Making the Portland Way of Planning: The Structural Power of Language. Stories from Community Planning, 1969-2001

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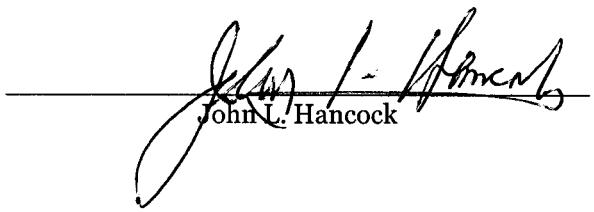

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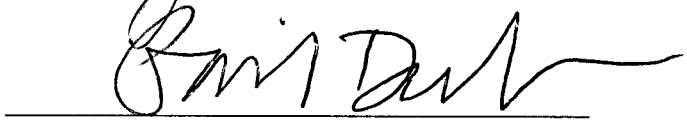

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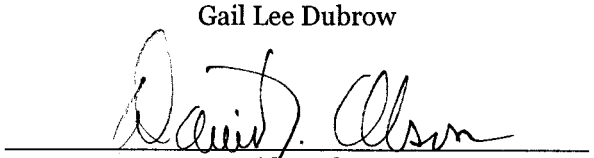

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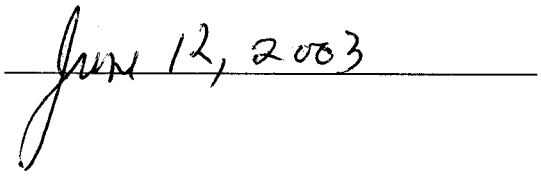

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Abstract

Making the Portland Way of Planning:
The Structural Power of Language.
Stories from Community Planning, 1969-2001

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Portland, Oregon has attracted continuing attention for its achievements in planning, urban design, and growth management, and for its participatory approach to this work. They have stopped freeways, rebuilt their downtown, resurrected neighborhoods, built public transit, designed urban villages, and drawn urban growth boundaries. More than that, over the course of more than three decades they have built an extensive and powerful structure of planning for neighborhoods, downtown, the city, and the metropolitan region. This dissertation examines in detail two episodes in this process – the Northwest District Plan (1969-1977) and the Southwest Community Plan (1994-2001) – as a means of demonstrating how this structure is actually the cultural product of the concerted mobilization of meaning through the use of language in planning, organizing, democratizing and institutionalizing these practices. To suggest that language has structural power is to recast the arguments about the character and status of ostensible structural determinants of action.

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Preface

In the Fall of 1988, I entered the Master of Urban Planning program at the University of Buffalo and took an introductory course in planning methods from an instructor named Beverly McLean, late of the doctoral program in regional science at Portland State University. She told a story of Portland's Central City Plan and how the process had been run by a citizen steering committee, not the professional planners in city hall. That is, the citizen committee was *in charge*, not acting as an appendage of the planning bureaucracy. That, I thought, was incredible. I had never heard of such a thing. And, as I learned more about planning in Portland, I became deadly envious of what they had done there.

In planning, development, urban design, and planning process, Portland was everything my hometown was not. Buffalo could supply all the case studies for a book entitled *Great Planning Disasters* if Peter Hall hadn't already taken the name. We tore up a beautiful Olmsted Parkway to build an expressway to the suburbs. We tore down a priceless Frank Lloyd Wright office building. We butchered our L'Enfant-inspired downtown radial-grid street pattern. We built a three billion dollar university campus in a swamp in the suburbs. We built a truncated light rail line that was at grade where it should have been underground, underground where it should have been overhead, and has yet to reached the destination for which it was originally planned – that same university campus. All our efforts to reverse the decline of downtown and neighborhoods had come up short. During much of this history, the planning process in Buffalo with regard to the public might easily have been characterized as authoritarian.

Meanwhile, Portland had become something of a legend in both planning and participation. Portlanders took out an urban expressway and replaced it with a riverfront park. They stopped another expressway to the suburbs and used the money to build light rail transit instead. They implemented their now-celebrated 1972 Downtown Plan, rationalizing transit service, capping parking capacity, concentrating jobs, improving the pedestrian environment, and ultimately keeping the core as the preeminent place in the region. They tore down a parking garage and built Pioneer Courthouse Square, one of America's most compelling public spaces. They rebuilt their close-in neighborhoods and institutionalized citizen participation at the neighborhood level, as well as throughout the planning process. More recently, Portland and Metro, the regional government, have worked together to forge a powerful program to limit sprawl and channel growth toward transit corridors and dense urban centers. Portland even did a pretty good job with Urban Renewal in the previous era. Unlike Buffalo, where land acquired and

cleared was left vacant for decades, Portland actually built things, offices and apartments that are still in use today.

Surely, it would be possible to construct a more subtle comparison of the two cities, finding some successes in Buffalo, casting a more critical eye on Portland. But the contrast would remain. One city has been very successful while another one has struggled to do something right. Which left me with the question, "why?" What was it about Portland that made for success? What was it about Buffalo that led to so many failures?

Pursuing this question led me on a long personal journey, as well as an intellectual one. In the beginning, there were some who suggested the answer to the question "why Portland?" (and the obverse, "why not Buffalo?") was fairly obvious. Portland had a homogeneous population, mostly white and middle class with all the attendant skills and advantages thereof. Buffalo was poor, and filled with quarreling ethnic and racial groups. Portland had a robust economy. Buffalo was the essence of an unreconstructed rust belt city. (It is true that Portland has a robust economy today, but it was not so true at the beginning of the period I study here). Portland was a "reform" city with squeaky clean politics. Buffalo was an old-style machine city where the patronage-powered party organization stayed intact longer than most other places. Buffalo was East, Portland was West.

All of these things were true, in general. But being true was not the same as providing a satisfying explanation. Such answers seemed to me to be too simplistic and – to use a word and a concept I was then still searching for – too deterministic. The mainstream political science explanations of these events seemed rooted in a metaphor of society as a kind of machine, a specific set of structures, and of laws by which the machine operates. From this perspective, observers examined the results of urban political processes after the fact and then discussed them *as if* they were predicting them. Having seen how things turned out, the political scientist described them as if they were always inevitable. Historical outcomes, in this view, were produced by social structures. Wasn't it possible, I asked, that the divergent histories of these two places also had something to do with the choices people made, or the commitments they maintained?

One of the problems with great urban success stories – and this goes, too, for the "legend" of Portland – is that what might really be instructive about case studies gets washed out in the retelling. All of the details of the inevitable conflict, frustration, delay and general messiness of planning in the public realm seem to wind up on the cutting room floor, so to speak. The participants don't want to talk about it. It's not flattering. Or they have forgotten about it. Memory is like that. Even outside observers seem to want to tell only of the triumph and not of the travail. With each retelling, the story only gets smoother, shinier. At the end, what's left is only a story of the patently insightful, creative, and courageous decisions of successful people. What lesson is there in this for a person from Buffalo? Is it that Portland has succeeded where we

have failed simply because they are smarter, wiser, more far-sighted, and just plain better than we are? What good is that?

I have since learned, through my research into Portland's 1988 Central City Plan, as well as the two case studies on which this dissertation focuses, that there has been plenty of conflict, frustration, delay and messiness in the stories of planning in Portland. There has even been some nastiness, at least by the tender standards of Northwest civic etiquette. At the very least, it has required an enormous investment of time and energy for Portland to plan in a public and democratic way. My perspective, then, is of the "warts and all" variety, like an Avedon portrait. Ironically, this makes what Portland has achieved even more admirable. More than that, it makes how they have done it more comprehensible. They got their city the old fashioned way: they *earned* it. They imagined a city, gave that vision a vocabulary and talked about it, built support for the vision in politics, made the vision real and tangible through the practices of citizens and professionals, institutionalized the vision in structures of government, and built it in the landscape.

This understanding of the purposiveness of citizens, politicians and planners in Portland is at the core of the theoretical perspective I adopt in this dissertation. But it is not unopposed by a similar appreciation of the role of social and political structures in the process of the development of a city. Portlanders got the city they wanted because they worked for it (of course, cities never being finished, they still haven't quite got it). However, their opportunities to work were always shaped by what came before, the structures of law and administration, political formations, organizational constellations, social norms and values, as well as the physical place itself. Those structures, in turn, were fundamentally changed by what they did. It has been said that "we make our houses and then they make us." It is a useful aphorism, but one that does not quite capture the continuous and recursive quality of social action and structural change. It just keeps on going.

The idea that this process could best be understood in terms of a concept of political culture began for me as mere intuition. It started with an hypothesis that Portland succeeded because of the character of its political culture. There were in Portland, I thought, ideas, attitudes, ways of doing things, and institutional structures that worked better toward the creation of the good city. I still think so. The more fundamental lesson, however, is about culture in general. Culture constitutes a realm in which we exert and undergo power, and in which the dialectical processes of structure and agency are carried on continuously. The specific "contents" of a particular political culture are important, but understanding cultural processes is even more so.

There are, inevitably, some lessons in the Portland case for practitioners elsewhere. We can always learn something from the successes and failures of others. Yet we remain embedded in our own contexts and we have to figure out on our own exactly how to adapt and apply lessons from elsewhere. Practical wisdom doesn't always travel well, especially in its original packing

material. Perhaps the most useful lesson here is also the grandest one: simply that what we do as citizens and planners to make our cities better really matters. We act within powerful structural constraints, that is certain. But we have the power to speak and act, and those actions help shape the character and quality of our cities.

There is such a thing, I think, as heroism in civic life. I have seen it. Not the heroism of pulling children from burning buildings or facing enemy bullets. Rather, it is the heroism of citizens and professionals, committed to some idea of the common good, devoted to values that extend well beyond their immediate personal interests. Such heroism is expressed not through exposure to physical danger but through great patience, perseverance, fidelity to principle, willingness to learn and listen, and ultimately, the courage to speak.

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Finally, I dedicate this work to the memory of my mother, Margaret F. Hovey, who taught me how to read starting as soon as I could hold a piece of chalk, and who never stopped helping me, and to the memory of Angela Oleske Hovey, my wife, who encouraged me to follow my urge to change careers, and who supported me all the way, through good times and bad.

Dedication

Heroes

Heroes are not giant statues framed against a red sky.
They are people who say: This is my community,
and it's my responsibility to make it better.
Interweave all these communities,
and you really have an America that is back on its feet,
a comfortable nation to live in again.

Tom McCall
Governor of Oregon
1967-1975

Allegiances

It is time for all the heroes to go home
if they have any, time for all of us common ones
to locate ourselves by the real things
we live by.

Far to the north, or indeed in any direction,
strange mountains and creatures have always lurked —
elves, goblins, trolls, and spiders — we
encounter them in dread and wonder,

But once we have tasted far streams, touched the gold,
found some limit beyond the waterfall,
a season changes, and we come back, changed
but safe, quiet, grateful.

Suppose an insane wind holds all the hills
while strange beliefs whine at the traveler's ears,
we ordinary beings can cling to the earth and love
where we are, sturdy for common things.

William Stafford

Chapter 1. Introduction

The moral of this story is that what citizens do and say in community planning processes matters. Moreover, it is only by looking at the painstaking day-to-day work of citizen participation in historical perspective, as well as up close and culturally, that we can clearly see that this is so. This is why I begin with the story itself.

In December 1969, members of the recently-formed Northwest District Association appeared before the Portland City Council to argue against a proposed urban renewal district in their neighborhood and to demand support for a grass-roots planning process of their own. The urban renewal plan, by then already reduced in scope, would have obliterated all or part of twenty blocks in the neighborhood, and replaced the old homes and apartments with a new suburban-style campus for The Good Samaritan Hospital.

After a debate that consumed most of the day, the neighborhood association prevailed. It went on to create its own plan for the neighborhood, one which aimed at protecting homes from continuing displacement by factories, warehouses, offices and parking lots. The plan also sought to preserve the distinctly urban mixture of homes, apartments, small shops, small businesses and neighborhood streets which residents saw as valuable in Northwest. In those same years, the residents also rallied to defeat a plan to build another link in the urban Interstate Highway system along a route which would have sliced another dozen blocks from their neighborhood. In the ensuing years, they worked to build their neighborhood association, to oversee the implementation of their plan, and to enforce it day by day.

This uprising in Northwest District was part of what planning historian Carl Abbott called Portland's "neighborhood revolution." During those crucial years, residents of Portland's older, inner-ring neighborhoods asserted the value of their homes, streets, and little shopping districts in the face of the prevailing orthodoxy in planning, which held that these environments were obsolete, rife with dangerously conflicting land uses, and in need of rationalization and wholesale renewal. The people living there didn't see it that way. What conventional planners condemned as chaotic, the residents celebrated as convenient, interesting, secure, affordable, sociable.

On top of that, residents were no longer willing to leave neighborhood planning to professional planners and their technical-rational methods as they had during the urban renewal era. They demanded that planning become a more democratic practice to which they, at least,

would be admitted. In fact, Mayor Neil Goldschmidt declared that there had never been any neighborhood planning in Portland up until then because neighborhood residents hadn't been involved and one couldn't have neighborhood planning without them.

The "neighborhood revolution" was part of a broader movement in Portland to save the central city, starting with downtown. Its partisans sought to define a new vision of urban living different from the prevailing American suburban model; to control the urban development process at the metropolitan scale toward achieving that vision; and to do it all democratically. The beginning of this movement is usually pegged to two watershed political events: the election of Goldschmidt, first as City Commissioner in 1970, then as Mayor in 1972, and the passage in 1973 of Senate Bill 100, which created a state-wide system of land use planning in Oregon. Indeed, passage of mandatory land use planning was a singular moment in the history of urban development in the state. Goldschmidt, likewise, was the indispensable avatar of both progressive planning and democratic participation in Portland. But to focus on individual events or political figures, alone, is to miss the breadth, depth, and complexity of what has been a great social and political movement.

Across this three-decade span, Portland rejected the old orthodoxies of urban renewal and highway building; implemented a landmark downtown plan that reinforced the city center as the center of the region; built great public spaces and regulated building design toward enhancing the pedestrian environment; replaced an urban freeway with a riverfront park; declined to build another freeway to the suburbs; reorganized and expanded its system of mass transit; experimented with neighborhood planning, then institutionalized it; fostered neighborhood participation in planning and public administration and then formalized it in the Office of Neighborhood Associations; completed a city-wide comprehensive plan then proceeded to update it; formed a metropolitan government and then produced urban policies and plans at this new governmental scale; developed widespread knowledge and awareness of urban planning issues among its citizens and capacity among its professionals; and, as a community, looked to the future development of their city with courage, clarity and ambition that has rarely been matched and never exceeded in the United States.

Surely, this impressive list of achievements cannot be attributed solely, or even mainly, to the role of any given individual or landmark law. It was much more involved than that. Even listing Portland's achievements in this headline fashion risks perpetuating the misunderstanding about how its citizens have done what they have done. It is important to remember that behind each item on this list is a dense social experience of meetings, debates, controversies, reports, delays, memoranda, hearings, press coverage, committee decisions, Planning Commission

decisions, City Council decisions, draft plans, final plans, and implementing legislation, and on and on. Each episode has been a matter of real struggle. The results have never been foreordained. In each case, the matter has been the product of messy collective effort involving hundreds, sometimes thousands, of people – professional planners, politicians, activists, and citizens – and consuming years. The Northwest District Comprehensive Plan, from the time the City Council approved the initial planning to the time they approved the final implementing ordinances, took nearly nine years. Portlanders have done what they've done, and a lot of it has been very good, but it hasn't been easy.

It is also crucial to understand that along with its physical planning achievements – a rejuvenated downtown, a downtown bus mall and 30-some miles of light rail, new downtown housing, redeveloped inner neighborhoods, new parks, public art, and more – Portland has created a whole new social structure in support of these policies. This structure encompasses not only powerful planning bureaucracies at the municipal, metropolitan, and state levels, a prodigious body of policy and law, and a whole system of official decision-making embedded in government, but also an array of political organizations dedicated to "livability," a fine-grained structure of neighborhood associations and interest groups, professional cadres in the private sector, academia, and media, and a public ideology of planning animated by a very specific language and set of values. Acts of design and building, and policies, do not exist on their own. They are the product of social formations, in this case, the regime of Portland planning.

This regime started as an insurgency. It began by challenging, overturning, or overtaking the organizations, people, and ideas which had dominated planning in Portland before. In the years that followed, through dozens of individual episodes, the proponents of this regime elaborated their own values, language, practices and organizations until today when their ideas and policies are firmly embedded in local politics, bureaucracy, law, and ideology. But, as a familiar saying has it: "what goes around, comes around." The regime of planning is more powerful than ever before, but it has also become somewhat rigid, and so has begun to attract its own insurgents.

In October 1996 the Portland Bureau of Planning staff released a "discussion draft map" of proposed rezonings for the Southwest Community Plan. Although the proposal was for the status quo for many neighborhoods in that hilly, mainly affluent, sometimes bucolic district, substantial areas of several neighborhoods were proposed for significant upzoning. In neighborhoods like Multnomah, blocks and blocks of detached single family housing on five- and ten-thousand square foot lots were proposed to be rezoned for attached single family housing – rowhouses. The "public workshop" at Wilson High School called by planners that Fall to receive

comment on the proposal degenerated into a raucous, angry confrontation between residents and city officials.

The proposal was a fair rendering of the adopted planning policies and programs of the Portland and Metro governments. It provided for increased housing density to accommodate residential growth within the Urban Growth Boundary and within the central city. It specified the development of high-density transit-oriented "Town Centers" and "Main Streets" in accordance with Portland's "New Urbanist" planning agenda. It also met the demand in state-wide policy that "transit supportive" housing densities be encouraged within transit corridors. Nevertheless, the proposal was anathema to many Southwest residents. They didn't want density and vitality. They wanted to keep their piney rural-seeming suburban enclave the way it was.

The proposal embodied in the "discussion draft map" was not just a faithful reflection of collected policy. In several ways, it could be traced all the way back to the Northwest District plan of the 1970s. The basic thrust of regime policies – for density, diversity, transit – were first established in places like Northwest. But there were personal connections, too. Vera Katz was a fledgling activist in Northwest in the early 1970s. In 1997, during the controversy over the Southwest Community Plan, Katz went as Mayor to visit with residents who had rallied to oppose the plan. She probably thought she was being positive and complimentary when she told the residents that Capitol Highway in Multnomah Village had the potential to be every bit as good as NW 23rd Avenue had become in Northwest. The problem was, the people there liked Multnomah Village pretty much the way it was and didn't want their neighborhood to become anything like Northwest Portland. The process had come full circle. Insurgents like Katz had become the establishment, and now the new establishment was faced with its own insurgents.

By the time the discussion draft map was published in the fall of 1996, some Southwest residents had been working for nearly a year and a half on more than a dozen individual neighborhood plans. Although citizen participants were aware that the new community plan would need to accommodate new growth in housing according to City-wide policy, they responded grudgingly, and their work reflected a vision different from that of the planners. When the draft map hit the streets, not only did residents find it unacceptable, they found it unrecognizable. Their little neighborhood plans had been ignored. City, Metro and state policy, instead, had been imprinted on the draft. The sense of betrayal and the atmosphere of suspicion these events created lasted throughout the planning process and persisted despite important concessions by the City.

By the time the Southwest Community Plan was completed in November 2001, it qualified as the longest, most contentious, and most expensive plan ever developed in Portland.

The activists who were involved, in many cases, had become disillusioned with planning and participation in Portland. Given the time and energy they contributed, they earned their disillusionment (although many did not retire). Nevertheless, it was clear that they forced consideration of a different plan than would otherwise have been created. More than that, they made their own mark on the process and structure of community planning in Portland. The Portland way of planning persists, but it is different for their efforts.

The point, again, is that what citizens do – and especially what they say – in participatory planning processes really does matter. The participants may not think it does. They may think they have wasted their time, but they would be wrong. Political and social theorists, likewise, may concentrate on describing the structural constraints to democratic action, and students of citizen participation in planning may work to debunk the claims made on its behalf. But those observers are, at the root of the matter, wrong, too. What citizens do and say matters even in the face of these obstacles, and my intention is to show how.

One fundamental problem in understanding change – in this case the evolution of the social structure of community planning in Portland – is that all of the action, all of the things that people say and do, occur at a kind of microscopic scale, while the changes are really only visible when we view the scene from a distance. The work goes on day by day, but the results can only be seen clearly across decades. Citizens who have given their all to make a difference come away believing they have wasted their time, especially if they have lost the most recent battle. Until they look at the whole scene on an historical scale, they can't see what has changed. It's a bit like the teacher visited years later by a former student. The teacher recalls the student as a constant trial whose prospects as an adult were clouded, at best. The former student returns, successful in life, to identify the teacher as the one who made all the difference. Somehow, we need to find a way to connect the fine-grained, daily experience of participatory planning with the historical big picture. Maybe that way, participants can comprehend the part they have played in creating change.

My answer here was to tailor historical method and selection of case studies in a way that would allow me to make connections between the tedious, day-by-day work of citizen activists, planners and politicians and the broader long-term changes they help bring about. The result here is two in-depth case studies – the Northwest District plan and the Southwest Community Plan – connected by a broader, thinner treatment of the creation of the whole regime of planning in Portland. I will not claim to make direct one-to-one causal relationships between what happened at the neighborhood level and what happened at the city and regional level. The situation is more complex than that. But I will attempt to make clear how events at one scale influenced and were influenced by events at the other.

My selection of cases was variously calculated, intuitive, and serendipitous. I knew that in order to illustrate the full sweep of the history of the regime of planning in Portland I needed one case near the beginning of the period, and one case near the end. Several other potential cases fit these criteria. Neighborhood plans undertaken in the early 1970s in Irvington, Buckman, and Corbett-Terwilliger-Lair Hill were also important. But the story of Northwest, in the recollection of some of the key participants, seemed to have a particularly legendary quality, and many more connections to people and policies that were to have continuing importance in the city at-large.

Likewise, I might have chosen to focus on other neighborhood plans of the mid-1990s, those in Sellwood-Moreland or Hillsdale, for example. The planners, and some citizens, considered these plans to be more successful and less contentious than the one in Southwest. I admit I was attracted by the conflict between regime and neighborhood evident in the SWCP process. But here, serendipity also played a role in the choice. One night in the Fall of 1997, I stopped into a meeting of the Portland Planning Commission who were receiving presentations from Southwest neighborhood associations. The commission had asked the neighborhood associations to explain the rationales behind their recommendations for neighborhood zoning. The fact that neighborhood associations had been invited to make recommendations on zoning was remarkable in itself. But when the Multnomah Neighborhood Association unrolled its presentation, complete with a detailed narrative about systematic participation, digitized displays of citizen research, powerful policy language and evocative poetry, I was hooked. Their work was sophisticated and thoughtful beyond anything I ever imagined a neighborhood association could produce. Members of the neighborhood association would boast that they had "outplanned the planners," and perhaps they did. I could not turn away from writing that story.

Another challenge I faced was in thinking about power – what it is, who has it, how it works, how we use it. Here, again, popular and academic views converge. Many citizen activists see power as concentrated in other hands to be wielded in predictable ways for the benefit of dominant interests. Many academics, likewise, theorize power as concentrated narrowly and being used on behalf of capital, class or corporate formations, bureaucratic prerogatives, and so forth. Taken without dilution, these views make it a wonder any citizen ever chooses to get involved in a public planning process. Why bother? The fix is in. I won't try to argue that political and social power is not concentrated along distinct lines. But I will argue that the situation is more open and more fluid than "power structure" arguments would have us think.

My answer here has been to theorize power as part of a continuous cultural process of social production, reproduction and transformation animated by the meanings we give to things through language but also produced through practices, organizations, institutions and the

physical world we create. I will say much more about this in Chapter 2 but I want to present the central concept here. Although they appear fixed from the perspective of the present moment, social structures are continually under renovation. Sometimes elements are replicated, sometimes adapted, sometimes replaced, but change continues. These changes – however much we understand them in terms of theoretical abstractions for broad social forces – are caused by what people do. In short, people have agency. Moreover, we all possess some power to participate actively in this process of change, although admittedly that power is constrained in many ways, unevenly distributed, for sure, and often misunderstood by those who might wield it. Nevertheless, it is there for us to use. It flows through specific practices, including neighborhood planning, and through organizations and institutions. But it's most elemental form is in the lamination of meaning and language.

We are used to thinking of language as something insubstantial and transitory, as expressed in common phrases like, "talk is cheap," or "actions speak louder than words." Yet, in fact, it is the meaning produced through language that enforces a system of prescriptions and prohibitions for our actions. Words are powerful. The childhood rhyme holds that "names can never hurt me" but it is, indeed, the process of naming that leads to "sticks and stones." In the realm of neighborhood planning, naming houses as "dilapidated" and "obsolete" versus naming them "sound" or "affordable" can lead to two different sets of actions and results. The power of language flows throughout the practices and organizations of the regime of planning in Portland, and it directs and is reinforced by what gets built on the ground. Likewise, it is the power of language that has been wielded against the regime, meaning against meaning, language challenging language, undermining the familiar forms that lead to predictable actions, and bringing about new and different actions.

The story of Portland planning, in general, and the episodes I focus on here, as with any cultural history, has been a story of building. It has been a story of tearing down and rebuilding, of renovation, addition, adaptation, and alteration. This is the meaning of a discarded working title for this dissertation: "constructing democracy, building the city." The visible practices of city planning, design, building and occupancy go hand in hand with the less visible work of producing the social structure capable of creating, inhabiting and sustaining the physical space of the city. Both processes begin with what is there but end up changing it and beginning again. Both processes go forward step by step across a landscape which is changed by each step. And, while both processes involve the production of practices, organizations, and physical space, they are each powered by meaning and language. In fact, they are not two separate processes at all, but one. Speaking the city and making the city are constituent parts of the same action. Portland's

regime of planning and the city itself are the product of this conscious, intentional work. The stories which follow will show it.

Chapter 2. "Language and Power," will discuss in much greater detail the connections I draw among concepts of language, power, culture, and structure and agency as a framework for understanding change in Portland. Chapter 3, "Politics and the City," will treat well-established ideas about political control of the urban development process in terms of the concepts developed in the previous chapter. Chapter 4, "Neighborhoods, Planning, and Participation," will review the familiar literature on those topics, also in terms of the political cultural production model I propose in Chapter 2.

Chapters 5 through 8 will detail how citizens of Northwest Portland went about their work. If all they had done was to create a plan, and make sure of its adoption and implementation, they would have done a great deal. The process took place over the better part of a decade during a period of significant change in the political and administrative context of planning in both Portland and Oregon. Seeing it through was a triumph of stamina as well as skill. But, looking at the story as a process of cultural construction, they did much more.

They began (Chapter 5, "Northwest District – Site of Origin") with only an appreciation of the experience of living in the neighborhood and hopes for its improvement. They created or adapted the language to express new or recovered values about the desirability of urban living, about the worth of their homes and streets. They produced a critique of the prevailing ideology of planning about order, efficiency, segregation of uses and unified treatments and substituted in its place their own theories about urban diversity, vitality, interaction and incremental change. In so doing they challenged head-on the notion that neighborhoods like Northwest were obsolete and therefore doomed. They forged new policies of planning and design and translated them into legal instruments of zoning and regulation; mounted new practices of participation and deliberation; and created new organizations to give the expression of their values continuity over time.

It is not always easy to draw a straight line between what it says in a plan and what happens in the place. Some of the participants think that what happened in Northwest might have happened even if there had never been a plan. Nevertheless, they saved their neighborhood, one way or the other. Some today would say they saved it too well because Northwest has become "gentrified." In any case, most of the goals of the plan have been achieved. The commercial strips are strong. Old housing has been saved and new housing built. The neighborhood is reasonably protected from through-traffic. The residential edges of the neighborhood have been firmed up and industrial uses kept at bay. But Northwest is no longer a place where people of marginal

means can easily afford to live.

In Chapter 6, "Building the Neighborhood Association," we see how the activists of Northwest organized a polity at the neighborhood level, defined its point of view, gave it institutional structure, and put a physical mark on the neighborhood. But they also contributed in a variety of ways to the work of constructing the regime of planning at the city-wide level. The Northwest District plan, itself, forced the Bureau of Planning, the Planning Commission and the City Council to consider how neighborhood plans would be dealt with, incorporated into city law and policy, as detailed in Chapter 8, "Adopting the Plan." Specific regulatory concepts like commercial storefront zoning were created and tested in the Northwest plan. And, as we see in Chapter 7, "The Interstate Highway in Northwest," the activists of Northwest both drew from and contributed to the city-wide skepticism about new urban highways, which was already on its way from notion to policy to dogma.

The Northwest District Association helped establish the institutional status of neighborhood associations in general, not only through their resolute dealings with the City, Good Samaritan Hospital, and others, but also through the work of individual Northwest activists such as Ogden Beeman, who chaired a committee on "district planning organizations," and Mary Pedersen, who was the first director of the Office of Neighborhood Associations. George "Bing" Sheldon, an architect and past-president of NWDA, took his perspectives on neighborhoods and urban design to the Planning Commission. Margaret Strachan, NWDA staff in the 1970s, went on to serve on the City Council and sponsored the Central City Plan process. Rick Michaelson, who worked for NWDA and for Strachan in the late 1970s and early 1980s, now serves on the Planning Commission and played a major role in the Southwest Community Plan process. Two other Northwest activists, J.E. "Bud" Clark, founder of the community newspaper *The Neighbor*, and Vera Katz, a long-time state legislator, each went on to serve as Mayor of Portland (Clark, 1985-1993; Katz, 1993-2005) and continued to help elaborate Portland's broad civic commitment to planning and participation. Urban social movements, after all, are made up of particular individuals whose personal commitments contribute to the continuity of those movements.

In Chapter 9, "City, Region, State," I attempt to show how citizens, politicians, and professional planners transformed planning values, language, process, policy, implementation devices, administrative organization, political supports and the whole social structure of planning across a range of political and administrative scales along the way to changing the face of the city itself. City-making in Portland, Metro, and Oregon has been the object of this regime for fully three decades now. Like the city itself, the regime has been constructed piece by piece, block by block, and the history of this construction is dense with meaning and action.

The values underlying the regime are powerful but not without tensions and contradictions among them. Portlanders have expressed both a love of the landscape and natural environment as well as an appreciation for urban settings. They have honored planning as a good way to make collective decisions democratically, but shown skepticism about professional planning expertise and ideology. Indeed, whatever reigned as the current planning orthodoxy – in the 1960s or the 1990s – was likely to draw a sharp critique from some quarter. They have demanded that planning processes be democratic but they have also supported the creation of structures which give great power to bureaucrats to enforce law, policy and regulation. One of the key points of tension in these stories has been between past participation – manifest in established policy – and current participation.

Portlanders have also created a new vocabulary to express these values. In the Northwest District plan process "diversity" became a kind of all-purpose term to describe the mixture of people, activities, and land-uses they wanted in an urban neighborhood. Phrases like "preserving the canopy of trees" became a way for residents in Southwest to mobilize the values they placed in suburban density and scale, and the quasi-rural quality of places. More broadly, talk of "consensus" or "livability" or "walkability" gave power to desires for values concerning planning processes, environmental quality, or urban design, respectively. As citizens were able to give their values a name, they became more powerful.

These values and this vocabulary informed, among other things, the structure and protocols of the political and planning process. Oregon had a political culture geared toward deliberative democracy well before the era chronicled here. Under the current regime of planning, however, the expectation has grown that decisions will not be made until everyone has had an opportunity to speak. The creation of citizen committees is routine. Notification procedures are built into the regulatory functions of planning. Neighborhood associations have been incorporated into specific planning processes as well as the ongoing regulatory functions. The legitimacy of decisions is seen as dependent on adherence to these process protocols, and the protocols themselves are subject to a rigorous, continuous critique aimed at further democratization.

The "substantive" side of the regime is policy and its implementation. Across thirty years there has been great continuity in the development and elaboration of land use, planning and urban design policies. From the emergence of the Downtown Plan and Senate Bill 100 the thrust of policy has been to reinforce the city as the center of the region; limit growth on the edges of the metropolis; organize growth around transit infrastructure; reduce the influence of the automobile; design the urban environment for the benefit of pedestrians; preserve historic

architectural resources; and protect the natural environment. Prevailing urban political theory would anticipate policies that favor "exchange values" over "use values." But in the case of Portland, the ensemble of planning policies seems to straddle that theoretical divide. Environmentalists and "quality of life liberals" as well as business interests and, most specifically, builders and developers, have joined together to support policies that have both improved the quality of the environment of daily life and enhanced the value of capital.

These policies have been implemented through an array of specific legal and technical devices which were created, element by element, over a span of years. Portland Metro's urban growth boundary (UGB) is a well-known element but there are many others. The Portland city zoning code, once a simple four category scheme, has been expanded and elaborated repeatedly to accommodate the intentions behind a steady stream of new plans. It now contains guidelines for pedestrian-appropriate urban design; development incentives for specific public amenities such as open space and public art or social needs such as day care and affordable housing; new zoning sub-categories to promote higher residential densities; special provisions for environmentally sensitive areas; new zoning categories to promote mixed use developments; and much more. Each of these innovations has emerged in response to a particular need expressed in specific planning processes. We can trace the emergence of each along a chain of events linking felt need, public rhetoric, policy development, and design of technical implementing devices.

Such development has proceeded in parallel with the creation of new organizations and institutions of deliberation, policy-making, and implementation. A voluntary regional association of governments was transformed over years into a powerful metropolitan entity with an elected council and responsibility for public transit and other basic functions as well as land use planning. A modest, though active, planning bureaucracy at the municipal level has grown in strength, size and savvy over the years as its policy mandate has expanded. An extensive structure of citizen participation, anchored in a system of neighborhood associations and coalitions, has been developed and elaborated over the course of more than three decades.

At the same time, Portlanders have developed a new political infrastructure to support these values, policies, and administrative structures. The process began with a few insurgents and neighborhood activists led by the likes of the young Neil Goldschmidt, Tom Walsh and others. Thirty years later the process has produced a robust and complex regime spanning environmental interests represented by organizations such as 1,000 Friends of Oregon and Coalition for a Livable Future, civic forces in such venues as The City Club of Portland, development interests in the Home Builders Association as well as developers big enough to represent themselves, along with personal and party organizations, and the whole array of organized neighborhood interests. Such

a regime is not without serious internal tensions and contradictions. As I have already noted, the regime has recently drawn new opposition. Nevertheless, it has produced a kind of general consensus about city-making policies that continues to hold sway.

In Chapters 10 through 13 we see how the regime of growth management, higher density, and transit development drew new opposition during creation of the Southwest Community Plan. What is perhaps most interesting is how citizens active in the SWCP process simultaneously resisted the regime and were brought into relationship with it. Sometimes they simply opposed the values, ideas, policies and mechanisms of the regime; sometimes they appropriated and adapted them to their own purposes; sometimes they seemed overwhelmed by the blinding force of the prevailing culture. In any case, no simple conclusion is possible about who is co-opting whom.

When the SWCP process first exploded in the Fall of 1996 it appeared to be a simple citizen revolt against an objectionable policy. What followed, however, was more complicated than that. As Northwest residents had done three decades earlier, Southwest residents worked to express their immanent understanding of the experience of their own neighborhoods in a way that was contrary to prevailing planning ideology. They did so by working out new values, language, practices and organizations. Until the release of the discussion draft map, citizens were willing to abide by the rules of a participatory process designed and managed by the planners (Chapter 10, "Normal Planning"). Afterward, they moved quickly to take greater control of the situation (Chapter 11, "The Neighborhood Strikes Back").

At the most local scale, the Southwest activists re-inhabited the previously dormant neighborhood association structure, filling vacant offices, creating new committees, using existing connections to other neighborhoods and the apparatus of city government, and generally appropriating whatever claim to representative legitimacy the associations could provide. Citizens demanded, and elected officials conceded, a role for neighborhood associations in the technical work of planning. Already a venue for deliberation about intent and policy, neighborhood associations became the mechanisms for gathering, analyzing and reporting the basic data of planning. Citizens took the technical tools of professional planners – most notably zoning – and bent them toward their own ends.

