mayor and Eugene City Council majority would prefer to believe that all they need to make SW-SAZ acceptable is better, and more, "communication."

For many folks, their homes are a stabilizing factor in life, and their most significant investment. When they move to, or invest in, a home, they do so believing the zoning will protect them. Rezoning will create serious havoc in their lives. It already has. The city is very responsive to the Chamber of Commerce's and developers' demands for "certainty" in government actions or regulations that impact their bottom line. Residents and homeowners deserve the same "certainty" the city affords the business community. They can begin by protecting our neighborhoods instead of exploiting them.

Bonny Bettman McCornack is a retired registered nurse, former Eugene Ward 1 city councilor and longtime progressive city and neighborhood activist.