

ARCADE

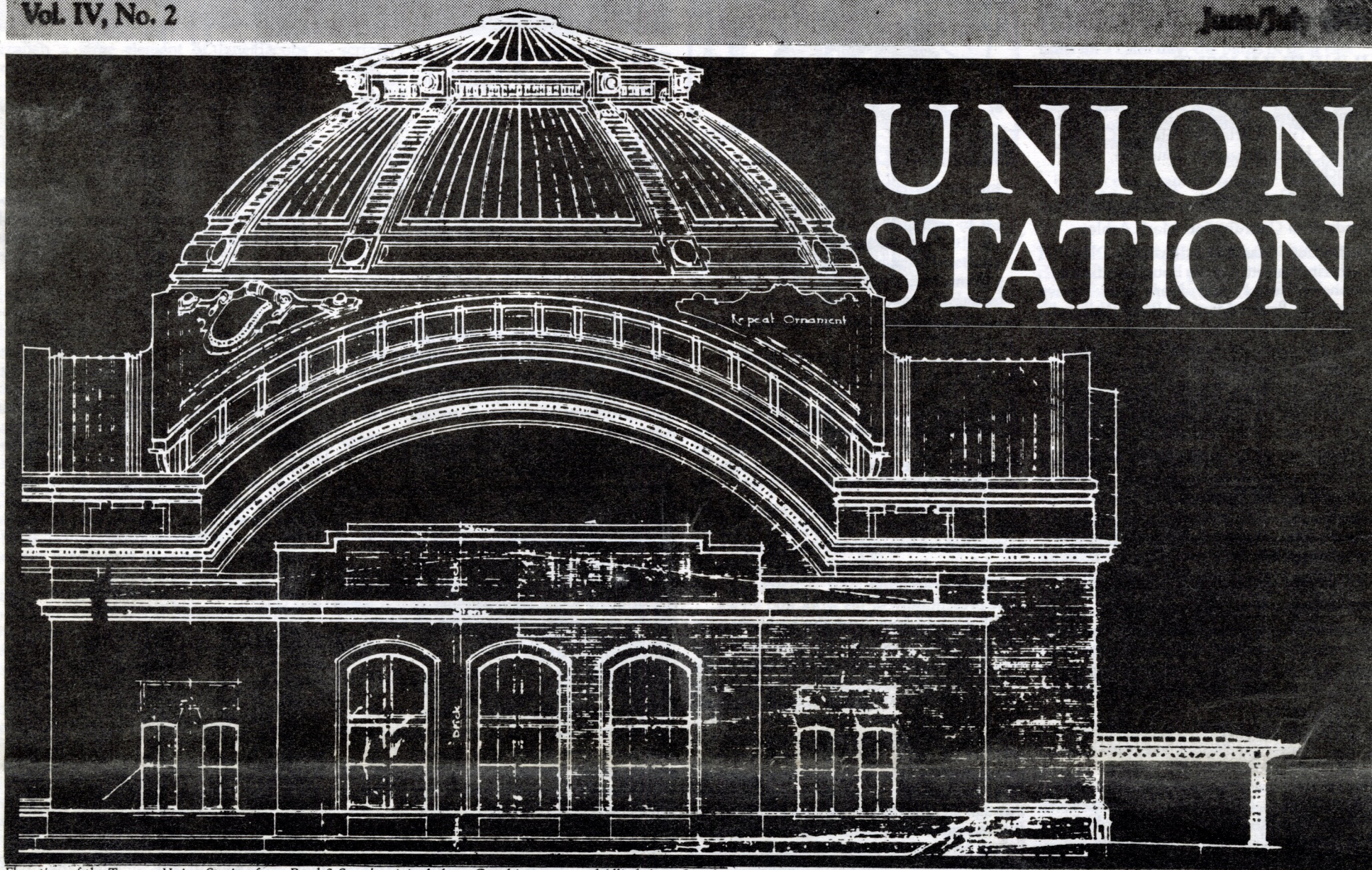
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Elevation of the Tacoma Union Station from Reed & Stem's original plans. Graphic courtesy of Allied Arts, Seattle.

Tacoma's Other Dome

In November 1983, a citizens' committee, Save Our Station, was formed to help preserve Tacoma's historic Union Station railroad depot. The week of its formation announcement, SOS held its first fundraiser inside the neo-classical structure. Although this event was hastily organized and held on a stormy fall night, more than 200 people each paid \$15 to subsidize a group dedicated to preserving their town's landmark.

Tacoma City Councilman Tim Strege made the rounds at the event, telling people why the building should be saved and how his group, SOS, was going to do it. The seasoned politician already had lined up "over a hundred prominent individuals from labor, business, government, arts, and civic organizations" for SOS. And from the enthusiastic crowd at the depot that night, Strege and SOS were to draw more supporters, which would add to "over a thousand individuals who have either donated money, time, or expertise" as of March 1984. What drew these people to volunteer, lend their names, or contribute to SOS, was a perceived role the station would play in Tacoma's "revitalization" and the emotional appeal the 74-year-old monument has for many long-time Tacoma residents.

Union Station was an appropriate place for SOS to throw a party. The first party held there was its inaugural ball on May 1, 1911. The party was as much a christening of a building as a celebration of a city. With the designation of Tacoma as the Northern Pacific's western terminus, "The City of Destiny" had finally arrived; its new station was the railroad's, and the region's, recognition of this.

Northern Pacific president Howard Elliott had arrived from "back east" to dedi-

cate the railroad's newest investment. After Johnson's military band played a triumphant Sousa march, Elliott began his speech in the spacious rotunda area of the depot.

The dome has leaked since its opening day. Time is running out on the depot; Amtrak plans to vacate this summer.

The building's monumentality, accented by a large skylight at the dome's center, must have added drama to the occasion. When the sun had set, 2300 electric globes set in plaster coffers lit the inner rotunda, which rose more than seventy feet above the floor. Theatrical lighting was appropriate for a depot in which, for 74 years, the daily drama unfolded in the lives of departing and arriving industrialists, politicians, immigrants, men and women in uniform, and students, all of whom became as much a part of the station's history as their memories made it a part of their history.

St. Paul Minnesota architects Reed and Stem had practiced the art of railroad depot design throughout America and had the distinction of bringing Beaux-Arts design to a frontier town. They incorporated techniques garnered from New York City's Grand Central Terminal, which they designed. A. H. Stem, principal architect for the station, integrated the grandeur of the Roman Pantheon with the influences of sixteenth century Italian Baroque into the design of the domed, symmetrical, Beaux-Arts building.

A stark contrast between the November 1983 fundraiser and the May 1911 inaugural gala was the location of the events. The

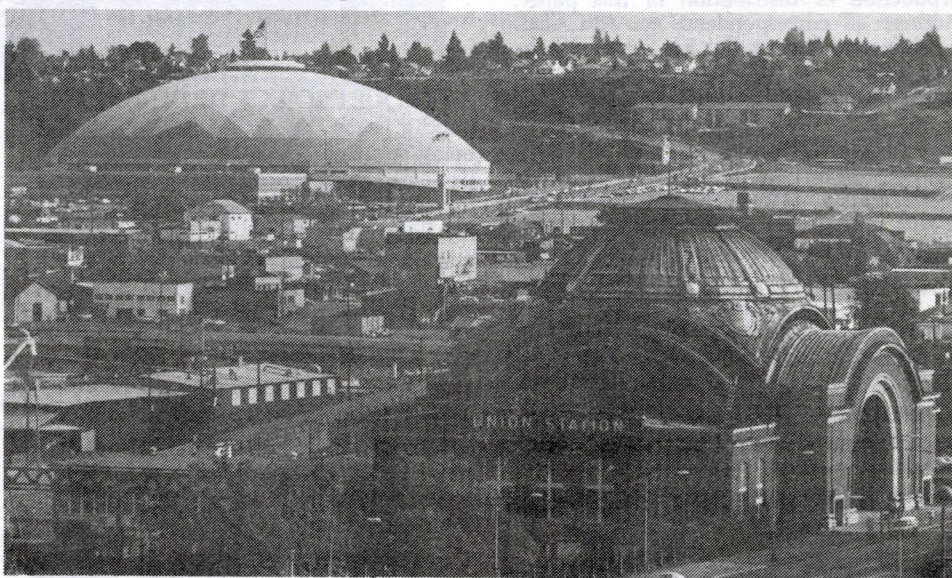
ball was held in the high drama of the rotunda, accented by the lighting. SOS was forced to hold its event in the dark, crowded confines of the concourse level. The rotunda area is closed to the public, the skylight was painted over during World War II, and the 2300 globes are dimmed due to faulty wiring. Rainwater has significantly deteriorated the plaster inner rotunda, causing some of it to fall on the cracked terrazzo floors seventy feet below. The outer copper dome was built without expansion joints, and as a result, the dome has leaked since the day the depot opened. In addition to ceiling leaks throughout the building, heating and electrical systems must be replaced, and sprinkler and ventilating systems must be installed when the building is rehabilitated.

Time is running out on the depot, broad-

casts SOS in its news releases and direct mail; its last tenant, Amtrak, plans to move out this summer. When the building is vacated, Burlington Northern Railroad, will "shut off the heat, board the building up, and defer maintenance. If carried on long enough, slow deterioration could prove as destructive as a wrecking ball," reads the SOS literature.

At the SOS fundraiser there were stories about the depot, reminiscences of a landmark long-time residents talk about as if the station were an old friend. In a town like Tacoma, currently undergoing a cultural and developmental "renaissance," many of its boosters, old and new, would loathe to lose such a symbolic structure strategically located adjacent to the city's downtown core.

... continued on page eight.



The two domes: present confronts past. Photo by Jerry Timmons.

ARCADE

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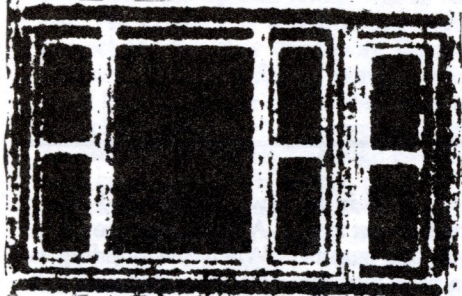
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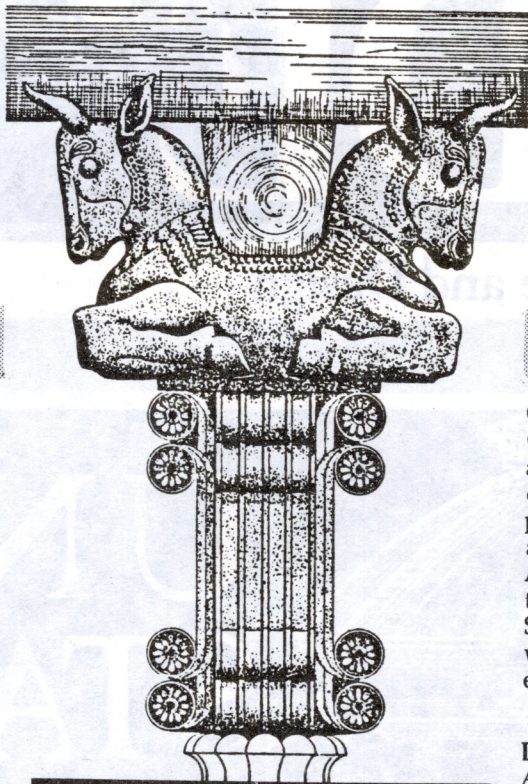
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Column of Many Orders

Rebecca Barnes

RICHARD MEIER'S SWING THROUGH Seattle was certainly treated as an architectural event. His appearances included a breakfast, a luncheon discussion, an AIA-sponsored reception, and at day's end a slide presentation of his work and views.

What could have been the highlight of the day was actually the most disappointing. A forum preceding the lecture had the potential of being an informative and insightful event, allowing for a fuller understanding of the architect and his work. It became, however, painfully clear that a number of Arne Bystrom's hand-picked panelists took advantage of the opportunity to attempt to elevate themselves through an unfortunate provincial display. It was evident that Keith Rolle and David Fukin, two of the panelists, found themselves among a group of intimidated, self-conscious architects incapable of addressing architecture at Meier's level. A much deserved and pronounced moan arose from the audience when a call for "another round of questions from the panel" was declared.

Once the parochial questions had been exhausted, the discussion was opened to the audience, at which time the level of discussion rebounded. Meier was asked about the subsequent complexity of the building diagram as compared to his earlier work. His response was honest and straightforward: he had become bored with the simplicity of his earlier work and needed an added dimension to explore to advance his own set of architectural predilections.

It is quite refreshing to observe an architect today who believes as strongly as Meier does in his objectives and manifestations of his work. While he has been criticized for being "fashionable," he has dealt with this art in a most unfashionable manner. The evolution of his work and the consistently high level of quality of his projects speak more of an attempt to achieve timeless qualities through a vigorously tested vocabulary than of one to gain approval in today's architectural confusion.

—Tim Carlander

A UNIQUE PROJECT TO DESIGN AND build a Peace Park in the Soviet Union is being sponsored jointly by Ploughshares (returned Peace Corps Volunteers working for peace) and the Washington Architects for Social Responsibility. Proponents anticipate US/USSR reciprocity, high PR impact, and construction in Fall 1985. For details, and/or to help out, call Andrew Goulding at 682-1133.

IF RUMORS COME TRUE, AS THEY SO often seem to do, the next fad in downtown development projects is bound to be pedestrian tunnels (out of site, out of mind). These anti-urban links are the latest thing in climate-control. Creation of a no-weather-underground may connect all four John Graham buildings (Sheraton, Stimson

Center, etc.), the proposed Convention Center, the proposed second Unico Tower, and the Rainier Square passage. At the other end of downtown, Martin Selig expects to connect Columbia SeaFirst Center and SeaFirst Fifth Avenue underneath Fifth Avenue. Is it the rain or the scent of joggers that is most to be avoided? Here's hoping Seattle City Council will look down as well as up in their pedestrian protectionist efforts.