At a broader scale, beyond individual neighborhoods and encompassing all of Southwest, citizens pushed to rewrite the rules and amend the structures of participation in planning (Chapter 12, "Representing Southwest"). When the procedures and structure of the official neighborhood coalition, Southwest Neighborhoods Incorporated (SWNI, pronounced "sweeney"), proved too slow and cumbersome, the activists involved created "the Summit Group" of

neighborhood leaders. They put forward a claim to represent dominant opinion in Southwest and attacked the Citizen Advisory Committee appointed by the City Council as unrepresentative of the community. When deliberations over policy language bogged down, The Summit Group proposed, and the Planning Commission agreed, to create "dialogue groups" to help articulate their differences. After the planning process collapsed altogether, activists who wanted to see the plan completed organized a "task group" and placed it back under the aegis of SWNI. They made whatever organizational and procedural adaptations they deemed necessary to ensure their effective participation in the planning process.

Within these forums, they put forward their own critique of prevailing policy and presented counter proposals. Sometimes they suggested a new vocabulary to express alternative values. In other cases, they used the language and logic of the planning establishment against it and its policies, catching them in seeming self-contradictions or pointing out their failure to live up to their own rhetoric. They engaged the technical debate on reasonably even terms with the professionals. They prosecuted a kind of guerrilla warfare against the city, using every difference between official intent and popular sentiment, every discrepancy between one official statement and another, as a means to attack the credibility and legitimacy of the regime. For participants on both sides – city government and citizen activists – this was not merely a disagreement over policy, but a battle between "us" and "them," between people of good faith and people whose motives were suspect.

The plan was completed, at long last, and at great expense (Chapter 13, "The Two Million Dollar Plan"). Even before its completion, however, it was clear that the process has led to some longer-term changes in the political landscape of Southwest and Portland more generally. The community press in Southwest developed a great deal during the planning process and in close relation to it. *The Southwest Connection* was created by its original owner specifically to provide coverage of local planning and development issues. *The Multnomah Village Post* gained in prominence because of its coverage of the SWCP and related issues. The planning process also stimulated creation of an e-mail discussion list which began as a way for activists to discuss policy and strategy but evolved into a much broader forum for political discussion. Many of the opinions posted on the SWPDX list are systematically and unremittingly critical of regime policies.

The SWCP process has left a further residue of citizen activism. Many key participants maintained their involvement over unusually long periods of time. The "task group" continued – in double-overtime, so to speak – to work toward closure on the plan. Other activists expanded their activities into other fields. One neighborhood association leader mounted a campaign for City Council. Another was elected to a regional watershed management board. Still another has

led a citizen-based effort to plan and create a system of bicycle and pedestrian trails throughout Southwest. Many others remain active in their local neighborhood associations, the Southwest coalition, or in land-use issues at the city-wide scale. Collectively, these folks could not be said to form a counter regime, but the makings for such a formation are already there. They have identified values, created new language, mounted a critique of policy, and developed new organizational practices. But it remains to be seen whether or not they will generate the strength to overturn the regime or extract major concessions from it.

In Chapter 14, "The Meaning of Portland," I redraw the connections between language, practice, organization, institution, and the physical city in producing the Portland way of planning. In example after example, we can see how, "the name," indeed, "is the command." Through a process of creating, appropriating, or challenging key terms in language, all the participants in the planning process generated rhetorical power capable of defining the good and the bad, the necessary and the impossible. Likewise, the work of citizens to create "discursive space" – the openings and opportunities for public talk essential to democratic life – has been persistent. Citizens have developed discrete practices by which to organize the talk of planning and created space for the exertion of their own power. These included processes and strategies of meetings, including some new formats; old and new ways for sharing information and talking with one another, such as the community press and e-mail lists; and the creation and recreation of the neighborhood association as a site for discourse and a platform for exerting power. A tension between conceptions of planning rationality and popular democracy also demonstrates the link between language and structure. Finally, we see in the examination of "city, regime and legend" the range of ways that a particular way of life presents and maintains itself. This includes the physical city as a daily manifestation of planning and development policies of the community, and as a shaper of daily life. It also includes the regime in the sort of sociological sense that Stone originally meant it, but also in terms of the role of rhetoric and ideology in the maintenance of the regime. Part of this is implemented through the propagation of the "legend of Portland." Their own talk about what they have done is a huge part of what keeps the regime in place. But critique of the legend strikes directly at the very foundations of the regime.

I conclude by extracting some lessons learned from Portland, hopefully "portable," for scholars, planning practitioners, and especially for citizens in other communities. If what people do and say matters, it should be possible to specify what they can do to make their impact more significant. Let it be enough for now to paraphrase David Harvey that the humanizing urban experience, long imagined, is not only worth struggling for, but is in some fashion and in the long view, achievable for all our cities.

Figure 1.1 Portland's planning tradition has combined a strong emphasis on quality urban spaces with an insistence on protecting environmental values. Photo by author.

Figure 1.2 Pioneer Courthouse Square is one of America's best public spaces. Once mentioned in the downtown plan, citizens insisted it be created. Photo by the author.

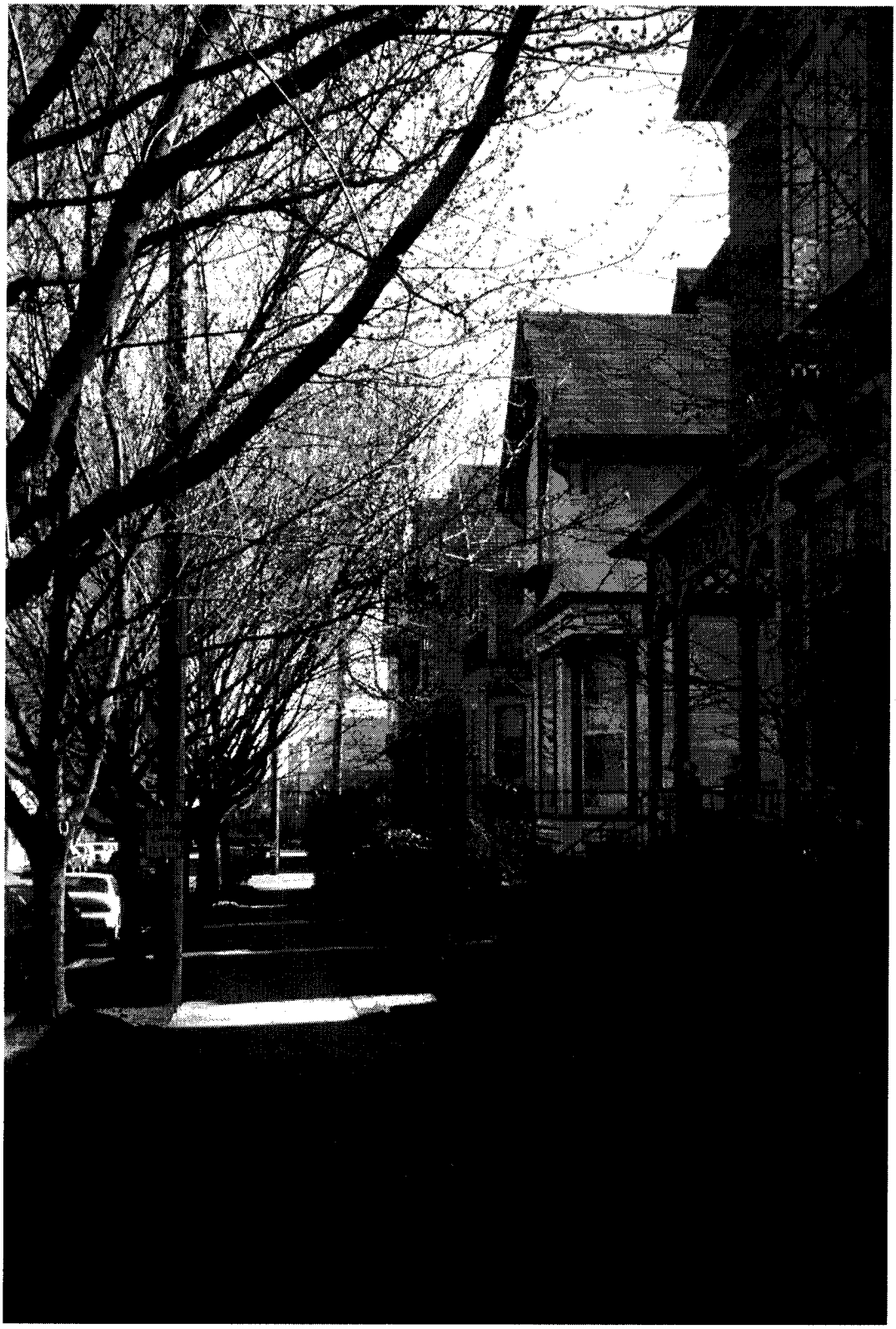

Figure 1.3 Early Northwest District pioneers saw great value in the aging Victorian homes on its quiet streets. Photo by the author.

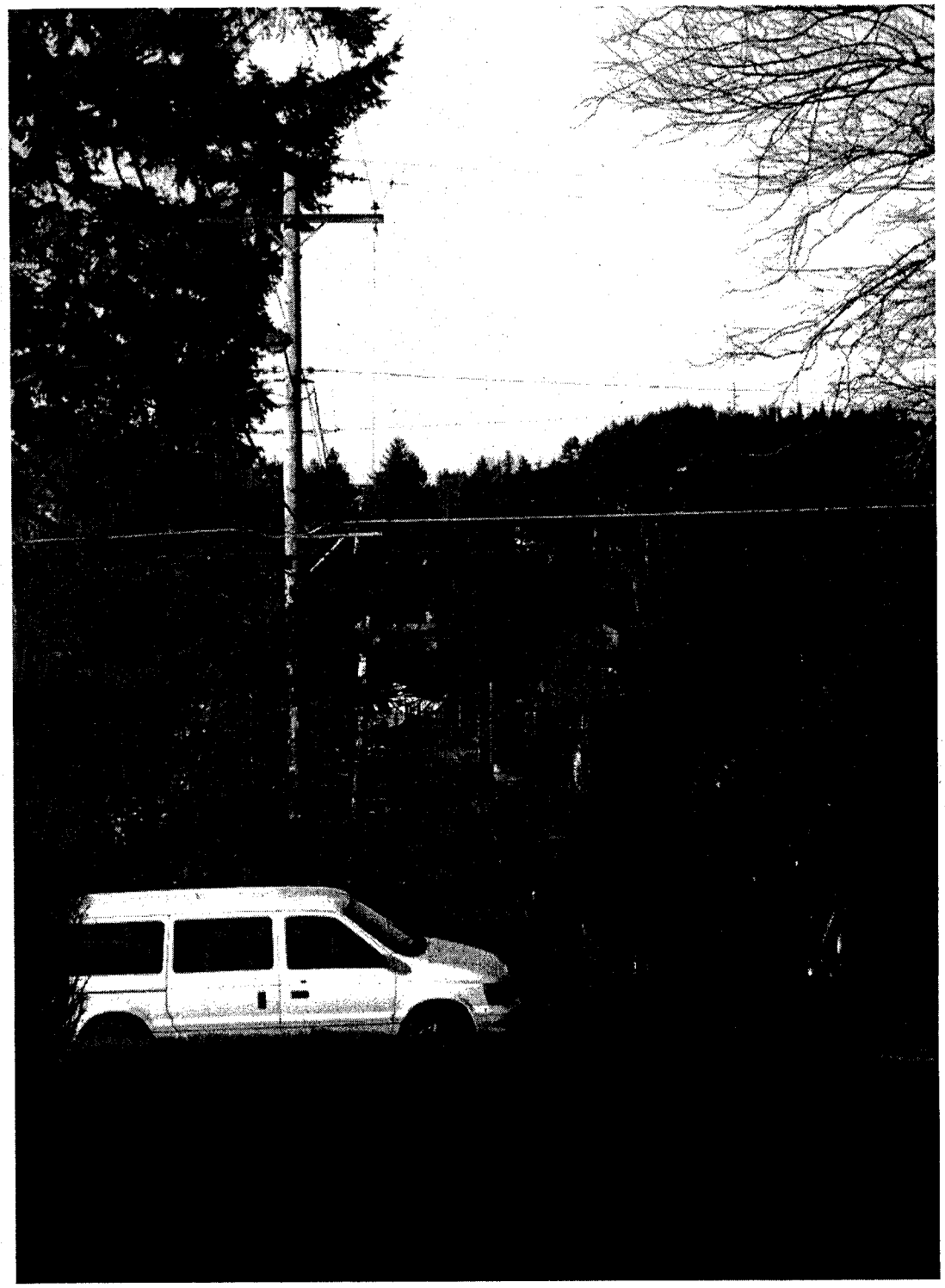

Figure 1.4 Residents of Portland's Multnomah neighborhood cherish its seemingly rural environment – even though the pattern of development is more accurately described as suburban. Photo by the author.

Chapter 2. Language and Power

Introduction

The central claim of this study is that in citizen participation in community planning work, what people say matters. Or, to put it another way, the rhetorical work of citizens as they engage the broader processes of planning and urban development produces structural change over time. This is not only in community planning, but in politics more broadly, and in all cultural production and contest. The rhetorical exertions of people in all sorts of situations help change the way things are in the economy, politics, society, culture and otherwise. More specifically, in the case studies treated here, I suggest that citizens have not only participated in officially sanctioned systems or processes of community planning and won decisions they deem favorable, but they have also helped to create, recreate, and transform those systems through their very participation. To adapt a popular aphorism, they have made their world through talking.

For some, this will be obvious. For many others, however, such a claim is simply naïve. Participation is a sham, elites rule, and entrenched power is immovable. But to say that the rhetorical work of citizens has structural effects is not to deny the realities of entrenched power, inequalities in access to decision-making, or the failings of democratic practice. It is simply to correct the overwhelming "you-can't-fight-City-Hall" bias of so much work on city politics and participation in planning. To put it in its crudest terms, in the study of urban development and otherwise, there has been too much emphasis on how "the fix is in" and far too little attention to what to do about it. As Forester advised, "let us stop rediscovering that power corrupts, and let's start figuring out what to do about the corruption." We need to understand that power is "political and therefore alterable" rather than some sort of "unchangeable metaphysical ether."[1] Yet, throughout the literature on citizen participation, planning practice, city politics, and the urban development process, runs a primary theme about the impregnability of entrenched power and the inevitability of its use for the benefit of the few over the many. This view is naïve in its own way. Certainly, it is far too simple, and in crucial ways, simply wrong. Moreover, it is profoundly disempowering and self-defeating for citizens seeking to exert control over the shape of their communities to believe that the struggle is lost before it begins.

This chapter and the next will attempt to offer a counterpoint to these views. It presents an analytical framework for understanding the work of citizens in Portland as fundamentally a process of cultural production. In the following chapter, "Politics and the City," I will attempt to

reinterpret an array of related literatures in the same terms. This is to suggest that the exertion of community power, the construction of urban regimes, the practice of urban planning, and the work of citizen participation in planning are also matters of cultural production; powerful and structural, but historical and contingent at the same time.

The theories that inform this approach to historical interpretation span a broad terrain of intellectual inquiry about who we are as economic, political, social and cultural beings and how things work in those realms. It addresses a set of fundamental and interconnected issues including the role of language in human endeavors; the idea of culture as constituting an encompassing cognitive environment or "whole way of life"; conceptions of power that go far beyond the simplistic formula of A over B; notions about the character of cultural and political hegemony; the role of critique in resisting the same; and an understanding of the concepts of structure and agency that is genuinely historical and dialectic. The order of march in such a discussion is somewhat arbitrary since these concepts are so intimately interrelated that it is impossible to discuss one without referring to the others. It is inevitable to have to work back and forth between these concepts. For now, a brief overview may prove helpful as an orientation.

Taken together, these theories seek some kind of understanding of the structure of our shared world and how people collectively can and do act to change it. They look for that understanding in a sense of *language,* not only as a means of communication but also as a mode of action, and even prior to that, as constitutive of our very consciousness of the way things are or might be. They set this idea of language within the broader context of a concept of *culture* as a system of meaning, values, language, practices, and institutions that constitute whole ways of life. Thus understood, culture is the medium through which we speak, keep silent, or listen; take action, remain passive, or absorb the action of others; and transform dominant regimes, maintain them, or live under their sway. These theories seek an understanding of *power* as a fundamentally cultural process, something exerted through the medium of language and through social relationships that are enacted largely in language. This is contrary to other views that see power as fundamentally physical, material, or economic, and therefore prone to monopolization. Such power is not equally distributed, but as a cultural effect, it is available to some degree for all those who breathe the same cultural air. In this regard, an understanding of concepts of *hegemony and critique* is crucial. For if culture produces hegemonic power over consciousness, such power is also vulnerable to ordinary people through language and the critique it can produce.

It is not so difficult to see that people in community planning and politics – or any other endeavor – work within a cultural environment and exercise power by speaking. But the claim here is that this work has structural consequences over time. Appreciating such a claim will ask

the reader to accept a particular understanding of the concepts of *structure and agency*. This task is complicated by the fact that the term structure has typically been understood too literally and applied too vaguely. Social theorists of all stripes have long talked about the structure of whatever aspect of human activity they studied. But they have often forgotten that structure is a metaphor, and like all metaphors, theoretical or otherwise, distorts our view just as it abstracts it. As a metaphorical term, structure seems to imply that structural things are fixed and permanent. It evokes images of buildings, bodies, and other solid and seemingly durable objects. But from an historical perspective, "what is solid melts into air."[2] Social arrangements – movements, organizations, institutions – are always in flux even when they seem fixed. Even the appearance of the city itself as hard, solid, and fixed is an optical illusion suffered by those who are stuck in any given moment of time. We still need the idea of structure, but if we don't understand structures as historically dynamic we miss the point.

As Buckminster Fuller claimed "I am a verb," so, Anthony Giddens insisted upon describing structure and agency as part of a single process.[3] My view is that language is at the heart of the process. It is the meanings, values, and assumptions produced through language that give any social structure the strength to stand up and persist. Discrete practices, organizations, parties, movements, institutions, and even the built environment of the city itself, are products of the workings of language and therefore derivative of language work. Money, time, and space, power and resistance, are likewise constituted as social structures or forces in and through language. Without it they can have no meaning, no substance. And if language is at the heart of the process of structure and agency, it is also the key to the intentional political work of creating change. In this light, whatever we think we know about the urban development process, about urban politics and the formation of urban regimes, as well as about the practices of participation and of planning, looks quite different. The status of seemingly dichotomous values in urban space, the durability of particular political formations, and the intertwined processes of rationality and democracy, seem more fluid and less inevitable. They are more fluid simply because we see them historically, not as a moment, but as a long series of moments. They are less inevitable because we see them culturally, not determined by laws and logics seemingly independent of human influence or residing in some realm of nature, but driven by meanings and values produced by people through language.

Why is such an explanation necessary? It is because it is so difficult for people to see the connection between what they may do on a daily basis in realms of community planning and politics and how things change over the long term. Too many citizen planners or neighborhood activists will report that their intentions were unfulfilled, their hopes thwarted, their time wasted. Too many will say that their work was without tangible impact. That they are weary, frustrated,

and disappointed is understandable. But they are often mistaken to believe that they have accomplished no good. The illusion of failure arises largely from the disconnection between the historical and metropolitan scale of urban change and regime transformation on the one hand and the immediate and local scale of community planning on the other. The former spans whole urban regions and is best measured in decades. The latter is a battle fought week by week within the compass of a neighborhood, a city block, or even a single parcel of land. My hope here is that by making the connections between what happens on the intimate scale of community planning with what happens on the grand temporal and spatial scale of metropolitan development we can begin to see that what people say in community planning really does matter.

Language

The themes in this discussion – language, culture, power, structure, action – keep intertwining and referring back to one another, but it makes sense to start with language because at the bottom of all these concepts is the bedrock reality of human life as distinguished by language. "Man is the symbol-using animal." There is something ineffable about what happens in the fusion of signifier and signified. It is so succinctly captured in Kenneth Burke's maxim "the word is the command." A little boy raises a block of wood in his hand and declares "boat." Nothing better summarizes the world-making, consciousness-forming, action-taking qualities of language. The word and the object are fused together forever, not as if by some mechanical process of painting, coating, or lamination, but more like a chemical process in which sound, symbol, and substance are transformed into one integral thing. Meanings aren't applied to things, like frosting. They are baked in. Likewise, the material and symbolic in social life can never be sundered, and as the active ingredient in the process, it makes sense to follow the language throughout empirical cases and throughout all the other theoretical issues.[4]

Other common conceptions of language are variously banal or hostile. Language is often understood simply as a medium of communication or expression, as if it were only a matter of transportation of messages. Even in such a narrow frame, the role of language in community planning would be a compelling topic for study. Through language, professionals share planning knowledge, citizens express their visions for the future, and participants in general negotiate agreement (or acknowledge disagreement) on a complex statement about collective futures. Such a role is important, but this conception of language is radically incomplete, since it fails to recognize that language not only delivers a message but produces it and forms the whole context for understanding it.

Even more common is an understanding of language as distinct from, inferior to, and somehow less real than action. This notion, ironically, is deeply embedded in our language. We all

know that "actions speak louder than words," and that "talk is cheap." All the president's men told us to judge the Nixon administration by what they did, not what they said. No simple deed could have expressed their fundamental duplicity as clearly as that simple warning. Yet we remain convinced that language and action are somehow separate if not opposite. It's one thing to talk the talk, another to walk the walk. Students of citizen participation, in particular, are obsessed with the gap between expression of public sentiment and official implementation based thereon. Citizen participation is seldom genuine, they say, it is a trap and a diversion, or that naked power trumps any democratic expression of rationality. If the correspondence between what citizens say and what officials do falls below 100 percent, it is argued, we know that some tricks are being played by the powerful. What gets missed in this simplistic frame – and it is especially true for planning – is that whatever work must be done to close the gap will be done in language. We are continually disappointed with the failure of words to keep their word. But the word is still hounded by words to be true.[5]

Language, however, is not merely self-policing. It is world-making. We live on a planet, on continents, in cities. But the physical environments in which we live, natural or built, are saturated with language. The meaning of every object and every situation is inscribed in our unique capacity for language. As Burke points out, animals respond directly to sensory stimuli. Human beings interpret the same stimuli through symbols and the meanings that symbols produce. Raymond Williams agrees: language does not merely reflect our reality. It produces our reality in the fusion of meaning and sign and agreement among associates. Language does not describe, or merely name, or represent the physical and social worlds in which we live; rather, it creates them. Language is "a constitutive facility" It constitutes our conceptions of the world, which is to say it constitutes our very consciousness. The consequences for what we say and do in the world should be obvious. What is good or bad, possible or impossible, right or wrong, are defined in this language-formed consciousness. It is a profound but conceptually simple process of the creation of categories of meaning that produce motivating distinctions, for example, between "purity and dirt," raw and cooked, or in the case of particular neighborhoods and their housing stock "vibrant" or "obsolete." The dividing line between two categories in language is the dividing line between two different sets of possibilities, two different sets of imperatives. "Such categories," Joan Cocks wrote, "singly and together police the boundaries of what can be imagined, thought, desired, said, and so done," and therefore police the world.[6]

Language, therefore, is simultaneously permissive and restrictive. We can think or say anything for which there are words, but nothing for which there are not. As Joan Cocks put it, "thought... has a double relation to language, being indebted to and constrained by it." Williams, likewise, understood the manner in which language produced both "pressures and limits" on

thought, speech, and action. Burke thought of language as a resource but also as a "prison house." Within speech there is total freedom to speak but only what language provides. Beyond that, as Anne Norton wrote, remains the fact that any given cultural or "political order inscribes itself upon our thoughts before we speak, even before we think." Whenever anything is being written in, many other things are also being written out. Language provides not only the means to think and speak, it also provides "perceptual screens" or "terministic screens" that partition consciousness. As Burke, in his characteristically catchy manner, put it: "even if any given terminology is a *reflection* of reality, by its very nature as a terminology it must be a *selection* of reality, and to this extent it must function also as a *deflection* of reality." But terminologies in language are not reflections. What is selected is produced, what is deflected is not. What is produced governs our consciousness – until we challenge it. As the creators as well as the recipients of language, that path is open to us, too.[7]

It is crucial also to understand language as a form of action, and Burke and others have spoken persuasively about "symbolic action." It might be enough to see that language is what motivates, directs, or precipitates action. The connection between word and deed is easy enough to apprehend. But it is better to understand language and action as fused together in a single process. Burke, again, makes the crucial distinction, between *action* and *motion*, the former being conceived, contextualized, and consummated in a wholly symbolic environment, the latter being not much more than muscular contractions without the intentionality provided through consciousness and language. As Burke argues, "language cannot be separated from action because what the action means and what it is addressed to is symbolic in its content... (and) because the situation in which the actor acts is defined and understood by the actor through the concepts available to him" – through language.[8]

Burke said "Language is intrinsically hortatory," or as Giddens has it, language is always about "that which has to be done." As such it is part of the process of doing anything. When Governor Tom McCall denounced the "grasping wastrels of the land" and the progenitors of "coastal condomania" he had already done most of the work necessary to enact statewide land use planning in Oregon. Likewise, the denunciation of residents of San Francisco's South of Market community as "bums," "drifters," and "transients" by redevelopers was essential to enacting their private plans. Mark C. Donovan has revealed the intimate links between "the social construction of target groups" and the ability of policy-makers to get legislation passed. Appeals to the plight of gay men were insufficient to win approval of programs to fight AIDS; the Ryan White story allowed them to put a deserving face on the beneficiaries of such support and win the day. In all of these cases concepts of good and evil, innocence and guilt, or otherwise are central elements in the action.[9]

Yet the process is more complex than just pushing rhetorical buttons. As Giddens says, language is "a medium of social practice." Buildings demolished, foundations dug, neighborhoods planned, and agreements negotiated are processes suffused with language as much as is delivering a speech or saying a prayer. For Williams, "signification, the social creation of meanings through the use of formal signs, is then a practical material activity; it is, indeed, literally, a means of production." "What distinguishes the worst architects from the best of bees is this," Marx wrote, "that that the architect raises his structure in his imagination before he erects it in reality." The linguistic and the material cannot be separated. They are wedded in the process of action.[10]

Forester has explained planning practice as a process of communicative action. Planners are problem-solvers and information-processors, it is true, he says, but it is far more useful to understand them as "selective organizers of attention to real possibilities of action." "Analysts must recognize clearly that what gets done depends heavily on what gets said, and how it is said, and to whom." Normally, rational action – presumably the essence of planning – is understood as a matter of maximizing returns on given goals. Forester suggests a second model of rational action in which conduct is "understood not as the use of a tool but as the making of a promise." The "discursive turn" in planning theory is highly developed, but the bottom line is that what people say matters, in planning processes as elsewhere in life.[11]

Language is also the bedrock of power. Power is a complex and heavily contested concept, and I will treat it in greater depth below. But the relationship between language and action also implicates power in the same processes. This is true both for those who regard power as a necessary and productive element in human social life and those who see it as some sort of "metaphysical ether" in which resides recalcitrant inequality and injustice. DeLeon found an explanation of the ability of San Francisco's anti-regime to overcome the theoretically superior power of downtown property elites in the high level of their "verbal, analytical and communication skills," what sociologist Ronald Inglehart calls "cognitive mobilization." In this case, political power is a measure of social capacity in language. Boyer, meanwhile, saw the emergence of American city planning as a somewhat sinister "disciplinary practice" propagated through "the political codes of power and control embedded within language." Whether we use language or language uses us, or a combination of the two, its relationship to power remains an intimate one. All the prescriptions and prohibitions of social life, as well as our primary conceptions of the world, are embedded in language. Whether we exert power as conscious agents or cultural power propels or limits us, its fundamental workings are through the categories, concepts, and meanings produced through language.[12]

The relationship between language and truth is similar. The distance between divergent understandings of the term is reduced by recognition that truth, like power, is produced through language. In the tradition of Boyer, Foucault, and Nietzsche, the production of truth is understood to be an element of the will to power. The truth itself is seen as a social or relational fact rather than any kind of "objective" truth. Truth in this case is not truly true. Forester, Habermas, Dewey and others also understand truth as a social product, but one produced through dialogue rather than some kind of coercion. They also eschew the idea of any sort of ultimate objective truth, but accept that the product of dialogue will be socially useful and benign and worry less that a socially produced truth will be untrue. We can accept that certain discourses – science, for example – may be coercive, that the assertion of truth is actually an exertion of power. Yet, it is also possible to accept that dialogue with "deep ethical roots in the 'ethics of ordinary discourse'" can be a social process of truth-seeking through "interrogation and confirmation" based on an expectation of clarity, honesty, legitimacy, and truth. I posit no teleology of language either way. Just as democratic practice may tend toward consensus or conflict, dialogue in general may be cooperative or coercive, depending on the circumstances. Instead, I suggest that we accept the fundamental ambiguity of truth and the means to make it. In planning or otherwise, sometimes when we attempt to win an argument we come to new understandings with our opponents. Sometimes it is the other way around.[13]

Finally, language is structural. Again, I will say more about structure and agency later in this chapter. But it is important to establish at the outset the idea that language is fundamental to the production of what we think of as structure. The marxian sense of structure encompasses the web of political and economic relations among workers and owners and the means of production. But a complete understanding of structure requires a much more expansive definition. Structure might be thought of as any collective social practice that spans space and time. Elements of structure may be expansive and of long duration – for example, religion, the military, the university, the nation state – or they may be narrow and specialized – psychotherapy, tourism, athletics – or transient – the New Left or the New Urbanism. They may be deeply rooted and persistent such as "the regime of masculine/ feminine" and "white racism" or rampant such as the interlocking rule of money, space, and time described by David Harvey. Elements of structure may manifest themselves in built form, stable organizations, fluid political movements, legal and financial constructions, durable social practices, and evolving knowledge and values. What animates all of these social arrangements is the way language produces knowledge and motivates action. Whether people organize for war, meet for prayer, ride their motorcycles in packs, or build downtown office buildings, their activity is motivated, informed, and justified by meaning in language.[14]

Language is also structural in that it connects the individual to the collectivity, links the past with the present and future, and provides for change as well as persistence. It might be too obvious to say that language is fundamental to what makes us social and collective. But it is the agreement among associates on the meaning of any sign that allows us to share that meaning. Such signs, Williams argues, are neither arbitrary nor fixed but they are conventional. Our acquiescence in those conventions is at the heart of our sociality. The role of language in spanning the individual and the collective can be seen in more concrete examples, such as the formation of communities or nation states. "Stories," that is to say narratives in language, "are the adhesive that holds groups together." Anderson, similarly, found the community- or nation-defining role of language in "its capacity for generating imagined communities... particular solidarities."[15]

Language, furthermore, carries these meanings from the past into the future. As Giddens put it, "language is a time machine." It conserves the past in the words of the past as they are passed from generation to generation. In the first instance, as individuals, we receive our language. The demands it expresses seem to come from nowhere, although we may call it our conscience. But as Saussure informs us, language is not only conservative. "Language is (also) radically powerless to defend itself," from any who might change or challenge it. We make our language as well as receive it. And if meanings from the past can be brought forward, new meanings might also be produced to serve some new purpose. As such, language is both a field of power and an arena of struggle, a primary means of agency as well as an element of structure.[16]

Culture

There is enormous overlap between a discussion of language and a discussion of culture. Both are primarily about the production of meaning in everyday life, as well as in discrete practices such as planning. But the idea of culture seems somehow more alluring. It is not just talking. Instead, culture is a great encompassing concept, as pervasive as the air we breathe. As a result, resort to a concept of culture is commonplace when other explanations for what happens seem not to suffice. Somewhere in the structure of meaning and values of society we can find the patterns of motivations that explain events. Unfortunately, in common discourse, culture is often used as a dumping ground, a place to abandon our questions rather than try to answer them. Social conflict is sometimes simply written off with a wave of the hand toward culture, as if to say that a "culture of permissiveness" or a "culture of narcissism" is to blame for our troubles and that's all we need to know. Still, the impulse behind these maneuvers is a sound one for we may, indeed, find the motivations for what happens in this tissue of meaning and values.

Some discussion about culture in the realm of politics and planning has focused on the contents of particular cultures. These are often described through simple typologies. Banfield and

Wilson offered an observation that middle-class urbanites tended to be "public regarding" while lower-class citizens were "private regarding." Almond and Verba suggested that political cultures divided among the "parochial," "subject," and "participant." Thompson and colleagues offered the slightly more complex "fatalist," "hierarchist," "egalitarian," and "individualist" framework. Heskin found his activist Angelenos with "pluralist," "populist," and "clientelist" tendencies. In general, these typologies speak to attitudes toward authority, community, and participation. Like all such schemes they destroy nuance in the effort to find clarity.[17]

Abbott has examined the history of planning in Portland with careful regard to the political culture of the city and its state. Following Elazar's classic typology, he describes Oregon as a "moralistic" culture, rather than "traditional" or "individualistic." It is a culture focused on a concern for the "public good," one which values "issues above individuals." It values the democratic process and respects the legal and regulatory products of that process. Cultural and institutional processes in this vein, moreover, have been crucial to the creation of the Portland regime. Abbott is right on the mark, but also misses an important realm of inquiry. He describes the *contents* of Portland political culture accurately, but he largely ignores the *process* of culture, the ways and means by which these values are produced and elaborated through speech, organizational practice, and institutional development.[18]

In a certain sense, all culture, political or otherwise, is moralistic, or at least prescriptive. Through the power of the imperatives produced through categories of language, culture enforces judgments about what is right, good and necessary. "Reward your friends and punish your enemies," which might be a tenet of the "traditional" political culture, or "take care of number one," possibly a central value in an "individualist" political culture, are as much value-laden statements – that is, expressions of a moral position – as "a public office is a public trust." Yet, simply to identify Portland's as a "moralistic" political culture, however accurate that might be, is to neglect the way that culture works through institutions, organizations, practices, meanings and values, language, and consciousness.

Culture is both everything and something very specific. Basic definitions of culture are constructed at two scales. At an immediate and concrete scale is the idea that culture is a specific system of meanings, values, habits, customs, practices, and higher forms of organization that characterize a given community or society. At a much broader, almost ethereal scale, is the idea that culture is a "whole way of life," engulfing and total. Kovel does as well as any in the first category by describing "a concept of culture as a system of shared meanings, an organized structure of symbols, made by men in order to define their world and regulate their mutual relations." More simply put, culture is the process by which "individuals confer meaning upon

situations, events, objects, relationships – in short, their lives." As I have argued at length above, such a process depends primarily on language.[19]

But to define culture only as a system of meanings is to miss what is really important about it. The understanding of culture as "a whole way of life" is what makes the idea of culture profound. It is not an object, or a category of objects. It is more like an environment in which we are submerged. Thus, Tocqueville was moved to consider "the whole moral and intellectual condition of a people." Gaventa described the "experiences, lives, conditions, and attitudes... key symbols, cues, or routines... processes of communication, socialization, and acculturation." The effect, as Williams emphasizes, is constitutive, which is to say that a society finds distinctive form in this cultural process. The description is inevitably vague. But the search for understanding comes back to the intuition that culture is immersive.[20]

Culture is everywhere. Yet as it envelops us, it disappears. From simple understandings of what is appropriate to do in any given place or situation, to broader conceptions of what is good or bad, right or wrong, necessary or impossible, the meanings produced through language permeate everything we experience. They are on the surfaces of daily life, on the air, in our heads, in relationships of all types, silent or explicit, accepted or contested, embedded deep in our experience, or blared from the rooftops. As much as the bottle in *Alice in Wonderland,* they carry powerful instructions. We drink almost without knowing it.

The person who attempts to study his own culture is a bit like the person who has lost his glasses and ransacks the house in a panic searching for them only to discover they are perched on his own nose. It is all too close to us, too ever-present for us to see it. As James C. Scott put it, "One cannot expect the fish to talk about the water; it is simply the medium in which they live and breathe."[21] So it goes for our own culture. It is invisible to us, in a sense, "hidden in plain sight." Whenever we are visitors in another culture, however, the cultural-ness of things heaves to the foreground of consciousness. The critical distance achieved by such transplantations is indispensable to anthropological research. It was useful for me as an Easterner looking and listening in Portland to have been raised in a cultural environment that was even modestly different from the one I studied. For a person in his or her own culture, gaining critical perspective is rare and insights are hard-won.

