SERENDIPITY AND INVENTION

THE MULTIFACETED ARCHITECTURE OF BRAND GRIFFIN

Over the past years a number of critics have called attention to the lack of originality in Seattle's architecture. Some of this criticism is valid; however, there are a number of talented architects in Seattle. The architect who are internationally recognized, but are unknown to a general public who is more familiar with the work of developers than of individual architects. A case in point is a recent weekly cover story on Wendell Lovett (September 1980) who was described as the unknown architect with an international reputation.

Seattle has a diverse population potential. The region offers the kind of opportunity in small scale practice that has traditionally nurtured budding talent. Architectural publication is the first step to creating public awareness, but until the appearance of ARCADE, Seattle lacked a vehicle for recognizing talent and offering forth a critical voice to what is being built.

By calling attention to the work of individuals such as Brand Griffin and their potential for contribution to the field, Seattle will cease being perceived as a wasteland and cease looking elsewhere for its inspiration.

Brand Griffin is a native of the Northwest. He was born in Medford, Oregon, in 1947, and graduated from Washington State University with a B. Arch. in 1970. WSU served only as an appetizer to the many possibilities which he saw in fields of architecture and design. Apart from an interest in the early work of Stirling and some of the Italian firms such as Zigurat and Studio 999, Brand admits to no strong influence at WSU. This taste of design with no firm direction probably accounts for his enrolling the following year in an M.F.A. program at the new California Institute of Arts in Burbank. The Institute was heavily endowed, with relatively few students and excellent faculty and facilities. He intended to remove himself from formal architecture, but he met Peter de Breuville and Craig Hodgetts who encouraged him to consider a multi-disciplinary approach to architecture.

After receiving his M.F.A., he enrolled in the M. Arch. program at Rice University. His goal now was to master the medium so that he could cross breed this knowledge with some of his many interests outside of architecture. His projects at this time demonstrated a strong interest in architecture as a "machine for living", as illustrated in the Dessler House published (A.D., July, 1974).

One of his interests was a "dilettante's fascination" with space and spacecraft. For Brand, a major reason for attending Rice was the presence of the Johnson Space Center in Houston. The excitement that the Space Center provided influenced him to apply architecture to the new and yet undiscovered environments in outer space. He received the top thesis award for "Cities in the Sky", and upon graduation received the Prix de Rome Fellowship in Architecture.

After his return from Rome in 1974, Brand obtained a teaching position at Tulane. As a teacher of beginning design, he offered "performance projects", such as collapsible and portable rafts and tents. These could be tested in real life situations. In addition, Brand and his students made intense investigations of the anthropomorphic design determinants centered around the particular requirements and dimensions of human beings. This idea of fitting the environment to the individual was more exciting than designing environments where people had to adapt. His interest in human flotation, for example, led to his design for "an inflatable body boat", published on the cover of domus (December, 1973).

Brand's fascination with space continued to grow, and in 1977 he returned to Houston to teach at Rice and work at the Johnson Space Center. He produced "A NASA Design Guide for the Influence of Zero-Gravity and Acceleration on the Human Factors of Spacecraft Design", in which he focused on the effects of zero gravity and weightlessness, and man in a "neutral body state". Through this he came to a realization which has been a major influence in his work. The fundamental concepts for anthropomorphic design which have been the baseline for all architecture throughout history, as expressed by Leonardo da Vinci's Vitruvian Man, Le Corbusier's Le Modulor, Henry Dreyfu's Measured Man, and Maya Bridge's Man in Motion all depend upon gravity and its resulting architecture as the variable.

In 1978 Brand decided to return to the Northwest and make his home there. He lived and practiced in Gig Harbor for a couple of years, returning in the summers to Houston to continue work at the Johnson Space Center. During this period he dabbled in a variety of projects from architecture to furniture design. His work was published in Progressive Architecture, May, 1981, as part of the First Annual Conceptual Furniture Competition, and in 1979 he was one of 54 "New Americans" whose work in architecture was exhibited at Trajan's Market in Rome.