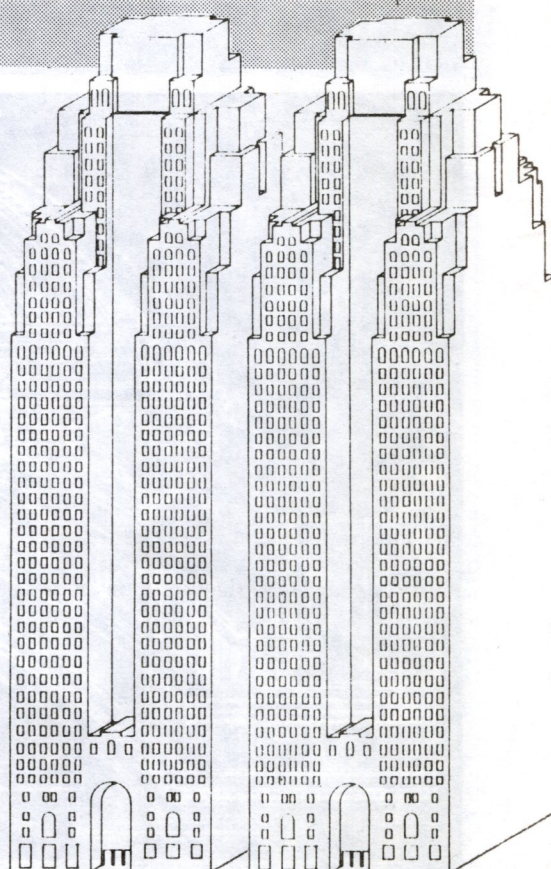
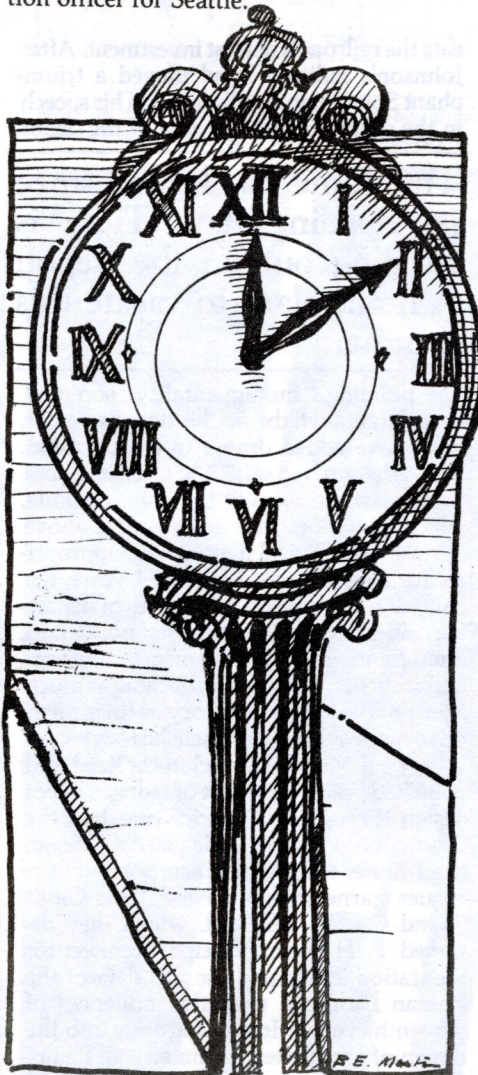
DEAR EDITOR:

ARCADE magazine is nicely printed, pleasantly written, and it does well at informing the community about architectural education, the existing parks, Sydney and Nicaragua, but what about the real architectural problems the town is coping with? (Or maybe not coping with.)

Seattle has the potential for solving architecturally the commuting problem, the pollution problem, the housing problem, the Convention Center problem, the Waterfront problem, etc., and your magazine ought to focus on these subjects, and call upon the architectural community to become involved, to actively participate and perform the social responsibility which is especially critical in this time of rapid change.

Andrea Brass

IF A STITCH IN TIME SAVES NINE, how many do nine street clocks with historic landmark status save Seattle? They are at Benton's Jewelers (4533 University Way), Ben Bridge Jewelers (409 Pike), Carroll's Jewelers (1427 4th), Century Square (1529 4th), the Lake Union Cafe (3119 Eastlake), Greenwood Jewelers (129 N. 85th), Hong Kong & Shanghai Bank (703 3rd), Myers Music (1206 First), and West Earth Co. (406 Dexter N.). At First and S. Main, a tenth street clock was dedicated during Historic Preservation Week in May to Earl Layman, recently retired preservation officer for Seattle.



THE END OF ARCHITECTURE AS WE

know it may be the hidden message in a recent UPI story about a developer suing his former architect for designing someone else's "virtually identical building" across the street. Builder Donald Trump of Manhattan's Trump Plaza claims that architect Birnbaum and Olshan copied the Plaza's design and "appropriated" Trump's reputation. Trump believes he played a creative role in the design of his tower and that the design features of his building belong to him. Although to any architect the case would seem Trumped-up, the New York State Supreme Court found enough apparent merit in the argument to stop construction on the "copy" and order the architect into court to "argue why the (new tower) should be allowed to be built." A Trump win could mean the future of Post-Modernism will depend entirely upon an interpretation of the statute of limitations; contextual design may be a jailable offense. The design process may have to be swathed in veils of mystery and incoherent architectural gibberish, and professional design journals may have to use language in such a way as to obscure the meaningful visual elements of any architectural composition to avoid congruence between visual images and the associated verbal descriptions.

"VERY MUCH A GENRE PIECE" IS HOW Daniel Soloman, FAIA (San Francisco architect and UC Berkeley prof) assessed Seattle's Draft Downtown Plan at Spring Design Workshop at the UW in April, setting the more-philosophical-than-practical tone of the critique of six teams' project proposals. The idea of the workshop (jointly produced by the College of Architecture and Urban Design, the Seattle AIA, BLUEPRINT: for Architecture, and The Gang of Five) was to spark discussion of the Plan's pros and cons through a design charrette and public review.

While by far the hardest work was done by the architect and student members of the design teams, it was the discussion among the jury and members of the audience which provided the real substance of the event. The subjects of debate, rather than being the wonders or horrors of what the drawings revealed, were the attitude toward controlling design expressed by the Plan, and the subservience of the architect's position in the development process.

Soloman's "new orthodoxy of American planning" was well-illustrated by the teams' drawings. The jury moderator saw the orthodoxy composed of "a large element of romance with the American sky-

scraper, a large element of Jane Jacobs' romance with street life, and some elements of the brothers Krier and Colin Rowe's emphasis on positive shaping of figurative public space, a reaction to 60's buildings." One team was so orthodox as to have retained the Roosevelt Hotel and destroyed I. Magnin's (the project site was between Pine and Pike, 5th and 6th in downtown Seattle); another modeled its public space after Lincoln Center; many included housing in the use mix.

Don Stasny, a Portland architect, questioned the means by which the Plan proposes to control development, targeting the prescriptive nature of the Plan. He asked, "How will the very prescriptive Plan age?" in contrast with Portland's performance standard-based Code which "has had layers added over the years" based on accumulated project experiences. Soloman added perspective by reflecting that there are — in planning code terms — three kinds of cities represented on the West Coast: Portland, a city in which a political consensus and the old-family patrimony allows its process-oriented plan to succeed; Seattle, a city with a restrictive code because of a lack of consensus; and San Francisco, a city characterized by "bare-knuckle corporate and political bargaining within the terms of a largely discretionary planning code, whose values are only determined through bargaining."

William Justen, Director of Seattle's Department of Construction and Land Use, seconded Stasny's interpretation of Seattle. When answering a question about why Seattle's Plan relied so heavily on prescriptive standards, Justen explained, "The process has led us to that." The Plan is an attempt to satisfy everyone, to show each interest has been given something, to come up with an acceptable package which will satisfy the development community's highly valued predictability and the architects' desire for flexibility," he said.

With hints of confessions, people spoke to almost-taboo subjects. Design review may have had its first popular public appearance here in the midst of a crowd more likely to bristle at the suggestion of any committee's right to judge their work. Architect Jim Olson tackled the subject directly: both the Market and Pioneer Square have commissions which review designs for those historic districts; they use good guidelines representative of basic values; a similar process could help promote successful interpretations of this Plan.

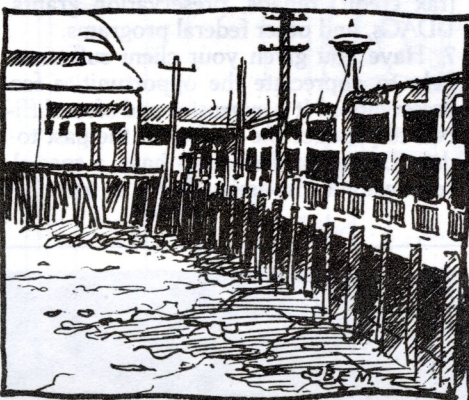
Taste as a determinant of urban form was put in its place — second — behind economic feasibility, by developer (and ex-Seattle planner) Paul Schell and his political nemesis, Professor (and social activist) Folke Nyberg. Nyberg accused architects of "taking on too much responsibility for fighting the decline of cities." To Schell, the "new game in town, the stepping box (per Soloman) is an architectural detail. That's not the issue. Architects won't have much to say, architects are only a part of the (development) process. The end user will ultimately answer the question about what kind of building we're going to get."

Symptomatic and illustrative of this point of view were Schell's criticisms of the teams' proposals on grounds of feasibility. "Most of the schemes wouldn't be built," he said, adding that the site selected for intense mixed-use development by the workshop planners, "probably wouldn't go for more than mediocre offices," or hotels, but it wouldn't be used for housing. The small towers every team showed "won't be built" because their floor areas wouldn't be large enough for the market, he said. Economically speaking the site will "probably call for less intensive use and economics will limit the applicability of the bonuses. It has always been and will always be the case that you can get bad design; pre-

scriptive vs. performance criteria is not the issue," Schell concluded.

In some mysterious combination, the proper and necessary ingredients assembled at this workshop revealed enough philosophical spring cleaning of old rhetoric that the fresh shifts in philosophical stances appeared to tease the audience. Architects considered the possibility that public design reviews could assist their work; a developer described the Plan as a good step to solve the problem, (but noted he was) "feeling funny to be a defender of the Plan."

"ARCHITECTURE IS MAKING A MEASURE in a larger landscape that we can act in relation to," according to Donlyn Lyndon in a recent lecture on "Place and Position" at UW.



SEATTLE'S CENTRAL WATERFRONT may be its most controversial, most important and most complicated historic preservation project. As the people of Seattle, individually and as members of organized groups, take the time to dwell on alternative visions of the Harborfront's future, they need to be familiar with its history as a commercial center. A good overview is provided in *Seattle's Waterfront, The Walker's Guide to the History of Elliott Bay* by Hershman, Heikkala and Tobin. It would be useful in preventing mistakes of historical naiveté for them also to become familiar with the history of planning for the use of that part of downtown. This is succinctly chronicled in the City's "Background Report" of 1981, published by the City's Office of Policy and Evaluation.

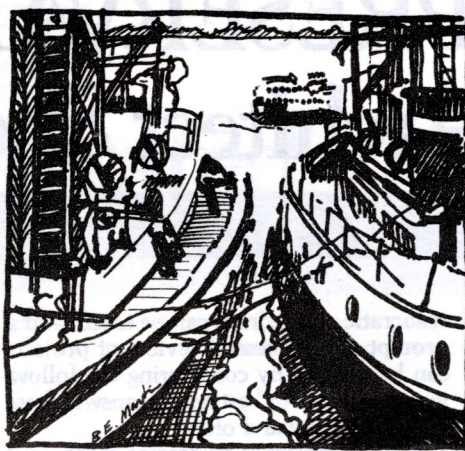
The Harborfront, bigger than any group of individuals, nevertheless bears the imprints of assorted individuals whose preferences and ambitions collected and conglomerated over more than one hundred years and produced the present Harborfront. So, in deliberations about its future, it is most important to know what personal meanings individual citizens attribute to this piece of land and landscape. (The following statements are excerpts from a brochure recently published by Waterfront Awareness, the UW Institute for Marine Studies and the Washington Commission for the Humanities, used with permission.)

Seattle's waterfronts are still down-home, small/big-town places. They are still utilized for rolled-up-sleeves' work, although there are heavy pressures on these uses. . . . Seattle's downtown might be downtown anywhere. But Seattle's waterfront is Seattle's essence.

(Pat Davis of League of Women Voters, Portwatch, and Waterfront Awareness)

Some might characterize Maritime Seattle and its waterfront in seemingly harsh words; it is "disorderly." But therein lies its richness, variety, change, and dynamism. (Myer Wolfe, UW Urban Planning and Design Professor)

I remember the waterfront as one of the city's focal points, a theater in which a meaningful common life was revealed. The



waterfront exposed the significant and purposeful everyday activities of people who performed the necessary functions of the city's existence. This contrasts with the highly technological, mechanical methods of today's shipping and cargo handling which appear to have all but eliminated people from the downtown waterfront.

(Victor Steinbrueck, UW Architecture Professor Emeritus)

If a city can make one of its parts home, then Seattle's home is its central waterfront, and further development should be guided by that image. . . . If we succeed in making a better home out of our downtown waterfront, the benefits may reach beyond Seattle itself. Seattle's success could provide a useful model for other port cities seeking a meaning beyond economic value for their redeveloping waterfronts.

(Melissa Rohan, Executive Director of Waterfront Awareness)

Seattle's history has been influenced by the right people at the right time. Everything about this city carries the effect of those people who decided they were going to change things — and did.