As productive of an encompassing whole way of life, culture appears simultaneously as something that is interior to the individual and yet also resident somewhere in the collectivity. We have a hard time saying just where the broad forces, logics, and imperatives of capital, markets, the bureaucracy, and politics are located. The logic of capital accumulation, the dynamics of urban politics, or the processes of city development, seem to have a life of their own. Indeed, we speak of these processes as if they were independent of any identifiable agent. This is probably

because that is the way it seems. If the workings of the large-scale capitalist economy appear beyond anyone's control, Williams observed, then it is no surprise that we resort to describing them as somehow governed by "laws" or "logics." But as Paolo Freire pointed out, "there is no historical reality which is not human." How do we bridge the gap? How do we avoid the mystification of such processes? J.M. Balkin suggests that we think of culture as a kind of software in which cultural code is written in each of us. It isn't a beautiful metaphor, but it does capture how cultural material is simultaneously internalized in the individual as it is externalized as independent forces and logics. Those seemingly free-floating processes operate the way they do because they reside in us as individuals and we actively participate in reproducing and adapting them, if not always consciously.[22]

In a similar paradox, culture is something both given and made, something we are born into and take for granted, yet something which we also help reproduce and transform. The prescriptions, prohibitions, and possibilities of any culture are imbued in its members from the moment they are born through child-rearing, education and acculturation in general. From the point of view of the individual this is simply the way things are. This sense of culture as given extends even beyond the point at which we begin to question or resist what culture demands of us. "Although it is individuals who construct, bolster, contest, and discredit ways of life, from the standpoint of any single individual the social world appears largely as given." Yet the sense of culture as given extends even to the collective. Williams, Foucault, and others, Cocks points out, "have made it very clear that a mode of social life is something which neither autonomous individuals nor a consensual community have had a great deal to do with bringing into being or reproducing in a self-conscious way." Yet the simplest of questions remains. If people don't create modes of social life, who does? The quandary resides in the distance between the perspectives of individuals in the moment and their imagination of the collective and historical.[23]

That culture appears to us as given, and that we also understand that it must have been made by someone, provides a foreshadowing of a crucial discussion about structure and agency. If we understand structure and agency as reciprocal elements in a continuous dialectical and recursive process of social production, reproduction, and change, we can also see the parallel construction between culture as given (structure) and culture as made (agency). As Floyd Hunter pointed out in his classic study of Atlanta, "the existing order has been a cumulative process... handed down to the present generation by the past." But if it was given to that generation by its predecessors, it was also made into something somewhat different before it was handed on to the following generation. Culture is never merely "transmitted" like a baton being passed. Rather, it is altered as humans shape their culture through an active process of often critical engagement of the values it carries.[24]

Intertwined with the idea of culture as both given and made is the observation that the values we adhere to, the behaviors we adopt, the social roles we play seem to us as natural when in fact they are culturally or socially constructed. Some of what we do is innate to us as a species, but much more of it is cultural. Even the role of parent, surely one of the most fundamental social roles is mainly constructed through culture rather than given through nature. That there are mothers and fathers from culture to culture is clear. But what it means to be a mother or father, or what each is expected to do, may vary radically from one society to another. As Clifford Geertz points out, the search for what is universally human keeps leading us back to what is specifically cultural. The lowest common denominator among cultures is so low it is barely worth considering.[25]

It matters not what the role is, farmer, factory worker, bureaucrat, athlete, artist, planner or citizen, what is done and not done, said or not said, and how these are done or said and in what situations, are matters of convention. It is the ordinariness of such roles, their givenness, which makes them seem natural. As Paul Willis observed:

> It is one of the most fundamental paradoxes of our social life that when we are at our most natural, our most everyday, we are also at our most cultural; that when we are in roles that look the most obvious and given, we are actually in roles that are constructed, learned, and far from inevitable.[26]

This is crucial because it demonstrates the very arbitrariness of social roles and the values and vocabularies which inflate them. This is not to say arbitrary in the sense of random. But they are arbitrary in that they could be different. That social roles and cultural values change over time also shows the seemingly natural for the construction that it is. Although culture may often seem given and natural, if we keep in mind that it is also made or constructed in processes that are both arbitrary and historical, then we can understand that our culture is subject to change, that what it demands right now is neither necessary nor inevitable, however real it may be.

Yet, the effect of culture that seems most powerful is what Bourdieu called the "naturalization of its own arbitrariness." The ability of any given cultural regime to appear as a matter of "simple common sense" is one of the greatest resources of culture. The way that a cultural way of life places limits on things that "are not considered a fit subject for public discussion but are instead part of the natural order of things," is one of culture's greatest strengths. The overwhelming taken-for-grantedness of culture that provides for its continuity and reproduction is one of culture's greatest assets. Yet we are not "dupes" to culture and we need not be its victims.[27]

Power

It should already be apparent that I mean to define power in terms of the foregoing discussions on language and culture. I agree with Cocks, who proposed a concept of "power as it is radiated through culture rather than as it is governmentally imposed... a power entrenched in ordinary linguistic distinctions, literary and imagistic representations, and habits of practice..." But the concept of power, as we use it commonly as well as in the academic realm, carries such unwieldy baggage that some strenuous unpacking is in order. Power as a concept has been mystified and made sinister. When the name of power is invoked definitions are seldom offered; rather, they are commonly assumed. Yet the meaning remains obscure and elusive. We hardly ever get down to specifics. In the midst of the community power debate of several decades ago, Raymond Wolfinger was moved to dismiss power as "not a very useful or interesting empirical concept." Only if we can be more discrete in our definition of power can the concept have much theoretical utility, either.[28]

A short genealogy of that community power debate shows a useful evolution of thinking about power, both in the descriptions of the structure of power and explanations of the processes of power. Hunter detailed a local community power structure in Atlanta that was unitary and encompassing in its control, working quietly through a network of influentials but backstopped by "force, intimidation, and threats" when necessary. It was the classic elite formation. Robert Dahl followed with his study of New Haven, Connecticut, concluding that power there was broadly distributed with multiple centers of influence and a shifting array of players depending on the issue at hand. G. William Domhoff countered Dahl's pluralist interpretation with a re-analysis of New Haven and a critique of Dahl's methods. Domhoff argued that New Haven's power structure was similar to the one Hunter described in Atlanta – all of a piece and in total command. More than that, this unified local capitalist power structure was integrated with a national elite that likewise had full command over processes of urban development.[29]

In long retrospect, views from both sides of the community power debate seem naïve and unsubtle. The conflict between pluralist and elitist interpretations was, in the end, sterile (as Wolfinger concluded) and was rightly superseded by Clarence Stone's regime theory, on which more later. Just as problematic, both elite and pluralist views were rooted in inadequate explanations of power as a process. They understood money, jobs, and votes as sources of power rather than as manifestations of it. They spoke in terms of inducements, "specific and material" or otherwise. Self-consciously materialist views were the most simplistic. Piven and Cloward concluded "power is rooted in the control of coercive force and in the control of the means of production." Domhoff worked backwards from an assessment of the distribution of resources to infer a distribution of power. The problem was that such views said little about how power was

exerted in the first place, how it was organized and amassed, and how it was maintained or undermined.[30]

Other theorists of power understood that there was more at work than material inducements and constraints. Otherwise, how could we explain the failure of aggrieved segments of society to place their issues on the public agenda? Some theorized a "second face of power" that worked, not through material coercion, but by control of "the rules of the game" or "the dominant values and political myths, rituals, and institutional practices which tend to favor the vested interests" of one group over another. In turn, Steven Lukes suggested there was a "third face of power." This was "... the power that resides in the structure of any society's prevailing modes of acculturation, political communication, and consciousness."[31]

Gaventa, also relying on Gramsci's ideas about hegemonic power that is cultural, adopted the idea of a "third face of power." This was an advance in the sense that it began to describe power as something rooted in language and consciousness. But there were two problems. First, Gaventa's Appalachian case study provided an example of a society in which power as ideological and consciousness forming was shot full of holes, but power as immediate, material, and menacing was complete. The more power relies on the goon squad the less effective is its resort to mystifying consciousness. Second, he undertheorizes the resources of power the oppressed have at their command. As Cocks points out, "there is nothing in the concept of 'overweening social power' that entails that power lies entirely on the dominator's side."[32]

As the search for power moves from an interest in physical or economic coercion or social practice to the formation of consciousness, the search for power moves back toward language. All of the "faces of power" are produced in language. Our consciousness of the possibilities for change or the expectation of defeat are produced in language. The accepted forms and protocols of social or political action – "the rules of the game" – are defined in language. Even the threat of a back-alley beating or being fired from a job is a material-linguistic event. All of it occurs through the conventional categories of speech and thought that Cocks identifies. What's more, she says that there is nothing more than this to any regime. These "conventional classifications, while posing as the mirror of some deeper objective truth, have in fact no bedrock at all beneath them but rather are the deepest bedrock of a system of power..."[33]

Foucault renders this idea in terms of the circular relationship between "truth" and power when "truth is to be understood as a system of ordered procedures for the production, regulation, distribution, circulation and operation of statements." In which case power is present everywhere at once in a web of relationships, "produced from one moment to the next, at every point, or rather in relation from one point to another." One of the difficulties of this idea of truth is that Foucault is unconcerned with the clarity, sincerity, legitimacy, or even the truth of statements. It

is one thing to understand truth as socially produced, another to claim the production of statements as representing nothing more than a will to power.[34]

What is crucial, however, is his understanding that power arises relationally and within the production of language-based discourses. Boyer, for example, used Foucault as a guide to trace the genealogy of American city planning as a classic "disciplinary practice" propelled by powerful statements about the neighborhood as a natural formation, the value of urban parks, and the imperative to privilege administration over politics. This idea locates power not only in the relationship between A and B but at the same time in the linguistic environment in which A and B and all the rest exist. It acknowledges the way that language-based power is exerted by the collectivity on all individuals. But it seems to deny the fact that individuals also have a role in the production of statements. It seems to leave open the possibility that statements somehow have a life of their own. As Cocks points out, Foucault so thoroughly denies the role of agency that "dominating social groups" disappear and leave "dominative power" standing on its own. We can allow for some "decentering" of the active subject and we need to appreciate Foucault's sense of power as ghostly, residing somehow "out there," but we cannot let go of the subject altogether for it is ultimately people who intentionally and reflexively create, endorse, resist, or refute truth statements of any kind. Statements seem to have a life of their own, but they do not. They live only in us.[35]

But if "power is relational, as opposed to possessive or substantive," we must also acknowledge that power relations are always two-way even when one party is strong in relation to the other. If a relationship is a transaction, being in relation always exacts some cost as it delivers some benefit. The bargain is often not favorable to the weaker party, as when citizens make themselves beholden to petty party operatives or when citizens become clients to professional experts But as Godschalk pointed out, "coercion can flow upward and horizontally as well as downward."[36]

Students of participation in planning often talk about the "cooptation" of citizens. They understand that politicians and planners often enter into relationships with citizens in order to control their behavior or to mute their protest. But a closer examination of situations raises the question of who is coopting whom. There may well be clear gains for officials in such relationships, but there will also be costs. They will find their own choices suddenly constrained and hear new demands from the coopted to have a hand in shaping policy. Manuel Castells, writing in Mexico about relations between squatters and the state, suggests that even in the relationship between unequals "each gets something and prevents something." As long as the bargain holds there is a kind of political peace. But the ostensibly weaker party always has the

option of returning to tactics of conflict. They may temporarily acquiesce in their own cooptation but they do not permanently cede whatever power they have in the two-way relationship.[37]

The two-way nature of power manifests itself in a persistent "ambiguity of leadership." Elected officials may exert their power in many ways. But their power is also constrained by the expectations and desires of their constituents (and while their most important constituents may be business elites, other elements of the electorate can also exert themselves). "If the leaders lead," Dahl wrote, "they are also led." Some political leaders have responded to this inherent ambiguity in power relations by adopting a conscious strategy of sharing power as widely as they can. Daniel Kemmis, Mayor of Missoula, Montana, describes political power as "held, risked, and extended... as a form of stewardship on behalf of those whose power it really is." Bern Ewert, former Mayor of Roanoke, Virginia, talked about having a "basket of power" from which he distributed power to neighborhood residents and others. He believed the basket would never be empty as long as he kept giving the power away. Heskin reported the same tactic in use by one neighborhood activist in Los Angeles. "Whatever power she had was there for the taking. Interestingly she was seen as the most powerful person in the project and was revered and even feared by some of the residents."[38]

There are many, no doubt, who will see this approach to the use of power as naïve. In reality, it is only the sunny side of Foucault. If power is relational and two-way, if the notion of sovereign power is obsolete, and disciplinary power is a network or a system of flows, how could one ever expect to grip power and wield it? Kemmis, Ewert and others know that perhaps the best they can do is to surf the flows of power.

In more prosaic terms, this is an understanding of power as productive rather than restrictive. It is a "power to" rather than a "power over." Such power is a rare commodity in situations where government is weak, private interests are fragmented, and the divisions among racial and ethnic communities, city and suburb, sexual orientations and gender identities, and subcultures of all kinds proliferate. In this kind of society the problem is not what happens when any party resists commanding power, because there is none. "In a fragmented world," Stone wrote, "the issue is how to bring about enough cooperation among disparate community elements to get things done – and to do so in the absence of an overarching command structure or a unifying system of thought." Those who can organize power in this productive sense do not repel, they draw others nigh. Sometimes they do, indeed, collect that power by giving it away.[39]

Nevertheless, a view of power as unitary, malevolent, and almost supernatural seems to persist. Part of this lies in the influence of Marxist thought even among those who do not identify themselves as Marxists. If we see capitalism as an overweening world historical force with all other discourses subsumed within it then we might equate power with capitalism itself. Even

Foucault's ostensibly anti-Marxist and anti-teleological approach seems infected with this sense there is some ultimate unity of power. Flyvbjerg understands power in similar terms, as an extra-subjective force that pushes its way back in like a poltergeist even when citizens have exerted themselves most strenuously for democracy. The struggle against capitalism is sometimes cast as a struggle against power itself. Freire declares that "an end to oppression must end oppression, not simply enact a reversal of roles." Cocks sneers at radical feminists who believed that "to have power was in itself a vice, and to have none a virtue." All of this is misleading and disabling for citizens – especially when they are the ones declaring "you can't fight City Hall."[40]

Power is a necessity of social life – at least in the sense of productive power. The most important disciplinary practices are not in the control of body, psyche, or sexuality by society. More fundamental is the individual's discipline over her own body and larger manifestation of self. Our "routine control" over movement, speech, and presentation of self are integral to the production of our basic social competence, trust by our fellows, and ultimately, agency. The individual carries out this work within a cultural context that is given, but he also acts intentionally and reflexively to make himself. We do something similar at the social level, taking what is given culturally but taking intentional action in turn to reinforce, reshape, or overturn discourses, practices, organizations, institutions.[41]

Such power – there is no other way to put it – is good. However, there is only one way in which power is unitary, and that is in our humanness in general, and most importantly in our capacity for language and complex forms of sociation which flow from it. As Cocks argues, there is no single axis of power from which all power flows, nor any axis on which all the others are modeled, not capitalism, nor the "regime of masculine/ feminine," nor racism. All of these discourses, and others – democracy, religions, professions, nations, science, even planning – are partial and transitory, structural but historical and contingent. They are powerful but assailable. What connects them is that their power is a product of our language.[42]

Hegemony and critique

If language sometimes speaks us as much as we speak a language, if culture is both given and made, if power is something that simultaneously exists in a field of social relations and in the capacities of specific individuals, then we can also understand the relationship between the crucial concepts of hegemony and critique. Anticipating the next segment of this discussion, hegemony tracks with structure, the exercise of critique parallels agency. But the idea of an interplay between hegemony and critique isolates that process in which individuals and their groups search for a way through the haze of cultural power to create political resistance and social change. It is well to remember that both the production of hegemonic consciousness through a

cultural process and the development of a critical consciousness through the interrogation of structural conditions are both based in language practices.

Part of the difficulty in a discussion of a concept of hegemony is that it has meant different things at different historical moments and in different cultural settings, not to mention that it has meant different things to different people. What the various definitions hold in common is that hegemony involves a process through which the arbitrary nature of any cultural regime seems to those engulfed in it as only natural and a matter of common sense. As Pierre Bourdieu put it, "every established order tends to produce... the naturalization of its own arbitrariness." But he also qualified his observation by noting that this is so "to very different degrees and with very different means."[43]

Bourdieu identifies the "undifferentiated social formation" of "doxa" as most efficiently productive of the taken for grantedness that generates hegemonic power. In such cultures the alignment between the objective order of things and the subjective principles of organization is nearly perfect. The questioning of the legitimacy of any regime arises from some competition for legitimacy, Bourdieu says, but in the doxic culture the question has never arisen, the possibility has never been discussed. "Doxa" may reign only in insulated traditional cultures. Modernism relies on different mechanisms of hegemonic power. But Bourdieu's category is useful because it describes one pure form of hegemony and pinpoints the relationship between dialogue and resistance.[44]

James C. Scott proposes a distinctly more open conception of hegemonic cultural power. He acknowledges the powerful effect of any culture to inhibit a consciousness of resistance: "if the fish do not talk about the water, how can we expect them to talk about the air?" But he questions how completely any cultural regime can be made to seem necessary and inevitable to the people consumed within it. The purest forms of the arguments about cultural hegemony, Scott notes, "ask us to believe that, for the subordinate classes, the larger structure of domination is typically experienced in the same way a peasant might experience the weather." In Scott's conception of hegemony there are clearly crevices and fissures in which resistance might root and pry open the rockface of power.[45]

The classical definition of hegemony in these contexts comes from Antonio Gramsci who, ironically, sometimes used the term to mean a merely ordinary dominance. But he also described hegemony as a cultural power to produce "spontaneous consent" always backed up by the threat of physical repression. Such was appropriate to his own time – Mussolini's Italy – where coercion of the mind and coercion of the body came together in roughly equal measures. Likewise for Gaventa's Appalachia, where the heavy timber of physical repression reinforced the softer seams and veins of local political culture, presenting a weak, though harsh, form of hegemony. Gaventa's

mistake was to give too much credit to a mystifying hegemonic consciousness in maintaining "quiescence" and not enough to hegemonic guns, bats, and pink slips.[46]

Perhaps the definition of cultural hegemony most appropriate to our times in general, and to the Portland cases in particular, comes from Anne Norton. It is a hegemonic power generated by a popular belief in our radical freedom to write and rewrite ourselves as we wish. "Liberalism," she declares, "has become the common sense of the American people," which is to say, carrying on with the Gramscian vocabulary, not necessarily the critical "good sense" of the people. In the hyper-pluralism of identities, subcultures, life-style choices, and endless great shopping, there seems to be no restriction on who or what we can be. That this energy is focused on the individual rather than the collective is problematic. Even more important is the extent to which we are unaware of our original constitution in a culture with such liberal pretensions. The social and political order, as Norton says, inscribe themselves on us before we speak, even before we think. Yet such is the case for any culture, and perhaps there is a resource for resistance in this particular cultural personality, a kind of naïve confidence in the ability of individuals to make a difference.[47]

Across a range of historical objects and theoretical interpretations, there is still some agreement on the way that culture as invisible, seemingly natural, given, and driven by apparently independent logics and dynamics, obscures from consciousness the potentials and possibilities, the ways and the means, of social change. We are so immersed in our own cultural contexts that it is sometimes difficult to understand what is going on or what we might do to change it. Williams might have produced the best general definition. It...

> ... sees the relations of domination and subordination, in their forms as practical consciousness, as in effect a saturation of the whole process of living – not only of political and economic activity, but of the whole substance of lived identities and relationships, to such a depth that the pressures and limits of what can ultimately be seen as a specific economic, political and cultural system seem to most of us the pressures and limits of simple experience and common sense.[48]

Thus "saturated" and subject to both the "pressures and limits" culture exerts through language, the individual comes to identify with and internalize what the culture demands. Normally this is "positive" but at a minimum will express itself as a "resigned recognition of the inevitable and necessary."[49]

Gramsci, of course, not only described the predicament of cultural hegemony, he also prescribed the way out of it. What the forces within any cultural system obscured, he advised, a process of critique could reveal. He also suggested that the work of criticism might be led by "organic intellectuals," individuals both embedded in current political circumstances, and skilled

in finding the critical distance or perspective required to see around or through them to courses and strategies of action. Heskin, for example, adopts the idea of the organic intellectual in describing the development of community resistance to state highway planners, and many others recognize some sort of critical practice as indispensable to political action. What is the skill of the "organic intellectual?" Perhaps Cocks provided the best available answer in talking about an "oppositional imagination."[50]

In all but the most air-tight doxic cultures – and maybe even there – there is always some room for resistance. Workers struggle for meaning and power at the very crux of capitalist oppression, the factory shop floor. Peasants in Malaysia maintain an insidious everyday resistance to their domination by the landlords. Individuals throughout the West struggle to gain control of their bodies and identities. "Between the rule of masculine/ feminine and the triumph of the rule," Cocks writes, "perversities, insurgencies and overturnings always are able and likely to occur." Culture is never fully determining, she says, and always both enabling as well as constraining. The wellspring of such resistance is language. "While domination may be inevitable as a social fact," Scott writes, "it is unlikely to be hegemonic as an ideology within the social sphere where the powerless may speak freely." In intimate, private, and semi-public spaces, critique finds room to grow.[51]

The inertia of all hegemonic culture is to hold things within the realm of the undiscussed. The thrust of all critique is to push these matters into the realm of discourse. In this way the taken for granted is transformed into the scrutinized. In the same way that naming makes a "boat" critique takes a situation and makes it a complaint. If to speak a true word is to transform the world then to give voice to a grievance is to transform our consciousness of it. There is a long way to go in formulating strategies of resistance and organizing adherents to the cause, but speaking what has previously been unspoken is the crucial first step. This is not to say that a license to speak will make critique more likely. The process of critique grows lax when it is "permitted to do 'anything it likes.'" Like weeds in rocky soil, critique does better when it is somehow restricted.[52]

Forester envisions disciplined criticism as an essential element of progressive planning practice. He calls for planners to foment a systematic interrogation of the structural, organizational, and interpersonal sources of "distortion" in communication as a way to assure that planning is "democratic and legitimate." When institutional constraints dictate, he urges planners to cultivate "democratic outsiders" who can criticize the planner's own agency from beyond. Based on a Habermasian concept as it is, not everyone will accept the ontological status of the "truth" as Forester sees it. But as a politically-constructed truth, he believes we can get to it:

> The practical critique of systematically distorted communications becomes the basis, then, for a vision of legitimate political action, for a vision of a democratically deliberative

> planning and policy analysis practice... Habermas's appeal is not to some ideal communications community, but rather to the continual democratization of political discourse.[53]

An understanding of culture as arbitrary, as its own bedrock, fits awkwardly with the idea that hegemonic power arises from "distorted" communication. Distorted compared to what? Nevertheless, what Forester suggests would have the same effect as any critical practice in discussing the undiscussed, in unmasking cultural power. His call for "open political discourse, for rational argument and criticism," is nevertheless a "call for subversion of anti-democratic structures of investment and control."[54]

This is not to say that all elements of a particular cultural and political regime are easily accessible to the leverage for change that critique provides. Some elements of a regime may not be accessible at all. Harvey's interconnected practices of money, space, and time are, though of relatively recent origin, nevertheless deeply embedded in our daily lives. The power of money, the alienation of space, and the intimate control over our daily lives enforced by the clock may be discussed but not in ways likely to soon dislodge them from our collective lives. Other elements of cultural regimes – gender identity, sexual orientation, ideologies of race – are vulnerable but seem to evolve only over decades. Still, in historical perspective, some of these regimes are more fluid than we understand.[55]

The Portlanders in these cases, meanwhile, have focused their critical attention on hegemonic cultural forms that are far less deeply-rooted. American ideology and law governing the use of property have sturdy foundations. But the values of planning and participation, belief in the legitimacy of bureaucratic process, and the ideology of growth management practice all have shallow roots. As such, their arbitrariness is somewhat less obscured from popular view. But more than that, these citizens, like Norton's, are used to thinking in terms of how *else* they might be. Thus, it is a short leap to thinking about how else their community might be. Nevertheless, these cultural forms have power, and the process of critique necessary to conceive some resistance to them is as strenuous as ever.

Action and Structure

The concepts of action and structure, or structure and agency, along with those of determination and contingency, have long been a crucial part of any theoretical discussion of social processes. Social theorists have been fascinated by the ways that social formations take shape, have strength, persist, and change. In that context, some might imagine that a writer who claims "what people say matters" will emphasize agency to the neglect of structure. But I have

also said that language has structural effects, indeed, that it is structural. Thus, what I am after is not a simple voluntarist explanation of what happens. Rather, I seek a way to understand the durable patterns and tendencies of social and political life with an interest, not only in their continuities, but also in how they change. I seek a theoretical framework that links structure and agency in a robustly reflexive and recursive relationship, showing social actors always emerging from structural circumstances and always acting back against those same structures.

It seems at first like strawman-building to juxtapose crude Marxist understandings of action and structure with more nuanced and dynamic treatments of the concepts. None of the most influential thinkers in the field still hold the most mechanical and deterministic versions of these views of the world. Likewise, it seems pointless to attack the apolitical and reductionist views of analysts in the "social ecology" tradition. They have been roundly denounced. Yet there remains a tendency to show more interest in structure than in agency, and to emphasize determinants of action over contingent factors. Likewise, as we all struggle to grasp what happens at a scale beyond our own immediate lives, there remains some tendency to resort to mystifying metaphors: the city as an organism, seeking homeostasis or following life cycles; history as an inexorable machine driven by "forces" and "logics" beyond human influence. What we need are some new metaphors, and an adjustment in what Kenneth Burke called the "scene-agent ratio," shifting our attention toward the actors while still keeping in mind their sets and situations.

For some, on the Right as well as the Left, the most important actors continue to be large-scale abstract processes. In the case of "mainstream" analysts these are natural processes of urban change or key technological determinants. On the Left there is a concern with inherent logics of an abstract and mythologized capitalism. Harvey talks about "how capitalism creates" city form "in its own image." In this view, disembodied "forces" are "put in place and set in motion" and appear to take on an independent existence. Harvey seems to understand that the character of any regime is ultimately cultural, but he continues to talk as if capitalism were somehow a natural force. Domhoff's rendition of the New Haven story makes ruling class cohesion, political collaboration, and bureaucratic acquiescence the "self-evident" result of capitalist power. Piven and Cloward declare that how people participate in politics and whether or not they are effective is "consistently determined by location in the class structure." In such a view, the later Castells decried, people are not creators of their own history, but actors in a play "whose script has been written in advance," which begs the question, "by whom?"[56]

But if we understand that political action can never be fully determined by structural circumstances, we must also know that actors never do simply anything they want. If social ecology as well as Marxism in its crudest forms tend to be "monocausal, reductionist, mechanical,

ahistorical, (and) non-empirical," we also know that the structural circumstances with which both are concerned still shape what happens.[57] As Alvin Gouldner wrote:

> Marxisms did indeed say that capitalism is governed by blind and necessary laws to which persons were inescapably subject; it is also true that Marxism treats persons as free agents who will not only do what they must, but who can respond to appeals and be won over even against their own class interests.[58]

The tension between Marxist explanations of the overweening power of capital and the Marxist call to revolutionary practice is extraordinary. The latter calls for workers to throw off their chains; the former says that the chains are unbreakable. As Saunders put it, "a deterministic Marxism that denies the effectivity of conscious human subjects denies also the potential for radical action." Or, as Williams wrote, "a Marxism without some concept of determination is in effect worthless. A Marxism with many of the concepts of determination it now has is quite radically disabled."[59]

What kind of concept of determination will work? Williams turns back to culture for an answer. He finds one in the "pressures and limits" produced in language, manifest as "a whole way of life," and appearing to individuals as simple "common sense." These are "pressures" that move individuals to think, say, or do certain things, as well as "limits" that restrict them from the same. But there is nothing in the concept of "pressures and limits" that says we must always accede and there is much in concepts of critique and resistance that provides us with alternatives. Our "free wills" may be the product of a particular cultural regime, but they are not prisoners of it. There is some value to be found in the critical application of an understanding of a world "in which actors are propelled by historical laws," but we must ultimately put our weight on the other foot – of a Hegelian coming to consciousness in history. Or, as Freire put it oppression is not "a closed world from which there is no exit." Rather it is a structure of limits which people can transform through critical practice and resistance.[60]

The critique of a deterministic analysis of urban politics has drawn many adherents. They complain that such discussions are "relatively abstract, ahistorical, universalistic," or "reductionist," or fail to offer credible explanations for variations caused by ethnicity, race, culture, institutional precedents, or local circumstances. "Their common errors include: the reification of markets or structures, a failure to recognize or explain variation in the patterns of urban policy and performance, and a neglect of agency." What these critics also agree on is that whatever the structural forces that political actors at the local level may face they always have some room for political choice and policy innovation. "In the final analysis," Swanstrom says, "local government policies are never 'determined' by economic pressures... Policies are always a choice between competing values." The structural pressures and limits are always real, and they

shape the choices of local elected officials and grassroots forces alike, but they always have choices about how to respond. Whatever the character of "limit structures," Freire says, there is always an "untested feasibility" for action to transform them.[61]

If history is not a machine, then we must make way in our thinking for a role for the contingent in political and social life. Sometimes we mistake "what is" for "what must be." But as Cocks points out, "any system or mode or order is a contingent reduction of a much greater possibility."[62] In logic, the contingent is something that is neither necessary nor impossible. Similarly, things that seem likely to happen might not. Things that seem far-fetched might actually come to pass. It was not foreseen in 1981 that a tavern owner named J.E. "Bud" Clark would beat the well-known Francis X. Ivancie for Mayor of Portland, but it happened. Even things that seem structurally determined might actually occur because of contingent factors. The demise of Dennis Kucinich in Cleveland was as much brought about by his own political shortcomings as it was by the supposedly inevitable power of the local business elite.[63] What we think of as contingent factors might actually arise from what we choose to do or how hard we try. In any case, the lives of cities, like people, are fraught with uncertainties, shaped by what seems mere chance, and never the straightforward product of structures.

However, not everything that falls beyond the ambit of the structure of economic relations – the "mode of production" – is a matter of contingency, even though some writers put it that way. Some things that may appear as contingent factors in the social process are, in fact, structural themselves. This draws our attention to both the variations in structural conditions from place to place and the complexity of the action once we have broadened our understanding of what counts as structural. First is a simple and obvious question: if urban processes are determined by a logic of capital, then how do we account for the wide variation in experiences from place to place? Perhaps it is that "to know one capitalist society is not to know them all." Even more to the point, elements of social structure that are not reducible to manifestations of any particular capitalism also vary from place to place. Capitalism in Sweden is, indeed, different from capitalism in Singapore (although many crucial capitalist values transcend local and national boundaries). But what is also different from one to the other is the shape of the state, the character of gender relations, racial and ethnic identities, family and community life, protocols of civic conduct, parties, unions, the media, and much more. These things are structures too, and their foundations in culture and language are every bit as deep as the roots of capitalism – sometimes deeper.[64]

What happens after that may seem like a matter of contingency – things that might or might not happen, things that are not determined – and that is part of it. But another part of it is the result of the sheer complexity of structural circumstances overall. No "simple, single-factor

theory," no monocausal account, can fully explain the urban development process, or any other social process.[65] DeLeon has adopted the concept of "multiple conjunctural causation" as a guide to explaining the complex, hyper-pluralistic politics of San Francisco. "The conditions are multiple in that no single factor alone can account for the city's political transformation," he writes. "The conditions are conjunctural in that they interact multiplicatively (one might even say chemically) rather than merely add together to produce their effects." Among the significant factors he identifies are:

> The city's geographical compactness and population density; its service economy and attendant middle class of professionals, managers and petty entrepreneurs; its "place luck" as a beautiful and attractive location that ranks it high in the hierarchy of cities; its ethnic and racial diversity; its fragmented and leaderless downtown business community; its political institutions, particularly the instruments of direct democracy (the initiative, referendum, and recall); and its political culture of civility, tolerance, and leftism – the invisible broth of values and ideas in which all of the other "ingredients" are mixed.[66]

In such a frame, simple attributions to the "logic of capital" seem ridiculous as an explanation of the urban development process. But DeLeon is slightly in error to suggest that such conditions "produce" anything in some straightforward way. Instead, he describes the conditions under which any political agents may exert themselves. These conditions may produce a host of different "logics" that people may follow or resist. These conditions present limitations, but offer resources for action as well. They produce "pressures and limits" of a determining cultural power that nevertheless leaves individuals and their associations free to act. Often it seems we "do what we must do" but this is always the result of some mixture of structure, agency, and contingency, of determination, choice, and chance.