Brand's own architectural practice centered primarily on work for the Stanley family in Gig Harbor. One of these projects is an addition to the Stanley House, a handsome old frame structure. The addition is designed to meet the very particular needs of the family. The house has window walls that collect rain water for watering indoor plants, special doors for delivering groceries, windows designed for the particular heights of all members of the family (including the dog), and a bar which is built into a semi-circular counter. The faces of the counter open in large arcs and smaller doors unfold from the larger doors—all intricately furnished with drink-mixing tools. The petal-like series of folds presents a rich visual display as well as being a highly functional element. Architectural motifs such as pediments become "working" elements which contain lights, airducts, water collectors, etc., and yield perhaps a new interpretation of classical forms.

In a schematic design for a waterfront lot in Gig Harbor he employs formal symmetry, but replaces classical artifacts such as pylons with windmills that generate energy new "working elements" that transcend the traditional.

In discussing a personal philosophy of design, Brand expresses a fascination with "serendipity and invention". The sometimes surprising blunders that happen when a process of thought is explored with no preconception of the conclusion is exciting. The more information the designer can get about a project, Brand feels, the wider the range of solutions. Thus he sees design parameters as freeing rather than constraining. Facts provide the impetus for design decisions which are subjective, yet are characteristics made because they are based on fact. Brand is a person who is liberated by constraints.

Why does a Soviet spaceship look different from an American one when, in fact, they perform the same function? Brand's answer is that when a number of technical alternatives are possible and all are able to perform the task at hand, choices are made on subjective grounds, and that is where the designer can experience his excitement and freedom.

Galen Minah

Brand Griffin is presently teaching graduate design at the Department of Architecture at UW, and working at Boeing's large Space and Systems Division on a Space Operations Center. His work will be featured in an exhibit called "Builders of the Universe: Constructs by Architects", opening November 12 at Erica Williams-Anne Johnson Gallery, 317 East Pine.

Galen Minah is a partner at ARC Architects, and Associate Professor of Architecture at the University of Washington.
PLANNING SEATTLE: IS THE PROCESS WORKING?

Once upon a time, a woman walked into the Midtown apartment building. She pulled an 8 x 10 from the folder she was carrying, and showed it to the man at the counter. 'This is a photograph of my husband,' she told him, 'but I've never liked the hat he's wearing. Could you retouch it when you take his picture?' 'Yes,' the man assured her. 'I'll do that and out that you when take his hat off.'

What has this old joke to do with the planning process in Seattle? To some who are officially trying to perform this difficult task, it could symbolize the frustrations of steering the public's choices through the maze of current issues, where there is seldom a clear case of right and wrong. To those who are critically evaluating the planning process the city has put in motion, the story could symbolize the shortcomings of logic and information which seem built into the program.

It is an important time for those who are making decisions in Seattle, because so much is happening apparently all at once. The outcome of the string of events which have become involved in the process, is not only critical of the planning process the city is to take for the next twenty years or so. If you think this means that the multitudes of people and official actions are not interested, the task, you are, of course, wrong. Although many people and organizations have become involved in the process, it is nevertheless true that many more either do not know what is going on or do not care.

According to Ann Ormsby, assistant to Councilmember Michael Hildt, it is a perpetual process which is not just for the users, but ultimately for the citizens themselves to be interested in the process not at the important times—when policies are set—or even if they want to know the current physical results of those policies. "It is somewhat discouraging when you do make efforts and people don't, and then they come after you later and say, 'Well, you didn't let us know,'" she said. "It's not surprising that they don't, when they don't want to be concerned with the physical results of those policies."

Some otherwise conscientious citizens are uninvolved for what they consider to be good reasons. "We've had an insuperable number recall without fondness the hours spent on the Seattle 2000 report," a group of citizens said, "it's a waste of time and money."

