

founded Eugene Parents Concerned About Testing. Rosiek will speak up and work to bring Eugene together to defend and improve our public schools.

With either of Rosiek's opponents, we'll get more of the same. This is no time for school district business as usual. Vote for Jerry Rosiek.

Stefan Ostrach
Eugene

Editor's Note: Go to eugeneweekly.com for a full array of the 4J school board election letters EW has received.

LCC NEEDS EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM

As early childhood educators for over 30 years, we were dismayed to hear that the LCC Board of Education is considering the elimination of its early childhood training program. How can our community afford to lose this most valuable educational asset?

The demand for early childhood care and education programs continues to increase, with numerous studies demonstrating the critical importance of educational experiences during the early years. A key component of quality early childhood programs is the quality of the teacher(s).

The National Association for the Education of Young Children says: "We can invest now in our children and families and enjoy long-term savings, with a more vibrant nation of healthy, achieving children and more stable families. Or, we can fail to make the investment and pay the price: increased delinquency, greater educational failures, lowered productivity, less economic competitiveness, and fewer adults prepared to be effective, loving parents to the next generation of children."

Our future preschool educators need to have access to an affordable, two-year early childhood education. All young children deserve excellent early childhood care and education. We urge the LCC board to retain their early childhood education program. Our community cannot afford the absence of this most foundational training program.

Please leave your comments to the Board in support of the early childhood training program online at lanecc.edu/board.

Christopher & Deb Michaels
Eugene

VIEWPOINT BY KAARIN KNUDSON AND JOSHUA SKOV

Fight the housing crisis, fill the missing middle

SMALLER, MORE AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN WALKABLE NEIGHBORHOODS IS PART OF THE SOLUTION

On a rainy night in January, the National Association of Realtors published an article that should have alarmed every hopeful homeowner, empty-nester, and business entrepreneur in Eugene.

Seattle — where the median home value recently tipped past \$620,000 — was named the most-constrained, least accessible housing market in the country.

But who was second?

Eugene.

On April 11, renowned architect and urbanist Daniel Parolek spoke at two local events about "missing middle housing," a term he coined. "The key to missing middle housing is that it never gets much larger than a house," Parolek explained. "Missing middle is about smaller, well-designed units in walkable neighborhoods."

This remarkable range of housing designs — including duplexes, fourplexes, courtyard apartments, bungalow courts, row houses and live/work units — fills in the gap between typical single-family homes and mid-rise buildings.

But in many communities, including ours, these once-common missing middle housing types are now rare for a simple reason: we've stopped building them.

One culprit is outdated zoning. A century ago, it made sense to separate people's homes from the noise and pollution of industrial-era workplaces. But today, these same regulations push daily needs farther apart and restrict both the supply and variety of housing available. Most of Eugene's residential land is zoned for single-family housing alone, and our current land use plans call for more than half of new homes in the next 20 years to be single-family residential alone. And yet, by 2025, the majority of households will be without children. By 2030, 35 percent of all households will be a single person.

Another obstacle is that we're often talking about the wrong things. We need to stop talking about "density" and start talking about neighborhoods and more inclusive communities. Moreover, one-size-fits-all Systems Development Charges (SDCs) encourage building larger — more expensive — houses. Many communities focused on affordability are rewarding developers for building more units within the same buildable envelope.

Because missing middle units are smaller, they can be more affordable by design, which might mean young people with entry-level jobs can get into the local housing market, or that

your own parents can stay. They're also designed to blend into the surrounding neighborhood and can provide a graceful transition from single-family homes to the commercial buildings and businesses along our busier corridors.

While Eugene's housing affordability crisis has gained national attention, the entire country is grappling with this generational shift in the housing market. Baby Boomers are seeking to downsize while Millennials are trying to break into the market — and they're both looking for smaller, more affordable housing within walking distance of shopping and public transportation, according to the Urban Land Institute and AARP. Or, as Parolek summed it up: "What the Millennials want, the Boomers need."

Meanwhile, suburban single-family homes make up 90 percent of the current U.S. housing stock. Combine this market mismatch with the still-significant influence of the Great Recession's housing market crash, and it adds up to a 35-million-unit shortage in the walkable housing desired nationwide. Here locally, we have our share of that shortage.

But we can do something about it — specifically, our building culture has the skills needed to do something about it. Over the past 10 years, Portland has taken concrete steps to eliminate barriers to missing middle types like backyard cottages, and the market has responded. With every step to build capacity and remove financial disincentives, Portland's local industry of builders, architects and homeowner-developers focused on this smaller scale has grown in capacity and diversity.

According to AccessoryDwellings.org, Portland issued 615 permits for accessory dwelling units in 2016 — 20 times the average number of permits issued each year before Portland began waiving the SDCs for these units in 2010. They're building almost as many small cottages as they are typical single-family homes.

Make no mistake: Eugene still needs single-family housing, market-rate apartments, mixed-use projects, and larger affordable housing projects — missing middle housing is not a silver bullet. But it can help provide some of the quality, variety, affordability, and accessibility our community has long lacked.

Kaarin Knudson is a local design professional and member of the AIA-SWO Design Excellence Committee. Joshua Skov is board president of Better Eugene-Springfield Transportation and ran for Eugene City Council in 2016. More than a dozen organizations sponsored and over 300 people participated in the recent community events focused on "missing middle housing."

The UO Center for Environmental Futures Presents EMERALD EARTH FILM FESTIVAL Thinking About Environmental Justice

Tickets:

Two-Day Festival Pass:
\$20 adults/\$15 students

Friday Only: \$6 adults/\$5 students

Saturday Evening: Land Beneath Our Feet +
Meet the Filmmaker \$6 adults/\$5 students

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Saturday Matinee Films (each): \$4 adults/\$3 students

Blue Vinyl

Oil and Water

River Blue

River of Renewal + Climate and Na-
tive Wisdom

O UNIVERSITY OF
OREGON



Friday Evening, April 28

6:30 Climate and Native Wisdom:
The People of the Oregon Coast
7:00 Crying Earth Rise Up
8:15 Meet the Filmmakers:
Suree Towfighnia & Rose High Bear

Saturday, April 29

Matinee Films

11:00 Blue Vinyl
1:00 Oil and Water
2:30 River Blue
4:00 Climate and Native Wisdom:
The People of Oregon's Interior
4:30 River of Renewal

Saturday Evening

7:00 Land Beneath Our Feet
8:00 Meet the Filmmaker: Gregg Mitman

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