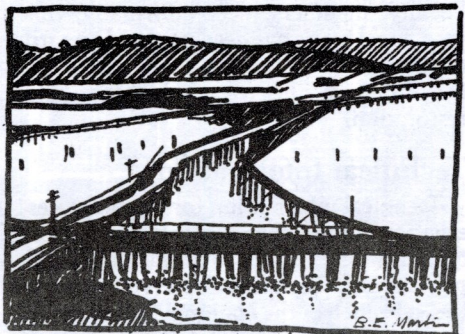
(Fred Short, shorebound maritime enthusiast)

Our local institutions reflect a desire to divide the maritime from the city. We've established separate municipalities — a "city government" and a "port government," both of which live in our midst but make separate decisions about land and jobs that affect us all. We even design our city to reinforce this division we have created. No task is more important to a thriving seaport city than to find ways to re-unite the land and water sides of its life.

(Marc Hershman, teacher and author)

Everything about us is maritime. We are on an isthmus, bounded east and west by water. Because of the uneven terrain and the multitude of viewpoints, Seattle forces maritime associations at every turn of geography and intersection of people. There is no separate "Maritime Seattle," only one city that is in all respects waterbound.

(Marc Miller, UW Marine Anthropologist)



Instead of being a costly and technical process with which the public is scarcely concerned, port developments, whether of vacant waterfront or of new port districts, should be a community affair which opens up the entire urban region to fresh ideas, new possibilities, and unexplored options. . . .

(Josef Konvitz, in "Spatial Perspectives on Port City Development")

The land surface has been altered almost beyond recognition, but the water has, in many respects, remained unchanged during the past century. The surface of a body of water is always changing, however. It is never at rest. The patterns of the waves, the variable colors, the reflections of moun-

ains on a calm day, the paths of light cast by the setting sun and moon, the lights on a distant shore, or the wakes of the ships passing through our harbors — all provide a drama of endless fascination. We are all "water-watchers."

(Richard Fleming, UW Oceanography Professor Emeritus)

HAVING TROUBLE EXPLAINING architecture to your parents, your friends, even yourself? A new film, *Beyond Utopia: Changing Attitudes in American Architecture* can be rented or purchased from Michael Blackwood Productions Inc., 251 W. 57th, NYC 10019, 212-247-4710. Work and theories of Eisenman, Gehry, Graves, Scott Brown and Venturi are presented and reviewed by Philip Johnson.

INTERIOR DESIGNERS MAY BECOME important members of energy-conservation design teams. In a National Science Foundation-funded study, Burt Hill, et al, Associates of Butler, PA, hopes to find combinations of polarizing glass and reflective shelving which will allow more light to travel farther into buildings with less glare. (Typically, daylight reaches 20 feet into a building's interior, often making visibility difficult because of the contrast.) The days of simple color consultation may be ending for Interior Space Scientists.

A CHRISTMAS BOOK IDEA FOR YOUR favorite architect: *Post-Modernism in Letters, or Spelling As Visual Imagery*. It is rumored that architects have a high rate of divorce, and it is obvious that architects have a low incidence of spelling competency. Would reading "tenants of modernism" have driven your spouse to the house of a better speller? Is there anyone in the audience who could right such a book? Come fourword!

TO HAVE HISTORIC BUILDINGS OR not to have historic buildings, that is the question for the Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation. Each design should reflect the needs and desires of its users and neighborhood, that is the answer. Largely for health reasons, Seattle's Park Administration prefers no buildings in their parks. Maintenance costs and user conflicts are their strongest arguments against the historic buildings in Martha Washington and Discovery Parks, two much debated projects, where (we believe), the value of the buildings outweighs the need for space in these two good-sized projects. The Art Museum in Volunteer Park would not have been included in the design by the original park architects. On the other hand, the buildings are a crucial part of the design concept at the nationally acclaimed Gas Works Park. Each site has its own determinants that should guide the addition or subtraction of buildings from the "open space."

THE ALLIED ARTS RALLY FOR THE Cobb Building's salvation continues. The turn-of-the-century building was featured on one of AA's historic preservation posters. The word is getting out, although Dick Hoyt of AA said Unico is trying to divert attention from the Cobb issue to the Skinner Building, which is already listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Miriam Sutermeister, leading the Cobb effort at AA, says that the State Advisory Council will meet on June 8 to consider the Cobb for the National Register. While that won't mean the Cobb can't be torn down, it will give the Cobb's cause extra clout and be something else for the University of Washington Board of Regents to ponder.

—Jestena Boughton

HISTORIC PRESERVATION: What Every Architect Should Know

The utility of a building often survives the original function. A waterfront pier becomes retail shops. An old school is rehabilitated as elderly housing. Offices of the 1890s are the offices of the 1980s.

The increased frequency of these transitions has created an ever-increasing involvement in historic preservation by design professionals. The visibility of adaptive reuse has been paralleled by an increased public expectation that significant parts of our built past will not be lost.

Responding to the movement toward historic renovation, government has become involved in preservation, more involved than many designers realize. Historic preservation, once a haven for romantic architects, now requires teamwork with regulators, national and local, who have review powers in local historic districts and over individual landmarks. (In Seattle, this occurs through the Office of Urban Conservation and its Landmarks, Pioneer Square, and Pike Market Design Review Boards.) State and federal preservation officers review and approve rehabilitation projects using investment tax credits. (See the list which follows.) Frustration with the bu-

reaucratic conundrum can be eased, and a prompt and successful review of projects can be assured by considering the following questions. For best results, answer these questions early and often!

1. Is your project in an area of recognized historic significance? Unregistered buildings within historic districts may be regulated much like an individual historic building. In the City of Seattle, the designated historic districts are Pioneer Square, Ballard Avenue, Pike Place Market, Harvard-Belmont, and Columbia City. Do you know the boundaries?
2. Is your project individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places or designated as an individual Landmark? If so, it may be eligible for many local code exceptions or significant federal tax benefits of important financial value to your client.
3. Do you have a methodology for reviewing your work on a historic building? The most widely accepted is the Secretary of the Interior's "Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings," which may be applied by the reviewing agency. Know these rules. For example, did you know that glass color matters, as

does some interior work? (Contact Seattle's Office of Urban Conservation for help, and a copy of the Standards.)

4. Have you checked for local development of design guidelines? Most historic districts specify preferred materials, scale, and/or signage criteria.
5. Do you know how to solve technical preservation problems? A creative technical solution may require a knowledge of available sources of technical assistance. An excellent general guide is published by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation: *Where to Look: A Guide to Preservation Information* (US Printing Office).
6. Has sufficient time been planned into the project schedule for the reviews, approvals, and possible alterations that may absorb considerable time? These reviews are required for local historic districts, ITC (tax credit) rehabs, preservation grants, UDAGs, and other federal programs.
7. Have you given your client sufficient help to appreciate the opportunities for preservation? It is expensive and often difficult to produce the quality of the past today. Design professionals have a special responsibility to assist clients in identify-

ing the special features of a preservation project. A thoughtful rehabilitation may give your client the best and biggest bang for the buck and help preserve an important resource.

Although this checklist may seem simple and forthright, many projects have been delayed or disqualified from special benefits which the owners needed; the design professional neglected to do a little simple research early in project planning. Could you use a little help? It is available. To avoid project shortcomings, always assume that you don't know everything about a historic building and contact a friendly, helpful bureaucrat at your local preservation office. By doing so, you may avoid a historic headache.

John Chaney

John Chaney, one of Seattle's helpful preservationists, staffs the Pioneer Square Board at Seattle's Office of Urban Conservation.

And Where to Go

There are numerous organizations and agencies that offer designers and preservationists information about the philosophy, process, and problems of working with historic buildings.

Big Granddaddy

The big granddaddy of them all is **The National Trust for Historic Preservation**, a Washington, D.C.-based group with a paid staff, which serves as a clearinghouse for national and regional activities, as an educational and lobbying agency, and as the manager of donated historic properties such as the Frank Lloyd Wright home and studio in Oak Park, Illinois. The National Trust also publishes *Historic Preservation* magazine, *Preservation News*, and assorted books through the Preservation Press.

Affiliates

The Trust's regional relations include **The Washington Trust for Historic Preservation** and the **Historic Preservation League of Oregon**, non-profit advocacy organizations which emphasize public education and state-wide preservation issues and activities. These are membership organizations; benefits include annual conferences, seminars, publications, and basic technical and procedural information.

Government Agencies

The Trust organizations work closely with the federal and state-level government agencies, the **U.S. Department of the Interior's National Park Service** and **State Historic Preservation Offices**, such as the **Washington State Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation**. The latter keeps a roster of preservation professionals and distributes technical information and tax-certification guidance. Two specialized documenting agencies of the Department of the Interior are the **Historic American Building Survey (HABS)** and the **Historic American Engineering Record (HAER)**. HABS was established in 1934 to preserve, through documentation, a full record of historic American buildings. Today the survey's collection contains over 45,000 measured drawings and 80,000 photographs at the Library of Congress. HAER

provides a similar inventory and recording service for industrial and mechanical structures. Privately, the **Society for Industrial Archaeology** provides information, conferences, updates, kinship, and research regarding American bridges, railroads and railyards, mills, and manufacturing structures, and publishes a quarterly newsletter and bibliographies.

Lobbying Groups

Preservation Action is a full-time, D.C.-based lobbying group. The value of a "preservationist voice to Congress" was made apparent recently by lobbying from real estate groups which resulted in reduced tax benefits for historic rehabilitation. Preservation Action is a high-profile membership which works to continue government funding of preservation activities. It publishes a quarterly legislative and informational update on Congressional action. Locally, members meet informally; this year, local work has been oriented toward documenting the positive financial benefits of tax subsidies for rehabilitation and restoration.

Technical Information

Technical information for building preservation comes from a variety of sources: organizations, product manufacturers and publications. **Technical Preservation Services**, a branch of the National Park Service, distributes technical briefs, case studies, technical reports, and information regarding tax incentives through the regional offices of the Park Service. The **Association for Preservation Technology (APT)** is a Canadian-based international organization which acts as a professional forum for the exchange of conservation problems and techniques. APT has published a quarterly bulletin since 1969 on a variety of technical issues from paint seriation studies to eighteenth century hardware and epoxy wood-patching. It also publishes a bimonthly newsletter on current member activities and offers technical workshops and a members' referral service. The group's western regional affiliate is in San Francisco.

On-Site is a bimonthly newsletter which deals with building performance and con-

servation diagnosis. **Preservation Resources Group (PRG)** is the publisher and also makes available conservation instruments and tools, preservation and conservation books, and references. PRG releases its current book list and instrument list quarterly. **Friends of Terra Cotta** and **Friends of Cast Iron** are groups organized for the appreciation of technology and a specific building material. FOTC is a national organization with local chapters. Last month it sponsored a one-day conference in Portland, Oregon, on terra cotta restoration. Because of the prevalence of cast iron buildings in Portland, there is an active FOCI chapter in that city, as there are in New York and Philadelphia. Both groups offer walking tours in various cities; FOTC sponsors tours of the only operating terra cotta manufacturing plant (in California) and publishes a quarterly newsletter.

In Seattle

In Seattle and King County, preservation activities and information are coordinated by a number of groups. Both **Allied Arts** and **Historic Seattle** are concerned about buildings within the city: Allied Arts as a watchdog and lobbying group, and Historic Seattle as a non-profit development agency. Current issues that involve these two membership groups are the retention of the University of Washington's Cobb and Skinner Buildings downtown, the preservation and re-use of Queen Anne High School and the Martha Washington School buildings and campus, and the long battle over the city's abandoned and historic military buildings at Fort Lawton. Local agencies which offer a wide variety of guidance and information regarding preservation are the **City of Seattle's Office of Urban Conservation** and the **King County Office of Historic Preservation**. Similar preservation offices are also located in Tacoma and Spokane, WA; Whatcom, Snohomish, and Skagit counties; in Portland and most counties in western Oregon.

How to Make Contact

Agencies and organizations (listed alphabetically) can be reached at the following addresses:

- Allied Arts of Seattle: 107 S. Main St., Seattle 98104. 624-0432.
- The Association for Preservation Technology: Box 2487 Station D, Ottawa, Ontario, CANADA K1P-5W6. (APT, Western Chapter: Diane Nicholson, c/o National Park Service, 450 Golden Gate Ave., San Francisco, CA 98142.
- HABS: Division of Prints and Photographs, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. 20540.
- HAER: Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.
- Historic Preservation League of Oregon: PO Box 40053, Portland, OR 97240.
- Historic Seattle: 207 1/2 - 1st Ave. S., Seattle 98104. 622-6952.
- King County Office of Historic Preservation: 808 Alaska Bldg., Seattle 98104. 587-4858.
- National Trust for Historic Preservation: (and The Preservation Press): 1785 Massachusetts Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.
- National Trust for Historic Preservation: PO Box 4071, Seattle, WA 98104.
- Preservation Action: 1722 Connecticut Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009.
- PRG and On-Site: 5619 Southampton Drive, Springfield, VA 22151.
- The Society for Industrial Archaeology: Room 5020, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institute, Washington, D.C. 20560.
- U.S. Dept. of the Interior, National Park Service and Technical Preservation Services: Western Regional Office, 450 Golden Gate Avenue, Box 36063, San Francisco, CA 94102.
- Urban Conservation Office, City of Seattle: 400 Yesler Building, Seattle 98104. 625-4501.
- Washington State Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation: 111 West 21st Ave., KL-11, Olympia, WA 98504. 753-4011.

Susan Boyle

Susan Boyle is a Seattle architect whose practice includes consultation on historic preservation projects.