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Looking for More than Just Motherhood and Apple Pie

The criticism of the recovery over methodology reach back to the inception of the current planning effort, with the Urban Renewal administration in the mid-70s. At that time the City was feeling increasing pressure from neighborhoods to change their existing situation, which allowed—among other things—high rise condominiums along hilltops, not popular items in places like Capitol Hill and Queen Anne. The laws themselves dated from the 1950s, with revisions from the 60s, and were by then archaic in both form and content. The Seattle 2000 effort, too, provided one of its few demonstrable results with the strong admonition that the zoning code requires intensive revamping. With this prodding, the administration and the City Council in 1977 began to investigate the method by which it might go about redrawing its comprehensive plan.

What they were looking for, according to Beatrice Ryan, Manager of the Special Projects Division of the City's Office of Planning and Evaluation (OPE), were "policies that were more than just...Motherhood and Apple Pie;" that is, which were more detailed than those that had come out of Seattle 2000. 'The sentiment within the City,' says Ms. Ryan, 'was very strong to get off the dime with these general policy statements that were being developed in the 60s. The feeling was, 'We've had enough of that...Now what we really need are policies that are, really, very close to zoning.' Seattle 2000 did tend to deal in broad generalities, and the crucial connection between its aspirations and the mechanism for producing them was never quite clear. A statement such as "Urban design and development in the downtown should be guided by the highest standards of excellence' was an unassailable and lofty goal, exemplary of the Seattle 2000 effort, but it was not the kind of language which carried much weight at the zoning desk.

After studying the planning processes used by other cities across the country, analysts in the Office of Policy Planning (OPE, the precursor of OPE) determined that the City could not afford the time for the staff that would be required to do a detailed, one-shot comprehensive plan.

The City Council was told that it therefore had two choices: to draw a new comprehensive plan for the entire city at one time, or to redraft it each time for general use, or to divide the planning process up into increments and deal with each increment in a detailed manner. The Council opted for detail.

Dividing Up the Pie

The project was thus divided into categories of use, which at the same time created rough geographical divisions of the city. The categories: Single-family Housing, Multi-family Housing, Downtown, Offices, Retail, Commercial, Industrial, and Open Space. With the creation of these discrete elements naturally came the creation of different planning commissions, each of which they were to be addressed. Ormsby recalls that some procedural questions were solved rather late in the process and in the end, that the final hearings on the Multi-family portion of the process recently were reset from October 21 to December 8 because of complaints from property owners that they had not known the process was happening. Officials connected with the project have admitted that while they have gone beyond merely complying with the law as to notification, they could have done better. Some citizens came to them too late to be of use—putting leaflets at the desk, for example.

The question of order, on the other hand, was answered along more political lines. It was clear from the start which of the categories would be addressed first: the one with the largest lobby, single-family housing. This was to be followed by the next largest—though possibly more vocal—constituency, multi-family housing. Next would be Downtown, then Commercial, Industrial, and finally Open Space. Downtown was initially to be among the last areas considered, but this was changed after concerns from what the City terms 'a variety of sources' made it seem prudent to move it to its present position in the process. Although the Ulman administration made the choices about ordering the phases of the process, on reevaluation the schedule was upheld by the Boyer administration, which also knew how to recognize a large bloc of voters when it saw one.

From here the procedural guidelines were established which all of the elements would follow in basis. The procedure consisted of the actions of five or six City agencies, the Mayor, the City Council, and the Planning Commission: 1) the Mayor was to call the project off and receive the report of the process. 2) After the Mayor had received the report, the City Council was to receive the report of the process. 3) The Planning Commission was to make recommendations to the City Council, which passes them (or doesn't). The Department of Community Development (DCD) then starts writing zoning text based on the adopted policies, and the public and City Council review begins. 4) That's how it works, allowing for variations in procedure between the various components of the project. In a nutshell, then, this is what the agencies do: OPE writes policy, DCD writes zoning text, the Planning Commission makes recommendations, the Mayor revises and submits what the staff has produced, and the City Council adopts it (or doesn't).

