

Dennis Payne (left) shares his thoughts on a future for Portland's Memorial Coliseum, with David Knowles, a development and project management planner.

PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

## Ideas Shared for Future Use of Memorial Coliseum

Plans range from destruction to new multi-level sports complex

BY LEE PERLMAN  
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

What should be done with Portland's beloved glass box? Saturday, more than 150 people took the time to give their two cents on the matter.

As part of a study on the best future use of Memorial Coliseum, consultants held an open house at the 170,000 square foot facility to hear public input on proposals for the site.

The city owns the 42-year-old auditorium, but it is operated by Paul Allen's Oregon Arena Corp. as part of a lease agreement for building and using the adjacent Rose Garden. The corporation also has the right to propose an alternative use for the site.

According to recent studies, in the next few years it will cost \$8 million in seismic upgrading, overdue maintenance and handicapped access improvements to keep the building useable.

Last year's Rose Quarter Study concluded that most of the building's current uses as a sports facility, auditorium and meeting/exhibit space could be accommodated by other venues such as the Rose Garden, Oregon Convention Center and Expo Center.

One preferred scheme is to tear the building down and redevelop the surrounding area on a more pedestrian scale.

"There are two huge, looming structures there, and it seems that one of them should go," said Ingrid Stevens, a member of the study group.

Other proposals call for retaining at least the outer shell of the coliseum and building four levels of sports activities inside. These would include swimming pools, basketball, tennis and soccer courts, an ice rink, aerobic facilities and a 100-foot climbing wall.

The idea has attracted a number of supporters, including Alan Peters, owner of the nearby Portland Conference Center and a member of the Lloyd District Community Association.

"This is a Portland idea created by a Portland organization," he told a Lloyd District meeting recently. "What other city can offer two athletic facilities of this size right next to each other?"

The construction of Memorial Coliseum forced the removal of a residential community of more than 400 houses, most of them occupied by African Americans.

Dennis Payne, who grew up in that community, would like to see a museum in the area commemorating the vibrant music that was performed in several of the neighborhood's black establishments of the time.

On the multi-sports facility proposal Payne says, "It's an inter-

esting idea."

Other proposed uses for the coliseum include an amusement park, an "extreme sport" or indoor soccer facility, an indoor garden and conservatory, a public market, or an amphitheater of 7,500 seats. (The coliseum currently seats 12,000.)

One of the strongest political reasons for retaining the building is that it was originally built as a veteran's memorial. The building has two walls on its lowest level dedicated to veterans of World War II and the Korean War.

The city is pledged to retain the walls, or create some other memorial, in a more prominent location, regardless of what happens. Some veterans say that is not enough, that the building itself is the memorial and must be preserved.

One of these is Gil Frey, who wants the coliseum refurbished and retained as is. "The coliseum served 500,000 people last year," he says. "500,000! You can't just ignore those figures," Frey said.

Citizens for Better Transit wants the area to be a mass transit center for two MAX light rail lines, Amtrak, and future high-speed regional rail and commuter rail lines.

Another possible use for the space is a headquarters hotel to serve large conventions or a college campus.

## Liquor Stores Get Option to Open Sundays, Holidays

Oregon liquor stores may open Sundays and holidays, under a new law that took effect this week.

Sunday participation by liquor agents is optional, but a number of stores, especially in tourist or recreation areas, will be open Sundays, according to the Oregon Liquor Control Commission.

The bill, passed with an emergency clause, was designed to raise an additional \$3 million in revenue for the state general fund during the 2001-2003 biennium.

OLCC has written a temporary rule to open its 237 stores for business on Sundays and holidays, reversing a rule that kept them shut tight for almost 70 years. If

they choose, liquor agents will also be allowed to open their stores on New Year's Day, President's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas and other legal holidays.

"Since Sunday/holiday sales are optional, we urge consumers to contact their local liquor store to see if they'll be open or not," said Rick Ripley, co-director of OLCC store operations. "Our agents are independent business people, so some will choose the option of opening Sundays and others will remain closed. It depends on whether it pencils out for them financially to be open."

## Jefferson Hosts Community Forum

Jefferson High School will host a parent and community forum Monday, April 22, to let parents and the community know what's been happening this school year.

The newly selected Jefferson principal, Larry Dashiell, will attend.

School staff will share information about the progress they have made in attaining student achievement goals. The school also wants input into plans for next year.

Parents and community members are invited to attend the forum. Chicken and ribs dinners will be provided for 150 people at 6 p.m. Childcare and pizza will be provided for children.

## Siblings Torn by Abuse Need Adoption



Three sisters and a brother need a loving, adoptive home.

Looking for an instant family? These four delightful children may be exactly what you are looking for.

Aisha, Stephanie, Abigail and Christopher are four special siblings who are looking for a caring and loving home. They have a strong sibling relationship and have been together all of their lives. They were placed in foster care due to physical and

sexual abuse.

Aisha is a lovely young girl with brown hair and eyes. She has a great smile with dimples. Aisha enjoys music, clothes and animals.

As the oldest child of this sibling group, Aisha cared for her younger siblings as best as she could when her mother was not there to care for them. An adoptive family will have to help her give up the desire to parent

and help her to continue to become a 13-year-old.

In all, these children are a closely bonded Hispanic sibling group. The adoptive family needs to understand that because of their past, they have problems trusting others and that they can relate superficially at times.

They all struggle with emotional problems related to their past. However, they have made great strides in overcoming these problems.

With love, patience, reassurance and some therapy, an adoptive family could help these children continue to grow. Our recommendation for the adoptive family would be that they help the children maintain their Hispanic culture.

For more information, call Terry Betts, a caseworker with the state of Oregon at 503-648-8951, extension 6035.



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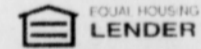


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