GIVING CHARACTER TO A STREET

Third Avenue Rehabilitated

For the last fifty years Third Avenue has been a street without an identity. Fifth Avenue has the image of fashionable downtown shops, and Fourth Avenue has become the front door for many of the downtown's newest and best business addresses. Even First Avenue has its own identity; originally one of cheap hotels, pawn shops, surplus stores, "adult books," and the old-time front door of Seattle, now it links Pioneer Square and Pike Place Public Market and serves as the focal center of the conservationist Waterfront Center project.

Third Avenue, however, never achieved a special identity. The city's major emergency access route for fire truck and ambulance, it houses a credible collection of 1920s and 1930s buildings, but its essentially utilitarian purpose and location at the western edge of the downtown's office, retail, and financial core renders it a neighbor of, but not a focal point for downtown growth. Third Avenue, however, is about to change. It may soon become the most notorious street in downtown Seattle; First Interstate Tower has just been completed, 1111 Third Avenue opened just last year, and four additional projects are being pursued by developers.

By the early 1990s, Third Avenue will be one of Seattle's best downtown addresses. The primary driver of change along Third Avenue will be METRO's proposed transit tunnel (aligned underground with Third Avenue and Pine Street), a major public improvement project which could be the catalyst needed to recreate Third Avenue. The tunnel will be designed for both bus and rail transit capabilities and have five or six underground transit stations.

Since the project will involve major surface improvements, as well as underground tunnel and station construction, considerable attention must be given to insuring that the design is an artistic addition to the cityscape as well as a functional improvement for transit operations. Similar recent large-scale transit improvements in Portland, Oregon, and Denver, Colorado, are strong design statements that create new urban environments along their routes. However, the appeal of these projects has begun to diminish both functionally and visually. The creation of completely designed settings continues the 1950s urban renewal mentality, which promoted tearing out the old and replacing it with something new and "beautiful." With these classy new environments which disrupt familiar landmarks, the users' comfort is in doubt.

Public reaction in Seattle to projects like these likely would be unique and intense because of the "Seattle attitude" toward urban design. In Seattle great emphasis is placed on conserving existing buildings and structures and on public design solutions which merge with the existing setting rather than stand out from it. The city's most successful and popular projects (for example, the Pike Place Public Market where



Seattle's Third Avenue in 1984 is in need of a stronger identity.

local Seattleites approved a low-key plan for the Public Market's restoration in opposition to a proposal for a new Market and high-rise residential complex) illustrate this attitude. In other well-received public and private efforts, the conservation of Pioneer Square's historic buildings and the rehabilitation and expansion of older buildings in Cornerstone Development Company's Waterfront Center Project have been more effective, with the concept of improving a familiar setting rather than creating a new design concept.

A more understated approach to urban design reinforces the city's complexity by introducing new elements which help make sense of a street's activities.

A successful "Seattle-style" Third Avenue transit project will require the same solid, common-sense thinking both about the proposed public and transit improvements along the street and the enhancement of the historic setting and Third Avenue's purposeful role as one of downtown's few north-south streets. A well-planned design, which incorporates transit improvements while respecting the existing street, can become a rich urban concept. Such a plan should mature with age and continue to reveal new facets over time, continually improving itself.

The technique most difficult for strong designers to handle well is the effective use of understatement as a major urban design concept. However, this use of understatement is probably the most significant feature in Seattle's best urban design projects. To achieve it, problems must be solved sympathetically with the basic purpose and historic character of an existing environment, long before grand new ways to interpret the situation are considered.

Seattle's understated approach contrasts

strongly with the past approaches to public improvements where the new project stands out in the existing urban environment. A good example is the Portland, Oregon, Bus Mall. The new mall replaced an existing downtown street, adding broad brick sidewalks, granite curbs, artwork, new transit hardware, and many buses. The mall design created a new atmosphere which contrasts the street's original mixture of building types and architectural styles. This strong design statement lies like a bright new Persian carpet in the city's transit corridor and magnifies the usual disharmony between buildings, storefronts, and signs that the original street had welded together. What many designers who are trained to make such strong design statements tend to forget is that good urban design is most often an exercise in restraint and attention to the existing historic elements of a setting, not the imposition of a new will.

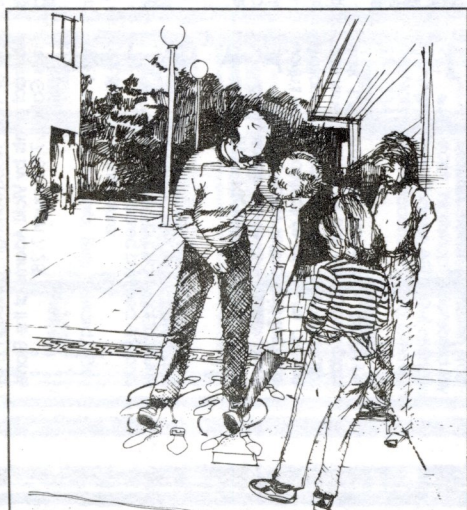
Often projects such as the Portland mall are designed in plan and pattern (paving patterns tend to become an overly important unifying tool). Designing by plan does not adequately address the multi-dimen-



Portland Transit Mall — a "Persian Carpet" treatment. Photo provided by METRO.

sional urban context of buildings, storefronts, and pedestrians. Designers repeatedly neglect the reality of a normal downtown street filled with dozens of activities, people, cars, buses, signs, lights, and pieces of street hardware. The last things these streets need are highly visible, attention-claiming elements that add confusion to the already overactive setting. Indeed, the more dynamic a project's design becomes, the more its designers must look for methods of simplifying the existing environment. By collecting usual street hardware elements into one fixture, eliminating on-street parking, reducing traffic volumes, or pro-

... continued on page twelve.

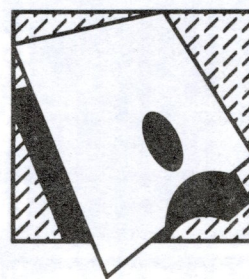


Dance steps on Broadway and mosaic tile strip at edge of sidewalk make the street special.

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Architecture

June

3 Window installation by Gloria Bornstein at Art in Form, 2237 Second Avenue, through June. Continuation of exhibit: "Pastels by Marilyn Crosetto." Works inspired by Seattle area landscapes and "by a fondness for Van Gogh's paintings of fruit trees." At UW's Thomas Burke Museum through 6/17, 6/3.

10 The Art and Practice of Urban Design: a UW Continuing Education class, M & W evenings, 6/18-7/18, Dennis Ryan, Chairman of Urban Design Program, instructor. Call 543-2590. Kinetic light sculpture by Seattle artist James Vitale, and window installation by Tom Collicott, 6/1-6/30 at Gallery 911.

Plant cucumbers and last sweet corn.

17 It's Bicycle Sunday! Enjoy Lake Washington Boulevard at the pace the Olmsted Bros. designed it for. No motorized vehicles today.

Charles Eames, born 1907.

24 At the Belltown Cafe in June: Sketches and cut paper by Sara Anderson.

4 Terra Cotta Reliefs by Ulisse Paggiari, an artist with studios in Milan and San Francisco. At Philippe Bonnatfont Gallery, San Francisco. Tour southwest England with Grant Hildebrand. Departure: 8/9. Call UW Architecture, 543-4180, for details.

11 "Urban Reflections," Neon Art by Paul Trautman; works on paper by Peter Cody; and paintings and mixed-media works by Andrea Petterson, at the Jackson St. Gallery, 6/1-6/19. Paintings and Works on Paper by Chem Caba, at Linda Farris Gallery, 6/1-6/30. "The Seattle Waterfront: Design Alternatives for the Future," a UW Continuing Education class, 6 Monday evenings, 6/25-7/31, David Fordon, Research Associate in Architecture and Urban Planning, instructor. Call 543-2590, or see "SPECTRUM."

18 June 30 Deadline: Charles E. Peterson Prize. An annual prize awarded for the best sets of measured drawings donated to the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) by students of architecture. Acceptable entries will be transmitted to the permanent HABS collection. Write to: Charles E. Peterson Prize, HABS, National Parks Service, Washington, D.C. 20240.

25

5 Seattle outlaws windows in new buildings. John Hagan, DCU energy specialist, presents new energy code requirements at Seattle AIA Energy Committee meeting. Call 622-4938 for details. Interior Plantscape Design and Maintenance: topic of discussion at WASLA Chapter meeting, 6:15 at Interiors in Green. BLUEPRINT: for Architecture and ARCADE sponsor a call for new work. Exhibition tonight at 6, followed by a critical panel discussion at 8. \$3 at Seattle Art Museum, Volunteer Park.

12 "Portraits of a Culture," slide show of a recent tour of Nicaragua, presented by CANTO, at Seattle Art Museum Auditorium, Volunteer Park, 7:30 pm. Call 324-5880, or 322-4304. The Mayor's Recommended Land Use and Transportation Plan for Downtown Seattle should be available at LUTP, 625-4591. This latest version includes significant revisions to the palette of downtown development bonuses, and a special housing district in the Regrade.

19 "Latvia, USSR," an exhibition of photographs at Silver Image Gallery, through 9/1. Entry Deadline 6/30: Urban Design Competition for \$52M civic center in Escondido, CA. First phase will be \$8M city hall. An NEA Design Arts Program. Write Wm. Liskamm, FAIA, City Hall, 400 Valley Blvd., Escondido, CA 92025, or call (619) 741-4631.

26 "The Gothic Cathedral," a UW Continuing Education course on 6 Tuesday evenings, beginning tonight. Lecturer: Grant Hildebrand, architect and art historian. See "Spectrum" for details, or call 543-2590.

6 Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board meets today. Topics: Designation of Smith Tower interior, Hiawatha Playfield, Queen Anne High School. Call 625-4501 for details.

"Aleut Art: A Living Tradition," major exhibition of contemporary Eskimo art. Snow Goose Associates, 6/7-6/23. Fiber art by Jacque Rosenthal and architectural glass by Doug Hansen at Foster/White Gallery, 6/7-7/1.

13 Computer Capabilities: workshop on the creation of art with computer techniques. Praxis School of Art, 6:30-9:30 pm. 244-1818.

"Subliminal Ideology, Two Views of Revolution," a lecture by Esther Parada, professor of Art at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Focal Point Media Center at 8 pm. 322-4304. Electronic Cut and Paste: day-long workshop offering hands-on experience in computer graphics for graphic designers. Praxis School of Art, PO Box 66147, Seattle 98166. 244-1818.

20 Oregon and Washington - "States of Architecture." Watch for tours and presentations of projects by AIA chapters in Seattle, Spokane, Portland, SW Washington, on 6/21 through 6/23. Seattle hosts a three-day meeting at the Madison Hotel Convention Center (for those who can walk on air?), and seminars on management and production techniques. 622-4938. Ploughshares Russian Peace Park Project/Soviet Culture, talk by Art Rice, UW Landscape Arch. Prof. at meeting of Washington Architects for Social Responsibility. Coffee at 7:30, program at 8:00. Seattle AIA Office, 1911 First.

27 "Architecture in Silver" Tea and coffee services designed by 11 modern architects. At the Seattle Art Museum, Volunteer Park, through 9/2.

"Images of China," a group show at Equivalents Gallery featuring photographs by Mark Abramson, Jane Tuckerman, Dorothy Potter Barnett, and Bockman Dong. Show runs into August.

7 Bellevue Downtown Central Park Competition: exhibit of Phase I design. Today 5-10 pm and 6/8 10 am-10 pm at First Congregational Church, NE 8th & 108th NE, Bellevue. And, Vincent Scully, architectural historian, at First Congregational, 8 pm. Lecture topic: "Architecture: the Natural and the Manmade." An analysis of the effects of urban parks on the surrounding city. Free! Go! Workshop: Computers in the Graphic Design Industry, at Monroe Center, 6-9:30 pm. Praxis School of Art, PO Box 66147, Seattle 98166. 244-1818.

14 "Surimono" - Japanese privately-commissioned woodblock prints from the 19th Century, at Davidson Galleries, through 8/8. "The Goldman Look In Wearable Art": a benefit for the Market Foundation, which supports Pike Market Community Clinic, Senior Center, Child Care Center, and Downtown Food Bank. A cross-section of Seattle's "most exciting" young fashion and jewelry designers will preview their fall collections. \$20 tickets at Goldman's Jewelry, on First. The Seattle Club; or by calling 625-4764. 7 pm at Pike Place Cinema.

21 Paintings and works on paper by Robert Motherwell, at the Seattle Center Pavilion, now through 8/5. Paintings by Gary Reel and Lizz Hardwick at the Jackson St. Gallery, today through 7/10. "Harborfair" on the Central Waterfront in Seattle, 6/21-23. Call 623-0340 for schedules.

28 "Fiske Portfolio 2," photographs of the North Dakota Sioux by turn of the century photographer Frank Fiske, at the Donnelly/Hays Bookstore through 7/24. "Three-pty," presented by On the Boards. Sound sculpture by Trimpin, computer graphics and visual design by C.T. Chew, and choreography by Louise Durkee. 6/28, 29, 30 at 8 pm. 325-7901 for info. "Documents Northwest: The PONCHO Series," two- and three-dimensional works by John Buck at the Seattle Center Pavilion.

1 Sculpture by Boyd Wright at Traver Sutton Gallery through 6/30. "Morris Graves: Recent and Earlier Works" at Foster/White Gallery through 6/3, along with 18th & 19th C. Japanese screens; and metal work by John Marshall. Cornish Institute classes in art, design, music, theater, and dance are open for public enrollment this summer. The session runs from 6/18 to 8/10. Write or call for information: 710 E. Roy, Seattle 98102. 323-1400.

8 "Fish Invitational": Art about fish. At the Stone Press Gallery, 6/7 through 6/30. The Mark Morris Dance Group, an evening of dance set to chamber music. 6/7, 8, 9, 10, at 8 pm. For info, 632-6494.