Public participation and comment is sprinkled liberally throughout the process, in the form of both public hearings and formatted opportunities for ideas and recommendations. Notifying people of what is happening can be something of a problem, and the City has come under some criticism for not publicizing the process of how and in what ways information is provided. A statement thought that we'd go through all of the policies, get them all in place, then start the implementation. . . But as time went on and [with] not only staffing changes but councilmember and committee makeup changes, it seemed more prudent to try and take chunks and do the policies and the implementation, so that there would be some coherence.

Rocking the No-Growth Boat

Those who want to know, however, appear to know. Groups such as the Downtown Seattle Development Association (DSDA), Allied Arts, the Downtown Neighborhood Alliance (DNA), the AIA, CAUSE, INTERIM and others have kept a fairly close eye on the process, although their involvement has been primarily in the Downtown Project. Those taking part in the residential planning processes have been, for the most part, individuals who possess a sense of self-protection centered about their particular niche of the city. Most have not wanted land threatening to become multifamily to lose its single-family status.

That may smack of an "I'm in the boat, pull up the ladder" attitude, not a new phenomenon here in the home of Lesser Seattle, where those who are here keep trying to think of new ways to keep those who are not here out. In fact, the City is planning to accommodate very few additional inhabitants with its new policies, because, as the Seattle Growth Policies state, "The city will continue to grow in terms of households, single persons, childless couples, minority and poor families and individuals, while stabilizing or slightly declining in population." According to the City's studies, while the number of dwelling units will grow, this growth will be due to a change in household size rather than an influx of new people. Although King County has been steadily growing over the past two decades, Seattle itself has actually lost population. The city has extrapolated these trends into projections for the future, and that means a couple of things: (1) that the suburbs will continue to absorb the real residential growth in King County; and (2) that Seattle planners won't have to monkey too much with existing single-family neighborhoods, where they dearly fear to tread. The City has found that even timid attempts at densification of the single-family neighborhood by miles that in the case currently before the Council of "add-a-rental" units, which would add by miles the single-family homes, to the 3000 owner-occupied units to the city's existing 150,000 single-family homes. The City has called the supposed threat this represents to their neighborhoods in the form of choking traffic, rowdy renters, and hazards of additional parked cars. With such sentiments afoot, it is not surprising that the City perceived itself as one of its principal directives in the replanning process the preservation of single-family neighborhoods, and it is equally unsurprising that the single-
of the major deficiencies of the process begin to present themselves in this otherwise promising enterprise.

Divide and Conquer

Some critics point out that while detail and enforceability in policy and zoning are certainly desirable, the process has, by design, created a capability to deal with problems which do not neatly fall into the categories. Folke Nyberg, a member of the University of Washington and a leader of the Downtown Neighborhood Alliance, maintains that "if you give them their draw backs, so do detailed plans without some broader understanding of the whole picture. If you do it one hand, as in Seattle 2000, you get participation with very general—legal action-oriented attitudes, where 'everybody says what they want.' But there's no vehicle for bringing together all the segments to be completed prior to the formulation of any zoning text—anything that there was theoretically the fact that projects currently under construction under the existing rules, they cite excessive time and cost. The current situation in the downtown meets all of the criteria, Fox did come out with a report entitled "Cost of Controls in the Seattle Area—areas which they contend are not been yes. This sort of development brings several effects all of the divisions within the process called for the policies for the downtown Project, but they acknowledge that they are hampered by the fact that the City has already gathered dust until recently. Supporters of the plan, including Martin Selig's 76-story Columbia Center, and the Cascade Shorelines Coalition, and the Cascade Tenants Union, First Hill Mid-rise, Tenants Organized in the Gradare and Queen Anne (TORQUE), the Seattle Shorefront Community Council president Paul Kraabel last July. Kraabel forwarded the proposal in August to the Department of Community Development, where it apparently gathered dust until recently. Supporters of the plan, including Martin Selig's 76-story Columbia Center and the Arcade Center (formerly Carma Towers)—is erroneous, and that this would probably slow the replanning process. They also caution that an assumption that projects currently under way—somehow—will be speeded up because the infrastructure for the latter is already in place. OPE has nevertheless considered the implementation of interim controls were circulating in the administration. But publicly, the response has been consistently against such an action.