This is perhaps the core of any understanding of theoretical concepts of structure and action. One is no good without the other. Katznelson captured the necessary relationship in the unforgettable metaphor of "the thumb of structure and the fingers of agency." "Social structure and agency cannot exist apart from each other," Katznelson wrote, interpreting Giddens. "In that social structures enable human action and, at once, are the effects of such action, the usual structure-agency dichotomy is profoundly misleading." For his own part, Katznelson urged the development of Marxist thought that "distinctively works within, and manages the field of tension between, the structural and the historical, the abstract and the concrete, the determined and the contingent." Never mind that the structural *is* historical, that abstractions are meaningless cut loose from the concrete realities they are intended to explain, and that the distinction between the determined and the contingent is blurry at best, both Katznelson's and Giddens' advice is well-taken.[67]

Beyond that, we need to understand the relationship between structure and agency as always reciprocal. Structure sets the conditions for action and action often takes structure as the target for its exertion. "We make our history ourselves," Williams quoted Engels, "but, in the first place, under very definite assumptions and conditions." Those conditions are real but never inevitable, Giddens wrote. "Human agents never passively accept external conditions of action." As Habermas had it, "we use history to make history." We never build from a "structurally clean foundation," Stone allowed, but we are nevertheless "purposive and reflective creatures, capable of modifying the situations in which we find ourselves." Even the values, traditions, mechanisms and protocols of citizen participation in one city or another are simultaneously the products of the action of a previous generation and the conditions under which the current generation must seek its future.[68]

In this way, we also need to remember the relationship between action and structure as persistently recursive. What goes around comes around. Taking an historical perspective can help us see this. As Marx noted in *The Grundrisse* "every social item 'that has a fixed form' appears a merely 'a vanishing moment' in the movement of society." "In historical light," Stone wrote, "social structures are less solid and less fixed than social scientists have sometimes assumed." Over time, what is structural appears fluid. "All that is solid, melts into air." Mired in our everyday lives the social realities in which we find ourselves seem like boulders of granite. From the broadest historical point of view, however, continents are skidding across the planet and the evolution of human societies is a frantic, blurry dance. How can change be so difficult when it is so permanent?[69]

Likewise, every established order, even the utopian one, creates its own opposition. We can see this clearly in DeLeon's San Francisco where "the progrowth regime's economic development strategies fostered the growth of a professional middle class and postindustrial petty bourgeoisie" that became the core of a new opposition. Likewise, Mollenkopf showed how the successes of Democratic policies on housing, lending, and transportation demographically undermined the coalitions that originally supported them. In Portland the neighborhood revolution that produced institutions of neighborhood participation now provides a platform for citizens to attack the planning policies that the original revolution put in place. Changes in policies or the architecture of institutions frequently has consequences for future politics that were wholly unintended.[70]

But it is not merely that structural change creates new populations or fosters new political alignments in unexpected ways. It is that that social structure always provides resources for an opposition. Structure is sometimes a barrier to action. But structure is also an essential part of what allows people to act. "Social reproduction," Giddens pointed out, "always (involves

the) contingent... knowledgeable use of convention." Giddens, most notably, argued for collapsing the concepts of structure and action into the single term "structuration." His point is taken about the intimacy of the relationship between the two concepts. But he is still forced to talk about structure and action as distinct "modalities of structuration." When the analytical focus is on structure what we see are "rules and resources" that are the armature of institutional power. But when we focus on action we see "stocks of knowledge and resources (usable) by actors" who are skilled, knowledgeable, intent, and accountable. They are one and the same. So, we see 1960s-era protesters "(holding) democratic systems to its own pretensions" by invoking the values the system is supposed to cherish. Or we see Malaysian peasants calling forth historical ideals of community as a way to fight their modern oppressors. The tools to oppose culturally-based power are always available in the culture itself.[71]

Also crucial to an understanding of concepts of structure and action is the persistent intentionality of action by individuals and their associations within and against the structure of regimes. Interpretations on both the Left and the Right tend to "discount the importance of citizen choices in making public decisions," emphasizing instead the structural determinants of action. For some, like Althusser, "the practices of individuals... can be explained only through a scientific theory of structure." Piven and Cloward mock the idea of "freedom of choice in the evolution of political strategies." Even Harvey attributes "innumerable movements of revulsion and revolt" not to those who instigate them but to "interlocking sources of social power" in command over money, space, and time. In this frame all is predestined by structure. Yet at the same time somehow the members of the ruling class possess what has been denied to everyone else, namely consciousness and intentionality. It can't be both ways.[72]

In the end, there is no way to make sense of human life that does not include a concept of our own intentionality. "There is no historical reality that is not human," Freire wrote, and "we are not captives of history and social structure." We are within social structure, but we are not mere victims of it. We are "creators of meaning, which is also a wellspring of human action and historical change."[73]

Giddens locates this process ultimately in the individual, in her work in the world or in her construction of self. Whatever choices she makes she "could have done otherwise." She provides accounts or explanations for her actions, and in many cases continues courses of action over periods of time, repeating choices she made and thus underscoring their intentional nature. Even when people say "I had no choice" they "could have done otherwise." This is all part of "reacting creatively and interpretively" to the structural realities we encounter in daily life. The "insurgent consciousness" or "oppositional imagination" that makes such intentionality possible includes an understanding that problems and situations are in some sense structural. "However

partial or imperfect their understanding of the situation," Scott wrote, "(individuals) are gifted with intentions and values and purposefulness that conditions their acts."[74]

This attention to intentionality located in the individual is not to ignore the fact that political work is mainly collective. Politics and city planning is work we do in groups in public. But we need to keep in mind that behind the collective abstractions we use to analyze these processes is the aggregation of choices that individuals make. "When using collective concepts such as 'social class' or 'state,'" Saunders warns, "the sociologist should always remember that it is not a class or state that acts, but rather the individuals who comprise it."[75]

We also need to see that what we understand as structure – large in scale, encompassing, continuous, durable and powerful – is not impervious to individual, local, or small scale acts of opposition. Indeed, it is the agglomeration of such small acts that creates what think of as structure. Scott provides a beautiful and graphic metaphor for the way that tiny acts of resistance accumulate into massive social realities in the same way that tiny coral plants build huge reefs on which ships might run aground. Or, as Cocks points out, "molecular details that begin to diverge in increasing numbers from the massive fact eventually will add up to a different massive fact, after all." Our individuality thus presents a persistent paradox. We have only one vote, literally and figuratively, but anyone who gets elected does so by collecting a majority of votes cast one at a time. "The individual experiences feelings of powerlessness in relation to a diverse and large scale universe," Giddens writes. "What is originally human becomes alien; human powers are experienced as forces emanating from an objectified social environment." Without some concept of our political efficacy at small scales and local sites these appearances can be debilitating.[76]

Castells gives some emphasis to the work that is carried out at local sites in opposition to large-scale and global trends. The evolution of the world system is always interacting with "social processes which are historically and spatially rooted in particular societies." He allows that local sites – in his cases the neighborhoods of Madrid, Santiago, San Francisco, Mexico City, Paris, Lima, and elsewhere – are not the best positions from which to mount oppositional politics but much better than nothing. "They may be unable to control international flows of capital," he admits, "but they can impose conditions on any multinational wishing to set up in their community." At the same time, Castells also suggests that political forces operating from outside the formal institutional structure of power. "Major innovations in the city's role, meaning and structure tend to be the outcome of grassroots mobilizations and demands." There are limits to what can be achieved at the grassroots, but as Giddens argues, there is no logical reason why we should understand large scale social realities as some kind of overwhelming structure that shapes the local micro-settings for action without being shaped in return.[77]

In a similar way, we must beware of the assumption that whatever structural change may take place will always be to the benefit of a particular kind of regime. To be sure, capitalist culture has shown an extraordinary dynamism and adaptability over several centuries, and much of what has occurred has been to reinforce the power of discourses of economics. Likewise, there is a predictable process by which oppositional movements are incorporated into what might be called normal politics. But the assumption that historical change is always ameliorative and regulative rather than transformative is to make the status quo supernatural and to mystify the power of white male capital. "The cultural process," Williams declared, "must not be assumed to be merely adaptive, extensive, and incorporative." Sometimes change is "real."[78]

The best way to appreciate concepts of structure and agency in concrete terms is through historical analysis. If "social systems are patterned in time as well as space through continuities of social reproduction," we can see the full sweep of these continuities in historical narrative. Of course, the continuities this refers to are continuities of change in most cases. Social reproduction doesn't simply replicate social structure. It remakes it in a continuous flow of change, especially in a still-modern epoch where change is the primary constant. In such a process intentional actors are always confronting the immediate realities of social life as objective, natural, and given, and always transforming them with their own work.[79]

Thus, we see an extraordinary reconstruction of nature, law, politics, and technology in creating a water system that made urban Southern California possible and that today is taken for granted, almost natural. Or we see a sprawling military industrial complex of Navy and Air Force bases, aircraft factories, and technology suppliers constructed at the initiative of local city builders and now a fixture of Southern California life. Or we see archetypes of anti-cities, created by business entrepreneurs in reaction against the problems of Eastern U.S. cities. What started out as an attack on the prevailing structure of urbanism soon became the new structure of urbanism. What started out as one-off development innovations were quickly adopted as set pieces of city building. What couldn't be done soon became what must be done.[80]

History's great strength is in the complexity of social change it can describe. Marc Weiss traces the transformation of home building as a simple, small-scale business into the sophisticated, integrated, highly-institutionalized large-scale industry of community building. When we look at any suburban community today it appears to have just grown. But when we understand the process by which entrepreneurs built their corporations, organized their associations, penetrated the nascent practice of city planning, created the legal and regulatory frameworks for their industry, invented new financial arrangements, and shaped the political environment in which they worked, we can see that the American urban landscape was hardly "determined." As Weiss put it,

> The key point to emphasize is that 'the possibilities' in historical action do not simply refer to a passive determinism based on technological innovations and macroeconomic cycles. Technological and institutional changes, government and industry policies, were consciously created and shaped with the purpose of achieving the goal of community building.[81]

Yet, as much as this industrial structure was intentionally created, it has also become for all those involved in the industry or touched by it what William Cronon liked to call "second nature."[82]

Cronon's own story is an even better illustration of the paradoxes of "structuration." He chronicled the growth of the intricate web of connections between country and city, nature and marketplace, Chicago and its hinterland. We now understand these systems of markets, exchange, finance, regulation, transportation, processing, husbandry, agronomy, and more, as taken for granted elements of the whole way of life in urban America. Yet Cronon shows in railroads, lumber, grain, meat, marketing, and finance capital, how these systems were invented piece by piece. Even the waving wheat of the great prairie was a human invention as was its transubstantiation from product to commodity to abstract financial instrument. The great irony is that those most involved in marshaling stupendous resources of cultural innovation were among the most likely to describe themselves as if they had no choice in how they reacted. The entrepreneurs were the most committed determinists, always talking, for example, about how "natural advantages" favored Chicago as a center of railroad development. But, as Cronon argues, "the railroads centered on Chicago not because nature ordained that they had to do so – nature made no such pronouncements – but because investors and everyone else who acted on booster theories proclaimed they should do so." Thus we see the power in the theories themselves, not so much the material conditions they sought to describe. The action, the power, is fundamentally cultural, not natural.[83]

Harvey tells similar stories about the historical development of more pervasive and interlocking social disciplines of money, time, and space. He describes the creation of practices of commodity exchange and monetization and how such practices came to reduce all things to a money value so that "they all float with the same specific gravity in the constantly moving stream of money."[84] He notes, as Cronon does, the invention of railroad standard time and later the setting of global standards for time, time zones, and "the beginning of the global day" and how these cast "... a sort of chronological net in which daily life was caught."[85] Likewise he notes the transformation of land ownership from something governed by long-standing communal claims and obligations to a "freely alienable" commodity, standardized as much as it can be by increasingly sophisticated practices of mapping and rules of law. Singly, but especially together, money, time, and space are "concrete abstractions" which govern daily life.

> Prices, the movements of the clock, rights to clearly marked spaces, form the frameworks within which we operate and to whose signals and significations we perforce respond as powers external to our individual consciousness and will. And no matter how fiercely the spirit of revulsion and revolt may occasionally flare, the tight norms defined by such concrete abstractions are by now so deeply entrenched that they appear almost as facts of nature.[86]

Unfortunately, Harvey is less interested in the transient careers of these practices than he is in their current power. He allows that to challenge these concrete abstractions is to "challenge the central pinions of our social life." Such revolts are likely, in Harvey's view, but necessarily futile. No doubt that these practices are deeply entrenched and are a vital part of a capitalist social order. On the other hand, they are for the most part only a few hundred years old. Where are they going? What kind of resistance will alter their course?[87]

One of Raymond Williams' most unusual and useful contributions was to propose a set of terms to describe the historical status or stage of development of any cultural formation – that is, any structure. These terms constitute a kind of generic temporal trajectory for structure, marking the approximate life cycles, perhaps, of any regime. He identified *institutions* as the crucial contemporary manifestation of cultural regimes, encompassing the current realities of family, school, state, and others. Such institutions can be seen, variously, as buttressed or undermined by *traditions* brought forward from the past. Traditions, Williams suggested, can be "dominant", "residual", or "emergent," but they are always selective, mobilizing meanings for current purposes. The ideological equipment of tradition can be used to challenge a current regime or to reinforce one, but the making of tradition or its use is always purposeful. *Formations,* in Williams taxonomy, encompass the active and emergent forces in cultural life, those elements seeking to renovate or overturn or perhaps even restore the current institutional order. Most ephemeral in this scheme is Williams' idea of a *structure of feeling*. This denotes those cultural movements that are so diffuse and so new that they cannot be fully named or described. All that has emerged of it visibly is the *feeling*, yet it is powerful enough that it must be recognized as a *structure*.[88]

What eventually became the "Portland way of planning" solidified from such a diffuse structure of feeling, coalescing from many different impulses in many different sites; becoming in the late 1960s and early 1970s a movement and a formation; since then institutionalizing itself in the structure of government, politics, law, and development economics; and now calling on its own traditions for support. But if the process of cultural evolution is scaled in time, it is also measured in the complexity and scope of cultural productions. Institutions are composed of many different kinds of organizations from simple to complex, families, companies, government bureaus, parties, and associations. These organizations, in turn, manifest a myriad of discrete

practices. In the current framework, these include planning, architecture, real estate development, land use law, democratic practices both representative and direct, bureaucratic regulation, civil engineering, and many more. Each of these practices, again in turn, is animated by a particular set of concepts, terms, and meanings. Institutions, organizations, practices, and meanings do not nest neatly one inside the other like Russian dolls. But they describe the relevant scales of cultural production, and along with Williams' tradition, institution, formation, and structure of feeling, suggest a usable framework for understanding the processes of "structuration" in time and scope.

What remains to be repeated is that meaning produced through language is at the heart of the entire cultural process. "So long as men and women continue to justify their conduct by reference to values," Scott writes, the struggle for the symbolic high ground between groups and classes will remain an integral part of any conflict over power." This is true, but it describes only one aspect of the role of language, meaning, and values in the workings of power and the dialectical relationship between structure and action. Smith, among others who have rejected the crude Marxist idea of a primary "base" in the mode of production and a secondary cultural "superstructure," argues that "the study of culture cannot be separated from the study of structure," that "the two are an inexorably linked duality." I would go one step farther to say that culture and structure are no more distinct and separate than are "base" and "superstructure." Culture is the structure and vice versa. And the enzyme, the catalyst, the active ingredient in all of this is language.[89]

Notes for Chapter 2.

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Chapter 3. Politics and the City

Introduction

A wide range of topics need to be discussed on the way to a meaningful interpretation of case studies in Portland community planning. These include the urban development process and "the production of space"; urban politics, especially issues of community power and "urban regime" formation; the practice of urban planning and its shifting ideologies and alliances; the now-pervasive practices of citizen participation in planning; the insistent focus on the neighborhood as a site of political and planning action; and a variety of issues in the practice of democratic politics at the local scale.

Many observers, from the Right as well as the Left, have understood the objects of these discussions as either structural or determined by structure. That is, they have been seen as manifestations of larger-scale forces, or they *are* such forces. For example, from the crude Marxist perspective, the capitalist mode of production and the logic of capital accumulation are understood to determine the patterns of urban development. "Mainstream" observers use different terms to describe a similar dynamic. From these perspectives, the patterns of alliance in urban politics are seen as determined by the position of actors in relation to the values they place on urban space – for daily use or for the creation of wealth. The reality, I believe, is much more complex.[1]

My intention here is to re-read all of these objects of discussion as structural, but structural in the sense defined in my discussion in Chapter 2. In this frame, practices of local planning and citizen participation are as much structural as are practices of real estate development and public sector capital investment. Citizens criticizing proposed development as placing "profits before people" and individual capitalists working to "make a fair profit" on their projects are each examples of conscious agents working to change the city. Both are responding to structural conditions as well as using the resources found in structure to achieve their ends. There's no logical reason to describe what citizens do as merely agency while we chalk up to structure what business people do. Nor is there any reason to believe that what these citizens do is determined while what the developer does is determining. Both struggle to find agency in the restrictions and resources of structure. Both work within a matrix of meaning, language, practices, and institutions to get what they want.

My goal here is to describe that matrix, focusing first on the urban development process in general, then the political arrangements that have developed to govern that process. In the subsequent chapter, I turn toward more specific practices of city planning, citizen participation, and neighborhood action, before closing with a discussion of key issues in democratic theory and practice.

The social production of urban space

Many scholars have denounced both Marxist and "mainstream" explanations of the urban process as reductionist, deterministic, and totalizing. What they mean when they say these views are reductionist is that the stories they tell about city making are just too simple to describe the complexity of what really happens. The purpose of theory, of course, is to extract some kind of essential meaning from the flesh of experience. It is meant to be abstract and simpler than the reality. But when a theory doesn't allow for details that matter, the simplifying has gone too far. Likewise, what they mean when they say these views are deterministic is that they erase from their accounts not only the messy, accidental, and unforeseen in human affairs, but the purposeful actions of people as well. Finally, when the critics say these views are totalizing they only mean that they purport to explain everything. Of course, to the extent that they explain anything, they can only explain part of something. History isn't a machine, and society isn't a system or a unified object. It is messy, complicated and full of struggle and no single key can unlock its meaning.[2]

One such body of theory was produced by the Chicago School sociologists, Park, Burgess, McKenzie, and many others.[3] The main problem with their urban ecology theory was that it understood the city as an organic whole, as a kind of unified pseudo-biological being. As such, the city had a nucleus, growth rings, natural areas, and it developed according to self-equilibrating processes. Neighborhoods traversed clearly defined life cycles. The city as a whole lived and grew and decayed according to seemingly natural laws. These views left out of consideration "such factors as class conflict, the voluntarist impulse in environmental decision making, the vested interests operating in space, the influence of government programs and policies, the changing nature of economic organization, and the production of uneven spatial development." The biological metaphor distracts us from the many and conflicting actors in the urban process and leads us to imagine that the city itself is the only agent. Gottdiener rightly indicts urban ecology as "an ideology highly biased toward interests of the capital class" because it presented the urban process as somehow natural and not political, a way of describing "stratified urban social organization which does not mention class, status, or power..." If we don't understand the urban process as a fundamentally social and political process, then we don't understand anything.

Second and third generation urban ecologists such as Hawley, Berry, and Kasarda would acknowledge the social nature of the process, Gottdiener allows, but their loyalty to the biological metaphor continued to hamper their thinking.[4]

One aspect of the urban ecology view is the understanding of market mechanisms in the city making process as somehow "natural" and therefore neutral. Since markets in land, housing, urban amenities, and public services are subject to the "laws" of supply and demand, the argument goes, if we get a particular form of urbanism it must be because "we" wanted it. This is not quite the case. Markets are real, but they are social and collective processes, not merely mechanisms for agglomerating millions of individual preferences. Markets are cultural constructions that make some outcomes more likely than others. The work of conscious agents in markets (car wash developers as well as bicycle activists, for example) is still crucial but they act against the structure of the market as much as they act through it.[5]

Such markets are not made up mainly of willing buyers and sellers. They are made up of developers, venture capitalists, builders, architects, planners, inspectors, construction financiers, surveyors, title insurers, property insurers, real estate brokers, mortgage companies, accountants, attorneys and more, each pursuing their own specialized practice from a particular institutional position and animated by particular understandings of what is good, and what is necessary or possible, as much as by what customers want. Governmental action permeates the entire process and is, in turn, conditioned by it in the form of property law, tax policy, land use regulation, professional certification, building codes, and much more. Markets are real, but they are cultural, not natural. They are made, not found. And they are dense, complicated, arcane expressions of myriad interests, public and private, not a simple meeting of supplies and demands. Those who wish to create a different mode of urban life must address the market at this level.[6]

Another perspective on the urban process holds that major changes in city form are determined by technological advances. The changing form of cities has often been described in terms of the evolution of transportation technology – steam power, the street railway, the automobile, the interstate highway system – and other advances – structural steel, the elevator, air conditioning. Without a doubt, the development of such technologies are structuring events that have had profound impact on the character of urban life. But we ought never lose sight of the fundamental fact that any given technology is invented, shaped, deployed, and propagated with specific intention to serve particular human goals. While, again, it seems like the most important of these technologies have been propelled by a kind of internal logic, the logic is always ours, not the machine's. As William Cronon, the eminent environmental historian, points out, Chicago didn't become the rail capital of the Midwest because of its "natural advantages." It did so because of the work of economic and political urban entrepreneurs. Sam Bass Warner's Boston suburbs

didn't grow up because of streetcars; they grew because traction magnates and real estate speculators worked hand in hand to create new living environments. Technologies help make alternative visions of the city possible, but they don't provide the original impetus. Note, for example, that the first London suburbs were created without the help of any new transportation technology. The desire of the well-to-do to get away was enough.[7]

Certain Marxist views contain similar errors. Unlike the urban ecologists, they attend closely to issues of power, inequality, and conflict. But they ignore both the complexity of the city making process and the role of intentional agents in it. When Harvey announces his intention to explore "how capitalism creates a city in its own image," he is talking about how the specific character of urban life is a product or reflection of "the mode of production" and the "logic of capital accumulation." As Gottdiener says, this is far too simplistic.[8]

The problem is not with the general idea of a "mode of production." I believe there is such a thing and that it has a strong relationship with the type of urbanism prevalent in a given capitalist era. The problem is with the idea of a mode of production that is equivalent to the Marxist concept of "base" where the process of city making is relegated to the subordinate category of "superstructure." This portrays ostensibly fundamental economic arrangements as determinants of secondary cultural products. Yet the mode of production itself is an expansive and elaborate cultural product. The patterns of ownership, technologies of production, organization of labor, management of demand, mechanisms of distribution – the "mode of production" in detail – are all cultural constructions. As such they are both determined and determining. In this context, the process of city making is neither more or less significant than any other part of the capitalist process. Likewise, our values in urban life, and the practices and institutions that mobilize and perpetuate them, might have independent status. Consequently, the concept of the "mode of production" is too broad to be very useful.

Harvey, nevertheless, identifies several crucial aspects of the "logic of capital accumulation." These include the incessant pressure for expansion of markets, production, consumption and profits; how "the domestic economy must steadily give way before the expansion of capitalist commodity production"; how the reorganization of the work process brought about the separation of workplace from domestic sphere; how the "search for 'authentic community and a 'sense of place' must be pursued ever more fiercely against "the community of money"; and the repetitive process of building, destruction, and rebuilding that is characteristic of capitalist urbanization. What he fails to underscore, however, is the fact that all of these tendencies are products of culture. These are structural, but they are structures of the kind produced in human meaning and language. As such, they are not the effects of some kind of

generalized and disembodied "capitalism," but the work of capitalism's adherents, against its opponents, and with the acquiescence of the resigned.[9]

Harvey, among others, also errs in depicting capitalism as a kind of unified system, not only driven by determining logics, but also producing results that are consistently functional for its own interests. Gottdiener argues that capitalist process of city making is "not necessarily rational. Sometimes it aids capital formation (by making primary production more efficient) and sometimes it interferes with capital formation (by overbuilding, destroying still useful building capital, siphoning off capital from primary circuit activities)." The urban development process is anarchic, conflictual, often unpredictable. It serves some fractions of capital better than others. It brings benefits to capital, but it also imposes costs. Even with clear and ostensibly objective criteria of rationality, individual capitalists sometimes fall prey to what Sir Isaac Newton called "the madness of human beings" in financial dealings. Yet, for Harvey, the rationality and cohesion of the system is overwhelming. For example, he depicts policies supporting broad based homeownership as functional for securing the "allegiance of at least a segment of the working class to the principle of private property" and for driving fissures through otherwise natural working class alliances. Homeownership as a cultural value has no independent meaning in such an account. For that matter, all values, practices, and institutions are to be seen merely as sub-functions in the larger processes of capital and labor.[10]

This functionalist view of the urban process portrays the state as an integral element of the capitalist mode of production. The reality is that government sometimes acts in the interests of capital, sometimes on behalf of labor, and often in its own institutional interests. Gottdiener acknowledges that various capital interests often get what they want from government. Yet the local state, especially, remains "an open forum for the play of social forces and the interests they generate." Poulantzas suggests that the state is a "condensation of class struggle" and "not a tool of any one class as is often claimed by economist Marxist theories." Katznelson observes the expanding role for the state in city building from the 19th to the 20th century, and not to impose the logic of capital, but to mediate it. If we don't grant "ontological independence to states, state-building, and politics," Katznelson argues, there is no way for us to see the specific role that planning plays in the urban process.[11]

Perhaps the most important advance in the 1970s and 1980s in theorizing the city was the widespread recognition of the fundamental role of space in the urban process. The irony here cannot be subtle. Waking up to the idea that the city is about space is a little like discovering that flight has something to do with air. Leading Marxist thinkers, taking their cue from Lefebvre, acknowledged that "historical materialism has to be upgraded... to historical-geographical materialism." Yet they were still talking about finding the "determinants" of city form in the

"mode of production." It fell to others to give due emphasis to Lefebvre's revelation that space was the equal of labor and capital in any analysis of capitalism. Indeed, Lefebvre's interpreters understood there was something even more profound about the role of space.[12]

Urban space is "not just a built environment," but also a "force of production," an "object of consumption," and of "political struggle," and an "instrument of control by the state." Space is not merely a "reflection of society, but one of society's fundamental material dimensions." Space is always "political and strategic." In urban politics at the local scale "spatial concentration can be a political resource for promoting the interests and independence of individual city neighborhoods." It is this "multifaceted nature" of space that was for Lefebvre its "most important theoretical aspect."[13] Space, Gottdiener wrote,

> Cannot be reduced merely to a location or to the social relations of property ownership – it represents a multiplicity of sociomaterial concerns. Space is a physical location, a piece of real estate, and simultaneously an existential freedom and a mental expression. Space is both the geographical site of action and the social possibility for engaging in action.[14]

Whatever the impact of advances in transportation or telecommunications technology, all social and political relations must at some point *take place*. Democratic practices at the fine grain require some kind of face to face meeting, some connection to particular places. Even the global movements of capital must sometime come to rest and face the possibility of political struggle in particular places. Cultural production, likewise, to be most powerful must also take place. "As Lefebvre writes, 'whatever is not invested in an appropriate space retreats into vain signs and significations.'" This is not to say that signs and significations are always in vain – only when they do not occupy space, only when they fail to take place.[15]

Lefebvre's second crucial theoretical observation was that urban space tends to be divided between "abstract space" and "social space" – the former being space as a commodity, produced and exchanged for profit, the latter being space as used for the support of everyday life. Logan and Molotch used the terms "exchange value" and "use value" to describe the same concepts. These polar tendencies produced the same sorts of conflicts, between residents "who use place to satisfy the essential needs of life," and "entrepreneurs, who strive for financial return, ordinarily achieved by intensifying the use to which their property is put." For Harvey's "community of money," the city is made up of "relative spaces to be built up, torn down, or abandoned as profitability dictates," regardless of its impact on the "absolute space" of place-bound community. The conflict between use values and exchange values, between social space and abstract space, is inevitable because what is most profitable to produce for the entrepreneur is not always what is most socially necessary for people to consume. Moreover, such abstract space has come more and more to dominate the "integrated space of social communion." The

friction between use values and exchange values, therefore, is a fundamental source of conflict in the politics of urban development.[16]

It is hard to imagine two other theoretical terms that have such palpable referents. When we focus on the idea of "abstract space" we see in our mind's eye, perhaps, stacks of empty office space gleaming in an evening sky, so many square yards of carpet, so many electrical outlets, so many acoustical cubicles. Or we see the strip plazas, the office parks, power centers, shopping malls, and festival marketplaces, all in our imagination somehow vacant, measured simply in dollars per square foot. Likewise, we are familiar with the processes by which such spaces are created, how the old houses, residential hotels, small retail shops, or neighborhood taverns are demolished, or how the farmlands or woodlands are bulldozed, to make a site for these new buildings. The old spaces are covered in memory, knit together both by the common spaces of community – street, yard, and sidewalk – and by a web of human relationships. The new spaces are cold, flat, hard, devoid of any meaning save the meaning of money. That the battle over these two visions of city life is so harsh, so passionate, is no surprise.

Like many such theoretical constructions, the use value/ exchange value dichotomy is powerful but crude. It illuminates an important truth. Those who would restructure the urban environment to intensify its use for the benefit of higher profits often find themselves in conflict with place-based community forces who want to protect existing environments because they support the daily lives of residents. But when we come to consider such battles on a case by case basis we find that some don't fit the mold while others are just more complicated than the straightforward struggle between capital and community that the theory predicts.

One way to look at this is to understand that we often attach both types of values to the same solid objects. As Logan and Molotch acknowledge, "material use of place cannot be separated from psychological use." The family home can be a repository of memory and meaning for family members. It is likely to be the family's largest financial investment as well. A neighborhood can be a place where particular ethnic or social groups find space and voice to produce collective meaning. A neighborhood may also be a particular product or price point in a metropolitan housing market. What's more the same neighborhood could be both things at the same time. Castells observed the development of San Francisco's Castro neighborhood as a place where gays could freely and public express themselves. He was moved to conclude that "when a space becomes meaningful, exchange value is no longer the dominant issue." Yet the meaning gays attached to this urban territory was also connected with a steep increase in residential property values in the Castro. In the end, Gottdiener advises, "interests associated with the use values and with the exchange values of space are interconnected and contingently related."[17]

Another complication of the dichotomy between use values and exchange values is that the social groups that hold any of these values are radically heterogeneous. Aesthetic judgments about the built environment, symbolic attachments to place, or norms of appropriate use of space are likely to differ, not only between capital and community, but between the different racial, ethnic, class, and lifestyle fragments of community. Likewise, different segments of capital are likely to disagree on modes of development, levels of investment, and strategies for economic growth. It is not hard to see how conflicts could break out between retired single-family homeowners and twenty-something apartment dwellers, between large-scale property developers and small business people, or between elements of the tourism industry and the petro-chemical industry that happen to be geographically proximate to one another.[18]

Finally, a useful critique of the use value/ exchange value dichotomy in theories of urban development must take account of the fact that both use values and exchange values are ultimately values. They are cultural inscriptions on the hard surface of the city, which is to say that values placed on urban space do not inhere in the object. They are the result of the social production of meaning. Such meanings are social and collective, and they become structural, but they are also malleable and contingent, which is what leaves space for transformation. Particular meanings are by no means inevitable. The meaning we attach to an event or a place could be different than it is. Nor are such meanings only about the social identity or collective experience of a community. The production of meaning in urban space also includes the specification of economic values. The definition of such values as status, privacy, and image is part of what defines the economic value of, say, office space for a corporate headquarters. Even issues of functionality and productivity and their translation into money values is part of a cultural process. Use values and exchange values, therefore, are both structural, but also subject to change and open to struggle.

Some observers from the political economy perspective have imagined that the battle over the priority of use values versus exchange values in urban space must run parallel to the battles between labor and capital in general. Labor has been drawn into a "Faustian bargain" by capital, Harvey writes, one in which labor receives "a packaged relation to nature in the living place as a just and adequate compensation for an alienating and degrading relation to nature in the workplace." And if labor does not agree to such a bargain, "capital must impose it because the landscape of capitalist society must in the final analysis respond to the accumulation needs of capital, rather than to the very real human requirements of labor." Harvey's classical Marxism seems disappointed that the urban development process does not "etch clear class and social distinctions into the social spaces of the city." Class and social distinctions are, indeed, written on the city, but their messages are unclear – complex, subtle, sometimes ambiguous, and not always

in parallel with the battle for class privilege. In the face of such confusion, Harvey holds fast to the idea that "class struggle" must take priority over "community action."[19]

For Katznelson, the social patterns in city space were simultaneously an opportunity for organization of the labor movement and part of a process undermining class struggle as the focus of political struggle in general. "In the sharply divided spaces of cities like Manchester, workers became 'conscious of the fact that they form a separate class,'" he wrote. Yet place-based and face-to-face politics in the neighborhood were not always enough to "give the class collective agency." Moreover, it was the historical separation of work from residence that "provided a material basis for the development of dispositions and patterns of collective action based on territory, ethnicity, religion, race, recency of immigration and other non-class criteria." Lay on top of this the rise of global capital, the emergence of the information economy, or the growth of feminism and other forms of identity politics and the significance of class in the urban process was severely reduced.[20]

For Gottdiener, however, the relationship between class struggle and the battle over values in space could not be displaced because the two were never parallel to begin with. The battle over city space actually cut across class lines "because it is not produced by relations of production alone." Marx's conception of a distinct land-holding class had lost its meaning because "the power of landholdings as a means of acquiring wealth exists in modern society for anyone willing to claim it – worker or capitalist," whether in the form of union pension funds or small real estate entrepreneurs. Even within the fevered pursuit of exchange values there was nothing to ensure that the economic interests of the participants – and therefore their political interests – would be compatible with one another. The challenge of analysis that stemmed from such circumstances was beyond what Marxism had achieved. Gottdiener concluded: "It is only through an analysis of the interaction between class fractions and racial, gender, ethnic and consumption groupings that the new socio-spatial cleavages can be grasped."[21]

Castells added to this debate the concept of the city as a realm of "collective consumption." As Blackman explains, "the city is a shared environment, its resources demanding shared management if they are to meet common needs." Readings of the concept of "collective consumption" vary, however. Sometimes they are merely relocations of the class struggle, as Castells' case study of the Glasgow Rent Strike of 1915 indicated. Other times the fight with the state to maintain the city as a realm of social consumption connects political actors across class lines, as his study of neighborhoods in Madrid demonstrated. Saunders agrees that the reaction to the "crisis of collective consumption" "cross-cuts traditional class divisions between manual workers, professional workers, and the petty bourgeois" because it affects them all, even those who have "remained aloof from the struggle against monopoly capital." Yet he concludes such

struggles are "fragmented," "localized," "strategically limited," "politically isolated," and a dead-end for those interested in the socialist project. Katznelson and Harvey would both agree.[22]

For Gottdiener, however, what is needed is not a return to conventional class-based struggle but the development of a "spatial praxis which is the concrete, material correlate of the more complex, multi-dimensional notion of class praxis." It is only through this that "abstract space can be destroyed." The collective consumption idea is useful in describing the class-cross-cutting nature of spatial conflict, but the demand that the state intervene is of a "limited radicalizing nature." Perhaps the difficulty lies in the economism of conventional Marxism. It is correct, perhaps, to describe the city as the sphere of collective consumption, but it is also woefully incomplete as an understanding of the urban experience. What is both produced and consumed in the city is not merely some array of goods and services, collective or individual. Rather, it is a "whole way of life." To see the environments of the city – traditional neighborhood, ghetto, subdivision, strip mall, freeway interchange – as some bundle of goods and services or amenities is akin to seeing a person as some collection of cells or their organs. The social production of urban space is the collective creation of city culture, and to challenge the modes of production in this case – whether it results in socialism or something else – is to demand the creation of a new and better way of life.[23]

The lust for elegant theory unwisely impels the theorist to devise tools that can lift the entire weight of an object of theorizing all at once without other assistance. The urban development process is too complex to budge with a single lever. What is needed, to torture the metaphor just a bit more, is a whole box of tools, specialized for discrete tasks and employed with a clear understanding of their appropriate uses and limitations. The concept of markets is useful in understanding the urban development process so long as we keep in mind that markets are not natural processes but human constructions conditioned by law, politics, and culture in general. The idea that there is a logic of capital accumulation is also useful so long as we understand that a logic is a cultural construction and not some kind of natural law driving people to act. The idea that urban development is a matter of class conflict is still useful so long as we see that the contemporary fractioning of both capital and labor along a variety of lines has made the issue far more complicated than the marxian two-class model would allow.[24] Even the idea that struggles over urban space organize around opposing values is useful so long as we understand the ambiguities and limitations of the concept and recognize that values are cultural matters. But none of these tools will get the job done on its own. The most satisfying explanations of the urban process must rely on a multiplicity of factors, as DeLeon used in making sense of San Francisco's politics. Many things came together there to make the "anti-regime" possible. It is only when all the vectors can be assembled that we see the full picture in all of its complexity. [25]

If there is any overarching concept offered here it is simply that the "production of urban space" is a social process, as Lefebvre, Gottdiener, and others have argued. Explanations that emphasize complexity, reciprocity of effects, historical change, and conscious action within structural bounds make by far the most sense. As Smith suggested, the city making process is "best understood as the long-term outcomes of social actions taken by both economic and political actors operating within a complex and changing matrix of relations between global and national political-economic forces and national and local social and political processes." Whatever other concepts they might employ – markets, capital accumulation, the role of the state, the organizing valences in space – any explanation must ultimately acknowledge that "the reality of place is always open, making its determination an inherently social process." Given that our sociality is rooted in language and meaning, the social production of urban space is also profoundly a cultural process.[26]

Community power and regime formation

The study of community power and the more recent focus on urban regimes encompasses a long and involved intellectual genealogy. Across half a century, our understanding of these topics has grown in sophistication and discrimination. At the same time, however, the object of our study – politics and the city – has also changed a great deal. If our theoretical frameworks for understanding city politics have grown more complex it is because they had to. The narrow, coherent elites that Floyd Hunter wrote about have become fragmented and contentious. The stable categories of actors in city politics have changed roles and identities. Globalization, changing federal policies, and metropolitan deconcentration have divided the attention of property-oriented elites. Changes in the terrain of local politics – voting rights, interest group politics, the neighborhood revolution, institutionalized participation, diversity politics – have made new formations possible at the grassroots. While others will look for the key causal factors behind this trajectory, I am interested in tracing the dialectical interplay of structure and agency in the development of city politics. It is, I will argue, a matter of cultural production and a process in which social relations are structured through the exertion of meaning and language.[27]

The benchmark in the study of community power is Hunter's study of "Regional City" – Atlanta, Georgia. What he found in Atlanta was a tightly-organized business elite with preemptive control of politics in that city. It is true that his reputational methodology[1] was predisposed to

[1] The reputational methodology, in simplest terms, sought to map the power structure by asking influentials in the community who they considered to be most powerful. The resulting sociograms were supposed to describe the structure of community power. The method was considered to be flawed because it relied on the subjective judgments of informants – statements of reputation – rather than any more objective measure of power.

discover exactly the kind of power structure that it did. Yet there's no particular reason to believe that power in Atlanta was not as unified as he described. Mid-century was a time when hierarchical social structures still held sway in America. And the history is consistent with those who succeeded Hunter, even after things were different. But the image of a unified and commanding local business elite proved very durable. Even as the "anti-regime" began to emerge in San Francisco, Chester Hartman was focusing on the "overwhelming domination" of development politics by business interests since the Second World War in that city. Like Hunter's Atlanta, Hartman's San Francisco was ruled by an elite tightly integrated through appointments to boards of directors, participation in civic organizations, memberships in country clubs, class affiliations, and close personal relationships. "The connections between the business community and public policy," in San Francisco, "run the gamut from massive plans to intimate personal ties."[28]

Robert Dahl's New Haven study is the other archetype in the debate over community power. He traced a two-century evolution of the New Haven power structure from "oligarchy to pluralism" beginning with the "splitting off of wealth and political influence from social standing and education" as resources of influence. By the mid-20th century the same sort of "economic notables" who ostensibly controlled everything in Atlanta were in New Haven "simply one of the many groups out of which individuals sporadically emerge(d) to influence the policies and acts of city officials." Dahl concluded that power in New Haven was "specialized" with individuals who were influential in one sector of public activity, for example school politics, but not particularly influential in another, like urban renewal. Moreover, these specialized influentials arose from a range of socio-economic positions, not just the upper class. Domhoff's bracing rebuttal then took Dahl to task, not only for methodological approaches that obscured what Domhoff took as a well-integrated ruling class in New Haven, but for ignoring the connections between a local ruling class and the national corporate community.[29]

What made this debate so barren and ultimately unsatisfying is that it was driven by ambitions that were largely beside the point. On one side was a desire to prove that the political power of economic elites was all-encompassing. On the other side was a wish to show that democracy was working pretty much as it should. Both projects were aimed not so much at explanation as they were at the manufacture of ideological – and hence, rhetorical – weapons, one for radical change, one for continuity. The irony is that the social formations that Hunter and Dahl each examined were not that different from one another. Moreover, political power is never all-encompassing and democracy is a practice which can never reach its ideal, however that ideal is defined. What truly was remarkable about both Atlanta and New Haven was the extent to which political and business entrepreneurs were able to organize enough power to get anything

done. The entropic forces working against any power structure are enormous. We fool ourselves, once again, if we continue to think of "structure" as something permanent and fixed. They are fluid and dynamic, and it is as difficult to keep structures of power together as it is to oppose them.