Photographs of the Columbia River Gorge by Stu Levy, at the Silver Image Gallery, 6/7-7/14. "New Members, New Works" at the Northwest Gallery of Fine Woodworking, 6/7-6/30. Frank Lloyd Wright, born 1867.

15 "Art of the Architects": Exhibition of drawings and models by local architects and designers, at the Design Concern Gallery. Reception tonight 5:30-8:30. Show runs through 7/31. Martha Gever, critic and editor of Afterimage magazine, will discuss the status of the arts in a mass media society, 8 tonight at Focal Point Media Center. \$3/\$2. Call 322-4304. Skinner Releasing presents Deborah Hay in concert with Seattle dancers. 6/14, 15, 16, at 8 pm. For info, 527-1492. Saul Steinberg, born 1914.

22 Paddy McNeely, "Variations in Black." Works in thrown porcelain at the Clay Occasion Gallery, now through 7/14. Works on paper by K.C. Maxwell and Fred Birchman, Metal sculpture by Bernard Hosey, at Francine Seders Gallery through 7/15.

29 Mercer Island Summer Arts Festival noon 6/29 through 7/1. Juried shows. "Last Friday," city issues series luncheon, presented by Allied Arts, at Elliott Bay Cafe. Noon. For speaker and info, call 624-0432. San Francisco Forum on Architectural Issues 6/29-30 "Engaging the Urban Place: Public Architecture, Symbolism and the City." Sponsored by Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture and the San Francisco Center for Architecture and Urban Studies. Contact San Francisco Forum, ASCA, 1735 New York Ave.

2 Laurie Anderson does it again at the Paramount in 8 and 10:30 shows tonight. Tickets at Ticketmaster, 628-0888.

3rd Annual Mock Exam: Architectural Women's Gathering and ARCADE host 50-60 hopefuls in a trial run of the design portion of the architectural registration exam. Gould Hall. Pre-registration required. Call Pat Shelby at 624-5670 or 322-5714.

9 Tour of Schmitz Preserve sponsored by The Friends of the Olmsted Parks. Meet at Alki Community Center, 59th SW and SW Stephens at 10:30. Tour lasts till noon. What is this generation coming to? UW School of Art MFA Thesis Exhibition 1984, at the Henry Gallery through 6/24. The best work in sculpture, ceramics, metal design, industrial design, painting, photography, and fiber design. Cole Porter, born today, 1891. If architecture is frozen music, who is building Cole's lyrics?

16 Esther Parada will give a slide talk on her work in photography, 1:30 at the Bellevue Art Museum. Free. "Garments," an invitational group show at the Cerulean Blue Gallery, today through 8/11. Opening 2-5 pm today. The collapse of private memory by public images, the myth of "information" and "neutrality" in the American media, and much more, will be discussed by a panel, including Esther Parada, Martha Gever, Gary Reel, Emmett Murray, and moderator Carolyn Tucker, at 913 E. Pine, 8 pm. \$3/\$2. For info, 322-4304.

23 Seen any landscape architects around here? Visibility Brainstorm Workshop sponsored by Washington State Chapter, ASLA, 9-4 at Snake Lake Native Center, Tacoma. For info, Glen Hunt, 522-2334.

30 Seattle's Central Waterfront: watch for a public event this summer sponsored by Allied Arts and BLUEPRINT: for Architecture. WASLA Auction. For info, Terry Gerrard, 454-5723.

1 Japanese Ukiyo-e prints: "The Forty-Seven Ronin" by Yoshitōra, ca. 1865, at the Carolyn Staley Gallery through mid-August. **Photographs** by Sylvia Plachy at the Yuen Lui Gallery through 7/31.

8 Deadline July 31: **Domus International Competition.** Design 3 industrial series products. For additional information see *Domus* magazine, Vol. 648, '84.

15 **Judy Chicago:** "The Birth Project," at the Jackson St. Gallery through 8/26. **Bicycle Sunday** on Lake Washington Boulevard. **Old-Fashioned All-City Picnic** at eight city parks. Call 343-PARK for details.

According to Charles Jencks, "modern architecture died in St. Louis, Missouri, at about 3:32 p.m. 1972 (Pruitt-Igoe demolition began)."

22 Ongoing exhibit: "China: 7,000 Promotional Mailers," at the Pacific Science Center. **Special Report** on Tax Incentives for Historic Preservation and Their Effect on Rehabilitation Activity in Pioneer Square, Seattle, by Bill Nichols, Ann Alexander, and Ai Elliott. Available at Historic Seattle or by calling 622-6952.

29

Sigurd Lewerenz, Swedish architect, born 1885.

2 Seattle Design Commission Update Report 1980-83. Available by calling 625-4503. **Out to Lunch Concerts:** call 623-0340 for a schedule.

Austrian furniture designer Michael Thonet, born 1796.

9 Seattle Parks Centennial Events Line: 343-PARK. Call this number to learn how and where to celebrate "Parks Centennial '84 — a Century of Growing with Seattle."

16

23

30 "Olmsted Parks of the West: the Future of a Tradition." National conference at the UW, 9/12 through 9/15, on Olmsted-era landscape design, history, and preservation. Call UW Conferences and Institutes, 543-5280.

3 Last chance to see mouse helping a hedgerow animal carry a prie-dieu. Morris Graves' work at SAM. Volunteer Park, through 7/8.

10 Denny Park dedication of Centennial Grove in honor of the Seattle Park's Centennial year. Call 343-PARK for details. "Critical Thinking and Visual Literacy," lecture by Herb Parr, sponsored by 911, at 911 E. Pine, 8 p.m. For info, 324-5880.

Plant winter storage beets, fall carrots & peas.

17

24 Lecture and workshop on Japanese carpentry will be given by Japanese carpenter Yoshikumi Shimoi, 8/10, 11, 12. Contact Northwest Gallery of Fine Woodworking for details, 625-0542.

31

4

Louis Armstrong, born 1900.

11 Contemporary Set & Costume Design by Artists Exhibition of recent work for opera, dance, and theater productions by painters and sculptors. Philippe Bonnatont, Gallery, San Francisco, through 8/11.

18 Peace Action/Peace Park Meeting. Washington Architects for Social Responsibility. Coffee at 7:30, program at 8:00. Seattle AIA Office, 1911 First Avenue.

Plant kohlrabi, now through 8/7.

25 Architectural preservation courses are offered by the National Building Museum this fall. Write to the NBM at 440 G Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20001, for information. "Maids in a Row" — window installation by Gloria Bornstein, in response to the Green River Murders. At Art in Form, 2237 Second Avenue, through 7/30.

26

5 Clay sculpture and architectural installations by Debra Sherwood, Cecelia Otto, and Laura Sindell at the Traver/Sutton Gallery through 7/28. **Glass** by Stephen Dale Edwards and by the Northwest Pilchuck artists at the Foster/White Gallery today through 7/29. **Lynda Barry:** paintings at the Linda Farris Gallery today through 7/29. **Special performance of the Empty Space Theater's "K2"** presented by REI Coop to benefit Allied Arts. At Broadway Performance Hall, 8 p.m. For tickets, call 624-0432.

R. Buckminster Fuller arrived, 1895.

19

26

6 Paintings by Elisabeth Johns and relief prints by Pirminia Koch at Studio Gallery 75, through 7/28. **Asian-American Artists Exhibition, 14th Annual,** at Wing Luke Memorial Museum. Artists from Western and Southwestern US including Alaska and Hawaii. Through 8/11.

Dutch architects William Dudok, b. 1884, and Herman Hertzberger, b. 1932.

13 "Jack Lenor Larsen: Seattle, 1984." Textile design exhibition at the Henry Art Gallery. US — his alma mater. Mr. Larsen will be guest curator. Fabric, upholstery, and carpet designs by Larsen, plus ethnic textiles from his collection. Through 8/31. "Arts Forum" 8th Annual Conference of the Arts 7/13 and 7/14 at St. Thomas Conference Center, Kenmore, WA, presented by Washington State Arts Alliance. Planning, advocacy, marketing the arts; strolling classical guitarists the lake. For information call 447-3505.

20 Clay Occasion Gallery group show by gallery artists opens today. **Paintings** by Michael Dailey at Francine Sedars Gallery through 8/9.

27 Allied Arts presents "Last Friday," city issues series luncheon, at Elliott Bay Cafe, Noon. For speaker and info, call 624-0432. **Watch for exhibition planned by BLUEPRINT:** for Architecture of the work of Fumihiko Maki in the fall. For info, PO Box 20486, Broadway Station, Seattle 98101.

Plant spinach and onions for overwintering.

7 Wood sculpture, furniture, and artisanry: Group show of gallery members at the Northwest Gallery of Fine Woodworking, 7/5 through 7/24. **Abstract prints by Vicki Adams** at the Stone Press Gallery, 7/5 through 7/28.

14 The Pilchuck School Open House, 10 to 5. Beautiful Skagit River Valley setting and Tom Bosworth's wood architecture, as well as demonstrations by artists, at the internationally renowned school for flat- and blown-glass work, 1201 316th NW, Stanwood. 445-3111.

21 Jog, run, bike, skate, sail, or ride the bus, but don't try to park near the Greenlake Arts & Crafts Fair and Bite of Seattle this weekend.

Coming Soon to Seattle: Industrial Design Society of America national conference, 8/4-8/8. Featuring top design thinkers, such as Victor Papanek, computer animators, researchers, doers. Write IDSA, 6802 Poplar Place, Suite 303, McLean, VA 22101, or call (703) 556-0919.

28

J u l y



Union Station in the late 1920s. Photo courtesy James A. Fredrickson Collection.

continued from front page . . .

With its formation, SOS leadership promised to sponsor a public bond issue to preserve the station, assuring taxpayers public accessibility as a payback. In November 1983, Councilman Strege sponsored a resolution authorizing the Tacoma City Manager to seek an option from BN to negotiate purchasing the station for one dollar. Once this option was in hand, SOS planned to sponsor a \$7 million bond issue to provide the City with capital needed to bring the building up to code. Then, the City would have the option to lease or sell the building to a private interest on the condition that that business would make tenant improvements and preserve part of the building for a public use. Once rehabilitated, Union Station would compliment BN's future development on sixteen vacant acres surrounding the depot.

With the public concern and pressure generated by SOS, Strege's resolution passed the Tacoma City Council. But BN balked at selling the station and its underlying land for a nominal cost. (For nearly a decade BN has been willing to give the depot to the City of Tacoma, but unwilling to part with the property underneath it.)

Without an option agreement from the owner, there can be no public bond issue, and lacking the leverage of public financing, SOS has appeared to lose direction, momentum, and a purpose.

Five months, more than \$10,000, and one thousand participants after SOS's formation, its leadership claims a victory, albeit in a roundabout fashion. Burlington Northern is about to initiate a Request For Proposal to find a development scheme suitable for the station's restoration and its integration into the sixteen acres of vacant BN land around it. SOS Co-chair Linda Bowman claims her citizens' committee was instrumental in persuading BN to seek the RFP.

"I feel very good about what [SOS has] been able to accomplish. At the time we spoke with Burlington Northern at the beginning of our effort, we were advised

that they had many stations around the country and [Tacoma's Union Station] really didn't have any special significance for development. However, they have made [cooperation between SOS and BN] a priority," says Bowman.

"[SOS] has made [BN] aware of how strongly we feel about it and about the key role it can play in the redevelopment of our city," she adds.

"I guess I disagree with Linda [Bowman]," says Steven Wood, Vice President, Law and Government Relations of Glacier Park Company, the wholly-owned real estate subsidiary of BN.

"Tacoma's Union Station is one of about 20 projects [Glacier Park] has going on around the country, and it doesn't have any greater or lesser priority than any other projects. We're going through the same process to try and determine if it's economically viable to do anything [at the station and its site]."

"Certainly, the SOS group has not been responsible for Burlington Northern taking one position or another — it's the task force. The Tacoma City Council task force [on Union Station] piqued our interest, and that's who we're participating with. The SOS group are not members of the task force," says Wood.

Yet Bowman claims SOS was largely responsible for bringing about the formation of the task force composed of representatives from the City's planning and community development departments and the

UNION STATION

city manager's office. The task force's duties are to envision a suitable development for the station, find a means for that realization, and determine how the station and its surrounding property fit into the scheme of downtown Tacoma's urban plan. Through the influence of SOS co-chairs and Councilman Strege, SOS set in motion a series of events that eventually led to the task force's formation, claims Bowman. One such event was a \$12,000 grant from Governor John Spellman to help finance a study on the station.

"It's hard to say — it's a chicken-and-egg thing," says Wood, referring to whether SOS's or BN's development plans came first. When pressed about Bowman's claim about SOS influence on the task force, Wood retreats a little, but adds, "[BN] had taken a look at the station long before SOS came around. And because we have sixteen acres of land in a metropolitan area, [we] ought to be able to make some money off it, right?"

"[And] the people of Tacoma had the depot successfully designated on the National Register [of Historic Places] before SOS days.

"All we know is: this is a project that we have, and if we come up with a good development plan, and it looks like it's going to make money, and if it gives the rate of return that we expect on our projects, we're going to do it.

"And if it doesn't," concludes Wood, "Then we're going to have to think of some other solution or maybe think about [developing] it in the future some time."