The major drawbacks, according to the Mayor and other City spokespersons, is that a fight over what the controls should contain is certain to be divisive, and that such sparring would probably slow the replanning process. They also caution that an assumption that projects currently under way—somehow—will be speeded up because the infrastructure for the latter is already in place. OPE has nevertheless considered the implementation of interim controls were circulating in the administration. But publicly, the response has been consistently against such an action.

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Pietro de Corte, Italian, born this day 1928. Equally talented as a painter and architect, he called architecture his "pastime." Of his "pastime," he said, "It is a great experience for a two-day excursion to Vancouver." He is one of the great masterpieces of Baroque architecture and urban design.


MARKET PARK COMMISSION: Dedication of park to celebrate the 20th Anniversary of the Market Initiative. 2:00 p.m., at the park located at Western and Virginia.

LAND USE PLAN: City Council takes final action on the Administration and Single Family Sections of the new Seattle Land Use Code.

CHRISTO EXPHIBIT: "The Dance of the Tutu Chair" by Brand Griffin, at the Seattle Center for Visual Arts, 401 Denny Way, Seattle, through December 5th. The exhibit includes over 150 works of art by emerging and established artists.

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TV ARCHITECTURE: 7:00 pm on PM Northwest, KOMO-TV. Rebecca Kelley reports on the recent activities of Seattle's Pike Place Market.

FINAL HEARINGS: The Chair Search Committee for the UW's Architecture Department asks your suggestions and comments regarding the choice of a Chairperson. You may meet with the Committee from 11:30 to 3:30, November 6th at 2201 S. Jackson St. Call 767-5888 for an appointment.

ARCHITECTURAL DRAWINGS: Architectural drawings of the new Seattle Land Use Plan.

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CHAMBER MUSIC: Second Annual Chamber Music Festival Northwest, 7 PM, free, Museum of History and Industry, Seattle, begins October 4, runs for 8 consecutive Sundays.

CITY NEWS:

Ginger Voorhees
Seattle Design Commission, Department of Community Development
City of Seattle

Dear Mr. Voorhees:

With the new Department of Construction and Land Use a little more than a year old, I'd like to send some time over the next few months meeting with design and construction professionals and frequently conducting business with the Department. I am writing to you to ask that you alert the readers of the AIA to the fact that monitoring may have a specific topic be the focus of meetings. Smaller offices are to combine for contact. Opel Lloyd at 625-2262 and specify Offices wishing to schedule a meeting should permit application and review procedures. The opinions expressed in this paper are those of the authors. Address all correspondence to ARCADE: 2238 Second Avenue, Box 94, Seattle, Washington 98122. E-ARCADE 1981.

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The third in a series of exhibitions by the Museum of Modern Art on "the most important designers of the 20th century," Marcel Breuer: Furniture and Interiors," is an informative but prosaic show. The exhibition is organized by presenting chronologically Breuer's work of the 1920s and 30s, when his primary work was not architecture. Furniture, with the emphasis obviously on chairs, is displayed and augmented by interior photographs, original drawings, and furniture catalogs.

Breuer's first major design work was done in Dessau. This was in 1925, while the Bauhaus was building Gropius' famous complex. The well-known "Wassily" chair resulted, along with furniture designs for the Bauhaus facility. By matching actual pieces with photographs of the original interiors, the exhibition clearly shows the appropriateness of Breuer's tubular steel furniture to the architecture of Gropius. Both were products of a verve and desire to express the technology of the time: the original high tech movement.

Moving on to Berlin in 1928, Breuer continued his furniture designs. A Thonet catalog from this period illustrates the extensive "Breuer line" of pieces, referencing them dispensationally by number as B1, B2 and so on. Thus the "Wassily" is B3 and the ubiquitous "Cesca" is B32, sounding more like World War Two bombers than the design milestones they were. The catalog also shows some Breuer designs that perhaps don't survive the test of time as well as some of the classics. After leaving Germany in the mid-30s for London and then the U.S., Breuer became increasingly involved in architectural work.