Greer, a contemporary of Hunter and Dahl, worried not about the manipulation of politics by local elites, but about the inability of an elite to create the conditions by which any decisions at all could be made. "When the 'Big Mules' of Cleveland or St. Louis try to help reorganize local government of the metropolis," Greer reported, "their projects go down in defeat at the polls." Such elites "reign but do not rule," a signal of "the end of positive government." A generation later, things had only gotten worse. Yates declared that the city was "ungovernable," beset by "street-fighting pluralism" and "incapable of producing coherent decisions, developing effective policies, or implementing state or federal programs." City government was "like a ship without a rudder, or perhaps with a hundred rudders pushing it in different directions." What the parties to the community power debate were missing, Yates said, was the fact that no direct relationship existed between power and the ability to get things done. The context of urban governance was too complex, variable, unstable, interdependent, and too much about "direct and well-crystallized conflicts about urban goods and services" to allow even the ostensibly powerful to call the shots. Wolfinger agreed. Formal authority in the city was too fragmented, policy-making power too dispersed, accountability too diffuse, and decision-making too remote from popular control for government to work. New Haven was actually an outlier, not an archetype. Their Mayor got people to work together and that was unusual.[30]

Stone's conception of the urban regime provided a way to transcend the sterile deadlock of the elite-pluralism debate. It acknowledged that the resources of power were distributed unequally, as Hunter, Hartman and others had argued, but it focused on the problem of producing positive governance that Greer, Wolfinger, and Yates had stressed. City politics for Stone was more a matter of "social production" rather than "social control." It had to do with fostering cooperation much more than compelling compliance. And because the formal powers of city government were seldom sufficient on their own to get things done, city politics was also about "the informal partnership between city hall and the downtown business elite." The partnership predictably involved the downtown business elite because the latter were so good at organizing the cooperation necessary to create positive policy or program. They had a clear interest in central city property and significant control of it. They were ideologically coherent, socially adept, and organizationally disciplined. Moreover, they had access to "slack resources" – the foundation gift, meeting venue, cash contribution, and the "loaned executive" – that make joint projects possible and credible.[31]

Stone's description of regime dynamics spoke eloquently to the true character of political power. The Atlanta regime rested on two major power bases, the downtown business community and the black political establishment. Both were noteworthy for their internal ideological coherence. But their mutual programmatic compatibility was not obvious and had to be constructed for the purpose. They worked together to gain power and their success bound them to one another with a kind of planetary magnetism. Stone wrote:

> As the circle of cooperating allies grows, its effectiveness becomes cumulatively greater. The governing coalition has a kind of gravitational pull; as its own weight increases, its capacity to attract other civic entities increases. As the network of civic cooperation makes its presence felt, others realize that cooperation pays and noncooperation does not.[32]

But, like physical gravity, the gravity of political power pulled in both directions. The downtown elite could not do anything it wanted. It had constituents to satisfy and partners to consult with, as well as opponents to mollify. "Elite power in Atlanta is therefore constrained," Stone wrote, "not so much by the countervailing power of others outside the coalition as by the maintenance needs of the governing coalition itself."[33]

For those outside of the circle of cooperation, the prospect was dismal. The possibility of some kind of alternative regime formation was limited by the inability of white neighborhood organizations, historic preservationists, the black lower class, the arts community, and many others to act coherently, even in their own interests. Getting such disparate groups to cooperate with each other would be harder still. Yet, it must be said that the ideological and programmatic differences among the potential partners of the alternative regime were not qualitatively different than those between the partners in the reigning regime. And if they lacked the "slack resources" of the corporate sphere, they had other resources – human, material, and rhetorical – with which to promote the alternative regime. Stone cites Mayor Maynard Jackson's brief flirtation in the early 1970s with neighborhood organizations as the potential core of a new regime as evidence of the unlikelihood of such a new formation. The difficulties were real, but this experience was too narrow to draw any firm conclusions. Likewise, we should draw no conclusions from the possibilities for a neighborhood-based regime from the tenure of the self-isolating Dennis Kucinich in Cleveland.[34]

There is at least one other important aspect to the gravitational pull of regimes: they attract urban scholars. The most successful cases – New Haven, Atlanta, Chicago – draw the most attention and produce the most books. Unfortunately, concentrating on those cities where the gravitational field of cooperation has been most commanding distracts our attention from one of the most important facts about regimes: they can quickly turn to ashes. Citizens of Buffalo are not

the only ones who accept as "normal" a politics of chaos, conflict, and immobility. Entropy is a universal force in politics, too. Any regime is likely to develop contradictions it cannot easily solve. Organizations age, issues change, alliances shift, policies create new problems, political movements become corrupted, and the demographic ground rumbles beneath the feet of regimes. Stone rightly puts an emphasis on "managing conflict and making adaptive responses to social change." But sometimes political entrepreneurs do not succeed, and eventually even the most successful regime becomes something else.[35]

Stone's theory of regimes is explicitly "structurational." It describes a power structure that is anything but static. The successful regime changes to accommodate change. Atlanta's bi-racial regime is noteworthy because it has absorbed so much change over the decades. Yet even this kind of continuity cannot offset the fact that the political arrangements in place in 1946 (the opening date for Stone's study) were qualitatively different than those in place in 1988 (the closing date), let alone in 2002.[36]

Far more typical are cities where the processes of structuration have led to significant discontinuities on the way from one kind of regime to another. Abbott presents the story of city politics in the Sunbelt as one of "the rise and decline of businessmen's government in one metropolis after another." The business centered regime was by no means the stable *status quo ante* in these cities. Rather it was the result of a "revolutionary decade" when "civic activists created or reinstated local growth machines." Local entrepreneurs in San Diego, Dallas, San Jose and San Antonio, as well as San Francisco and Los Angeles, used the military as a tool to promote local growth agendas. Growth regimes evolved in many of these cities but they all eventually evolved into something else again.[37]

The demise of urban renewal, the federal program that was the signature of the 1950s-era regimes, was strong evidence of the structural churning in city politics. James Q. Wilson would write as early as 1968 how "the coalition among liberals, planners, mayors, businessmen and real estate interests which originally made renewal political so irresistible has begun to fall apart." In San Francisco, everything changed over several decades, not just political arrangements, but also the landscape and the underlying demographics of the town. Some would suggest that the constant in such a history is the influence of business elites. But when middle-class "quality of life" values become part of the regime agenda, or when blacks, Hispanics, gays and others are incorporated in the pro-growth regime, or when a "neighborhood rebel" ascends to power, is nothing changed?[38]

Indeed, others have argued that urban regimes could be – and have been – made up of other stuff.[39] Stone is right about the significant advantages held by business elites in the process of regime formation. He is also right about the attraction that these capacities hold for others.

Most people like to associate with people who can get things done. But by shifting the focus of analysis from an urban ruling class simply assumed to hold durable power to an urban regime continuously working hard to organize fragile power, Stone has left room for those who would argue that an urban regime might be made up of different participants. The argument is no longer about the inherent power of capital, it's about the challenges of producing cooperation. There are three primary candidates for this position: middle class populations concerned about "quality of life" issues; small business people whose agenda is distinctly different from that of banks, utilities, and corporations; and black and Hispanic populations renowned for their electoral solidarities.

Castells identified "the emergence of a new urban middle class as a major force in the local society," one "committed to values of urban life, environmental quality, cultural identity, and decentralized self-management." Abbott has written convincingly about the role of "quality of life liberals," not only in the transformation of politics and planning in Portland, but all across the West. Such constituencies are concerned with cities as environments for living more than as machines for economic production. They are inclined to organize around "postmaterialist" as well as "distributional" issues. And they have their own resources of power: an expectation to be heard in public debate; strong skills in analysis and communication based in professional training; their own "slack resources" – many have control of their time despite full-time jobs; and a tactically strong defensive position in the geography of neighborhood.[40]

DeLeon cites Jane Jacobs and Roberto Unger on the importance of the role of small business people in local politics. Their "petty bourgeois radicalism" is as likely to serve as a force for change as it is for stability. Logan and Molotch suggest that retailers and professionals who cater to local markets have more in common with those they serve – middle class or otherwise – than they do with the main players in growth coalitions. Indeed, they often become some of the regime's fiercest opponents. Bud Clark in Portland was a good example of this tendency, and Harvey Milk in San Francisco showed how small business and gay community constituencies might be welded together.[41]

Ethnic minorities with strong solidarities, as well as other identity groups, can also be important players in alternative urban regimes. The resources they bring to the enterprise vary, however. When individuals share an experience, perspective, or set of values with other citizens based on common race, ethnic heritage, sexual identity, or subculture, they possess one of the bases for common political action. When the members of such groups live together in a defined urban territory – a neighborhood or a district – the basis for common action is further reinforced. When assumptions about shared experience and values are supported by real social networks – as opposed to Sennett's myth of "purified community" – this foundation can be even stronger. But

this is in the most general terms. What such communities do with their potential power is a matter that needs to be specified on a case by case basis. Black ghettoes may organize to gain a piece of the municipal enterprise. Gay ghettoes are more likely to demand control of urban space to free it from violence or to allow cultural expression. Women may organize to "take back the night" while the poor camp out to protest homelessness. Other ethnic communities, whether Asian, Hispanic, new or old Eastern European, to name a few may have other political agendas or none at all.[42]

These resources of power are both more and less potent than what white middle class homeowners possess. They are more potent because of the sense of difference that defines each group in relation to mainstream society. The sense of injury or deprivation they share has the potential to unite them in political struggle. All the better when they are geographically concentrated. Yet it is also possible that their sense of estrangement from the larger society may lead them inward to defeatism or inertia. The resources of power in territorially based identity communities are less potent because they lack the sense of entitlement and competence that often comes with middle class status. Affluent white folks expect to be heard. The Portlanders I write about demanded to be heard and didn't quit until they were. Their persistence arose partly out of their sense of solidarity with other white middle class homeowners. But it also emanated from a finely honed sense of dessert. There is no substitute for their conviction that the can, should, and must have their say, and it something that ethnic an cultural identity groups don't always have.[43]

Nevertheless, all of these forces face the same difficult task that some local business elites have mastered. As Stone, himself, warns, "opposition is inconsequential unless it can be organized on a mass basis and transformed into an alternative capacity to govern." For political forces based in neighborhoods, racial and ethnic minorities, and other identity groupings, the challenge is even greater. DeLeon talks about the organizational challenges of "hyperpluralistic" San Francisco where political power flows through "capillaries" rather than "major arteries." But the point is just as easily applied to a far more homogeneous city like Portland. For an alternative regime dedicated to the preservation of "use values" or "quality of life" political power will always run through the capillaries. To have staying power, such an alternative regime must be based on an infrastructure of block clubs, neighborhood associations, advocacy organizations, deliberative public forums, legislative processes, and administrative mechanisms. As DeLeon put it, if such alternative regimes are "to have any lasting impact" rather than merely "plow the sea" their "values and goals (must) be welded fast to structures of governmental authority."[44]

Hopes for an alternative regime rest heavily on the organizing power of ideology. The materialist bent in analysis makes ideology a secondary or derivative characteristic of political formations. Yet, in Williams' sense of the term, where ideology is neither "true" nor "false" but

inherent in the tissue of meaning that constitutes a "whole way of life," ideology is important for all regimes whether they tend to promote exchange values or uphold use values. Indeed, ideology is a key element in the constitution of growth coalitions. This kind of ideology emerges in public debate as simple terms or phrases. New Haven's Mayor Richard C. Lee could talk about the "collective benefits" of renewal – a construction with distinct echoes of Banfield and Wilson's "public regarding ethos." It was typical of urban renewal advocates to claim they acted in "the public interest." As Logan and Molotch concluded, "the growth ethic pervades virtually all aspects of local life." The Atlanta regime melded the ideologies of growth and of racial tolerance into a single phrase: "the city too busy to hate." Far from empty sloganeering, such a mantra has power to motivate and justify the policies, programs, and practices of the dominant regime. The importance of growth ideology in regime formation can also be seen in the newsworthiness of its reported demise. "The ideology of growth has been mortally wounded," Saunders wrote. "The vast ideological construct crumbles slowly but surely."[45]

Such reports were premature. But the importance of ideology in the construction of alternative regimes has also been demonstrated. DeLeon showed how a compound progressive ideology "that encourages an expanded role for government in achieving distributive justice, limits on growth, neighborhood preservation, and ethnic-cultural diversity under conditions of public accountability and direct citizen participation" could provide a structure of meaning robust enough to bring together San Francisco's divergent Left tendencies. Sonenshein also showed how the overlapping ideological positions of blacks and white liberals could provide the conditions for construction of a bi-racial regime. Abbott's "quality of life liberals" in Portland (and elsewhere) also manifest a clear ideological position in the formation of alternative regimes. Sonenshein's direct definition of ideology is helpful in understanding why. "Ideology... is a set of beliefs that deeply affects political opinions. Ideology shapes opinion, even at the expense of immediate self-interest." More than that, it motivates action. As DeLeon put it, "political ideology is the closest thing to a blueprint giving leaders an overall perspective on how to proceed."[46]

Race, ethnicity, and identity form another important resource for the formation of urban regimes, alternative or otherwise. But they also present a distinct set of problems. Identity groupings are a resource in that they can provide the electoral coalition with solid building blocs of votes. But it may also be difficult for regimes made up of such elements to make the transition from electoral coalition to governing coalition. The same cultural material that motivates blacks, Hispanics, other ethnic minorities, or gays to vote with solidarity and conviction also tends to separate them in various ways from other potential members of a coalition. Their solidarity is based on their difference; regimes are based on commonalities. How do we bridge what Stone called a "chasm"?[47]

Sonenshein identifies three key factors in the construction of the bi-racial regime: ideology (discussed above), interest, and leadership. Interest – the matter of who gets what – is not as straightforward as it appears. We may think of interests as objective material concerns. But interests are always values and therefore conditioned by the cultural standpoint of the holder. So, the interests of identity groupings may include policy, program, and employment, but also recognition, respect, and autonomy.[48]

When the goal is regime construction the issue of interests gets even more difficult. Sometimes interests of potential regime partners are clearly at odds, such as in New York City where white civil servants resisted incorporation by blacks and Latinos. Other times there is merely an available complementarity of interests. Although, as Stone points out, the downtown business elite and the black middle class establishment in Atlanta "both wanted change," they wanted different kinds of change. The Atlanta regime overcame extraordinary tensions. Abbott suggests that in earlier days of the partnership what blacks got was a lot less than they gave, a situation bound to generate strife. Likewise, there was tension within the black community, with city-wide leadership and neighborhood leadership defining their respective interests differently. While it is true, as Stone wrote, that "Atlanta has been governed by a biracial coalition for so long that it is tempting to believe that nothing else was possible," one must be struck by how very unlikely the history of this regime appears in retrospect.[49]

When we see the city simultaneously as a space of collective consumption, a site for democratic self-management at the local scale, and an opportunity for the expression of identity in space, it is a great deal easier to imagine the potential for political splintering than for coalition building. In some cases, it seems, the narrower the movement, the greater the potential for fragmentation. But the fundamental quandary remains. Individual groupings can be mobilized through appeals to shared identity. But the production of a governing coalition with an effective program for changing urban space must, at least sometimes, subordinate identity to the broader needs of the coalition. The tension between the two may not always be manageable.[50]

Sonenshein suggests that leadership may provide a solution. In this case, leadership has at least two dimensions. One is in the construction of policy and program proposals that have the capacity to span the differences among regime partners (more on this below). A second is in the construction of personal relationships between leaders, as well as members, of the constituent groupings. Although it may join blocs, factions, interests, and identity groupings, ultimately, any political alliance is one made in specific relationships among individuals. "While coalitions are indeed subject to the objective factors of ideology and self-interest," Sonenshein wrote, "the human dimensions of how elites learn to trust each other are too often overlooked." There is

much more to say about this, but the basic point is simply that coalition formation requires that people meet, talk, and know each other.[51]

Leadership in the form of political entrepreneurship and policy innovation is also a key element in the construction of any regime – growth-oriented or alternative. Mollenkopf warns us not to equate the idea of a "political entrepreneur" with the more general category of "politician." Not every politician is an entrepreneur "who gathers and risks political capital of support in order to reshape politics and create new sources of power by establishing new programs." The work of the political entrepreneur involves finding a way to "bring together widely different, competing, and even conflicting political actors and interests" in large part through policy innovation. The New Deal coalition of "liberal reformers, working class ethnics, and minorities" seemed obvious after the fact, but their coalescing was by no means natural or inevitable. They came together in cities around a specific set of policies which they could not have enacted by themselves.[52]

There are plenty of examples of this process, from the California cities that mobilized broad constituencies to win federal investments by the military as a primary strategy for economic growth to Pierre Clavel's "progressive cities" that used experiments with property rights, tax policy, rent control, development regulation, collective ownership, cooperative service provision, participation, and political reform as a way to organize new urban constituencies. The success of San Francisco's Citizens Alternative Plan was that it "welded three distinctive Left agendas to form a single progressive reform package." Always driving the process are "efforts of the partners in a governing coalition to mobilize a supporting constituency and preserve the cohesion of the coalition itself."[53]

Cities and their metropolitan regions are often depicted as radically constrained in their policy and political choices, either in relation to a U.S. federal system or the globalization of capital. What is remarkable in the literature, however, is how many scholars have underlined the relative independence of local politics and policy making. If cities are dependent to capital or to the state, Kantor suggests, it is because political actors have allowed it. Large scale economic processes are always a factor in city politics. But city politics also have their impacts on economic processes, and the two are defined in their mutual tension.[54] Moreover, sometimes the constraints are real; sometimes they are "ideological mystifications" – false beliefs about having no choice. In fact, localities have "a great deal more discretion... to shape economic and urban restructuring than is commonly believed." The unfortunate upshot of this sort of deterministic thinking is "a paralysis of urban policy." Even as rigorously skeptical an observer as Susan Fainstein has acknowledged the choices local political actors have in their pursuit of policies for planning, participation, and equity. What assured the triumph of the pro-growth agenda in New York City, she concludes, was not global capital or local growth coalitions but the absence of any

"popular mobilization" to the contrary. Local actors are influenced by broader forces, but the reverse is also true. "If, in fact, a unified egalitarian movement organized itself politically with sufficient force to direct policy," Fainstein writes, "then the very character of international competition would change."[55]

Such a political movement would be organized by as well as aimed at "directing policy." The policies or "solution sets" of political movements are what give them definition. And what are policies? In general, they are statements about what people want to achieve together and how they will do that. They begin as ideas and words, but they are pitched to organize political support. When the sponsoring coalition succeeds, they become authoritative statements – laws– which are specified and enacted in plans, programs, and budgets. Thereafter they assume material form as capital goods or public services which, in turn, further organize political support. Policies begin life as words and mature into solid things. Policies start out as expressions of agency and end up as structural.[56]

Planning and citizen participation can play a similar role in the construction of urban regimes, especially alternative ones. In cities as diverse as Hartford, Burlington, Cleveland, Santa Monica, Berkeley, Cincinnati, Dayton, Birmingham, St. Paul and Portland, political entrepreneurs combined broad-based citizen participation with public planning processes to help define new public agendas and organize previously silent constituencies. A large number of these cities experienced "some movement away from trust in markets and toward trust in substantive government, and some movement away from reliance on council and city administration and toward reliance on mass participation." These new constituencies "learned to use spatial concentration and neighborhood networks as political resources," working to perpetuate their influence through institution-building.[57]

Still, the claim persists that the drive to maximize exchange values in urban space and the imperative to promote growth in the city must necessarily organize urban politics. Peterson has gone so far as to assert that the metropolitan public interest in growth is unitary. That is, whether they know it or not, all residents depend on the benefits that will flow from growth. Local governments and their supporting regimes must promote "developmental" policies pitched to create and attract wealth. Likewise, they must avoid "redistributive" policies because of their tendency to drive away businesses and jobs, and to erode the tax base. What is left over in local politics – the "allocational" issues of routine service provision – is barely worth worrying about. Indeed, there is a tendency for ordinary people to come to the political aid of the "growth machine." When people see their own well-being as dependent on the economic health of their city, they "tend to rally to the cause of any dominant class alliance that seems to offer even temporary or partial relief from the threat of devaluation." If popular forces decide to oppose the

growth regime, there are many possibilities for struggle over the built environment. But, Harvey said, "the limits of tolerance for capital are nevertheless clearly defined." Or, as Hartman put it: "Should local government, pressed by popular protest movements, challenge business hegemony too greatly, threats of capital flight, and abandonment , with attendant job and tax revenue loss, serve to discipline the public sector. It is not a contest of equals."[58]

Peterson has been roundly criticized for producing a deterministic theory of urban governance and taking "much of the politics out of urban politics." While Peterson views growth machines as unified, instrumental, and goal driven, others see them as made up of groups and individuals with conflicting needs, values, and directions. Still others note that growth politics is "preeminently an institutional phenomenon," in which, for example, the patchwork of metropolitan governments is a creation of the regime intended to organize inequality, not merely a means through which its preferences are manifest. The situation is neither as neat or as natural as Peterson suggests.[59]

Many have attacked Peterson head-on, arguing that "local economic growth does not necessarily promote the public good." Growth machine "incentives" may weaken municipal finances, redistribute jobs rather than create new ones, sacrifice neighborhoods to redevelopment schemes, and harm the environment. The simplest argument in support of this critique is that economic development must inevitably produce both positive and negative effects which are bound to be unevenly distributed. Therefore it is true that "there is no implicit correlation between growth and well-being." Beyond that, any political regime will tend to take care of its own and, in this case, "ignore the accountability of these development interests to the neighborhoods, under-employed minority groups, or the public interest as a whole who are supposed to benefit from growth."[60]

Peterson's critics would say that he takes the side of those who promote "exchange values" in urban space over those who support "use values." But the Lefebvrean dichotomy does us less and less good the farther we go on. Neither the class struggle nor the battle over urban space can be said to run parallel to the polar construction of "social space" against "abstract space." As Gottdiener insisted, "the struggle between pro-growth and no-growth advocates does not reflect the class structure; rather it cuts across it." The classical growth coalition is based in contradictory political alliances with trade unions or minority groups joining with bankers and developers to push redevelopment. Temporary alliances between developers and neighborhoods may emerge when the situation makes it strategically beneficial to one or both of the parties. Primary segments of capital may predictably find themselves on opposite sides in these battles. Place-based property interests support all kinds of growth incentives; firms that produce for national and global markets support incentives only for themselves. Meanwhile, and somewhat

ironically, the strictest conditions are placed on the agents of growth in exactly those locales where growth is the strongest and the stiffest resistance to growth incentives might originate from the popular Right. Nor is the choice between growth and distribution simply a choice between private sector and public sector. "Both sectors can create growth and redistribute resources."[61]

The problem with the entire debate, however, is not only that use values and exchange values are inscribed together in the same solid objects and thus produce cross-cutting tendencies. It is also that both sides generally accept growth as a predefined and undifferentiated phenomenon, which it is not. Growth can create high-paying jobs or poorly-paid jobs. It can exacerbate environmental problems or it can alleviate them. Growth can segment and stratify housing markets and therefore communities or it can integrate them. Growth can expand public spaces or desiccate them. Growth-oriented policies can, likewise, be directed toward any particular result. The issue ought not to be between growth and no-growth. The debate ought to be about the quality and character of economic growth, the distribution of its benefits, and the nature of its impacts on community and environment.

It is exactly such a shift in the debate that Stephen Elkin has suggested with his concept of the "commercial public interest." The aim of democratic government should be toward promoting the general prosperity of the people. But the specific character of that prosperity and means of achieving it should be defined through a deliberative democratic process. Business people will have much to say about these issues, but their opinions should not have a privileged position in the process. Rather, the public discourse about how to secure the prosperity of the city would be strongly democratic and focus on more than how to maximize profit for developers, businesses, and corporations. In addition, this public discourse would take into consideration the equity and environmental impacts of public policies to promote prosperity – which likely would also involve growth. Likewise, it would consider what kinds of policies not only promote prosperity but also create good places.[62]

Elkin acknowledges the political dynamics of regime formation and maintenance, specifically the "fond interest" with which political and business regard one another. Yet he insists that "electoral coalitions that have at their heart something other than rearranging land use to favor downtown interests are certainly possible." His response, however, is not to ponder the ways in which the hyperpluralist fragments of a potential anti-regime might be assembled. Rather, it is to focus on the construction of institutions that will be educative of a kind of citizenry and constitutive of a "political way of life" dedicated to "the giving of reasons" toward the definition of public policy. His suggestions in this regard are for "neighborhood assemblies with significant powers," citywide referenda, and "city legislatures, also with significant powers." Much remains to be done in constructing a different "political way of life," including, as Stone suggests,

the definition of "norms of cooperation, duty, and restraint within and among various community interests." But, as Gottdiener put it, "if political culture has died, there can be no substitute for its resurrection before schemes of social reform can be entertained."[63]

Notes to Chapter 3.

[1] Gottdiener, Mark. 1994. *The Social Production of Urban Space.* Austin: University of Texas Press provides a good overview of these arguments. See chapters 2 and 3.

[2] Logan, John R. and Todd Swanstrom, eds. 1990. *Beyond The City Limits: Urban Policy and Economic Restructuring in Comparative Perspective.* Philadelphia: Temple University Press; Molotch, Harvey. 1990. "Urban Deals in Comparative Perspective." In John R. Logan and Todd Swanstrom, eds. *Beyond The City Limits: Urban Policy and Economic Restructuring in Comparative Perspective.* Philadelphia: Temple University Press; Logan, John R. and Harvey Molotch. 1987. *Urban Fortunes: The Political Economy of Place.* Berkeley: University of California Press; Gottdiener, 1994; Swanstrom, Todd. 1985. *The Crisis of Growth Politics: Cleveland, Kucinich, and the Challenge of Urban Populism.* Philadelphia: Temple University Press; Castells, Manuel. 1983. *The City and the Grassroots: A Cross-Cultural Theory of Urban Social Movements.* Berkeley: University of California Press. Tillly, Charles. 1984. *Big Structures, Large Processes, Huge Comparisons.* New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

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[4] Gottdiener 1994, pp. 38, 40-41, 68.

[5] Garreau, Joel. 1988. *Edge Citiy: Life on the New Frontier.* New York: Doubleday. Logan and Molotch, 1987, p. 9.

[6] Gottdiener, 1994; Swanstrom, 1985, p. 12.

[7] Cronon, William. 1991. *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West.* New York: W.W. Norton & Co.; Warner, Sam Bass. 1962, 1978. *Streecar Suburbs: The Process of Growth in Boston 1870-1900.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press; Fishman, Robert. 1989. *Bourgeois Utopias: The Rise and Fall of Suburbia.* New York: Basic Books.

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[9] Harvey, 1985, pp. 19, 37, 226.

[10] Gottdiener, 1994, p. 193; Logan and Molotch, 1987, p. 27; Harvey, 1985, p. 42.

[11] Gottdiener, Mark. 1987. *The Decline of Urban Politics: Political Theory and the Crisis of the Local State.* Beverly Hills: Sage, p. 26; Saunders, Peter. 1981. *Social Theory and the Urban Question.* London: Hutchinson, pp. 190-191; Katznelson, Ira. 1992. *Marxism and the City.* New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 281, 132-133.

[12] Harvey, 1985, p. xiv; Katznelson, 1992, pp. 36, 207; Gottdiener, 1994, p. 125.

[13] Katznelson, 1992, p. 98; Castells, 1983, p. 311; Saunders, 1981, p. 154; Abbott, Carl. 1981. *The New Urban America: Growth and Politics in Sunbelt Cities.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, p. 212.

[14] Gottdiener, 1994, p. 123.

[15] Schneekloth, Lynda H. and Robert G. Shibley. 1995. *Placemaking: The Practice of Planning and Design.* New York: John Wiley and Sons. Kemmis, Daniel. 1995. *The Good City and the Good Life: Renewing the Sense of Community.* New York: Houghton Mifflin.
Smith, Michael Peter. 1988. *City, State and Market: The Political Economy of Urban Society.* Cambridge: Basil Blackwell, 8; Gottdiener, 1994, p. 153.

[16] Logan and Molotch, 1987, p. 2; Harvey, 1985, pp. 254-255; Saunders, 1981, p. 188; Gottdiener, 1994, p. 127

[17] Logan and Molotch, 1987, p. 20; Castells, 1983, p. 167; Gottdiener, 1994, p. 172.

[18] Logan and Molotch, 1987, pp. 209-215.
[19] Harvey, 1985, pp. 14, 56, 60-61.

[20] Katznelson, 1992, pp. 151, 269, 255, 257; Kling, Joseph. 1993. "Complex Societies/ Complex Cities: New Social Movements and Restructuring Urban Space." In Robert Fisher and Joseph Kling, eds. *Mobilizing the Community: Local Politics in the Era of the Global City.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, p. 33; Castells, 1983, p. 309.

[21] Gottdiener, 1994, pp. 127, 165, 162, 163, 169.

[22] Blackman, Tim. 1991. *Planning Belfast: A Case Study of Public Policy and Community Action.* Aldershot: Avebury, p. 1; Castells, 1983, p. 31; Saunders, 1981, pp. 198, 276.

[23] Gottdiener, 1994, pp. 152-153, 149.

[24] Ibid. pp. 169-170.

[25] DeLeon, Richard Edward. 1992. *Left Coast City: Progressive Politics in San Francisco, 1975-1991.* Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, p. 9.

[26] Smith, 1988, p. 6; Logan and Molotch, 1987, p. 47.

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[31] Stone, 1989, pp. 9, 3, 214.

[32] Ibid. p. 193.

[33] Ibid. p. 195.

[34] Ibid. pp. 215, 95; Swanstrom, 1985.

[35] Stone, 1989, p. 6.

[36] Ibid. p. 10.

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Chapter 4. Neighborhoods, Participation and Planning

Local political culture was never as dead as Gottdiener thought, but its continuing reconstruction is, indeed, crucial to mounting any effective popular alternative to the hegemony of narrow development interests in city politics. In fact, this struggle has been going on now in the U.S. – including Portland – for at least four decades. What is remarkable about this history, contrary to any images of the local political sphere as empty, is just how dense citizen activity in this realm has been. Citizens have found extraordinary resources in the ordinary material of civic life – neighborhoods, the practice of city planning, and citizen participation in planning, as well as the values, practices, and institutions of local democratic life. Social scientists have studied all of these things, typically with an eye toward understanding the supposedly inherent and natural characteristics and tendencies of neighborhood, planning, participation and democracy. To the extent that they have identified important issues and problems to be addressed, this work has been useful. But to the extent that they have drawn attention away from these things as purposeful practices and intentional cultural productions, they have done a disservice for those who would create change. Citizens have clung to the neighborhood as a locus of action despite all pressures to the contrary. They have put their weight behind efforts to create political ways of life worthy of the term democracy. And they have adopted planning as an approach to solving collective problems and elaborated it to their own ends.

The neighborhood

For more than a century, the neighborhood has been almost an obsession for sociologists, social workers, planners, visionaries, and political reformers.[1] Yet the neighborhood in the sense we know it today, as the residential territory of a distinct class of people or ethnic group, has had a relatively short history. "The mid-19th century conception of the city did not posit the existence of distinct and differential residential neighborhoods that interacted as units within the urban social system," Zane Miller wrote. It was only after the industrial revolution, when the scale of cities had expanded and "innovations in mass transit obliterated the historic walking city" that the differentiation of neighborhoods by class, race and ethnicity was really possible.[2] The neighborhood in our familiar sense was the product of a long evolution from 18th century urban districts in which home, office, store, and workshop coexisted, through the urban jumble of the 19th century, to the 20th century when zoning and development practices finally sorted industrial

from residential, affluent from working class, and black from white.[3] Yet, no sooner was the neighborhood established that it seemed under attack, dysfunctional, or lapsing toward obsolescence because of a new round of 20th century transformations. Perhaps because of what the idea of neighborhood promised – a little bit of Tonnies' *gemeinschaft* in an impersonal *gesellschaft* – a whole variety of actors picked up the cause of saving, fixing, or remaking the neighborhood.