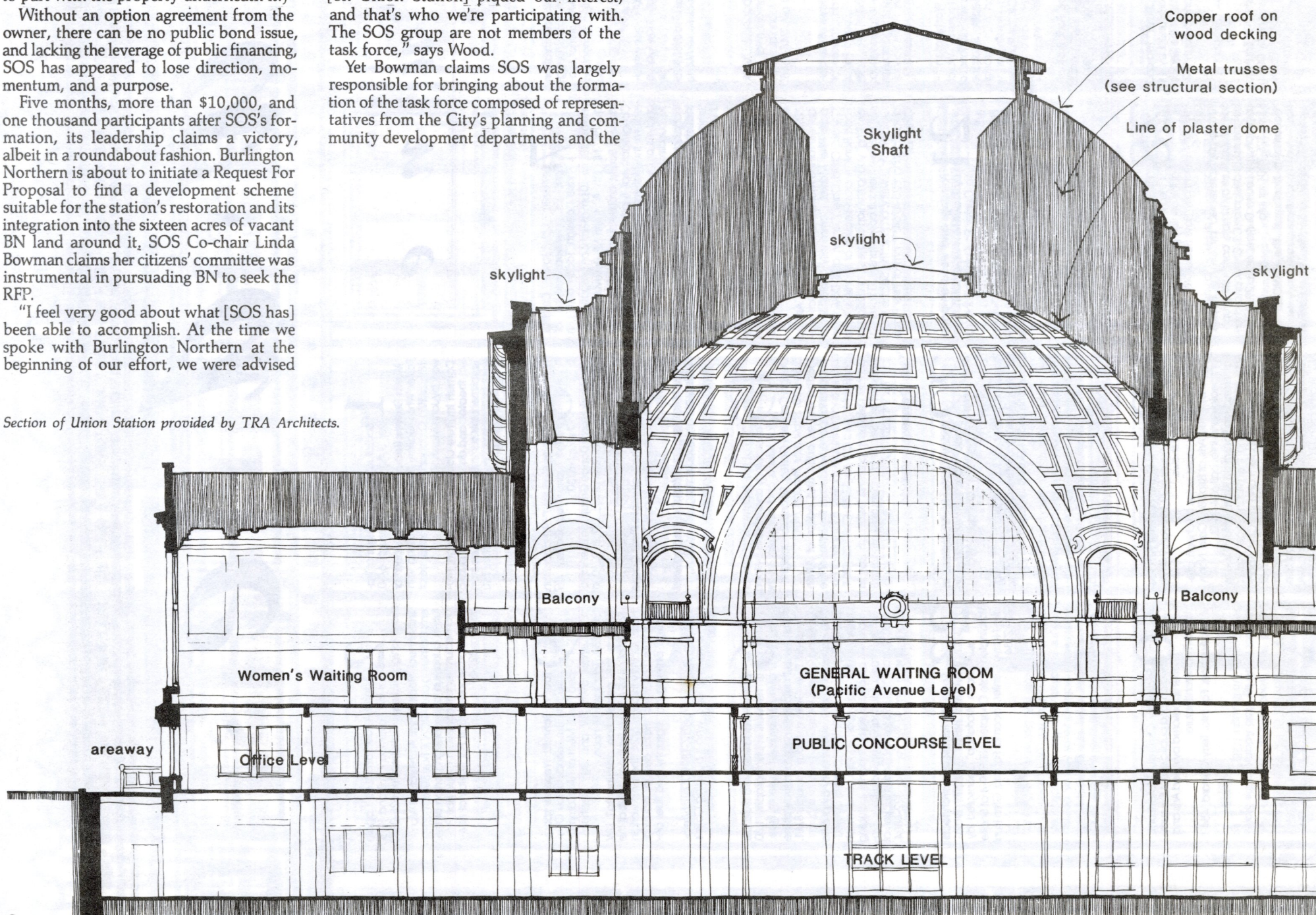
If BN's RFP proves profitable; if the railroad attracts a developer who gives it the required rate of return; then Bowman would consider SOS a success; the building will have been saved. Even if BN develops the building privately and restricts public use "I still would feel that development of it would probably not have taken place without SOS," says Bowman. If the building is developed privately without public funds, Bowman hopes, along with others, to "appeal to BN's sense of fairness" to allow public participation in determining a use for the depot and provide public space in the historic monument.

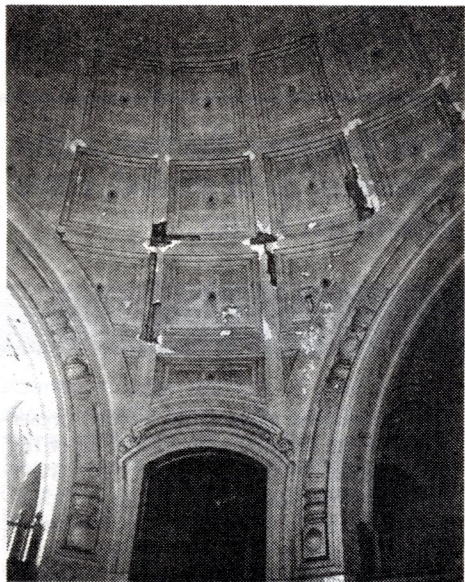
"However, I think it's up to the land owner to decide the ultimate use for which the land ought to be used," says Wood. "So, we see our job [to present] something that's consistent [with] the architectural integrity and, for lack of a better word, to complement the station in that setting. At the same time, we've never heard anybody in the community say they want a monument — it has to be something that's economically viable."

Frank Petrich

Frank Petrich is a freelance writer who lives and works in Tacoma.

Section of Union Station provided by TRA Architects.





The Dome's Destiny?

The first concern is to retain the historic structure in all of its majesty while restoring it as a vital element of downtown Tacoma.

The current condition of the interior of Tacoma's Union Station dome. Photo by Jerry Timmons.

The rehabilitation of the Tacoma Union Station appears to be the rare preservation project for which there is unanimous support. The grand old depot with its imposing copper domed roof dominated Tacoma's cityscape from its completion in 1911 and emerged as a symbol of "The City of Destiny." While a dome of greater stature now dominates Tacoma's skyline, Tacomans nonetheless retain a special affection for the original domed landmark. However, the Tacoma Union Station has seen its last days as a railroad station, and as Amtrak prepares to withdraw its operations from the Tacoma Union Station later this month, the issue of the station's future has gained broad attention.

The first concern of all who know the station is to retain the historic structure in all of its majesty while restoring it as a vital contributing element of downtown Tacoma. Yet whatever that function may be, it must ultimately meet the challenge of economic feasibility against some difficult impediments.

Any development on the Union Station site will feel a unique handicap created by the construction of the I-705 spur slated to pass directly in front of the building. The parcel of land owned by Burlington Northern, on which the station sits, stretches from Pacific Avenue down to the City Waterway. The spur, which is presently under construction, will split the Burlington Northern property in two, isolating the station on Pacific Avenue from the waterfront parcel below. It is a high priority of the city to maintain pedestrian access between Pacific Avenue and the waterfront; however, it has yet to be decided whether trans-spur access will be accomplished in the form of a lid over the spur, or a pedestrian overpass, as is most often suggested. A lid over the spur would require an outlay of approximately \$3 million. The state has not allocated any funds for construction of pedestrian access over the spur, and at this stage such access should be planned in conjunction with future development of

the Union Station site. It's hard to judge the spur's impact on a Union Station renovation, but it must be a major consideration in any development of the Burlington Northern property.

Finally, any development in downtown Tacoma, which is just emerging from years of neglect, is bound to be a calculated gamble. Happily, Tacomans are rediscovering their downtown, thanks to the new Tacoma Dome, the renovated Pantages Theatre, and Cornerstone Development Company's Tacoma Center project. However, the commercial and retail market is just now being tested, and no one can guarantee that the area will re-emerge as a commercial and retail district with sufficient vigor to support commercial development around the station.

Any development on the Union Station site will feel a unique handicap because of the I-705 spur slated to pass in front of the building.

The potential for private development of the Tacoma Union Station has been evaluated in the past. Two years ago Cornerstone Development Company joined forces with Glacier Park Company, the Burlington Northern real estate subsidiary which owns the station and its site, to investigate the building's development potential. Under the name of Union Station Associates, Cornerstone commissioned TRA Architects to conduct two studies exploring the rehabilitation and development possibilities for the Station and its site. The first study, *The Tacoma Union Depot: A Rehabilitation Analysis*, was completed in December 1982 and addressed the structure's condition and recommended necessary improvements and provided cost estimates for its resurrection. The second study, which was conducted in conjunction with Parsons Brinckerhoff, presented several hypothetical development schemes for the site which would utilize the station as well as subsidize its renovation.

The rehabilitation study, based on the available construction documents and on-site inspections, dealt only with the bare necessities of bringing the structure up to code and returning it to an active public function. Despite the conservative nature of the recommendations, the price tag for such an undertaking was estimated at \$4-5 million.

Structurally, Union Station was found to be in relatively good shape for its age. It was judged to be seismically sound with minimal additional roof bracing to bring it up to modern code. The unreinforced brick perimeter walls have remained strong, as have the concrete interior walls.

The largest and most crucial task will be the replacement of the copper dome roof. The roof was constructed with large sheets of copper designed without expansion joints; consequently, it has leaked since its construction. The present copper sheathing with its relief pattern will either have to be replaced in kind or patched with a synthetic alternative. Afterward, the interior moulded plaster dome ceiling of the station's Great Space will require extensive repair where the years of water leakage have left it damaged.

Many of the improvements recommended in the study reflect the obvious

necessities of bringing the structure up to modern code, comfort, and convenience. In order to meet the energy code, all of the ceilings will require insulation, and the existing window sash should be double-glazed. Presently, the building enjoys only a natural ventilation system, but when the windows are double-glazed, they will become inoperable, and the natural air flow will need to be supplemented with a mechanical ventilation system. The original steam heating system still works, albeit with a modern boiler, however it does not function efficiently. The study recommends that it be converted to a hot water system, utilizing the existing pipes, radiators, and equipment as much as possible. Predictably, the electrical and plumbing service will need to be entirely revamped and the fixtures replaced. The cosmetic rehabilitation of the impressive public dome room involves repairing the moulded plaster ceiling, patching or repairing the terrazzo floor, and repairing the marble where it has cracked.

The survey, labeled as Phase I, was intended to be followed up with a Phase II study outlining development potential for the station which would then be incorporated into a Master Plan for development of the entire site. Instead, as the impediments to the site's development became evident to Cornerstone, the later phases of the Master Plan were condensed, and the second study became an overview of the potential development schemes, utilizing the rehabilitated depot at their center.

This second study addressed three hypothetical development options. Anticipating the I-705 spur, the study examined the property as two separate parcels of land: the Pacific Avenue parcel and the waterfront parcel. Within the study three development options were proposed, all sharing certain common elements. Each option incorporated a hotel/motel built around the renovated depot which would be used as lobby and public spaces. Also included in each option was a "boatel" on the waterfront site and office structures along Pacific Avenue and the waterfront. Though all of the options dealt with essentially the same elements, they varied in the density of construction, the combination of high- and low-rise construction, and the structure's placement on the site.

The Development Potential study only provided sketchy preliminary design schemes along with rough cost estimates for construction. It did not attempt to give a market analysis for any of the property's proposed uses. Its intent was to demonstrate the potential for development on the property, and as such, it dealt very generally with the issues raised by construction of the spur, the resurgence of Tacoma's downtown, and the significance of the landmark station to any development in the area.

At the conclusion of the Development Potential Study in June 1983, Cornerstone chose to suspend its involvement in the project, citing the adverse effect of the spur on the property, the limited commercial market in downtown Tacoma, and the extensive costs of rehabilitating the depot, which made such a development economically infeasible at that time. Cornerstone indicated that if public funding paid for the initial renovation of the depot and a good pedestrian link between the two parcels, then private development of the scale proposed in the studies could be justified economically.

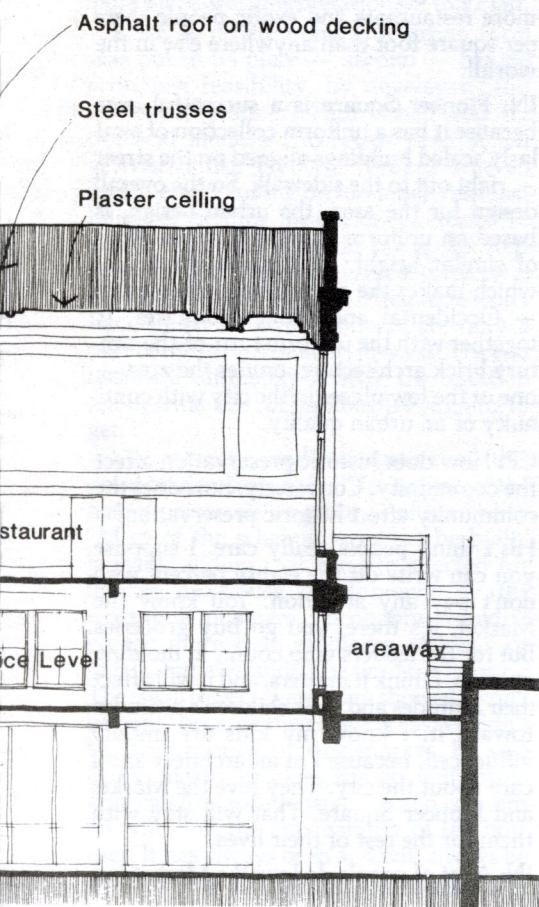
Forces within the city of Tacoma and Glacier Park Company cannot and will not wait on the station's fate. When Amtrak removes its operations from the station this month, the liability which the structure poses to its owner will come to bear yet more heavily. With a \$12,000 grant obtained from the state, the City of Tacoma recently commissioned a new rehabilitation development study to generate and examine ideas for the station's future use. The study, just completed by TRA Architects, fills the hole left by the aborted Cornerstone Phase II Rehabilitation Study. Following up on the Rehabilitation Potential Study, it deals with the potential and problems in publicly proposed development schemes for the structure and its site. We should hope the study will contribute impetus for the successful reuse of the station.