The show is informative in tracing the history and development of Breuer's furniture design work. It is more difficult to grasp this sense of development in his interior design, since one must judge it solely through photographs. Even though some were almost life-size, they were not able to convey a sense of the spaces Breuer developed. "In the end we will sit on resilient air columns," reads the caption for the last illustration, proclaiming the editor's prophecy with typical optimism in progress.

Everyday we are getting better and better. A series of photographs published by the Bauhaus Journal in 1926 (number 1), showing Breuer's chairs of 1921 (first from the top), 1924 (second and third) and 1925 (fourth). "In the end we will sit on resilient air columns," reads the caption, for the last illustration, proclaiming the editor's prophecy with typical optimism in progress.

The closest "Marcel Breuer: Furniture and Interiors" will come to Seattle will be the Cleveland Museum of Art, June 16 to July 25, 1982. A 392-page monograph, written by Christopher Wilk, is published by the Museum of Modern Art.

* David H. Fukui* is a Seattle architect.

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I recently interviewed a witness in my Pioneer Square office. He was an old timer, giving to reminiscing. "You know, it's been a long time since I've been down here. But I remember it well. I met my wife there. It was the first time you met her?" "Yes," he said, "my first wife. Sure wish I could remember her name."

Not being able to help him out, I changed the subject. But he reminded me of my first encounter with Pioneer Square. It was in the fall of 1970. I had received an invitation to an art exhibit of a young artist who was a friend of mine. This invitation was unique; at the heart of the printed announcement there was this warning: "DON'T COME ALONE. PARK CLOSE TO THE BUILDING. BRING A FLASHLIGHT."

I was not particularly surprised that, of the 400 invites, 10 came to the opening. Two of them were sober. When I arrived in Pioneer Square, a place I had never visited, I quickly understood the warning that was so boldly printed on the invitation. Pioneer Square was everything Alfred Hitchcock would have wanted. It was not just dark; it was not even virtually dead. Except for weaving shadows chasing silhouette of wine bottles, there was no evidence of existence.

I entered the City Club Building from First Avenue. It had been so black on the streets that the beams of the flashlight seemed consumed by darkness. There was a stairway leading to the second story gallery. It was one of those stairways that cause you to race to the top before its impending collapse. Through a creaking door, I entered an enormous room. It had every appearance of a now-defunct theatre. A huge arched window permitted little light. Arched windows once filled the room. In a corner, a film of the artist's creation was running non-stop.

I went to see the film first. Just five minutes long. I was told that it was an "experimental" film. I watched the film several times. I had not the foggiest idea of what I was seeing. It was a series of images and sounds; beyond that I was lost. I remember looking around the room for men in white coats with nets. This had all the makings of a psychiatric ward. And if it was, I knew I was thinking. My artist friend wandered over. "Well what do you think of my film?" he asked. Embarrassed by my earlier reaction, I told him: "I think it's got a great beat and you can dance to it. I'd give it a 95."

He continued. "I'm trying to do that with film. Others are trying to do that in different forms, in different areas."

He started out the window for a moment. "Frankly, it's not unlike that building across the street."

He was looking at a building called the Maynard. "That is a tremendous structure. It is simply majestic."

I shook my head in puzzlement and then cleaned the dirt from the window in front of me. He certainly was seeing something I was not.

He continued. "You see what you right in front of your nose is not all there to see, either here in Pioneer Square or with the film."

The doubt must have been apparent on my face. He only smiled.

I no longer have reason to doubt. My friend's last experimental film received international acclaim, and was featured at the Cannes Film Festival. Pioneer Square has indeed shaken off the layered crust of neglect. Through the visions of a few, the efforts of many, it began to develop. The City of Seattle became infatuated with this new historical district and charmed by its architecture. It was "cool", trendy. There seemed to be no limit to the reconstruction of a viable community here. But infatuation is fickle. Although interest continues all too soon. Before the reconstruction of Pioneer Square was of age, the commitment of the City evaporated. The Square was left to struggle on its own.