"The neighborhood has always been the concern of some movement or another," wrote Howard Hallman, forgetting about prior periods when "neighborhood" had a different meaning. But across the 20th century, the American neighborhood was the object of charity organizations, the settlement house movement, the school center movement, indigenous organizations and institutions, civic associations, area coordinating councils, Alinsky-style organizing, urban renewal, Community Action, Model Cities, neighborhood councils, and neighborhood community development corporations. Fainstein and Hirst subdivide this history into an early phase when the neighborhood was seen primarily as a social unit requiring therapy; a middle phase (1920-1960) when it was seen as a physical unit needing better design; and a later phase (1960-present) when it was treated as a political unit requiring organization of participation.[4]

Sociologists "found" the neighborhood. "Every community has something of the character of an organic unit," Park wrote The neighborhood developed like a biological organism, "but the process is more complicated... in any case, all or most of the fundamental processes seem to be functionally related and dependent upon competition." Researchers located "natural areas" with recognized names, dividing lines, concentrations of memberships, and ethnic identities. Such areas progressed through predictable stages in a developmental cycle, progressing from birth to decay to renewal. At the same time, planners, designers and developers sought to create the neighborhood unit from scratch – a process with its own trajectory from Howard's Garden City to Clarence Perry's neighborhood unit to the "community builders" and on to a contemporary generation of separatist subdivisions.[5]

The project of saving the neighborhood was urgent. We were seeing the "eclipse of community," Maurice Stein reported following the Second World War. We lived in a time when the "existentialist experience, the feeling of total shipwreck" was one which ordinary people could share with intellectual elites. Somewhat more concretely, Dillick would attribute the loss of community feeling to "the reduction in distance brought about by the automobile, the world-wide news services, and the radio." The neighborhood, many believed, could provide what seemed to be slipping away: physical order amid urban chaos; face-to-face contact and a sense of community; local solidarities against forces of social hypermobility; and feelings of identity,

security, stability, and rootedness in an unstable world. Neighborhoods and their organizations would be a training ground for citizens and "constitutive of a broader political life," a community of interest and "an effective unit of collective action."[6]

Others condemned the project as foolhardy. Hunter called the aspiration for a democratic politics rooted in face-to-face relationships an "illusion" entertained by people uninitiated to the realities of community organizing. Many residential areas in the suburbanizing metropolis did not begin to resemble the ideal the neighborhood advocates promoted. "To devolve public decision-making to such non-communities would be a hollow gesture." Suzanne Keller sneered at the fuzzy-headed idealism of proponents of the neighborhood unit movement. "To make the primary school a nucleus of local life for adults without children or unmarried individuals is patently absurd." It was unwise, they argued, to "hang so many of our hopes for urban salvation on the creation of strong, semi-autonomous urban villages," when relationships with immediate neighbors had become such a small part of the daily lives of city-dwellers. "Extreme emphasis on neighborhoodness is now an anachronism."[7]

Indeed, what is important still about neighborhoods is not neighboring. The social worker Philip Abrams proposed a complex concept of neighborhood. It was a role, neighbor; a territory, neighborhood; a set of activities, neighboring; and an attitude, neighborliness. He offered a finely cut hierarchy of neighboring activities from acquaintanceship and cordiality to "watch and ward" functions in the shared territory to a range of helping activities including borrowing and lending, and assistance to neighbors in family or collective crises. People today routinely play these roles, but not necessarily on the basis of neighborhood proximity. "Neighboring in dynamic urban areas is no longer part of a tight network of interdependent activities and obligations concentrated within a small physical and social space. It is simply one more segmentalized activity." Communications mass media, the growing ease of travel and transport, new employment patterns, growing economic prosperity, and the substitution of professionalized social services for neighborly helping had all contributed to the demise of the neighborhood as we thought we knew it. Instead, sociologist Morris Janowitz suggested, we had a "congeries of localities, each of them functioning as a 'community of limited liability.'" The most important neighborhood unit was the "sub-block" or what Jane Jacobs called the "face block." "It exists because people need neighbors but can develop only a limited number of social relationships and because women and children are restricted in their mobility." Beyond that, efforts to design neighborhoods to increase neighboring were futile, Gans argued, "for so long as neighbors have no reason to meet they will not do so."[8]

The neighborhood was real enough for all that. It was just different than people

supposed. Rather than products of "personal and human nature," Gerald Suttles, writing in the late 1960s, offered, neighborhoods were more "the contrivances of planners, bureaucracies, and depersonalized institutions." In any case they were "artificial or imposed forms of residential segregation" which helped governments decide how to deal with them and helped individuals navigate the city. Our ideas and images of neighborhood have utility for daily life. "They help us decide where to live, where to walk at night and when to start worrying about our children's absence." Neighborhoods, Suttles concluded, "are preeminently human constructions," whether imposed from without or projected from within or both. Or, as Downs put it a decade later, neighborhoods are "what the inhabitants think they are."[9]

Overall, neighborhood was been a broad category with varied contents. It was, at a minimum, a territory, although the exact boundaries of neighborhood turf might be defined differently by different people. It was an "identity which distinguishes," a way for people to characterize themselves and their territory, as well as for outsiders to characterize them. And the neighborhood was a convenient "object of administration" from the point of view of local government. Beyond those basic characteristics, a neighborhood might or might not be defined by a relationship to a local church or parish boundaries, by common ethnicity, political membership, relationship to public service offices, or participation in exclusionary agreements. A neighborhood might have a widely recognized name, a formal neighborhood organization, and designated representatives – or it might not. A neighborhood might, more or less, be an object of resident sentiment. A neighborhood is likely an identifiable sub-section in a broader real estate market, with a "bundle of services" and "amenities" beyond the individual household. Overall, the range of possibilities is great. Neighborhood identity may be weak or strong, its population diverse or homogeneous, its associational life active or latent.[10]

The most crucial characteristic of neighborhoods for the purposes of this study is that even the weakest can generate the ability to act on its own behalf. Neighborhood identity is "not a collective ratification of private friendship and neighborly solidarity," political scientist Matthew Crenson wrote, but more likely "a cognitive container for the definition of neighborhood issues and problems." Membership in the residential aggregation called neighborhood provides the basis for "mobilizing to meet both the symbolic and material challenges brought on by the environment." Even when many of the elements of the idealized neighborhood are missing, the fact of shared territory, and therefore collective problems, can move the residents to act. Despite all of the centrifugal forces in metropolitan America, there remains a "physical community of interest" in safety, security, amenity and sociability.[11]

That is the minimum. But because people want and need what they think neighborhoods

can provide, many neighborhoods have much more than the minimum. Even where sociologists are inclined to look for "disorganization," there are amazing resources. Not only are many neighborhoods more than a physical place and a "personal arena." They are also a social community, "a little economy," and a miniature polity. Part of the strength of the neighborhood as a social community is that the affiliations residents feel for one another are not rooted in economics. As Allan Heskin wrote, invoking Martin Buber, "the desire for community comes not out of a material-based collective self-interest but the need for people to have relationships." Such relationships are likely to sustain values that don't put the interests of capital first. The neighborhood as a "ludic center of communion" may foster the development of consciousness "deeply antagonistic to the individualism of money, (and) to the profit-seeking and class-bound logic of capital circulation." Still, residents face a stiff challenge in bringing these values across the threshold from a private realm into a public one.[12]

There is a strong connection between the neighborhood as community and the neighborhood as polity. The essential elements of the neighborhood as community – family and ethnic connections, shared territory, voluntary associations, and common problems – are much of what makes the neighborhood a political unit, too. Crenson reminds us that both Locke and Rousseau understood the necessity for citizens to establish relationships with one another before they could make connections to government. "People who form conceptions of their residential areas as distinct neighborhoods have also formed a kind of political covenant or social contract with their fellow residents." The same relationships also make it possible for such small publics to maintain an agenda. But neighborhoods only work as political units if people act as if they really are. The connection to territory and the relationships territory sustains are crucial. Together they manifest people's commitment to place and to one another, something that is essential if cities are to survive. As such, neighborhood politics can be constitutive of political life in general, forming people as citizens, and establishing a "widespread network of parapolitical organizations" that begins to span the chasm between the individual and mass society.[13]

Some insist that the neighborhood's primary role is as a political unit. Kotler claims "it is an error to define the neighborhood as a social unit. The neighborhood is, in origin and continuity, a political unit... whose absolute property is its capacity for deliberative democracy." From this foundation of generative political talk had by the 1960s sprung "a movement for local control" in the form of a "neighborhood organization revolution." Far from the social work approach that identified the neighborhood as a problem in social disorganization, "the political activist approach regards the community as a political entity and/ or power base. It focuses on obtaining, maintaining, or restructuring power." A few have anticipated the emergence of

neighborhood-based organizations to supplant conventional urban political machines and in some cases they have. Neighborhood organizations have moved from defensive strategies to a broad range of modes of action, drawing on place-based loyalties and interests to engage in advocacy, boycotts, direct action, service delivery, economic development, and much more. "So often does the residential urban neighborhood serve as a seedbed for collective action," J.E. Davis wrote, "that much of contemporary political life simply becomes unintelligible without some understanding of the interests, groups, and conflicts of the 'homeplace.'" Nor is there a more advantageous position from which to build a more democratic society than the neighborhood.[14]

Crenson, perhaps, has offered the simplest and most coherent description of the neighborhood as a political entity. Organized neighborhoods, he says, perform two basic functions in urban politics. First, they help to aggregate political demands so they are intelligible enough for officials to respond. Such clear demands are the product of the political conversations that initially bring any issue from the margins into the center of public consciousness. Until they are spoken, they are not issues. Once discussed in the local public sphere, they can become demands, whether as simple as a plea for a stop sign or as complex as a push for affordable housing. Second, neighborhoods produce low-level goods and services too fine in scale, or too costly, for municipal government to provide itself. These include the every day surveillance that neighbors maintain on their immediate surroundings, and maintenance of the street-level environment, such as picking up litter, cleaning vacant lots, or organizing to plant community gardens. Such goods and services are hardly noteworthy until "citizens stop producing them. It is then that neighborhoods fall into disorder and decay."[15]

Neighborhood organizations perform another important function in helping to manage conflict and maintain the governability of cities. While there is a certain political indigestibility to many neighborhood organizations "... even the most pugnacious community association ... by aggregating and articulating the political sentiments of its constituents... contributes to the structuring of public opinion, and it may smooth the way for democratic government in the process." Even four decades ago, some mayors had begun to encourage the formation of neighborhood associations for this very reason. The process has often been described in terms of "co-option" that mostly benefits municipal officials. Fainstein and Hirst explain the persistence of neighborhood planning structures in terms of its utility for local political leaders in tasks of regime maintenance. In other cities, neighborhood councils served to "routinize community input into the policy process and render it safe." Perhaps this was partly a good thing. In Cincinnati, "city council members were unanimous in reporting that their jobs had not become more difficult with the rise of the neighborhood groups, and most department heads concurred." But, as I

argued earlier, co-option is always a two-way street. Neighborhood associations have become a regular part of the decision-making process because elected officials and business people know that, once aroused, residents have the ability to quash an objectionable project. Moreover, neighborhoods retain the prerogative of resorting to more conflictual tactics if their concerns are ignored.[16]

The history of the creation of structures of neighborhood politics in the U.S. reaches back to the 1960s with the first experiments in municipal decentralization. The programs took a variety of forms including self-help organizations, advisory boards, neighborhood field offices, "little city halls" and multi-service centers, ombudsman structures, community corporations, neighborhood health corporations, community school boards and more. Such organizations were tasked with gathering political intelligence, conducting planning, administering city programs, facilitating accountability of political and administrative officials, and sometimes passing on policy and budgets. These initiatives provided experience and education for neighborhood leaders as well as greater effectiveness for bureaucrats. Decentralization, Yates concluded "is a hopeful and viable alternative in urban policy" for promoting both democracy and efficiency. "This is hardly a revolutionary notion," David Perry suggested, "because it is essentially the suburban model transplanted to inner city neighborhoods."[17]

The key to successful decentralization programs was in choosing which kinds of services were best delivered and which kinds of decisions were best made at the neighborhood level and which were better placed at another level in the governmental hierarchy. When the issue was how to make a strong neighborhood impact, such as with education or public safety, decentralization made sense. When the issue was fair resource allocation and equity, as with transit, housing, welfare, and school finance, it made sense to push decisions up to a higher level. There was a tendency in decentralization programs for "municipal officials to retract outstationed administrators when (neighborhoods) began to threaten their authority." But if bureaucrats were going to deliver services at street level, they needed to be located there. Overall, the results were mixed, with improved information, communication, and service delivery, but no great transformation of participating cities.[18]

Yet the results were promising enough that dozens of U.S. cities promulgated some form of neighborhood structure throughout the 1970s, 1980s, and beyond. By one estimate there were more than 8,000 neighborhood associations in the U.S. by the end of the 1970s. A decade later there were approximately 50 cities with ongoing, institutionalized structures of neighborhood planning and participation including Birmingham, Cincinnati, Dayton, Minneapolis, Roanoke, San Antonio, St. Paul, and Portland, Oregon. The most basic premise behind the construction of

such systems of participation was that "everyone cares about their neighborhoods and will take action on behalf of their homes, community, and city if the structure to do so is understood and accessible."[19]

In the most successful of these cities, the key has been to move from processes to structures, from events to institutions. In five cities studied by a team from Tufts University, every neighborhood in each city had an association; two way channels of communication were created; neighborhood associations had support staff, training, technical assistance, and neighborhood offices; they all were empowered to act. In many cities, neighborhood associations drew their own boundaries. Likewise, "allowing participants to control funds (assured) them that their activities would have meaning." The most successful associations benefited from strong professional skills among their members, large populations within their boundaries, "accidents of leadership," visible mobilizing threats, and the availability of outside assistance. The benefits were substantial. Formal decision-making processes were opened to mandatory participation. Surprisingly, political leaders welcomed the movement. Professionals, especially planners, were supportive and bureaucrats benefited. The balance of power between city and neighborhoods was equalized; sometimes neighborhoods had veto power. "It is no longer clear," Thomas said of the results in Cincinnati, "that municipal officials can expect to win a confrontation with neighborhood groups."[20]

Connections to city-wide politics varied. In Cincinnati, these new structures of participation, although consistent with political tradition in that city, required a very explicit electoral campaign to ensure their creation. In Minneapolis, the process worked the other way around. The neighborhood planning system generated new grassroots electoral activity that, in turn, was absorbed into the structure of "normal politics." In Birmingham, neighborhood leaders had a strong influence on block grant spending, budget priorities, and land use regulation. But neighborhood associations did not add up to a coherent city-wide political force. The Roanoke Neighborhood Partnership "had the apparently paradoxical effect of acknowledging and empowering individual neighborhoods as discrete places, while at the same time forging an image of the city as a whole." In Hartford, the demise of the progressive regime came about in part from an estrangement between the city administration and the local neighborhood movement. In any case, the forces exerted by neighborhood participation structures are not all centrifugal as some might suppose.[21]

Although the neighborhood movement is usually pitched as a progressive project aimed at the protection of community, "quality of life," and use values over exchange values, there is no doubt that it has some reactionary tendencies. It can be "a progressive response by city dwellers

who want to control the institutions that affect their lives," but it can just as much be "a retreat from urban and national problems, a reaction against minority group demands for social change, and a nostalgic longing for a simpler, mythical age." For some, the movement rested not on a call to collective aims but "on the turning inward tendency, an intensely privativistic individualism more concerned with one's self-fulfillment or careerism, or property values than with a genuine public policy."[22]

Some critics argue that neighborhood-based planning promotes parochialism and racism and reinforces, rather than mitigates, the inequalities in the distribution of power and resources between affluent and middle class neighborhoods versus poorer ones. In the Minneapolis experience, members of minority groups and renters were both substantially under-represented in participatory engagements. Poor neighborhoods struggled to get organized while middle class areas mobilized to keep out public housing. Neighborhood planning programs elsewhere seemed to be more effective in sustaining middle class neighborhoods than it was in rebuilding poor ones. Even in Cleveland, under "equity planning," neighborhood empowerment could be a conservative, even racist force. In San Francisco, at least one neighborhood "used expanded citizen powers under progressive rule to subvert the progressive agenda.[23]

Neighborhood planning and redevelopment could be reactionary in effect, too. Downs identified two primary directions for neighborhood development to follow: "incumbent upgrading" where people in place improved conditions for themselves and gentrification where improvement equaled displacement. For Logan and Molotch, it was hard to see how the first path wouldn't necessarily lead to the second. Even the idea of the neighborhood as locus of communal connections could be converted to an exchange value. "Images of knowable and affective communities can also be marketed as commodities."[24]

Some treacherous currents flow beneath these waves. Ostensibly, the aspiration behind the neighborhood movement was for real communal involvement. Sennett, however, argues that the behavior of many urbanites expresses an aversion to such engagement. This aversion arises from a fear of confronting people different from ourselves because of the challenge this presents to our own sense of self. Instead of engaging real neighbors face to face, which would require continuous negotiation between self and other, people construct a myth of the "purified community" in which one can imagine every neighbor is "just like us." This "counterfeit sense of community" protects us from the rigors of disorder, surprise, and conflict in the city. The result in local politics will be "a desire to avoid actual participation," "the repression of deviants," and the use of violence to exclude "others." Baumgartner has identified a similar dynamic in suburban America, where individuals turn away from conflict and practice "tolerance, avoidance, and

restraint in the pursuit of justice." The resulting community is minimal in the extreme.[25]

The tendencies Sennett identifies have had profound impacts on planning practice. Larry Bennett suggests that the same dynamic that spawned the "myth of purified community" has led urban designers to create a city of fragments. The urbanism of mercury vapor lamps, skywalks, enclosed shopping malls, surveillance video, privatized spaces, defended neighborhoods, and gated communities have been the result of conscious design strategies to "undermine cities' capacity to spawn surprise, tolerance, innovation, and democratic participation." Bennett questions whether neighborhood-based action can ever overcome the impacts of an urban realm that is segmented by race, class, and lifestyle choice. "As residents of different neighborhoods, members of different racial groups, and persons of differing levels of affluence lose the habit of sharing public space, they also lose the empathetic urbanity on which common political action is built." Ominously, these things have not transpired by mistake. Constance Perin argues that suburban zoning practices are purposefully sustained to regulate "physical proximity, social homogeneity, race relations, form of tenure, housing styles, income levels, privacy, and community." The desire for order, safety, and insulation from the problems of our great cities is so powerful it has spawned an entirely new category of residential developments – master planned, professionally policed, and vociferously regulated for the elimination of all surprise.[26]

Any neighborhood movement with aspirations to reshape the character of the larger society faces some very stiff challenges. Yet there are enough examples of effective neighborhood action that demonstrate their centrality within broader processes of social change to counsel persistence. The role of neighborhood organizations in Madrid in overturning Franco is one extraordinary case. The neighborhood is by definition parochial. As Marris and Rein argue, it does not "provide a natural focus of organization, except for those concerns which arise from the immediate environment – garbage collection, police protection, redevelopment plans." Many of the most vexing problems of the residential environment are caused, and would be best resolved, at higher levels of organization. And when frustrations arise and participants are faced with the choice of "voice" or "exit," the most resourceful among them may choose the latter. Neighborhood politics can be very taxing. As Fainstein and Hirst observe, "to the vexation of many a former participant, neighborhood organizations are particularly subject to domination by socially dysfunctional individuals."[27]

The most important challenge facing the neighborhood movement, however, is in solving what political scientists call the problem of collective action. Neighborhoods may be strong on their own turf, in part because of their social homogeneity, but at the city-wide scale and beyond, what divides neighborhoods often overwhelms what could possibly unite them. Divisions of class,

race, identity, and lifestyle, as well as particular local issues and the inevitably unequal allocation of public burdens and benefits, often prove impossible to overcome. Yet even acting coherently on the citywide or metropolitan scale is not enough. "If the struggle to save communities and promote the interests of the powerless does not occur at both the community and the state level," Fisher writes, "it is doomed to the inherent parochialism and limits of democratic localism." And, as Gottdiener points out, "no mechanisms currently exist that can aggregate neighborhood mobilization of needs into a viable public discourse on the future state of the metropolis."[28]

The good news is that while much divides them, many factors connect local movements. "These mobilizations are fundamentally alike and appear almost everywhere," Fisher writes, "regardless of the local political context, because they are rooted in the historical and contemporary social development of the global capitalist economy." They share roots in place and interest groups. They arise from "transclass groupings" of which labor is a part, but not the only part. "The ideological glue is democratic politics." Culture and social identity have a big role to play. And they "focus on community self-help and empowerment."[29]

Mollenkopf notes that while the neighborhood movement lacks a coherent ideology, it does offer a "working model of how things might be done differently." He also shows that a coherent ideology is not far from reach:

> Such a neighborhood platform would stress ideas like citizen participation and neighborhood control over government programs, self-help and small enterprise as opposed to large public or private organizations, restoring and supporting natural coping mechanisms and helping networks rather than supplanting them with bureaucratic institutions and rehabilitation of existing neighborhoods rather than allowing decline or creating new housing elsewhere.[30]

Such a movement is not ready to overturn capitalism, or even aimed at it, necessarily. But it has the potential to renegotiate the terms on which cities are built and urban life is governed. Despite the inherent weaknesses of the neighborhood as a position from which to promote broader political change, it must be acknowledged that somewhere in the convergence of shared territory, amenities, identities, relationships, and political structures is fertile ground for the production of meaning, practices, and institutions that can make a difference in the quality and character of urban life.

Citizen participation

Citizen participation – in planning and otherwise – is an extraordinarily varied set of practices expressing a range of intentions. As Checkoway and Van Til outlined, "citizen

participation can refer to a public relations program to build support for agency plans; or to the deliberations of those who hold positions on a city-wide advisory committee; or to acts of voting for political representatives; or to a transfer of power from central government to local territorial or functional units; or an organized effort to engage in protest or some form of direct action." In planning specifically, participation can mean almost anything from an after the fact review of agency plans to "citizen driven" planning in which lay people, not professionals or bureaucrats, initiate planning, choose and direct staff, set goals and assess alternatives, adopt and implement plans.[31]

The modern history of citizen participation in America spans roughly half a century. It emerged as a set of modest administrative requirements in the post-war period, expanded rapidly in the 1960s and early 1970s, suffered some retrenchment in the Reagan 1980s, but continued to grow throughout the remainder of the century, becoming embedded in both planning practice and local political institutions. The beginning of the development of citizen participation is usually pegged to the Administrative Procedures Act of 1946, which "placed the onus for participation on citizens; provided limited opportunities and means for participation; (and) delayed participation until late in policy-making." The second Urban Renewal Act (1954) became "the first in a series of federally funded programs requiring citizen input" and with more ambitious intent than the APA. With the "War on Poverty" in 1966, federal requirements for citizen participation in a wide range of programs exploded.[32]

Citizen participation in planning in Britain developed along remarkably similar lines. The British Town Planning Act of 1947 made similarly "passive" requirements on government, then expanded these in 1964 in the face of popular pressure against a planning system seen as opaque, heavy-handed, and anything but democratic. New procedures required open information, expanded opportunities to participate, a responsibility of officials to seek comment, and greater accountability by planners on how input was used.[33]

The early and continued development of citizen participation in the U.S. must also be seen in broader context to be fully understood. Rosenbaum, for example, places these efforts to develop citizen participation mechanisms in a progression that goes back to the enfranchisement of non-property owners, through the inclusion of blacks and women in the vote, to the direct election of senators, the creation of primary elections, referenda, and recall. In the same sense, citizen participation emerged in the midst of a broader effort to create more "open government," including the passage of "sunshine laws," the Freedom of Information Act (and its state-level progeny), political finance disclosure laws, consumer rights legislation, lobbyist registration, and many others. The drive for civil rights and black empowerment coincided with and helped

accelerate the emergence of citizen participation.[34]

In the U.S. the expansion of participation requirements brought forth a flowering of programs and organizations dedicated to the democratization of decision making in federal programs administered at the local level including neighborhood health centers, Community Action Agencies, legal services centers, Model Cities agencies, tenants councils in public housing, Urban Renewal project area committees, and community mental health centers. The forms of planning and administration proliferated to include "multiple service centers, neighborhood councils, little city halls, city hall annexes, and mini governments." These were mandated from above but very much pushed from below, as well. Citizen participation was a common component of a broad range of efforts.[35]

One of the founding controversies of citizen participation surrounded the assertion that Congress did not know what it was doing when it established new requirements for participation in the 1960s. Citizen participation rose out of the federal bureaucracy, not as a political reform, but as a kind of social therapy aimed at training the presumably incompetent poor in the management of their own lives. Mocking the phrase "maximum feasible participation" included in the legislation, Daniel P. Moynihan coined the unforgettable phrase "maximum feasible misunderstanding" to characterize the legislative misstep. Some agreed that Congress had intended to create processes that were much more passive than those that developed. But others point out that after the initial legislation, Congress actually returned to strengthen the rules for participation.[36]

Questions about the origins of citizen participation in America, however, are overshadowed by the depth, breadth and diversity of these practices and their supporting structures as they have permeated policy making, regulation, and community development, as well as planning, at all levels of government. By the end of the 1970s "almost all new, major federal legislative programs contain(ed) citizen participation requirements." There was some retrenchment in citizen participation during the Reagan era, but the demands of citizens "to participate in decisions that directly affect them" continued to expand and legislatures, more or less, continued to respond to those demands. Assessing the impact of citizen participation on decision-making or on communities has been difficult because of the range of approaches, techniques, and mechanisms employed, and because of the inherent limitations of social science methodologies. Yet it is very clear that the impact on plans and planning processes has been enormous.[37]

The claims made in support of citizen participation – as well as against it – are many and diverse and reflect the variety of perspectives of those involved in the process. The planner's

interest in participation may be different from that of the elected official and different still from that of the community activist. Participation, of course, may shape plans, policies, and program implementation, but participation in its many forms is also seen variously as "a means of education, as a means of building social cohesion, as therapy, as a strategy for gaining legitimacy and support, as a strategy to quell opposition, or on the contrary to enable the redistribution of power away from the established institutions." Susskind and Elliot identify four themes in the ideology of participation: the intention to democratize decision-making; to decentralize the management of service delivery; to deprofessionalize bureaucratic judgments; and to demystify the design process.[38] The reach of the participation agenda can be seen in Fisher's claim that grassroots democratic projects have had "profound impact:"

> Empowering participants, teaching democratic skills, transforming notions of political life, expanding political boundaries, returning politics to civic self-activity, strengthening a sense of public activism, raising new social and political issues, struggling against new forms of subordination and oppression, and even advancing agendas of the middle class to which formal politics remains closed.[39]

Some professionals have accepted citizen participation as a means to improve planning practice. Others have simply acknowledged its inevitability in contemporary political culture. But many others have embraced participation – not just in planning, but in all spheres of life – as a mode of social transformation.[40]

There is strong sentiment that participatory processes and structures are necessary for the production of a capable democratic citizenry. Likewise, the idea of participation as educative of citizens has deep roots in political theory going back to J.S. Mill, Rousseau, and others. "We do learn to participate by participating, Pateman wrote, "and ... feelings of political efficacy are more likely to be developed in a participatory environment." It is widely held that active participation in the political life of community and nation builds the self-confidence, competence, sense of responsibility, and desire to participate further that a democratic society requires. Even at the level of participatory planning technique, learning by participants is emphasized as crucial to the ability of people to participate. In a similar way, participation is understood to create the bonds among citizens that constitute political community. Some suggest that participation among citizens in territory or place is also necessary for the constitution of the local polity.[41]

The idea of participation as a kind of therapy is not inconsistent with this idea of participation as constitutive of citizens and polity. Citizen participation initiatives in the 1950s and especially the 1960s emerged, not as a generalized corrective for political dysfunction in America, but as a response to the specific problems of the poor and disenfranchised. As Marris

and Rein pointed out, "community organization was a form of treatment for collective depression. Discussion, participation, the devolution of responsibility, the self-analysis of community problems, imitated the techniques of group therapy." The dilemma they identified was that participation as therapy located the problem in the individual when it was actually "inherent in the society which humiliates them." A generation later the fingers were pointed in the opposite direction, but the claims for the therapeutic value of "participatory democracy, non-hierarchical decision making, prefigurative cultural politics, linking the personal with the political, direct action tactics and constituency based organizing" still held. Participation continues to be understood as a means of transformation.[42]

Among the many other claims made on behalf of citizen participation are that it provides planners with better information for decision making; provides additional labor power for planning activities; helps manage conflict in the planning process (on which more later) and generates support for adoption and implementation; helps monitor and discipline government bureaucracies to an immediate definition of the public interest; and promotes citizen satisfaction with government in general.[43]

Perhaps the most important argument made about the benefits of citizen participation is that direct democratic involvement in planning and policy making is consistent with our most central political beliefs. If participation isn't deeply embedded in our political culture, the idea that it ought to be surely is. Participation is often seen as "an end in itself" that is consistent with "our national ethos." Especially in planning, which relies so heavily on a concept of the "public interest" some suggest it may be impossible to specify that interest without direct participation of the parties involved. Theories of democratic elitism, which rely so heavily on representation of largely passive publics, have fared badly in the age of participation.[44]

The arguments against citizen participation are somewhat less expansive than the arguments for it. Many of the charges against participation are practical in nature. But the broadest and most important assertion is philosophical– that our system of government depends on representative political institutions that are fully up to the task. As Fagence notes, elitist theories of democracy have a broad compass, but organize around two strong themes: "society as a mass is inherently politically naïve, incompetent and apathetic;" and "the mass is either passive, inert and pliable or volatile, unruly and possessed of an insatiable proclivity to undermine government, liberty and culture." Fagence argues that participation is based on "idyllic notions of democracy" that are "inconsistent and possibly incompatible" with "the generally complex scope and scale of society in the twentieth century." The tension between the requirements of participation and the operational needs of large scale organizations, whether public or corporate,

is undeniable. In which case, the critics say, we're much better off if participation – including electoral participation – is low. It brings stability to governance and mitigates turbulence which allows elites to do their work. The argument seems mature and cool on its surface but an intense animus against ordinary people lurks below. Fagence cites a breathtaking passage from Seymour Martin Lipset, who believed that participation appeals mostly to "the disgruntled, the psychologically homeless, to the personal failures, the socially isolated, the economically insecure, the uneducated, unsophisticated and authoritarian persons at every level of society."[45] Or, to look at it from the opposite perspective, the privileged have far less interest in direct participation than do the socially, economically, and politically disadvantaged.

One of the most common arguments against participation is that it is inefficient. It wastes time and money and delays decisions on important community issues. Of course, many others insist that the time invested in participation can pay off later in better decisions and smoother implementation backed by durable public consensus. But Fagence argues that "the decision making process in urban and regional planning has become so intricate that the involvement of laymen has either become unfeasible or undesirable." So many people can be involved, with such divergent aims, that the process becomes "absurdly complicated." Many others acknowledge these costs of participation.[46]

Likewise, critics of participation charge that citizens are not competent to participate. "Citizens don't have the time, information, or experience to participate in a meaningful way." We would all be better off, this view holds, if such decisions were left to the planners and policy makers without "political" interference. Fagence, again, argues that the complexity of the participatory process makes it unlikely that the parties can come together to agree on the "optimal solution which is theoretically available." Setting aside the question of the whether a theoretically optimal solution can ever be determined apart from a political process, it is true that a participatory process is no guarantee for producing superior plans or policies. Yet there is plenty of evidence to suggest that giving planning and policy bureaucrats full sway won't necessarily lead to success, either. Yet, Fagence concludes, "... there is little justification for upsetting the tradition-fashioned and institutionalized decision making processes in the wake of temporary revolutionary zeal." Or, as Moynihan declared, "It may be that the poor are never 'ready' to assume power in an advanced society; the exercise of power in an effective manner is an ability acquired through apprenticeship and seasoning."[47]

Another central criticism of citizen participation in planning and policy making is that it leads to unnecessary and destructive conflict. It is, in some views, "worse than a nuisance," but a significant "hazard." This view took root in the early days of urban renewal when proposals for

community obliteration predictably drew fierce opposition. "In clearance areas," one administrator was quoted, "you don't organize citizens, you prepare them for moving." James Q. Wilson found a strong correlation between the level of indigenous organization and rates of failure for renewal schemes. "Today, in cities which have been engaged in renewal for several years," he wrote, "the planners often find prospective renewal areas ready and waiting for them, organized to the teeth." *Today,* of course, the conventional wisdom is that enraged slum residents were right while the perpetrators of urban renewal were in thrall to false gods. Nevertheless, it is true that participation, as any kind of political activity, often involves conflict. This could be an argument for planners to work at managing such energies in a productive way as much as it could be an argument to discourage participation. Indeed, the theory and technique of conflict resolution has become a standard part of the planning education.[48]

A fourth major complaint against participation is that its processes tend to be unrepresentative of the citizenry at large. "Interest groups with axes to grind" are the most likely to be involved. Despite the origins of the movement in the anti-poverty programs of the 1960s, participants tend to be white, middle-class, educated, and politically astute. Decisions from participatory processes are suspect because rates of participation tend to be low. Face to face democratic processes can foster exclusionism when some potential participants are intimidated by the presence of others. Public agencies sometimes co-opt citizen groups as a means to legitimate their own ends. Especially when it is focused on planning for small areas, participation can lead to parochialism. The poor are seen by some as "private regarding" and therefore disinterested in the search for a broader "public interest." Even when participation is not invited, the focus on local needs has often led to a NIMBY response – Not In My Back Yard – from citizens.[49]

Early experiences with citizen participation prompted some observers to make sweeping generalizations and bold predictions. After some of the early travails of participation in urban renewal, Rossi and Dentler could conclude that "the maximum role to be played by a citizen participation movement in urban renewal is primarily a passive one." Later on, Cole would conclude that citizen participation would wither away without the aggressive support of the federal government. Nevertheless, citizens have continued to play an active role in planning and policy making processes, sometimes because public agencies have reorganized planning processes to facilitate their involvement, in other cases because citizens have demanded a greater role in decision-making. While researchers have identified a variety of important issues, problems and tendencies within the practice of participation what is most notable is strong motive force behind the expansion of the practice. However, a number of issues deserve further discussion here.[50]

The first is power. Students of citizen participation have focused on the issue of power with extraordinary intensity. Many have agreed with Perloff and Hansen, who wrote that "participation without power is a cynical ritual." When citizens were invited to become involved in planning what were they being asked to do? To "rubber stamp" the renewal plans of political and business elites? Or were they to be able to "exercise some degree of local self-government, some manifestation of voice in decision making, some say in determining for themselves what kind of a community they will have?" Sometimes citizens had "real" power and sometimes they didn't. Municipal experiments in administrative decentralization in the late 1960s and early 1970s, for example, were assertions of central authority not to be confused with "community control." Nor was the quiet, presumptive power of the bureaucracy equivalent to the noisy, contested exertions of insurgent neighborhood movements. Power was a term that needed qualification.[51]

The most storied attempt to calibrate the quality of power in participation was by Sherry Arnstein. With her famous "ladder," she constructed a continuum of power that stretched from fake to real. "Citizen participation," she wrote, "is a categorical term for citizen power." To the extent that relationships and situations did not meet that standard, the power citizens wielded was suspect or substandard. Instead of power, citizens were the subject of "manipulation," or "therapy." Instead of real participation they were "informed," "consulted," or "placated." Only as they became equals or better with government officials did they rise to "partnership," "delegated power," and "citizen control." The idea that the quality of power could be placed on a sliding scale had great currency. Burke compressed Arnstein's eight rungs into five more comprehensible steps: review and comment; consultation; advisory; shared decision; and controlled decision. Others were more concrete in placing specific planning activities on the continuum. *Advising* on policy, program, and budget were not the same as *deciding* policy, program, and budget. Always implicit in these descriptions was a suspicion that participation would be turned against the citizens. As Fagence put it, "the act of participation seems to be variously interpreted along a continuum from environment disturbing demonstration to surreptitious persuasion."[52]

A less well-known but far more sophisticated conceptual scheme for assessing the power dynamics of any participatory situation was offered more than a decade later by Susskind and Elliot. They suggested that the matter could be mapped on a kind of triangular field in which one axis was "conflict," another "paternalism," and the other "co-production." At the first axis, participation might occur despite discouragement from public officials, often resulting in conflict. Under "paternalism," participation might be heavily controlled or manipulated by officials. With "co-production" people in government might work together with citizens. Susskind's scheme

incorporates several crucial observations: citizens are never wholly without power; and power predictably flows in both directions. It also acknowledges what Arnstein's notion of pure "citizen power" seems to ignore: that in representative forms of government elected and appointed officials have clear and legitimate roles to play in the planning process. Susskind believes that co-production is the preferred mode of decision-making, but he admits:

> Co-production is not without its problems. Tensions between citizen or consumer groups and public officials always remain. Citizens try to avoid the cooptation often associated with paternalistic practices of participation, while public officials try to balance their willingness to negotiate with their responsibilities to city wide interests. The constant threat of a return to previous patterns of conflict helps keep both groups working in coproductive fashion.[53]

Both major parties to the process have some power to adjust the relationship as their interests and the situation dictates. Neither party ever has total power over the other. And it may be that each party has its greatest power when the other does, too; when power is balanced in the coproductive relationship.[54]

Clearly, the coproductive relationship is not without its pitfalls for citizens. Many observers of grassroots politics have suggested that the main purpose and most significant result of participatory schemes is to manage conflict and "coopt" citizens. Piven and Cloward go so far as to say that the poor are never well-advised to invest their energy in collaboration with officials or the organizations that might sustain such activity. Rather, they should focus on rebellion as the only strategy likely to yield significant concessions. Marris and Rein, however, found here not a clear strategic choice but one of the central dilemmas of social reform. If an organization pursued a confrontational strategy they were likely to suffer official reprisals they had no resources to withstand. But if they engaged in a cooperative relationship with officials they lost the "freedom to attempt any radical innovation." Yet if power relations are always two-way, then so, perhaps, is the process of cooptation. Indeed, the literal meaning of the word is to "choose together." As Mogulof asked rhetorically, who is coopting whom? A neighborhood group may give up some of its independence of action in order to influence decision-making. But a public agency must also surrender some of its autonomy to win the neighborhood's cooperation. Even when a neighborhood's powers are *only* advisory, they have power. In many such cases it would be unusual for the official decision to go against the advice. As Savitch said of a similar situation, "consultation... can be a powerful tool."[55]

None of which is to say that citizens don't often suffer serious disadvantages in their relationships with officials. The resources of power are not always equal. Those with experience in

planning processes have an advantage over those who have none. Those with education and organization have an advantage over those who are lacking these resources. Those who have an ability to use and interpret technical information have an advantage over those who don't especially when citizens need to check the truthfulness of official claims. The poor, especially, are so lacking in education, money, hope, skills, and faith in the system that their ability to participate is severely limited. "The lesson of their vulnerability," write Piven and Cloward, "is engraved in every day life." Yet even the poorest communities have resources of power and to ignore their potential is self-defeating. In any case, it is important to note that money and social standing are not the most important resources of power; the ability to express meaning is.[56]