Perhaps a more dynamic step has been taken with the formation of the Tacoma Union Station Task Force. The task force, representing Glacier Park executives and Tacoma city officials, has met frequently this year to actively seek a means of redeveloping the station. The task force has prepared a Request for Proposal, which recently has been distributed to private developers. Glacier Park is willing to consider a variety of situations to facilitate development. They wish to retain ownership of the land and to remain involved in any project launched involving the station, ideally in a partnership with an independent developer. Consequently, the RFP is a solicitation of schemes, both financial and architectural, for development of the site. The development proposals are due at the end of June, and the responses will dictate the next step in the station's second coming out.

The envisioned redevelopment of the Tacoma Union Station would be a preservation project on a grand scale. Given the significant obstacles to a successful development of the site, there is no assurance that a developer will step forward to accept the challenge. The people of Tacoma have sent forth a unanimous signal that they want their station saved, and, sharing this attitude, Glacier Park Company and the City of Tacoma have joined forces to secure this end. With this singularity of purpose behind it, the Tacoma Union Station has perhaps the rarest and most valuable asset to any preservation project.

Tory Laughlin

Tory Laughlin, a historic preservation enthusiast, works for Cornerstone Development Company.





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ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION

An Interview With Ibsen Nelsen and Fred Bassetti

The following is an interview with Ibsen Nelsen and Fred Bassetti, two longtime Seattle architects. Both of them have worked on many historic preservation projects in Seattle, including Pioneer Square, the Pike Place Market, and the Boeing Museum of Flight. Because historic preservation is important to all architects, we chose to interview them rather than some other "preservation experts" in this area. We thank them for their cooperation and assistance on this.

Ibsen Nelsen: Historic preservation is important, cities grow incrementally over time. If we preserve the best architecture of each period. Cities should get better.

Marsha Back: Is there any inherent value in keeping some of the bad of the past?

IN: Well, that could be. However, I don't feel badly about tearing down an old building, if the one that replaces it is better. But it's got to be a great deal better. There was some discussion a few years back about saving the Governor's Mansion. Now, it's not a shining architectural masterpiece, but it definitely represents an attitude toward building that will never be prevalent again. And it was the building in which most of the state's governors had lived. There was never any question in my mind that it should not be saved.

Caroline Petrich: When you're designing a new building, you're given a project and you go at it. Do you ever project yourself into the future and your building as it progresses through time?

IN: Yes, sometimes. When I designed Morris Graves' house in California, I suggested to Morris that because of his position we'd have to be careful of what we did because people would take some kind of signals from it. I feel quite strongly that architecture should be part of the continuum of history. We might make more progress if we took, as a general goal, to design the most unsurprising buildings we could.

MB: Not many people share that view.

IN: It's not to diminish the idea of originality, but buildings should have something to do with the culture in which they occur. In Morris' house, I was thinking of the continuity of the American house, of the frame house. The balloon frame was invented in Chicago in 1820 by George Washington Snow. He owned a lumber yard and invented the idea of the wood-frame building, which happened to coincide with the invention of the wire nail. The wood-frame building is America's fundamental contribution to Architecture. It

is one reason why restoring the Boeing Company's Red Barn as a museum is important. It's a turn-of-the-century wood-frame, industrial building and has become a very rare building. It is extremely valuable because of its rarity, but also because of its chance attributes as architecture. It is located on an historic site — the Meadows Race Track, site of the first flight in Seattle in 1911. It is also the birthplace of one of the world's great industrial companies — certainly one often most important in air and space.

(The conversation drifted to local examples, eventually Pioneer Square.)

Fred Bassetti: Pioneer Square was started by Alan Salisbury and Ralph Anderson when they bought that little building at the corner of First and Jackson. About 1950 I guess it was. I thought they were crazy! And we thought, well, by 1968-70, the whole Pioneer Square would be gone. When we did the Action Better City program (1968), it seemed like it was in the works.

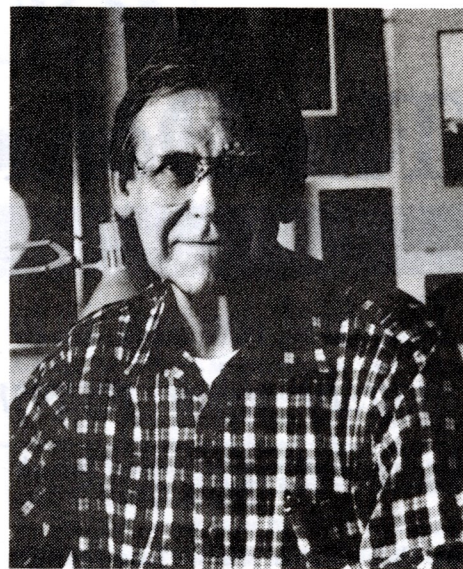
MB: What happened?

FB: I think it was one of those do-gooder things. When they built that park, it became a haven for drifters, and a lot of people got turned off. My present lawyer had his office in Smith Tower; he loved it. But he couldn't handle having all clients approached by the winos. He just gave up and left for a slick new building.

IN: The City's vision for Pioneer Square was to clear the site. A number of people have pointed out that the City now gets ten times more in property taxes than it did before restoration but returns little in services. The City has the responsibility to solve the social problems in Pioneer Square, but seems to be ignoring it, hoping it will go away. Then there have been people on various committees who have thought there was something picturesque about "street people": that they are part of the scenery. It's the fundamental problem of Pioneer Square.

FB: There's a lot of sympathy, and rightly so, for the derelicts. But what about the people who have invested money in the area — the little people who started shops? It's not the big corporations. It's our citizens — many have invested their life savings in opening a shop. The social problem is killing them. Look what happened to the Kissells' City Loan Pavilion Restaurant.

MB: Is there some reason why the City wouldn't want people to invest money down there?



Ibsen Nelsen. Photo by Sally Oien.

IN: I don't think the City ever said that, did they?

FB: No, except for one initiative. Ben Erlichman was a great power in town forty to fifty years ago [he was the uncle of John Erlichman, who was sent to jail after Watergate]. About twenty to thirty years ago, Ben Erlichman came up with a proposal for Pioneer Square. The plan was touted by the City, by the newspapers, as this great development renewing Seattle. They were going to wipe out everything. The City did actually wipe out a couple of blocks of old buildings. There was then a tendency on the part of some developers and the City to do things in a massive way, go in with massive money. When Alan Black, Ralph Anderson, Dick White, and others did it on a small piecemeal basis, there was some heart put into it. That really works!

IN: The clearance approach gave urban renewal a bad name. It's too bad, for the Market illustrates Urban Renewal can work. The Market Urban Renewal project is a major factor in saving Seattle's downtown. It was one of the few things that attracted people to the downtown. If the Market had disappeared, who knows what would have happened?

CP: It would have been like Tacoma.

FB: The Market was saved because of citizen initiative. The initiative provided a detailed program for control. It was the pattern for the Market Renewal program.

MB: It was controlled by the citizens. What about the private investors?

IN: The ordinance which gave the Market its direction was written by the citizens who got together the initiative. Victor Steinbrueck was the prime mover — and he inspired creative people to join him. What they created was remarkable. It set a pattern, became a vehicle to preserve Seattle's vitality — it's downtown.

FB: It was very close, a narrow miss.

MB: Gasoline in the bulldozers, right?

FB: We didn't know which way it was going to go. It finally came to a vote; and it carried fairly well, the Friends of the Market initiative. It was something. We were a little inflammatory in some of our statements that led to getting a lot of votes. Boy, there was going to be a 34-story hotel right there where the Triangle Building is, at Pike Place and Pine Street.

CP: Who designed it?

FB: Two of the most progressive architects in town were involved with that plan. And they really got mad at us.

MB: Those were the progressive thinkers though: Urban Renewal, they were moving ahead and tearing down the old buildings.

CP: Does that mean that historic preservation has just recently become an issue, whereas before it was just an afterthought?

FB: Less than that! You go back to the 30s, and I remember being in school and reading about slum clearance in Roosevelt's Administration: Get rid of the slums; tear out the slums. That was the point: get people out of the slums because that's where crime is bred and all that. We didn't realize until much later when we grew up a bit.

If we preserve the best architecture of each period, cities should get better.

IN: The Market exemplifies historic preservation at its best. It's the preserving of the life and quality of the city. George Bartholick, who was finally selected as the architect for renovation of the Market structures, deserves the greatest credit for the success of the Market Renewal. He did a selfless job, and did his job so well, his work is completely concealed. You must understand it as the work of a truly devoted and very skillful architect. A great piece of work!

FB: Yeah, right. Each official in turn takes the credit himself, but George really deserves the recognition. He really knew how to do it.

IN: He took the Market apart and put it back together again, put in new foundations, new plumbing, new structure, new electrical system, and all the while kept the Market in operation, made it all work. Yet he has never been recognized for it. The AIA has ignored him.

FB: He spent about \$15-20 million without it being noticed. The character of the Market is still there. You know it's a marvelous thing. Here Seattle did this and while Paris tore down their great human place, their market, Les Halles. They did exactly what some were proposing to do here — sterility!

IN: The Market Historical Commission, has been and continues as a very, very important aspect of the Market's preservation. While it was a miracle to save the run-down Market, and to renovate it successfully you have to save it over time, because buildings are destroyed over time, incrementally.

A carpenter picks up his hammer, the building gets worse; the painter picks up his paint brush, the building gets worse; and it reflects the direction of the bureaucrats who eventually ruin all our public buildings. In a short time, really, the Market can be completely ruined by make-shift thinking.

The function of the Market Historical Commission is to see to it that the Market character is preserved over time. Should you let food carts set up in the main Market arcade? The Commission is there to tell them "No!". The food carts were totally out of place. They might have been appropriate at Northgate.

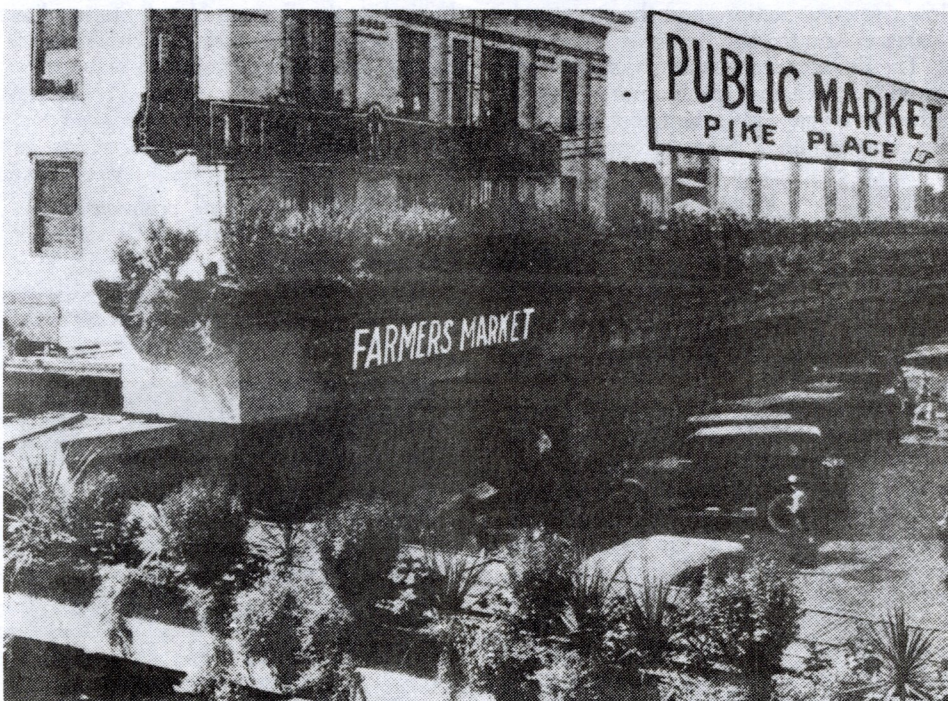
FB: The Market succeeds because it's a place where people go for a certain function, not just to go to work. There are probably more restaurants and exotic people there per square foot than anywhere else in the world!

IN: Pioneer Square is a successful area because it has a uniform collection of similarly scaled buildings aligned on the street — right out to the sidewalk. So the overall design for the area, the urban design, is based on uniform alignment of buildings of similar height. This is the continuity which makes the open spaces meaningful — Occidental and Pioneer Squares. It, together with the uniform turn-of-the-century brick architecture, unifies the area — one of the few places in the city with continuity of an urban quality.

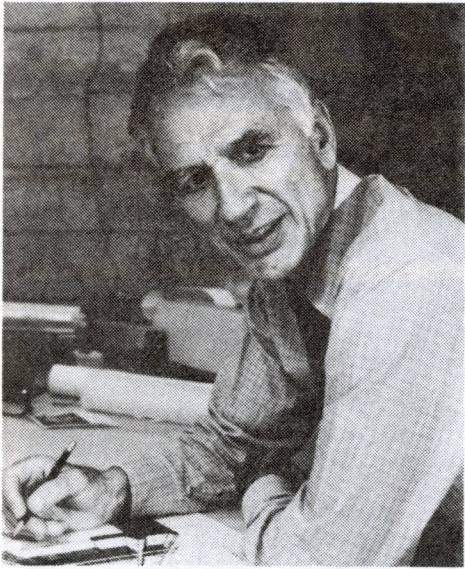
CP: How does historic preservation affect the community. Conversely, how does the community affect historic preservation?

FB: I think people really care. I suppose you can write off the eighty percent who don't pay any attention. You know the Market, it's there, you go buy groceries. But for the leaders who count, in molding opinion, I think it matters, and it will affect their attitudes and their children's attitudes toward it. I know my kids are unduly influenced, because I'm an architect and I care about the city. They love the Market and Pioneer Square. That will stay with them for the rest of their lives.

IN: A lot of people do love the Market but



Seattle's Pike Place Market as it was circa 1925. Photo courtesy University of Washington Libraries, Pacific Northwest Collection.



Fred Bassetti. Photo by Sally Oien.