Without favored status, or special consideration, Pioneer Square now will take one of two directions. It can stagnate and suffocate in its own lethargy; or it can develop a stable community through a viable use of the community's architecture and historical significance.

The challenge of making Pioneer Square a successful mixed-used community is not the lack of capital or lenders. And it is not the street people. With a well-conceived project, and with the proper presentation, investment capital and lenders are ready. The solution to the street problem, in turn— it only needs a touch of imagination, time, and a properly directed effort. The heart of the challenge for a mixed-use community is attracting people to urban living. Frankly, the problem pertains to the city of Seattle. Urban living is not a dynamic force in this city. It is an idea with possibilities, but it is not inevitable. Urban living is simply not at present competing effectively with other lifestyle styles.

The target group for successful urban living are those people who come to town, who will grow roots, who will want to be a part of a community and to work with neighbors for the vitality and enhancement of the area. Presently the target group is enamored with the suburban dream. Fashion that competition, the suburban dream, is a fundamental necessity for those who are involved in Pioneer Square.

I am reminded of satirist Russell Baker's comment about moving from suburban New York to the City. 'When we moved to New York we had to get rid of the children. Landlords didn't like them and, in any case, rents were so high. Naturally, we all wept. What made it doubly hard was that we had to get rid of the dining room furniture too.'

Not everyone in the target group will be willing to part with their children, leave their dining room furniture. To meet this challenge, Pioneer Square must create living spaces and a neighborhood which not only meets the needs of the target group, but is also so creative in concept that it will draw the target group from suburbia to an alternative lifestyle. That challenge rests primarily with the developers and designers who have the opportunity to create these new living spaces.

To respond effectively will take a masterful effort. The talent to do so is surely in Seattle. But I am bothered that developers and designers are unaware of the full breadth of the competitive effort needed to attract people to urban living. Once the first phase of urban living spaces are acquired by trendy professional, the work will begin. That work will be to create urban living as an option for those people who come to a community and stay. Those people will not choose urban living because it is exciting. They will not choose urban living because it saves them a commute. They will not choose it because it is more economical. They will choose it because the living space and the surrounding public spaces meet their domestic needs, and because the spaces are magnetic in design and function.

Can Pioneer Square meet that challenge? I have no doubt about it. The historic structures in Pioneer Square offer a great beginning to attract the target group. The investment capital and financing is within reach for an appropriate package. Indeed, two residential structures are presently under construction.

There remains one final concern. There still appears to be a dependency in Pioneer Square on governmental involvement. I am a cynic of such involvement. Resolution of the problems in the Square, I am convinced, will not occur because of the actions of any governmental board, agency, the Council or the Mayor. Typically governmental action is either nonexistent, inert, or just plain funny. I often think of the story of the Secretary of Commerce in Carter's administration who at the time was seeking to implement an affirmative action program for employment of women in the Department of Commerce. The Secretary sent out a communiqué asking everyone of his department heads for a list of employees broken down by sex. This is the report he received: "After a thorough review of employees in this department, I can report that none of our employees are broken down by sex, but two of them are alcoholics.

Pioneer Square is still in the exciting days of reconstruction. The positive possibilities in Pioneer Square are innumerable. The future is exciting. We will take to continue reconstruction is substantial, but the payoffs are great. The plain and simple truth is that Pioneer Square is irreplaceable. As the city is shadowed more and more by skyscrapers of mindless design, the charm and importance of this historic district will only increase.