The second key issue to consider in regard to participation is conflict. If we understand participation in planning and policy making as a fundamentally political process in which values – both symbolic and material – are authoritatively assigned, then we can see that conflict is an unavoidable phenomenon. Both values and interests differ and must be reconciled in plans, regulations, designs, and policies. As such, conflict is inevitable, not only between citizens and government, but also between different groups of citizens, or between citizens and business interests. Such conflict is criticized from the Right because it disrupts the predictable processes of government. "If political democracy is to survive," Pateman wrote in synthesizing the views of Michels, Schumpeter, Berelson, Dahl, Sartori, and Eckstein, "intensity of conflict must be limited, the rate of change restrained, social and economic stability maintained, and a pluralist social organization and basic consensus must exist." The main virtue of participation from this perspective is its capacity to mitigate such conflict. To the extent that it fails to do so, participation has little value.[57]

From the Left, the problem with participation is that it too often muffles conflict that so that legitimate interests and values are ignored or subordinated. There can be no real democracy, they say, without honest conflict, and no genuine urban life without confronting those neighbors who are not like us and with whom we do not agree. Yet, many observers have found that many processes and structures of participation are better designed to mute protest and manage discontent than they are to stimulate debate or help resolve the issues at hand. Indeed, when developers also promote the virtues of citizen participation in planning, the value of such practices in mitigating conflict must be very clear to them. "Cooperation," an Urban Land Institute publication asserted, "reduces delays and risks, assures a much more orderly process of development, eases the timely provision of needed infrastructure, and avoids litigation, with its diversion of both funds and attention from community development."[58]

The limits of tolerance for conflict in grassroots politics can be seen in critiques of the

Alinsky approach in community organizing. Some observers criticized their tactics as purposely confrontational, dependent on manipulating self-righteous anger and resentment, with an almost paranoid interest in power. From the planner's point of view, Alinsky tactics "produce conflict rather than prevent it, alienate the neighborhood from the city as a whole rather than bring it into a pattern of normal civic action, and place a premium on power rather than on a cooperative search for the common good." Yet, if disadvantaged communities are to organize power and assert their interests and values, some level of conflict will be not only inevitable, but good. The limits of tolerance for conflict might also be seen in the distance between Alinsky's own advice and the actual behavior of organizations spawned by his Industrial Areas Foundation. They used cooperative approaches and positive campaigns more often than they employed confrontation.[59]

The tension between deliberative and emotive practices in public decision-making and the balance between cooperation and conflict, is well-illustrated in the colloquy between sociologist Richard Sennett and a young attorney named Mario Cuomo on the latter's effort to mediate a settlement in a dispute over the location of public housing in Forest Hills, Long Island. Cuomo congratulated himself afterward for having "elevated the dialogue" and for lowering the "decibel count." They had at least refocused the argument on specific alternatives, Cuomo concluded, whereas "previously it was almost totally a clash of emotions, symbols and generalizations." Sennett suggested, however, that the real value to the community in this case was not in winnning some sort of compromise, but in the battle itself. Mitigating the perceived threat of the housing development wasn't the prize. Awakening the community's sense of identity through conflict was what mattered to them. Achieving some kind of civil dialogue was not important. "Finding a compromise," Sennett wrote, "didn't seem to touch the 'real' disturbance of the community."[60]

The issue of conflict in grassroots politics seems even more crucial when conflict occurs at the level of the local community and the subject of debate is the character of the community itself. Jane Mansbridge has detailed exquisitely the necessary balance between "unitary" and "adversarial" forms of democracy in community politics. The primary assumption underlying unitary forms of democracy – those appropriate to small scale communities and face to face deliberation – is that while opinions and preferences might differ, "goodwill, mutual understanding, and a rational discussion" can produce something approximating the common good. Both the requirements of consensus and the basis of community in ongoing personal relationships, however, discourage the frank exploration of differences. In the avoidance of conflict lies "the possibility of conformity through intimidation, resulting in a false or managed consensus." Most likely to be stifled in such encounters are those with the least verbal skill or the

lowest status. Mansbridge suggests we design protocols of debate that equalize power in such circumstances. Ultimately, the issue is balance. "Unitary democracies that ignore or suppress conflicting interests," Mansbridge concludes, "can do as much damage to themselves and to their members as can adversary democracies that ignore or fail to develop their members' common interests." No democracy can succeed without means both to entertain conflict and produce consensus.[61]

A third key issue in participation is representation. There is a chronic tension in planning and policy making between those who act as formal representatives of governments (whether the individual is elected or appointed by someone who was elected) and those who represent their views directly or on behalf of smaller, less formal groups. For those skeptical of participation, the issue is simple. Elected officials and their agents are the only legitimate representatives of the public and constructing "redundant and powerless forums for participation" that are "not statistically representative" of the public at large is not only pointless but dangerous. "If public officials are going to do the right thing," another observer put it, "the people should leave them alone while they do it." For others, the issue of representation is just another one of the dilemmas of participation. "In the highly complex, heterogeneous collectivities arbitrarily called communities and assigned to planners," the Needlemans wrote, "there is no way that any particular leader could represent the total community, even under the best of circumstances." The search for the "public interest" through participation was "a chimera," Fagence suggested, but "a goal to be aimed at rather than an objective to be achieved."[62]

Part of the difficulty in the discussion of representation in citizen participation is that it focuses too much on a single meaning of the word – representation by elected representatives. Yet, as we all know, a federal Representative or a local Council member may not represent our interests or views. Sometimes the "self-appointed" spokespeople of pressure groups do a better job of that. Members of juries also represent the "public interest" in a way. Attorneys are supposed to represent that interest, as well as the interests of individuals. In the political sphere, some call for "descriptive" representation, suggesting that a representative body that does not reflect the proportion of genders, ethnic groups, and other key identifiers in the population at large cannot be truly representative. Others suggest that only the individual can represent her own interests accurately.[63]

The dilemma of representation continues to be played out in concrete participatory planning processes. Planners and citizens approach one another warily especially over the question of who represents whom. Bureaucrats "are hesitant about dealing with representatives who do not represent, who have no constituency," Mogulof observed. "Conversely, it may be

costly to deal with those representatives having a strong constituency because of the fact that they speak for more than themselves." Citizens, meanwhile, question how an unelected agent of the larger-scale government can claim authority over their local territory. "A tension always exists between the centralized needs of the agency and the decentralized interests of citizens." But cooperation is possible, too. The seasoned bureaucrat uses citizen representatives for leverage, justification, and cover, while respecting the limits they set. The savvy citizen understands that sometimes they are wise to help the bureaucrat "carry out a valued social obligation."[64]

There are other angles on the problematic of representation. Representatives of the poor in early participatory experiences tended not to be quite as poor, nor lacking in political skills, as the population of the community overall. "Anyone who was truly representative of those strata," Marris and Rein observed, "probably lacked the capacity to effectively participate in formal organizational environments." Even in better-off areas, "neighborhood participation attracts only the elite of a neighborhood and... this gap widens as the programs approach neighborhood control over broader areas of policy." DeSario found that consumer representatives on health planning agency boards were nothing like the people they were supposed to represent.[65]

The early days of citizen participation often saw the "selection of representatives by established agencies rather than election by neighborhood citizens and groups." A decade later, Burke would suggest a "cooperative system" of participation in which representatives of various positions would be allowed to take part – so long as they were likely not to disrupt or delay the process. Public officials continue to covet control over representation. The selection of members of citizen advisory committees in Portland by members of the City Council was highly controversial. And while Portland allows neighborhood associations to select their own representatives, Seattle provides neighborhoods with money to select their own planners.[66]

The problematic of representation will not disappear. It must still be managed by planners and contested by citizens. In general, the approach should be to construct processes and structures of representation and participation that are more permissive; to paraphrase Al Smith, the solution to the problem of representation is more representation. There is no clear line between representative politics and participatory politics. Rather, there is an area of transition. We need the face to face experience of direct democracy to connect decision making to the polity. We need means of aggregating political impulses in order to act collectively. "The reason for having face-to-face units of authority is not mere sociological nicety," Kotler wrote. "It is what man's political nature requires." And, as Berry, Portney and Thomson concluded, "institutions for strong democracy must be integrated into a system that also includes institutions of representative democracy." In a large-scale society there must be both and planners must

navigate between the two.[67]

A fourth key issue is the continuing tension between the knowledge that professional planners and other technical experts bring to the planning process and the knowledge of the lay people who inhabit places to be planned. The dilemma has often been presented as a conflict between science and politics, reason and democracy, and sometimes between reason and passion. The emergence of participation in planning and policy making has paralleled the continuing growth of the specialization of knowledge of all types. These simultaneous trends have only sharpened the conflict, with democratic participation faring poorly in the comparison. For some observers, the planners represent "rationality, objectivity, consistency, and comprehensiveness," while politicians and the citizens they represent have "courted the notions of expediency, subjectivity, and interest-orientations." For others, it was simply an open question whether citizen participation was even possible once the subject matter rose above the level of the neighborhood. "We do not know with any degree of certainty," DeSario and Langton pronounced, "if technology is susceptible to public control or if citizens are capable of sufficient interest and understanding to impact thoughtfully on technological decisions."[68]

From many quarters, the answer was "of course not." The more technical the subject matter of planning, the more crucial it was to privilege "objectivity and rationality," to honor professionalism and expertise, and to recognize public officials as the only ones who can authoritatively define the substance of "the public interest." The "very multiplicity, diversity and complexity of government activity and responsibility," and "the increased specialization and professionalization" of the subfields of planning and policy meant that we were bound for "an elitist rather than pluralist form of decision-making." Nor was the complexity inherent only in the subject matter of planning. It was also in the number and diversity of would-be participants in making any particular decision. Here, too, the planner's expertise was indispensable, the citizen's participation only "complementary." Parsing the "public interest" out of the welter of competing claims was naturally the province of the planner rather than the politician. "The derivation of a mediated or moderated or synthesized public interest," Fagence wrote, "might be most suitably achieved through the medium of the omnipartisan and objective public service." To wit: the planner. Or, as Rossi and Dentler put it, somewhat more pointedly, "at some point a line must be drawn, beyond which the authority of technicians must prevail."[69]

Of course, whether the ideal of an "omnipartisan and objective public service" is real is a fact that needs some checking. And Fagence, for one, gives away the power motive behind the assertion: "Like most planners," he confesses, "I am a pragmatist, and jealous of my special competence." Indeed, the claim to special competence and knowledge is a vital source of power

for bureaucracies and professions. DeSario and Langton "viewed with alarm" how "professional cadres operate almost independently of democratic processes." Others note how the public has been excluded from substantive debate by "elitist values and the barriers posed by specialized scientific knowledge and technical jargon." Lauria and Soll show how statements generated through professional and technical discourses can be transmuted into downright lies when planners "simplify the complex" or "smooth" the truth. The claim to expertise was not what it seemed.[70]

Nor were the barriers to participation by lay people in areas of specialized knowledge as insurmountable as some presented. Techniques and protocols could be designed to fit any given situation so that the planning process would have benefit of citizens' own forms of specialized knowledge or include lay citizens in the process of forming consent. In any case, the choice offered between politics and planning, between citizen participation and policy analysis, was a false one. Adjustments in organizational structures, procedural rules, and mediation strategies could bridge the gap – if planners wanted to do so. The offer of "technical assistance" has been one of the most common and sensible responses. It taught citizens things they needed to know. The form of technical assistance known as "advocacy planning" is also well-known and the controversies stemming from it have been adequately ventilated. Sometimes planners working on behalf of communities have used those communities to legitimate their own agendas. But sometimes planners have "gone native" and served their neighborhood clients well.[71]

Increasingly, however, citizens possess technical knowledge or know how to acquire it, and can use such knowledge in conflicts with planners and their superiors. Land use planning and regulation is a knowable specialization and citizens can arm themselves for "a fair fight." "Ordinary lay citizens" can take part in the collection, analysis and use of scientific data, "hold up the traditional canons of scientific research," and use this knowledge to succeed politically. In metropolitan Portland, not-so-ordinary citizens penetrated the esoteric subfield of transportation modeling and challenged the professionals to include land use and air quality values in their more conventional traffic simulations. The result was a change in policy and practice as well as outcome. Citizens can combine the power of "situated" or local knowledges available to only themselves with challenges to the prevailing discourses of urban renewal, transportation planning, or other specializations. If it is true, as Judith Allen suggests, that the power of citizens rests on the knowledge they can wield, then citizens can "subvert the techniques of administrative power" by "challenging the nature of the discourses and practices that underlie participation."[72]

As participation moves back from conflict toward co-production we can begin to see that knowledge in a wide variety of forms has value for the planning process, if only professional,

technical, and situated knowledges can be reconciled with one another. We are reminded here of John Dewey's conception of democracy as a method of cooperative and collective intelligence. Schneekloth and Shibley have offered "placemaking" as process of bringing together "situated" knowledges and the specialized knowledges of design professionals in a "dialogic space." Planners in Madrid, for example, found that getting "residents' input was not only a question of democracy, but also one of effectiveness in assessing needs and finding adequate solutions." In Atlanta, the constriction of participation in the urban regime led to a diminution of the processes of "social learning." As Elkin reminds us, equity and efficiency are not opposed. Instead, they go hand in hand. The challenge for planners and others in structuring processes of citizen participation is not in choosing between professional and lay knowledge, but in devising ways to bring them together.[73]

Planners and others have worked hard over the past three decades to accomplish exactly that. The participation literature describes an extraordinary inventory of procedural inventions intended variously to collect information, disseminate planning knowledge, solicit opinion, organize debate, structure representation, promote consensus formation, and foster collaborative design. There is clearly an advantage from the point of view of planners in being able to construct the specific processes by which citizens will engage any given planning process. Some have dubbed this the "original sin" of participation. Someone must instigate the planning process, frame its purpose, and design the participatory process, and most often it is not the citizen. Some planning researchers have stressed the need for representation in planning processes to be "carefully structured," or for planners to look carefully at the "cost benefit perspective" of any participation approach. Planners would like to retain control of the process. Yet, it is also true that citizens can usurp the tools of the participation manager and use them for their own ends.[74]

In the absence of crisis or controversy, however, the more common problem is too little participation, not "too much." This may be due to a lack of interest by citizens or of confidence that their involvement can make any difference in the outcome. But the reasons may also lie in planning practice. Ethridge suggests that it is not enough to provide access to participation; a "mobilization of the public interest" is required. Low participation may also be the result of planners choosing techniques of participation "inappropriate and unsuited to the program objectives and the capability of citizens." As Seley points out, "the history of participation suggests that there is no lack of prescriptions or possibilities for effective and imaginative forms of participation."[75]

Indeed, the list goes on and on, with little need for planners today to invent new techniques, only to mix, match, and adapt those appropriate for their specific tasks, even for the

inclusion of multi-lingual and multi-cultural participants. Conventional public meetings and hearings continue to be the most common but more interactive structured techniques such as the nominal group technique and brainstorming are in widespread use. A variety of advisory committee, task force, mediation, and "fishbowl" discussions have been widely used as a way of organizing consensus on difficult issues. Surveys, citizen planning ballots, and referenda have allowed planners to give a greater number of people a chance to speak without devoting large chunks of time to the endeavor. The use of television, and later computers, has extended the reach of participation, both for the dissemination of planning information and gathering citizen perspectives. More specialized techniques like the design charrette and the policy Delphi have also been used to aggregate expert views or to integrate them with lay perspectives.[76]

In the same way that neighborhood scale institutions of participation and action are created and sustained over time, institutions of participation in planning sustain the techniques of participatory planning over time. What started out as innovations by planners, designers, or citizens, became set pieces of the participatory process, not only time-honored, but embedded in the local culture. By the end of the 1960s, many observers had already recognized that citizen participation had become "part and parcel of a more fundamental reorganization of American local politics." Otherwise "transient" processes of participation "aspire(d) to become governmental structure... restructuring in basic ways the relationship between city residents and those who govern them." Typically, structures of participation supplanted the old ethnic-based, patronage-fueled machines of the early 20th century. And if they were a poor investment of time and energy for the underclasses, they served other urban populations well enough.[77]

Many pegged the success of participation at the neighborhood scale to the development of more permanent structures. Babcock suggested that city neighborhoods should have representative boards with professional staff and power to set local zoning policy and enforce it – just like in the suburbs. The Tufts team also emphasized the need to build institutional structure to give citizens at the grassroots control over zoning, CDBG funds, and their own discretionary funds for staff, newsletters, and other communications. Such recommendations resonate with Elkin's prescription of "neighborhood assemblies with significant powers; citywide referenda, and; city legislatures, also with significant powers" and Bezold's suggestion for an "anticipatory democracy."[78]

Others have focused on the need to structure participation at the national level. Lancourt suggested "a national movement" for Alinsky organizations "with a reticulated network of regional and national linkages," balancing local autonomy with shared principles. For participation more generally, it was proposed that the dozens of program by program

participation requirements be superseded by a blanket requirement at the federal level. The alternative was for "a shift from a reliance on federal guidelines to reliance on locally based guidelines and organizations." Either way, the goal was to build a stronger foundation for participation on an ongoing basis. Not all innovations found support at the national level. Grassroots innovations for neighborhood development like the Neighborhood Housing Services and tenant management in public housing failed to gain federal support. And one promising effort to democratize science policy felt the Reagan era axe. Yet the experience only underscored the fact that "participatory mechanisms that provide the public with real opportunities to affect the policy process must be institutionalized.[79]

Success in this arena seems to require, not only appropriate institutional architecture, but also strong political foundations. As Berry and his colleagues discovered, cities with effective structures of participation were no different from other cities except that political leaders and organizations, as well as citizens in general, were committed to them. They concluded that structured participation "cannot be conceived as an administrative reform. It must first be a political reform." Conversely, in cities where political leadership declined to create new institutions, participation was short-lived or intermittent. "Progressive" regimes in Hartford and Cleveland passed as quickly as they arrived because they were rooted neither in political movements nor participatory institutions. Just the opposite was true in the most successful cases. In Cincinnati, community participation became a permanent and positive element of governing by linking neighborhood organizations and the city bureaucracy in productive ways, a true form of co-production. In Berkeley and Santa Monica, participation was understood as a mechanism not only for democratizing decision-making but also for creating long-term political change. And in Castells' Madrid, the citizen movement helped accomplish nothing less than the "transformation of the political system" by allowing the "penetration of the state by the demands of civil society" through the "articulation between grassroots democracy and representative democracy." In this way, political action and administrative structure evolved together to create institutions that were both more democratic and more efficient.[80]

But if these changes are anchored in political and administrative organization, they are also rooted in local political culture. Such cities have different political institutions in part because their citizens have acted differently. But their citizens act differently, in turn, because they have different political institutions. As Elkin suggests, such institutions promote the formation of a citizenry inclined toward political activity as a matter of giving reasons. When this is promoted structurally, step by step, it becomes the reality culturally. Berry and his colleagues talk about such cultural resources in terms of "capacity." Part of this capacity is practical

knowledge by citizens about how they can participate. Part of it is a belief that they can, indeed, influence the system. Part of it is the experiential lessons that participation teaches, including that it is worthwhile to be involved in the process. Ultimately, the structure of a vibrant local democracy must be in the hearts and minds of the citizens as well as in the city charter.[81]

"The task for democracy," Benjamin Barber wrote, "must be to invent procedures, institutions, and forms of citizenship that nurture political judgment and succor common choice and action..." Or as John Dewey put it, "the essential need... is the improvement of the methods and conditions of debate, discussion and persuasion. That is **the** problem of the public." This is exactly the task that planners and citizens have undertaken in cities around the world, especially in the United States, and particularly in places like Portland. Such an endeavor faces many unresolvable dilemmas about consensus and conflict, representation and direct participation, and power and powerlessness. But as a fundamentally cultural endeavor, the elaboration of local democracy in the form of citizen participation in planning may – and often does – address itself squarely toward the transformation of the social structure. An architecture that seems unalterable to some is actually susceptible to renovation.[82]

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Chapter 5. The Northwest District – Site of Origin

Portland is a city full of tales of planning glory, but none of these stories have been reduced to the diamond-hard quality of legend more than those of the Northwest District Association. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, the residents of that neighborhood rose up to stop the bulldozers of urban renewal, turned back a highway, created a new neighborhood association, and made a plan that not only saved the neighborhood, but helped make it one of the best places to live in all of Portland. They were smart, feisty, intrepid citizens with a vision of the future many others failed to see.

The legend has a smooth, hard, simple quality that belies the struggle and confusion of the actual events that fails to take into account the energy and time those citizens spent. The memories of the participants have been compressed by time, their stories worn smooth in the retelling. If you had just a minute to learn about the history of the Northwest District, the legend would certainly suffice. But you would miss the great richness and complexity of the story. It would be less interesting, not so instructive.

The Northwest District Association was born in a series of sometimes stormy meetings in May of 1969. The Portland Development Commission was looking for a federally-mandated participation partner with which to execute a major clearance renewal scheme around Good Samaritan Hospital. What they found instead was a group of savvy, professional, middle-class, urban homesteaders who would out-think and out-maneuver the agency to snatch control of the planning and redevelopment process at the earliest possible opportunity. The work of those citizens brought to an end roughly twenty years of official schemes to modernize and rationalize Northwest Portland, to eradicate slums and "gray areas", and install new highways and industrial infrastructure.

Northwest had once been one of Portland's most prestigious neighborhoods, with a core of gracious homes, tree-lined streets, fine apartment buildings, and pleasant city shopping districts. By the end of the Second World War, however, it had lost its luster. In the early 1950s, planners steeped in the dogmas of housing life-cycle and neighborhood succession began to plan for its rational replacement. Before the end of the 1960s, the City proposed an urban renewal plan that would have clipped off 44 blocks of the ragged, working-class, northern edge of the neighborhood, and converted the land to industrial and highway uses. "The staff report," historian Carl Abbott wrote, "carefully portrayed the area as a low-density slum, with ramshackle

houses crowded with boarders, transient factory workers, juvenile delinquents, and welfare families."[1]

Supporting documents for the urban renewal proposal were a compendium of post-war planning concepts, saturated with a distinctly modernist ideology: "obsolete" housing needed to be removed; "natural" and "market" processes of land use conversion needed to be facilitated; industrial areas should be separated from residential areas by means of a "buffer" of green space; and a new, six-lane Thurman Street – with a 120-foot right of way! – should serve the industrial area, be its southern boundary, and connect it with planned highway improvements including the Stadium Freeway (I-405), the new Fremont Bridge, and St. Helens Road (U.S. Route 30).

The planners saw the existing neighborhood as organized around its two elementary schools, although two shopping streets are its true backbones. So devoted were they to Clarence A. Perry's neighborhood unit concept they suggested that Couch School eventually be moved since it wasn't quite in the geographical center of the neighborhood of which the theory assumed it would be the core. The primary author of the report was a planner named Lloyd T. Keefe, who would later serve as planning director, and who would sustain those orthodoxies until his replacement by Mayor Neil Goldschmidt in 1973. But while an abstract sense of order and rationality may have moved Keefe, the president of the Planning Commission, Harry Stroufe, noted that the 575-acre "Vaughn Street Redevelopment Project, alone, will add 3,000 more workers, as estimated by the Chamber of Commerce."[2]

The bond issue to finance the plan was defeated in citywide referendum in 1952 and residents leery of public housing and government action in general resisted an attempt to resurrect it the following year. But the same concept – housing removal for industry and highways – resurfaced in the early 1960s. One planner at that time overlaid tracing paper on a neighborhood base map and etched a sweeping elbow of cross-hatched "I N D U S T R Y" around the eastern and northern edges of the neighborhood.[3] Thus the battle lines were drawn for the conflict to come. The planners, cool and rational, mounted their symbolic assault with text, map, and table. Traffic, high population density, conflicting land uses, and generally unfavorable demographics had created a neighborhood whose elements were "obsolete," "dilapidated," "congested," "chaotic," and "deteriorating." There were too many elderly, too many "unrelated individuals," too many multiple dwellings, too many cars parked at the curb. The nuisances of "a flashing sign, a blaring horn, a smoking chimney" would, in the long run, lead to "blight."[4]

The planners produced detailed maps and charts specifying the exact percentage, within each defined district, of housing units and structures deemed to be worthy of removal. In the "Couch" district, on the far eastern side of the neighborhood, 53 percent of the housing units and 76 percent of the structures were rated either "bad" or "poor." In the "Thurman" district, on the

northern edge, 79 percent of the units and 72 percent of the structures were so rated. Each district was then subdivided for an even finer analysis of the exact number of structures to be cleared, repaired, or left alone, a breakdown of project costs, sources of non-cash grants-in-aid, a projection of local and federal share of financing, and an estimate of the number of individuals, families and businesses to be relocated. In all, this exercise contemplated the demolition of 966 housing units in 356 residential structures, requiring the relocation of 718 families and 341 other individuals – more than 2,000 people – at a total cost of $14,491,000.[5]

Good Samaritan Hospital, meanwhile, struggled to come to grips with its own future in the neighborhood. Throughout the 1960s they announced a series of renovation and expansion plans with shifting programs, time lines, and cost projections but presented with a consistent rationale of pressing need, progress, and modernization backed by thorough planning. A 20-year, $15 to $20 million "blueprint for the future" developed by a "nationally-known consultant" was presented in March 1962. It included a new convalescent unit, isolation facilities, nursing dorm, and eight story main building on NW 23rd Avenue. Three years later they unveiled a six-year $10-million plan to make Good Samaritan "one of the largest medical complexes west of the Mississippi River." This plan, the product of "five years of intensive study, operational analysis and research into the metropolitan area's hospital needs," added a remodeling of an existing building, demolition of Good Samaritan's original 1900 facility, and construction of a six-story outpatient and emergency unit. The new facilities would occupy approximately nine city blocks. Two years after that there were more adjustments in the plan. Buildings, beds, equipment, and facilities would all be brought up to date. Planning committee chair, Thaddeus B. Bruno, said the hospital was meeting its "responsibility to keep abreast of the latest in medical advancements."[6]

The leaders of Good Samaritan Hospital, to this point, spoke for themselves without contradiction, or even comment, from another source. There were no neighborhood associations or neighbors at all, no unions or politicians, not anyone to interfere with the presentation of their plans, let alone the implementation of the same. Then, in December 1968, the papers ran a story reporting that Good Samaritan "has agreed to abate air pollution sources which have been in violation of standards for the past three years." They agreed to shut down one incinerator, and maybe two others, to eliminate "black smoke."[7] Thereafter, the hospital would find its actions, both rhetorical as well as concrete, constrained by the demands and expectations of others.

As the decade drew to a close, hospital planning and the City's schemes for urban renewal in Northwest began to converge. The city planner's rhetoric of necessary comprehensive action toward curing urban pathologies also began to converge with the health care planner's rhetoric of necessary progress toward curing human disease. The two were carried forward together in the Portland Development Commission's urban renewal project application, to be submitted to City

Council for review in December 1969. Good Samaritan's justification to expand was "extreme and necessary for their survival in their present location," the project application said. They were the only remaining hospital in Northwest Portland to serve local health needs. If they did expand, there would be nearly 1,500 new jobs, many for the people of the neighborhood, as well as new hope for stability in the neighborhood overall. A comprehensive clearance and renewal program, the PDC argued, was the only thing that could save Northwest from the inexorable processes of urban decay.

The planners believed the mixture of land uses and character of development that existed in Northwest was simply untenable. "Industrial, commercial, service organization, single family residential, and multi-unit residential usage is not only common in the area," the application read, "but also exists within the same blocks." Apartment buildings had no set backs. What yards existed were likely used for parking. There was little green space and no place for children to play. Noise, vibration, fumes, and traffic made life inconvenient, unpleasant, and dangerous. "The end result could be a concrete surfaced district," warned the PDC. No one with any choice in the matter would want to live in such an environment. Declining property values, disinvestment, and conversion of land to non-residential uses were inevitable unless government used its powers to sort things out. Even worse, the neighborhood was filled with unattached and transient individuals and overall population density was very high, fertile ground for criminal activity, they said.[8]

The renewal plan itself, however, was schematic, at best. In addition to the main medical campus buildings there were squares on a map labeled "housing," "low-cost housing," "research," "recreation," and "commercial." A "supermarket," "offices and shops" and several parking garages were also indicated.[9] "All proposed developments," the application continued, "will be compatible uses, and are desirable in trying to integrate the whole project area into the surrounding neighborhood." The application failed to specify – or even estimate – the total square footage of proposed new uses or overall development costs. They provided, however, excruciating detail on the worthlessness of the buildings to be replaced.

"The delineation of (project) boundaries," they said, "was determined by the degree of deterioration that exists in the area, and the projected needs by Good Samaritan Hospital to develop an efficient medical center." Yet it hardly seems coincidental that such deterioration and the hospital's desired path of expansion were so geographically congruent, or that the existing homes within the project boundaries could be so wholly without value. Roughly half of the structures were deemed "substandard warranting clearance." Another fifth were characterized as "deficient – rehabilitation questionable," and still another fifth "deficient – rehabilitation feasible." Only ten percent were considered sound and these existed in a context of "overcrowding

or improper location of structures on the land; incompatible land uses and land use relationships; unsafe, congested, poorly designed and otherwise deficient streets; excessive dwelling unit density; inadequate community facilities contributing to unsatisfactory living conditions or economic decline; and a high crime rate." They might as well all come down, the application argued.[10]

Of course, all of these assertions, arguments, and beliefs were about to come under intense challenge from the neighborhood. The residents of Northwest District would question everything: the value of these condemned homes, the desirability of life in this diverse and busy territory, the very definition of a good and healthy neighborhood. They would challenge the feasibility of the city's proposal and the necessity of the hospital's expansion program. In its place they would assert their own vision for the Northwest neighborhood, and ultimately for the entire city of Portland.

There had been stirrings of citizen activity in Northwest throughout the late 1960s. George "Bing" Sheldon remembers "concerned citizens" getting together periodically to discuss what to do about conditions in the neighborhood. Individual activists would speak up at Planning Commission or City Council on one issue or another.[11] Church leaders and social service providers began to meet to address the problems of the neighborhood. Llano Thelin, pastor of Emmanuel Lutheran Church, organized a group to study social conditions in Northwest. But the advent of the PDC's urban renewal plan was the precipitating event for the foundation of the Northwest District Association, and stiffening federal participation mandates prompted city officials to seek out organized local residents to serve as junior partners in the effort. PDC leaders met with Thelin, Sheldon, Edd Crawford of Friendly House, and a number of others to ask that they organize such a group.[12]

What followed showed how explicitly they had agreed to work together, but also how much their agendas diverged, and how little control they would have over events once they went public with their plans. A story in *The Oregonian* on May 4, 1969 announced "People to get voice in Northwest Portland with formation of community action body." The piece outlined the city's plans for the area, including expansion for the hospital, and for Consolidated Freightways, which already had a major facility in the area. It noted their intention to use a new and hopefully less cataclysmic provision of the urban renewal law called a Neighborhood Development Program (NDP) that would allow them "to incorporate various components of urban renewal – clearance, redevelopment, new housing, and residential rehabilitation, and public improvements – in a more flexible process than conventional, single purpose urban renewal methods." And, it announced the date and place of the organizational meeting for the new citizen body, which already had a name: the Northwest District Development Association.[13]

By that time, however, the differences between the city and the neighborhood were already apparent. Quotes from planning director Lloyd Keefe and others were heavy with the language of earlier urban renewal studies. He talked about "congestion," the "obsolescence" of housing, excessive "density," plans for clearance, and the creation of "buffers." Edd Crawford, in contrast, talked about the need to prevent displacement, and Thelin spoke of grass-roots power. "I see this community organization as a power base from which to counter the institutions – to give people a voice," he said. The PDC may have invited the neighbors to the table, but they wouldn't be able to control them.

On May 15 at Chapman School, several hundred people attended the first organizational meeting of the Northwest District Development Association. Llano Thelin was elected president of the new group and participants spent much of the evening wrangling over amendments to a draft constitution. Near the end of the meeting, a man named Karl Kubin rose to argue that no such organization was necessary and that individual citizens could and should speak and act on their own behalf as renewal planning proceeded. He moved that the NWDDA not be formed. The motion was seconded, discussed at length, then defeated, and the new organization was born.[14]

Still, many residents were suspicious about the origins of the new group. Some whispered that leaders were actually acting on behalf of the PDC. At the first organizational meeting, Thelin had been straightforward about the fact that the city had asked them to organize but it seemed only to inflame the rumors. At the second meeting on May 20, NWDDA leaders came prepared to rebut the charges. They circulated a flyer identifying their founders as "a small group of concerned Northwest clergymen, businessmen, property owners, and renters," who had "no relationship to any governmental body." The flyer carried a draft mission statement "to preserve and to improve the livability of Northwest Portland while protecting the personal (human) and property rights of individual citizens." It also announced their commitment to "seek information, express protest, or cooperate with any agency or Commission upon agreement of the membership."[15]

A second flyer framed the argument against those who were saying the best course was to deny PDC its participation partner and have no involvement in renewal planning except for opposition. "This planning can take place with little or no citizen endorsement. Can you, as an individual, influence any of these plans for the neighborhood? Can you voice your opinion effectively? Let's face it, we must have a neighborhood association... a no vote tonight will NOT stop urban renewal. Vote yes for a voice in your future through democratic processes." It was signed "George Sheldon, Resident and Property Owner."[16]

The greatest heat that night, however, was directed at the proponents of the plan, represented by Jake Bigham of the PDC, Lloyd Keefe for the Bureau of Planning, and Chester

Stocks, administrator of Good Samaritan. The crowd at Chapman School was estimated by one observer at 450 people, by another at 600. "If the proposal had any supporters in the crowd Tuesday night," wrote a reporter for *The Oregonian*, "they were impossible to identify amid two and a half hours of quarreling, shouting, heckling, and speech-making. Several residents said the government had no right to force them from their homes and businesses in order to accommodate the hospitals."[17]

Clearly, residents were not divided on the issue of urban renewal, only on the proper strategy for opposing it. Louise Weidlich, a Northwest District apartment building owner and long-time political gadfly, organized another meeting the following week for a group to be called The Northwest District Against Urban Renewal. They weren't *for* anything, one attendee proudly reported. They were just against urban renewal.[18] Weidlich and her supporters, however, lost their grip on the meeting. A resident named Roy Goodman electrified the crowd with a speech and was elected president in a landslide. Then he pointed out that he was not opposed to all forms of government redevelopment assistance, just urban renewal by clearance, and according to the proposed by-laws of the group, therefore not eligible to be its president. Nevertheless, he said he would try to develop "some sort of liaison with the Northwest District Development Association... I'm sure we have common purposes."[19]

Weidlich was to persist, resurfacing as spokeswoman for the Northwest District Against Urban *Removal*, and demanding that Mayor Terry Schrunk name her group the sole legitimate representative of Northwest District representatives. Schrunk ignored Weidlich and it was the NWDA – they dropped the word "development" from their name within the first year – who sat in that summer on discussions of details of the evolving renewal plan. An August meeting aired a proposal to construct 200 units of low-income housing for the elderly, discussed the desire of the developer to close a portion of NW Marshall Street, and raised the possibility of giving residents displaced by the project first choice in new public housing. NWDA leaders merely listened, claimed to represent no one but themselves, and insisted they would not take a position on the plan until they had studied and debated it carefully.[20]

Meanwhile, key elements of the city's original plan began to unravel. Provision for expansion of Consolidated Freightways was deleted from the plan to comply with federal urban renewal requirements that agencies deal with private profit-making firms at arms length. Likewise, hopes that Northwest might take advantage of the Neighborhood Development Program – something which drew initial support from a few residents – were set aside as it became clear the Nixon administration was unwilling to approve such projects. Instead, PDC would be forced to move forward under the clear-and-rebuild provisions of Section 112.[21]

That fall, however, it was the NWDA that would move forward. Citizens often complain

that public hearings and other participatory exercises seem to be conducted after decisions have already been made. Some may say: "the fix is in," that public deliberations are merely theatrics to justify a foregone conclusion rather than reach a decision. But in the case of the Northwest District it was the citizens acting through their new neighborhood association who put in the "fix" and got approval and funding for a grass-roots neighborhood plan. They constructed an argument for such a plan that no one could rebut, organized support behind the scenes for their counter proposal, and presented themselves as ready to play the role of responsible planning partners in a way that calmed bureaucrats and made it easy for the City Council to go along.