What's more important than romance in this world? Our hearts need fulfilling.

signed to eliminate skylights. This is what our government is doing to us. They require you, under the new energy code which was just passed, to design the building and calculate the energy need. Then you have to make seven options showing how it could be done. Then you have to make a computer analysis of the one you've proposed. Finally, you have to make another energy design saving ten percent of the original design.

MB: How absurd. What's the point?

FB: To save energy, that's the purpose. But the fact that people like a flood of light in an atrium doesn't seem to count.

IN: The purpose is getting ridiculous. I have a friend who has a way of putting things. I was at his house one morning having coffee with him and noticed his cat has no tail. I said, "How'd the cat lose his tail?" He said, "Oh, I chopped it off." I said, "You did! How could you do such a thing?" He said, "I did it to save energy. It takes the cat too long to get out the door in the morning." It seems to be human nature to embark on a program and get carried away with it. Once the initial 75 percent energy savings are accomplished, the rewards diminish.

(Editor's Note: Under Seattle's Energy Code, an architect can choose one of three paths for demonstrating a project's compliance with the code. In all three, skylights are allowable by demonstrating that any increased heat loss has been compensated for by other means, such as increased insulation, a lower overall glazing U-value, or photoelectric switching to utilize available daylight.)

The "new energy code" noted above refers to recent amendments to the Seattle Energy Code which apply only to major buildings over 50,000 square feet, and specify a two-step process. The first step is a siting and building form analysis, performed during the environmental review, to identify the energy impacts of a maximum of seven alternatives differing in siting or building form. The second step is analysis performed prior to applying for a building permit to demonstrate that the proposed project is 10% more efficient than if it were designed to meet Seattle Energy Code Chapter 4's prescriptive standards.)

CP: What are your opinions about the Cobb and Skinner Buildings?

IN: There are a number of crucially important buildings in the city but the really great building is the Skinner Building. The block-long Fifth Avenue facade is the very heart of our downtown.

FB: Some of us tried to save the White Henry Stuart Building, which was across the street from the Skinner Building. That was the only block left in Seattle that had old, well-designed buildings on both sides of the street. One block remaining in the whole city! The Landmarks Commission tried to save it. We proposed an historic district, for the Skinner, White Henry Stuart (the Fifth Avenue half), the Olympic Hotel, the Cobb, and all that. I started to get threatening phone calls at home.

MB: What is the most important preservation issue in Seattle?

IN: Save the Skinner Building! The facade cannot be improved upon. The office interiors can be replaced — completely modernized and made wonderful. That's the key to saving the building. We can't let that one go. It's the University that can save the building. If the University is the repository of our culture, it must show its concern for architecture in the city, and the humane city is the key to the future of our civilization.

Caroline Petrich

Caroline Petrich, an architectural enthusiast, is a freelance journalist who lives in Seattle.

wouldn't hesitate to make changes that would destroy it. I remember a good example of that phenomenon: Some years ago, when I started working in Bellingham, I toured the Western Washington University campus with Barney Goltz, a great man, now a state senator who ought one day to be governor, then assistant to the President at WWSU. He took me around the campus to show me the various classroom and office buildings. He said, "Of all our buildings, the Humanities Building (which Fred designed) is the one where people stay to work late at night. They love the building, and we are getting more work from them."

So we went through the building. Barney was asking people in the building what they liked and what they would change. They would like to have fluorescent lights; they didn't like the carpet because of its texture. It was Coir matting. . . . They would straighten out the crooked corridors. I told Barney, "You know, if they had everything they asked for, they wouldn't like the building any more."

FB: They had their chance to move out of those offices. Most of them who had seniority were allowed to move into new buildings, and they wouldn't go. These were kind of irregular offices, misshapen and with wooden furniture. There was also a leak that I could never solve. It took about six years to solve it. The water and wind would come blasting through those hills and drive against that wall. Every spring there were mushrooms growing in the carpet. But they still wanted to stay there.

MB: So were they living a romantic ideal?

FB: No, it was a practical ideal. Just as if you're in a chair like this [points to a stiffback dining chair]. You're going to want some kind of easy chair, even if it's an old beat up one, but something that's comfortable. The faculty were living the practical thing; some place they could be relaxed, meet their students, do their research. Feel comfortable. Well, you can say this isn't romantic, it's practical. But on the other side of the picture, you say, well, no, maybe it is romantic. But what's more important than romance in this world? Our hearts need fulfilling.

IN: I don't think we err on the side of saving too many buildings. The odds are always against a building surviving. It seems it's easier for society to think of removal rather than renewal. We've lost a lot of good buildings that should've been saved.

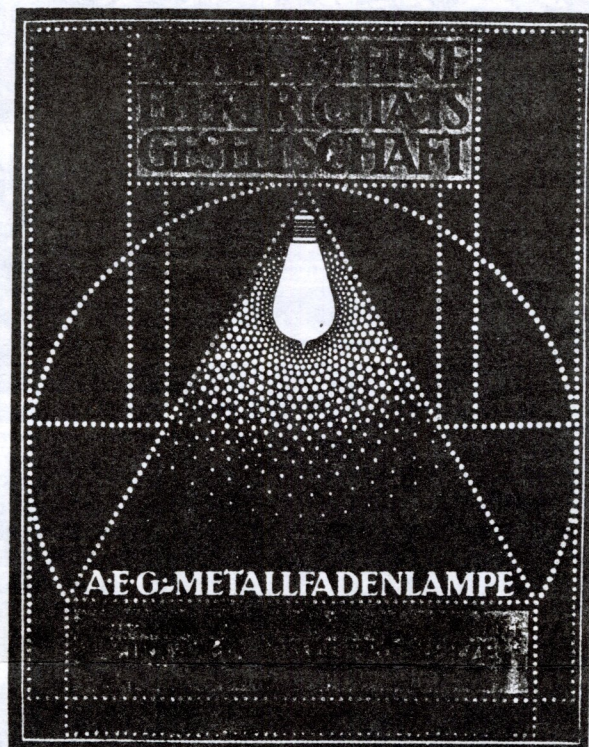
Since I started walking a lot more, I've become much more in love with the city. Capitol Hill and First Hill are full of wonderful old buildings. Most of these buildings insult our present building and zoning codes. They don't have setbacks; they don't have modulation; they're too close to the street. These buildings are now against the law. Yet many of them are better than more recent constructions. You can find scores, perhaps hundreds of examples. Capitol Hill has miles and miles of wonderful alleys with garages directly on the alley line. That's now against the law. The Loveless Building, the Anhalt buildings are against the law. Now what kind of sense is that?

FB: You couldn't do my office or your office today because the new energy code is de-



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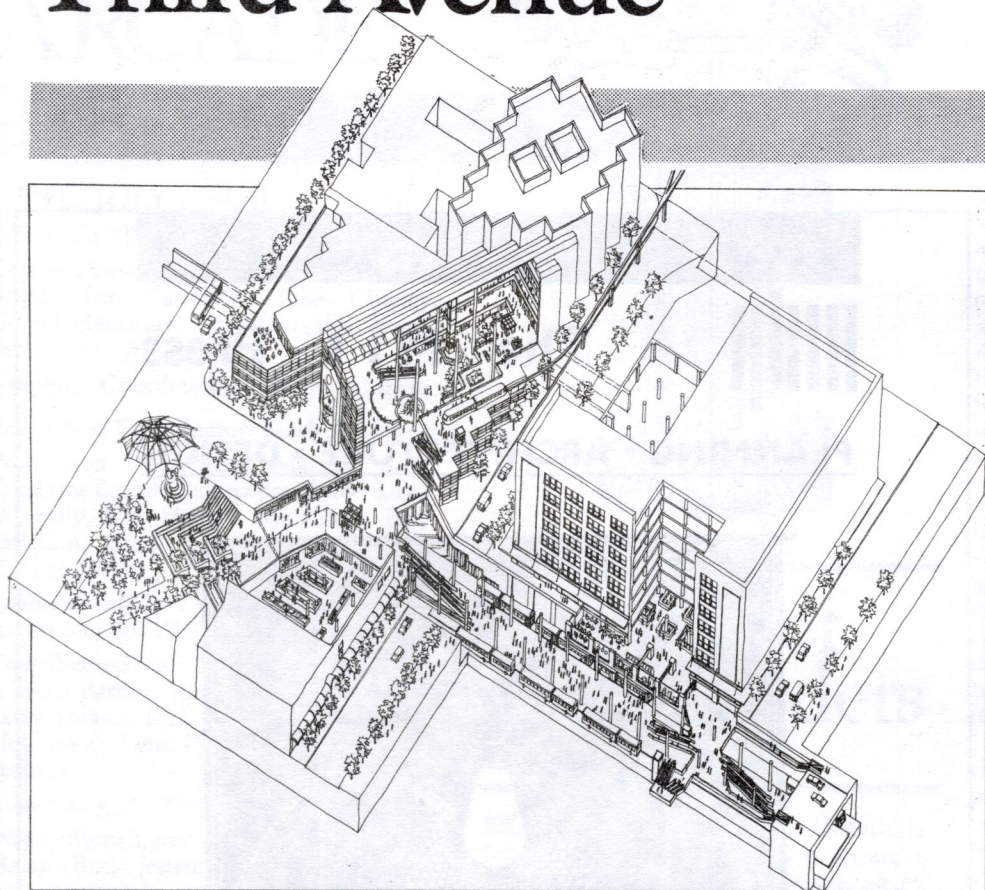
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Third Avenue



MAKERS architects' vision of the Westlake transit station with Nordstrom at left, Frederick's at right, proposed Rouse project at top, uses METRO to interconnect all below ground.

continued from page five . . .

moting uniform storefront design guidelines, designers can soften the impact of new design elements on an existing setting.

On the other hand, a more understated approach to urban design reinforces the city's complexity by introducing new elements which help make sense of a street's activities. Understanding and respecting the street's purpose are the designer's most important tasks. For example, the primary goal of a shopping street is to attract and lead customers to stores. A good project provides a setting that allows this to happen. An example is a streetscape design project for Seattle's Broadway Business District. Two non-design features were most important: the small retail shop setting of the street, and the street's use as a promenade. The project's design elements, such as new sidewalk paving, artwork (in this case, inlaid bronze dance steps), and a colorful storefront tile band, were used to help support the district's basic role as an active retail and social area which did not need redefinition.

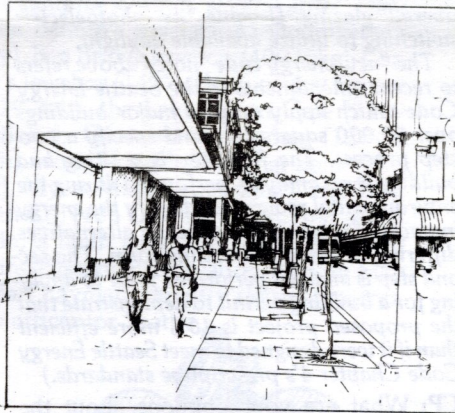
The same philosophy can be applied to a transit mall and street improvements proj-

ect. In an early design concept for the METRO bus tunnel station, the station was viewed not only as a transit facility but as a public improvement which should provide additional organizational definition within a complex urban setting. Users of an underground transit system need to identify each station with its location and surrounding surface activities. For example, at the Westlake station the rider should know that this is the city's retail core and have some expectations or feeling what to find on the street above. In this sense, the station should be considered an integral element of the street. The design concept incorporates as much natural light and visual contact with the outside as possible, as well as reproducing familiar street level features within the station to promote ready identity. Storefronts could be reconstructed at the mezzanine level in complete authenticity, including display windows, entries, and canopies, giving the transit rider a comfortable sense of location within the city.

A change from the traditional high visibility approach that has characterized transit improvements elsewhere is needed on

Third Avenue. A well-designed Third Avenue could be a blend of ordinary street materials used in new ways; colors selected to enhance, not stand out from, the street or adjacent architecture; transit hardware which can be either functional art or unique signature announcements of the METRO facilities below (these could include station entries, exhausts and gratings, or sidewalk skylights); landscape plantings which are selected to emphasize a season or unique color; or even art-inspired seasonal decorations. The best way to create a quality product and an exciting solution is to base the design interpretation on Third Avenue's existing setting and historic qualities. Typical of this approach should be the following items:

1. Improvements which enhance the street as a valuable downtown retail/commercial feature — not just as a transit corridor.
2. Underground stations and surface improvements which are integral parts and support adjacent activities. To the extent possible, the two should be blended together so that the station's internal image is related to the street above.
3. Plans for streets and stations which incorporate public amenities and the arts as integral components of their design. It is not sufficient to install amenities and artwork after the project is designed. The artist should also be a working member of the final project design team.
4. Design references to the important historic structures along Third Avenue. Accommodate these familiar images as impor-



Near 5th and Pine in the retail core, low-key street improvements establish the street's character.



Broadway LID project results: A street for walking and shopping, enhanced but not altered from the original.

tant qualities in the surface street's planning. For example, the Seattle Tower is Seattle's best 1920s office tower; make it one of the street's landmarks.

5. A final design which will grow and evolve in richness over time. Seasonal plantings, conceptual art themes, and unique or signature station entries (e.g., the entries to the original Paris Metro) are simple ways to add an evolving richness to the street.

Designers have studied Seattle's successful projects and found the "Seattle style of urban design" to be different from that of other cities. Reinforcement of this concept will eventually make our city an even more unique and special place to live. Third Avenue's best chance yet to have its own identity is in its redevelopment as a transit mall. It may succeed if its designers work in the spirit of creating a holistic project, one which will become part of the greater urban complex that is downtown Seattle, and redesign Third Avenue not just as a transit facility, but as a basic urban public improvement.

Gerald Hansmire

Gerald Hansmire is a Seattle architect and principal of the architecture, planning, and urban design firm, Makers, which prepared a concept design for the proposed Westlake transit tunnel station.

Sketches provided by MAKERS.

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