Pioneer Square is at a crossroads. It will need to take a path as yet untraveled. I suggest to you that Pioneer Square will be successful in its journey. It will be a community of exemplary design. It will be a neighborhood sustained by the energy of its residents. And it will be here in all its visual and historic splendor for years to come.
Groups such as Allied Arts, which worked on both stages, noted that producing the hard alternatives was made more difficult by the apparent lack of evaluation criteria to be used to judge the alternatives. It was unclear, even after talking with OPE staff, exactly how the hard alternatives were to be evaluated. Complaints were also registered that the Mayor's Guidelines, being the only guide to producing more specific alternatives, did not provide sufficiently detailed assumptions or information to allow them to intelligently judge differing possibilities.

Beatrice Ryan says that while people may feel a bit lost at times, the intent was to "free up" the process, so that people could "come up with ideas and not feel as if they had to justify the hell out of them."

As far as evaluation goes, she says, "We are using the [Mayor's] Guidelines. The Guidelines are not evaluation criteria—we know that—they are general directions that the Mayor and the Council would like to see downtown plans go in. The Guidelines are the result of a participatory process—the first round of alternatives, and they capture a lot of the ideas from the initial effort. I think it's oversimplifying to say that we will select any one alternative. I think that pieces of various alternatives will emerge as really meeting various guidelines. OPE's job will be to try to put these pieces together into what we think to be the semblance of a Preferred Alternative."

Some contend that this method of selecting pieces of various schemes is a play to make a predetermined result appear to be the outcome of a fair participatory process. George Robertson, architect with Whiteley-Jacobson and Associates, which has consulted with DSDAO in the preparation of their hard alternatives, says that he suspects that the process has not been designed to produce agreement among the various factions representing differing points of view. "There's a citizen participation process that leads to consensus," he says, citing his involvement in other participatory processes and seminars on the subject in which he has taken part, "but the City has chosen not to use it. They have designed a process where you get all of the factions dug in on their point of view and then you treat it like a Chinese menu. You say, 'You can't have this because they don't want it and they can't have that because you don't want it,' and you keep pointing at the other guy and saying, 'The only choice we have is to make a decision and so we have, and everybody loses and we get what we want.' You could pick anything from these Guidelines, anything at all."

Ryan says that too much importance is being attached to the Preferred Alternative. "I think it's being mistaken by some people as something the City selects and then acts on immediately. A lot of people in the process are anti-growth, she says, before the policies or the zoning that comes from them is finally and officially adopted. Veterans of this and other land use battles maintain, however, that the deeper into the process the City gets, the more unwilling they will be to change what they already have done. At some point, they say, the City will be forced to defend the product they have come up with because it would cost them too much time and money to go back and change what has already been done.

Downtown as a Chinese Menu

The controversy over procedural matters has been centered for the most part in the downtown process, which is currently in full swing. Groups and individuals have just submitted "Hard Alternatives" to OPE for evaluation by them and a Citizens' Task Force to be named by Mayor Royer. From the ideas submitted to OPE for evaluation, they will be developed with a very sound, objective approach. Groups and individuals have just submitted "Hard Alternatives" to OPE for evaluation by them and a Citizens' Task Force to be named by Mayor Royer. From the ideas submitted to OPE for evaluation, they will be developed with a very sound, objective approach. Groups and individuals have just submitted "Hard Alternatives" to OPE for evaluation by them and a Citizens' Task Force to be named by Mayor Royer. From the ideas submitted to OPE for evaluation, they will be developed with a very sound, objective approach.

His Hair is Black. His Hair is Red.

As in the case with the scheduling of the replanning process overall, the issues confronting the Downtown Project appear to center around the question of when certain information will be obtained and when it will be allowed to affect the system. (See the Inset on "Interim Controls.") Critics of the process would probably compare themselves to the photographer in the old joke that started this article. They feel they are being told, "Help us redesign the city, we'll tell you how to do it after it's finished." Nyberg compares it to "trying to design a building without a program."

The City, for its part, says it is doing the best it can to get people involved and to keep the process an open one. They don't know what the outcome will be either, they say. But they don't care as much what is under that hat as they do that everyone who wants to has a chance to give his or her views about it. No one will know how it all comes out until the process is over, and that is, after all, part of what makes it exciting.

—Alan Razak

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