Key participants from the neighborhood association like to recall how they were received by the political establishment as brazen radicals. But at the time, they purposely presented themselves as sober moderates. NWDA leaders made modest claims to political legitimacy and a very careful appeal to the conservative sensibilities of the City Council. "We represent a cross-section" of people in the neighborhood, they said, "who rent, own property, operate a business, or are affiliated with a non-profit institution," and who sought only to promote the "livability" of the neighborhood. They intended to offer "suggestions," as opposed to demands, arising from "issues," not ideology, and those suggestions would be "constructive, objective, and rational." As further evidence of their sobriety and even-handedness, they repeated their assertion about having "refrained from taking a stand either for or against the proposed urban renewal project."[22]

In fact, the NWDA membership was tilted strongly toward home-owners and social service providers, and against renters and businesses. Moreover, their pose of neutrality on the issue of the urban renewal plan was just that, a pose. They were, in fact, dead set against it. And, although they carried themselves with the same sort of professional decorum native to the elected officials and planning bureaucrats they faced, they held a radically different notion of what a good neighborhood was all about. The leaders of the NWDA also benefited from an inadvertent "good cop-bad cop" relationship to other, less well-organized elements of the neighborhood. They didn't make demands, cast accusations, raise their voices, or talk crazy as some others did.

They also argued the merits of the case on the planners' own terms. Their request for support for a neighborhood plan was based on the simple logic that it was inappropriate to approve planning for a small area – the Good Samaritan campus and vicinity – when there was no planning in place for the larger, surrounding neighborhood. It would be impossible to determine if the Good Samaritan plan was consistent with the vision and plan for the broader area if there was no vision and plan. Therefore, they argued, a neighborhood plan encompassing all of the Northwest District should be created at least concurrent with, if not before, creation of the urban renewal plan. Moreover, any such plan must be created with widespread community participation. In a letter to Mayor Schrunk, Thelin quoted chapter and verse of federal regulations

on the necessity that any "spot redevelopment" be tied to an "overall workable program" based on "effective, continuing planning," as well as expanding opportunities to provide citizens "clear and direct access to decision making, relevant and timely information, and necessary technical assistance."[23]

On the question of adequate participation the city clearly came up short. But the city did have plans for Northwest, which required Thelin to argue that they were either out of date or inadequate. There was a comprehensive plan, dated 1958, and revised in 1966, but the update was "not adopted by Council action." There was a basic zoning map, but it had not been reviewed since 1958. There was also a Community Renewal Plan, adopted in September 1967, but the Good Samaritan project wasn't included. "Upon examining these plans," Thelin wrote, as if a lawyer, "we have determined that notwithstanding any Federal determination of workability, we do not feel that they are adequate, up to date, or reflect the expressed desires of the people in the community." Their remedy was a new plan to encompass an area at least as big as the neighborhood association's chosen boundaries and to include consideration of traffic, including arterials and freeway ramps; present conditions, trends, and alternatives for land use; a review of zoning; and identification of social needs.[24] Planning bureau staff supported the argument, and the development commission had no retort.[25]

The December 10, 1969 session of the City Council was far more like a wedding than it was a public hearing. Representatives of the Portland Development Commission and the Northwest District Association came to recite their vows before the city fathers (and they were, indeed, all men at that time) regarding how to proceed with planning in Northwest. The hearing, which lasted much of the day, was not to reach a decision, but rather to enact and celebrate a decision which had been made in the preceding weeks. Commissioners Lloyd Anderson and Frank Ivancie had prepared a report recommending that both planning processes be approved and Mayor Schrunk had signed off at what is known in Portland as "an informal." The PDC would get approval to put its urban renewal application into the sluggish federal pipeline, and the NWDA would get its neighborhood plan with $75,000 in the 1970-71 budget for staff support. The latter plan was approved with the stipulations that it be done "prior to or simultaneous with" the urban renewal plan and that it be prepared "in cooperation with residents and representative groups in the Northwest area."[26]

Everything was in order. All that remained was to go through with the ceremony. Anderson enunciated both the Council's commitment to open participation and their demand to be kept informed of the plan's progress. "I, for one, will not vote for any project proposed in the area unless there is evidence of citizen involvement in the project as it progresses," he said. "There also needs to be, on an informal basis, a council review and understanding of the program

as it develops." These were, variously, promises to his constituents, a warning to the hospital, clear instructions to staff, and explicit permission for the nascent neighborhood association to take a leading role.[27]

Thelin repeated the NWDA's well-rehearsed representations about who they were, how they would act, what they wanted, and why it was logical within the existing framework of federal urban renewal law and the practice of Portland city planning. Again, the reverend spoke in lawyerly fashion. His presentation wasn't an attack, or even an argument, just a recitation of facts and foregone conclusions. In closing, Thelin also offered the substantial resources of the neighborhood association and its membership to work with the city and to "encourage, coordinate, plan, and participate in the orderly rehabilitation and renewal of that portion of Northwest." As if to demonstrate their discipline and moderation, the NWDA mounted only two speakers that day, Thelin and Howard Glazer. They had worked hard to turn out a supportive crowd, but they made clear to members that no additional speakers were desired. Having already won, they understood it would not help their cause to filibuster or browbeat the Commissioners.[28]

Glazer's role in the ceremony, however, was to qualify their vows and finally admit to the world that the members of the neighborhood association were – at least – highly skeptical of urban renewal. He had a reputation for being a hot-head at times. But Glazer was on his best behavior, speaking on behalf of orderly planning and acknowledging the legitimate needs of the hospital. But, he continued, if urban renewal around Good Samaritan was going to be another "real estate operation, preoccupied with tax returns, market analysis, economics, justifications and rationalizations and cosmetics, without regard for the needs of people" then the NWDA wanted no part of it. Urban renewal might work if there were a real commitment to meaningful participation and strong determination to save what is best about the neighborhood. He wrote a note to himself: "back to the drawing board. Organic plan – not T-square."[29]

What Glazer said next contradicted the basic tenets of urban renewal planning, and at the same time, foreshadowed the central thrust of the entire Northwest District Plan. There had been, as the PDC had documented, a continuing deterioration in the "livability" of the neighborhood because of traffic, air pollution, and the encroachment of industrial uses. But, unlike the renewal planners steeped in the orthodoxies of the day, the residents of Northwest Portland believed this deterioration "may very well be reversible." The kinds of change that conventional planners considered to be inevitable and inexorable, Glazer said, were not even necessary. "This kind of change, for the worse, certainly need not be, and it should not be, and it simply cannot be. Change is inevitable, but change can be responsive to people's needs." It may have sounded like gratuitous oratory at the time. But Glazer's declaration of the potential for positive change was at the heart of the neighborhood's entire project, as if to say, it doesn't have to be this way. It can be

better.[30]

While Thelin and Glazer spoke briefly, opponents of the deal railed at length. Louise Weidlich broke all the rules of Portland decorum. She used extreme rhetoric, raised her voice, got into arguments with the members of the Council, criticized Commissioners directly, and attacked her fellow citizens. She challenged the legitimacy of the NWDA while claiming the same for her own letterhead organization, and she cast accusations of corruption against citizens who worked on the Model Cities program in the Albina neighborhood. Most notably, she argued against any activities that would provide urban renewal officials with an ability to claim they had satisfied their citizen participation requirements. One of her sympathizers, businessman George Auckland, likened Anderson and Ivancie to Alice in Wonderland, and denounced the urban renewal plan as "a big major land grab" and an "under the table" operation. Joe Cruz, a native Guatemalan, said urban renewal was worse than totalitarianism. In Guatemala you could fight a revolution, he said, but in the United States you were forced to fight in court – "if you have the money."[31]

The members of the Council listening to such diatribes must have congratulated themselves on their good judgment in striking a deal with the demonstrably more responsible Northwest District Association. But the good cop-bad cop routine was in force again. When it came right down to it, the sober citizens and the rowdy crack-pots of Northwest Portland believed roughly the same thing. Their neighborhood had real value the way it was and tearing down a lot of buildings to make room for the hospital wasn't going to help it. Such a consensus bode ill for the Good Samaritan urban renewal plan.

Indeed, the Council, itself, may have been losing patience with the PDC and its pursuit of urban renewal dreams. Council old timers like Stanley Earl remembered the spanking they endured over the Vaughn Street redevelopment plan, and the public uproar over the South Auditorium clearance and redevelopment was still fresh in almost everyone's memory. And on this particular day, it seemed to require great effort on the part of Commissioners and citizens alike to get some straight answers out of PDC executive director, John Kenward. Will the PDC and the Planning Bureau work together to reconcile the two plans? Would the program and project boundaries for the hospital be adjustable to fit the requirements of the neighborhood plan? And would this be another "wipe out and start all over" project or something more constructive? The kindest characterization would be that Kenward's replies were obscure.

Kenward congratulated the Council for its commitment to citizen participation and praised his own agency for aggressive action on the same front. He talked about the potential of the project to sort out conflicting land uses, create new jobs, bring new housing, relieve traffic congestion, and improve health care. He warned about the dollars to be lost if the application were not expedited. He bragged on the details of the project. But when questioned about one or

the other of those details, he backpedaled. This was a very preliminary plan, after all.

Most noteworthy, however, Kenward seemed to insist on the priority of the hospital's plans. Of course, he acknowledged, the final plan would have to be approved by the Council, and they would have to see that it was consistent with the plan for the larger neighborhood. But the hospital was not likely to change its boundaries or alter its program. After all, they had studied things carefully and knew what they needed. If the Council found in the end that the two plans did not jibe the hospital might decide to do nothing. Pressed on the question of whether the project boundaries might be shrinkable, Kenward pointed out that there was no project boundary yet because there was no plan, although the hospital had a boundary and a plan, but they probably wouldn't be willing to change them because they were based on well-studied real needs. A suggestion by citizen Glazer that some mechanism for negotiations be worked out elicited no response from Kenward. It was classic Catch-22 logic, and it's goal was not so much to protect the prerogatives of the hospital, but those of the PDC.[32]

In the end, Kenward's performance didn't matter much. The sun was setting on the urban renewal program all over the country, not just in Portland. It had lost political support at every level of society from the White House to the cottages on NW Thurman Street. What mattered was that the Portland City Council had chosen a neighborhood association not yet a year old as its primary partner in an important city planning effort. And the Northwest District Association was ready to go.

Getting down to work

The leaders of the NWDA began the new year "spinning" their triumph. "If the real issue of Dec. 10th's City Council hearings was the needs of the NW District vs. the needs of Good Samaritan Hospital," crowed their inaugural newsletter, "then both sides won." But the neighborhood association, they vowed, "is not going to take this victory lying down." There would soon be a call for volunteers to work on the plan. The leadership would be reaching out again to the city and the hospital. They would all take an active role in the study process. And when a plan was in place, they would provide the pressure to make sure it was heeded.[33]

Budgetary cycles and bureaucratic inertia being what they are, there was no money available for the plan until July 1, 1970, and staff would not be in place until late Fall of that year. So, the neighborhood association began the work of planning on its own. There were, after all, plenty of experts in their number – an architect, a planner, a civil engineer, an attorney, and other professionals. They formed a planning committee and began to talk about what this plan should be. What emerged, almost from the beginning, was a simple vision of a neighborhood that remained active, urban, and diverse, without allowing it be overrun either by adjacent industrial

uses or the daily throughput of automobiles. The strategy and techniques, policies and implementation methods of such a plan would emerge over the following year, but the essence of it was clear almost from the very start. The Northwest District Plan was not so much created as it was revealed.

Planning committee chair, Edgar Waehrer, charged his cadre to "draft a series of statements which, in sum total, reflect the neighborhood's view of what the future of NW Portland should be, to be used as a guide by the city Planning Commission and as a standard by which to measure their proposals." Such statements should address a range of "critical functional topics" including zoning, traffic, and renewal processes, plus "critical areas" including Good Samaritan, the "industrial/ housing interface" and the transitional area between 20th Avenue and the Freeway.[34] The resulting drafts made "retention of residential character" the number one goal, with related concerns for "replacement housing for persons displaced by Good Sam and Fwy." with "a mix of housing types" and "how to deal with declining buildings." But they also wanted to "retain heterogeneity of business services" and "retain diverse population." Likewise, they were concerned with open space, the need to "minimize thru auto traffic," "minimize pollution," to preserve mixed land use, community services and public transportation, and how to deal with "social issues and physical implications."[35]

Their deepening discussions manifest, not only their imagination and industry, but also their knowledge of planning and their understanding of urban processes. They refined their geographic focus on areas of concern and zeroed in on the issues of business district preservation, traffic mitigation, and housing preservation in the face of industrial expansion. They talked about the potential for "performance zoning" as against conventional zoning, cited the work of Jane Jacobs, discussed the impact of mortgage lending practices on housing stability, and contemplated the "power relationships" between the neighborhood association and city government, local corporations, and others. They exhibited a surprising plannerliness, educating themselves about government programs and agencies, and organizing to collect data on just about everything.[36]

After the first round of discussions, Waehrer divided the committee into topic-focused subcommittees charged with providing the next level of detail. The results were remarkably well-developed. Al Edelman's housing subcommittee targeted the "preservation of the essential character and fabric of the Northwest District – the exciting intermix of diverse people and structures." Their elaboration of sub-issues was expansive and politically sensitive, encompassing concern for variety, choice, affordability, rehabilitation, the quality of the neighborhood environment, and "priority attention" for those displaced by hospital or highway construction. They adopted the unconventional view that even "unsound" houses could be "upgraded" rather

than demolished, and that there was nothing inherently "unstable" in a mix of housing types and prices. Foreshadowing a key element of the plan, they declared their desire to preserve, not just housing, but residential land itself, from conversion to industrial, commercial, or institutional uses.[37]

The land use and zoning subcommittee, led by Howard Glazer, pursued a similar course, identifying "diversity" as the primary value they sought to preserve, and even improve, in Northwest. "Diversity is the essence of urban living," they wrote. "Without it the reason for city life hardly exists." The mixture of single- and multi-family housing with neighborhood shops, schools, churches, and small-scale businesses was an historical happenstance in Northwest. But the members of the subcommittee imagined that such diversity "might well be a policy rather than an accident." Some kind of "positive design zoning" might make this happen, or perhaps a design review committee made up of citizens and professionals. They also imagined a neighborhood with more green space, a better environment for pedestrians, and better maintained buildings. But most audaciously, they imagined that such a neighborhood might expand.

If industry might displace residential uses, they reasoned, why not the other way around? Even to ask such a question required great vision and courage. But to build a plan around such an idea was simply extraordinary. The conventional wisdom of planners was that the "higher and better" uses were those industrial ones. Market forces alone would bear that out. But the activists in the NWDA believed that with a little help from the zoning code there would be plenty of market demand for renovated and new housing in these areas. Such housing could co-exist with light manufacturing, warehousing, wholesaling, and distribution almost indefinitely, but the latter would, over the course of decades, wither away.[38]

Early work on planning goals also turned prevailing orthodoxies about transportation and traffic on their heads. The traffic committee, headed by Lu Himes, urged Northwest be treated, not as a traffic system, but as a neighborhood with traffic elements. They envisioned a neighborhood in which cars, pedestrians, streets, parking and sidewalks all worked together to support neighborhood life, not throughput of vehicles. "The area's sidewalks and streets," they declared, "are primarily for the benefit of the Northwest District area's residents, business and service facilities," and with the exception of public transit, "there need be no efforts to encourage or facilitate the use of the Northwest District as a 'through way.'"[39]

Finally, at the end of 1970, the Bureau of Planning hired some staff to work with the citizens of Northwest Portland. All three were still early in their careers: John Perry, a bureau staffer who was ready to move on to something more interesting before getting this assignment; Dave Richen, a Berkeley-trained architect fresh from an extended visit to Europe; and David

Yaden, a specialist in public opinion research methods. Perry and Richen were introduced to the neighborhood association in meetings in November and December. They made it clear from the start they considered the NWDA their client and were ready and willing to provide whatever technical assistance the members required.[40]

The working relationship between staff and citizens was intimate from the start, especially with a small "coordinating committee" of NWDA leaders. Perry and Richen directed a steady flow of information and material to the members of the Planning Committee. They opened files for each of the sub-committees and filled them with maps, aerial photos, reports, and statistics. They peppered the chairs with suggestions about topics to discuss, information to seek, relationships to cultivate. They alerted them to pending land use decisions in the neighborhood and suggested negotiating strategies to use with Good Samaritan. Their advice, to paraphrase John Forester, was technically sound and politically astute. They suggested, for example, that the sub-committee on economic factors investigate whether Northwest was getting its "fair share" of public resources, and to assess the "attitudes of mortgage and lending institutions" toward the neighborhood. There was other advice on research methods, planning strategies, zoning tools, and more.[41] NWDA meetings became educational as well as deliberative, with presentations on current planning issues from the Board of Education on the future of Couch School, the Oregon State Highway Commission on designs for I-505, and others.[42]

Perry, in particular, served as the "political eyes and ears" of the association, working hard to keep the coordinating group tuned into political and bureaucratic events at City Hall without compromising his own status as an ostensibly impartial professional. He tipped them off to the pending demolition of two houses owned by Good Samaritan, warned them of a sensitive rezoning request by the hospital, and brought them up to date on work toward a city-wide policy on "District Planning Organizations," precursor to the Office of Neighborhood Associations. Both Perry and his clients understood the context of planning was highly political and that citizens needed this kind of information to succeed.[43] It was also Perry's job, however, to keep elected officials informed, particularly Commissioner Anderson whose charge included the Bureau of Planning. Anderson emphasized to Perry early on that he expected the "City Council (to) be 'brought along' in the study rather than have the plan dropped in their laps a year or so from now." Perry briefed Commissioners at Council "informals," provided interim reports to Anderson, and arranged to have a Planning Commission member serve as liaison to the NWDA, but all in all, he seemed to work more closely with the citizens than the Commissioner.[44]

The planners also reached out to their professional colleagues around the country for information and advice relevant to the issues facing Northwest Portland. Richen corresponded with planners in San Francisco and San Diego seeking advice on participatory processes.[45] Perry

asked a planner in Oakland about planning for hospital districts.[46] Richen even wrote to his Professor at Berkeley, T. J. Kent, the eminent scholar on land use planning.[47] Perry and Richen gave a tour to urban designer Grady Clay, and later shared information with him about planning for I-505.[48] On the home front, Perry worked with City Hall experts to collaborate on a "windshield survey" of housing, planning for exclusive bike lanes, and budgeting for the plan itself.[49]

Perhaps the biggest contribution made by staff was in their willingness and ability to guide a planning process in which citizen participation would be so prominent and mesh so smoothly with professional expertise. They had the classical training and experience to lead the process, step-by-step, from investigation to analysis, goal setting to alternatives testing, and beyond to implementation in ordinances, budgets, and projects. But they also had the understanding and philosophical commitment to make a much more participatory process work. This was apparent in their daily work, but it was ever so explicit in their own diagrammatic depictions of the structure and process of planning. An early diagram of the planning structure put the NWDA and its array of committees and subcommittees in the center of the action with staff – the "Technical Advisory Group" – off to one side. A thick black line sequestered the "political" from the "technical" and the Planning Commission and the City Council were no nowhere to be seen.[50] One week later, staff produced a diagram of the planning process in which discrete steps in the technical work were punctuated by frequent citizen reviews, which still understated the role of citizens in the process since NWDA members were also engaged in this technical work as much as the political work. Partly because citizens were so capable, but also because staff were so committed to the participatory approach, the lines between planner and citizen, between technical and political, grew fainter and fainter.[51]

Once settled, however, the planners did what planners do: they collected and analyzed data. In a mosaic from existing sources they saw a neighborhood with more old people, lower incomes, more women, fewer children, more single-person households, fewer families, more renters, and fewer automobile owners than in the rest of Portland. They saw cross-cutting patterns of mobility and stability – young people, many of them "hippies," moving in and out, old people staying put. It was a poorer neighborhood, perhaps not a "family neighborhood," but it was neither crime-ridden, falling down, nor emptying out.[52]

They made ambitious plans for gathering original data. The results of the 1970 census were not yet available and were not expected for some time. Since the Northwest District presented the "most complex mixture of types of people, land uses, and socio-economic conditions" in Portland, Perry reasoned, planning for its future required and deserved an appropriately fine-grained investigation. He envisioned a McHarg-like[53] composite of data

arrayed on 200-scale acetate overlays with streets, topography, land use, zoning, land value, ownership, housing conditions, traffic patterns, recent new construction, renovation, and demolition, housing and population density, income, age – everything visible at once to suggest "specific planning goals and policies" for the neighborhood.[54] The logistics of such a survey were, of course, more than daunting. Richen imagined a troop of volunteers, clipboards in hand, canvassing the entire 175-block neighborhood, noting the actual uses, current conditions, recent changes, "initial impressions," and "required actions," for each and every parcel. Such an army, it seems, never marched.[55]

The planners also wanted to find some way to bridge the gap, not just from one census to the next, but between the participatory process they had undertaken and their desire to understand all the residents of a neighborhood, including the vast majority who did not come out to meetings, were never interviewed, or never filled out a survey. David Yaden, who had studied with Samuel Lubell, one of the creators of modern in-depth survey research, proposed an elaborate social survey. He wanted to collect all of the obvious demographic data on age, marital status, employment, education, income, journey to work, housing status and tenure, household composition, ethnicity, and religious affiliation of residents. But Yaden also wanted to ask people about how they lived and what they thought. One draft of his interview script was 36 pages long, required 350 different responses, and would take up to an hour to administer. A random sample of residents would be asked in detail about their habits of life, their perceptions of conditions and problems in Northwest, and their attitudes toward the neighborhood, the city, and city government. Yaden worked for several months to raise the few thousand dollars it would cost to hire a research firm to do the survey, but no one inside or outside of City Hall wanted to invest in the project. It was a noble attempt to understand what the non-participants in the neighborhood wanted, but it was ultimately too much to carry off.[56]

The professional staff, however, did produce two estimable research products which they entitled "Interim Reports." One, released in May 1971, was subtitled "A Study of Conditions, Problems and Potentials." The other, released three months later, was called "A Study of Social Factors." Their ostensible purpose was "to establish a base of information... from which a set of goals and objectives can be developed." Of course, this was not the way it was. The goals and objectives had already been sketched by the citizen Planning Committee and all the participatory work done up to that point. The Interim Reports followed that outline, filled in the details, and laid the foundation for a more explicit argument later on. The language of the reports was mainly observational, but in describing existing conditions – the "what is" – they prefigured the more prescriptive thrust – the "what should be" – of the eventual plan. This is not to say that the portrayal of Northwest Portland in the Interim Reports was fictional, only that other

characterizations would have been possible (witness the urban renewal surveys of just a few years before), and that this particular rendition ran in strict parallel with the emerging strategy for the final plan.[57]

In Interim Report No. 1, the planners divided the neighborhood into four distinct sub-areas "on the basis of certain similarities of use, condition, and social factors." The first was the northern and eastern edge of the neighborhood, where industrial and residential uses collided. The second was the lively core of the neighborhood where apartments, single family houses, neighborhood commercial strips, and the hospital came together. A third, on higher ground to the west, clustered around Chapman School, was the bastion of single-family residence. The fourth was the southern ragged edge of the neighborhood along seedy Burnside Street, a thoroughfare richly deserving of Richard Sennett's epithet "sewer for cars."[58]

The authors claimed to have "identified" these sub-areas, as if there were something visible or tangible on the ground or in the data to suggest their existence, as if they just *found* them. In fact, the sub-areas were constructive abstractions of the neighborhood, each of which carried with it a cargo of assumptions and arguments about what was and what should be, and which altogether provided an explanation and justification of the plan strategy already under construction. They were by no means non-sensical. They organized neighborhoods of similar housing types, land uses, demographics, and environmental conditions. But there were other justifiable ways to draw these lines. This particular apportionment simply reflected the interests and intentions of these planners and their clients.

The defining of sub-area one, the "industrial interface," underlined the threat to Northwest presented by the incursion of industrial uses, and foreshadowed the debate about whether to allow the incursion, draw a line to hold it back, or even attempt to reverse it. It encompassed, on the north, the Thurman-Vaughn "corridor," the approved right-of-way for I-505, and an area long considered expendable by city planners. But the Northwest District planning staff described it as having "high utility for its residents, primarily because of low rents, proximity to work and shopping and convenient public transportation." It was "functional" from the metropolitan perspective, too, because it provided lower-income people unsubsidized housing close to jobs and services. These were the nicest things anyone had said about the area in a long time. More importantly, they would contribute to the rationale for re-routing the highway, something then not widely advocated. Likewise, on the eastern leg of sub-area one, where frame houses and apartment buildings mixed with warehouses and small factories, the planners found value in a neighborhood where poor people could afford to live and be close to jobs, health care, shopping, and the bus. The residents presented problems for the businesses and vice versa. But the planners judged it was more important to preserve a "neighborhood of necessity" for people

than for businesses.[59]

Sub-area two was the "apartment commercial core" centered on the business districts of NW 21st and NW 23rd Avenues. It had "the greatest diversity in types of living, commercial enterprises, fine old institutions, and amenities of in-city living. It is the heart of Northwest Portland." The planners discussed the fine-grained interdependence of people, activities, and urban environment in terms which Jane Jacobs would approve. Their detailed inventory of taverns, grocery stores, "head shops" and other businesses on the two main streets mimicked the sidewalk philosopher's own practical research methods. But their description of conditions also led directly to specific policy initiatives to be taken in the plan. "The old residential fabric is being rent with parking lots and larger structures," likely leading to "the break up of the fine grain, pedestrian scale that seems so much a part of the charm and function of these streets." Likewise, the widespread application of the "AO" zone (allowing apartments as of right, but freely permitting offices as a conditional use) had created few residential units but much commercial office development. Limits on parking, office development, and hospital expansion would all be part of saving "the heart of Northwest Portland."[60]

In drawing and describing sub-area three – the Chapman Area – the planners reinforced their policy arguments about the degrading effects of automobile traffic and identified again the threat to the neighborhood presented by the planned route of I-505. "The houses and apartments on the gentle slopes... will have no physical barriers between them and the objectionable aspects of the freeway." But the central message in the construction of sub-area three was about the important political and social role to be played by "normal families" in the overall regeneration of the neighborhood. The Chapman Area was one of well-maintained single family homes on quiet residential streets. It was orderly and homogeneous compared with the rest of Northwest, and it centered on a school, "close to the traditional planning ideal for a neighborhood." This was the only place in the entire neighborhood where middle-class families might want to raise their children. The planners were unconcerned with the contradictions between Jane Jacobs' view of neighborhoods and Clarence Perry's. Diversity and vitality aside, the residents here were the kind of people who had the skills, resources, and commitment that the neighborhood association – and hence the neighborhood – needed to prosper. If the Chapman Area fell, all was lost.[61]

A fourth sub-area called out the "Burnside Strip" and reinforced earlier warnings about the threat of automobiles to the neighborhood. Not many years before, city engineers had tried to improve the stretch of Burnside between downtown and the foot of the West Hills by widening the pavement and taking out on-street parking. The moves had turned W. Burnside into a "moat of alligators," a "noisy, dirty street alien to pedestrian activity" where the cheap hotels and apartments "are poor places to live and the shops below, opening to this environment, are no

more desirable as places to work." It made no sense, the planners concluded, to widen streets, narrow sidewalks, or tear down homes for parking lots "in the seemingly futile attempt to satisfy the space needs of the automobile." This plan would create a neighborhood for people, not cars.[62]

"Interim Report No. 2, A Study of Social Factors," published in August 1971, extended the earlier arguments about the importance of "normal families" in the political and social life of Northwest Portland. David Yaden, the principal author of the second report, painted a dismal scenario in which the neighborhood might become the "gerontology ward" for the State of Oregon at the same time as it became a dormitory annex for Portland State University in nearby downtown. "The 'normal' family of a working father, child-rearing mother, and school-age children is a disappearing species in Northwest Portland," they wrote. In many parts of the neighborhood the "normal" household was an elderly woman in an apartment, an old man in a rooming house, or crash-pad full of hippies. This was bad for the neighborhood, they believed, because "participation begins with the common denominator of educating the children."[63]

The report revealed a deep ambivalence about competing models of social and political health. One was based on nuclear families, Perry-ish neighborhood units, and back-fence socializing. The other one depended upon demographic heterogeneity, cultural diversity, and face-to-face contact in the urban milieu of streets, sidewalks, shops, restaurants and taverns. Clearly, the planner authors believed in a little bit of each. In the end, however, they came down firmly on the side of "normal families" as having more to offer to the stability of the neighborhood. Renters, singles, students, the elderly and others were less likely to pitch in with civic work.

Yaden analyzed "indicators of social stability," and the resulting map identified two census tracts in the vicinity of Chapman School as the most solid. But two of the most direct measures of neighborhood stability – length of household tenure and physical condition of the unit – were omitted. Instead, the analysis was weighted toward variables that would, by definition, identify affluent, home-owning, nuclear families. Areas with people who were elderly, non-white, or lived alone were assumed to be less stable. If the analysis was flawed, the political judgment, perhaps, was not. Their focus on keeping the middle class in the city paralleled one of Mayor Neil Goldschmidt's central policy initiatives. In fact, Yaden had helped Goldschmidt develop it.[64] "The city has a clear stake in seeing the Northwest stabilized by long-term middle class families," they concluded. Without housing options and a residential environment competitive with the suburbs, and without policies to "stabilize the middle-income population, continued decline can be forecast."[65]

Taking it to the streets

From the beginning, everyone involved agreed the Northwest District Plan should be created through a thoroughly democratic process. Some declarations of intent may have been more sincere than others, but the commitment to citizen participation was clear from the start. The neighborhood association wanted it, staff were committed to it, the City Council endorsed it, even the director of the Portland Development Commission said it would be a good thing. There was an explicit understanding that the effectiveness of planning, as well as its legitimacy, depended upon vigorous participation that went beyond mandated minimum requirements. "Only the residents themselves can determine" what they want, David Yaden's very academic introduction to "Interim Report No. 2" opined. "And it takes more than sterile 'citizen involvement' formulas written into most Federal legislation for a true sense of the community to emerge. In short, what is required is a continuing process of political participation in the events that change the community." This was a call to arms, not boilerplate.[66]

In December 1970, Elaine Cogan, not yet a nationally-recognized expert in citizen participation, led an NWDA "buzz group" to generate new ideas for involving neighborhood residents. The session produced no revolutionary techniques, hardly anything out of the ordinary, but it signaled the group's commitment to do whatever it took to involve Northwest residents.[67] In fact, the organization of the planning process within the neighborhood association straddled a gray area between participatory and representative processes. Members of the planning committees understood a responsibility to act on behalf of the best interests of the entire neighborhood, but they were strictly volunteers, never elected. At the same time, anyone who wanted to join in the work was welcome to do so.

No one involved was naive about participation, however. NWDA leaders supported participation in the process because they believed it was the right thing to do. But they also knew that their enemies, if given an opening, would attack the planning process as well as the substance of the plan itself. They wanted to be able show they had worked hard to be inclusive. This was particularly the case with the land owners, proprietors of businesses, and accompanying trade unions in the "industrial interface" area, the natural enemies of the emerging strategy.

Perry and his staff scheduled one-on-one interviews with about two dozen of these small manufacturers, haulers and warehousers, distributors, printers, and business-to-business service providers, but the talks revealed little common ground between the two sides. The businesses were in Northwest to be close to suppliers, customers, and freeways, or sometimes as an historical accident. Their employees didn't ride the bus and didn't frequent neighborhood restaurants or shops. Neither labor nor management cared much about urban vitality or diversity. When these men looked at the tattered houses of Northwest's industrial fringe, they saw room for expansion

or parking lots, or perhaps just dump trucks full of rubble (although one of Perry's informants explained that changes in market geography, transportation infrastructure, and real estate economics had combined to make Northwest obsolete as a warehouse location). The planners later met with another group of business owners and made no progress, but they could claim they had done their duty. The industrial interests would fight the plan, but they couldn't say they hadn't been consulted.[68]

Sometimes the planners would simply walk around the neighborhood and talk to people. They did informal interviews with a range of local shop owners – a barber, the shoe repairman, a grocer, the proprietor of a "head shop," a pastor, a laundry operator. Such folks didn't always share the biases of the professionals, but they were sympathetic to the emerging thrust of the plan. If it was good for the neighborhood, it would likely help their customer base. Like everyone else, they talked about one-way streets, parking lots, rowdy bar patrons, run-down houses, businesses that closed down, new ones that opened up. It's not clear how this information was incorporated into the planning process, but it must have given Perry and his staff a broader and more textured understanding of the life of the neighborhood.[69] A part-time staffer named Bob Gettel even talked to the down-and-outers of the Burnside strip, taking rough notes on their stories of drinking problems, divorce, disability, unemployment, and life on skid row in general.[70]

In May, the planners put up a table at a neighborhood fair, offered maps and fact sheets on Good Samaritan and I-505, sold 65 copies of "Interim Report No. 1," and passed out a mail-back opinion survey. People said they liked the neighborhood, its friendly people, the feeling of community, and the diversity of people. They valued nearby shopping, good bus service, proximity to downtown, old homes, trees, and cheap rent. But they were concerned about deterioration of housing and the neighborhood environment, absentee landlords, traffic, parking lots, pollution, and industrial encroachment. The responses also reflected a certain fear of disorder symbolized by dogs, bikers, hippies, students, and blacks. But the top complaints were plans for I-505 and Good Samaritan expansion.[71]

The most elaborate participation exercise undertaken was a series of house meetings in July and August of 1971. The meetings were intended to present the preliminary goals and objectives developed by the planning committees so far and ask for resident comment. The sessions – 51 in all with a total of 460 in attendance – were also seen as a good opportunity for the neighborhood association to make itself better known and build political support. Because city staff were already fully-engaged with the planning work, Perry insisted that NWDA volunteers organize and staff all the meetings. Llano Thelin and another local clergyman, Tom Braunschweiger, put up the money to hire Bob Gettel as temporary coordinator, and Denny West flogged the active membership to pitch in with the effort.[72]

The meeting concept had been cooking for months, but the approach was dead simple. An NWDA representative made a brief presentation about the status of the planning and the goals and objectives developed to that point and then asked for comments. They thought about showing slides but dropped the idea lest it "cause the people to react as if the plan has already been adopted and that all we wish is support for it." They considered a survey but settled instead on a note-taker to capture the conversations. The idea, West told the others, was to "try to draw people out in small groups where they will have an honest chance to express their opinions. We should be listening and asking questions, not talking."[73]

On July 27, 1971, Frances Schneiderjost hosted meeting No. 32 – one of the largest all Summer – in her apartment at 325 NW 18th Avenue. Seventeen neighbors attended, most of them retired, long-term residents of the building and neighborhood. Edgar Waehrer made the opening presentation and NWDA volunteer Edith Parker took voluminous notes. "The purpose of the meeting is to try and get information from you," Waehrer began, but he also offered background on the neighborhood association, the inspiration to plan, and their commitment to participation. He said they had wanted to see what could be done without urban renewal and to make sure hospital expansion happened in a way that was good for the neighborhood, too. The idea behind the plan "was to take a total look into all of Northwest Portland – all of it. What it ought to be, what do the people think are its good or bad points, what they want to happen, what could happen over the next 20 years."

He asked for their views on the preliminary goals and objectives, but what he got first was a flurry of questions about what was going on in the neighborhood. He looked authoritative; he must know something. "How many blocks do they really intend to tear down for industrial purposes?" Wasn't the Freeway supposed to be the boundary? Were they going to tear down houses and churches? The record of the conversation reveals a sense of vulnerability in a group of old people whose generation started out, at least, believing in government. They stayed where they were because of social ties and cheap rents. Their daily lives were defined by the apartment building, neighborhood shopping, and the bus ride downtown. A rash of purse snatchings and heavy truck traffic were noteworthy irritants, but they said they didn't mind the hippies. These folks were unlikely to active supporters but they must have liked NWDA's incremental approach to change.[74]

Across town, at Claire Putnam's house, 1212 NW 25th Avenue, a younger, more affluent group of residents gathered to hear the NWDA pitch. The recorder for the evening was Vera Katz, neighborhood activist, United Farm Workers campaigner, and soon to run for the state legislature. These folks, she noted, were the type who hoped for a "classy" tavern in the area to be a neighborhood meeting place, and who liked "walking in the area, enjoying old homes... antique

shops, pottery studios, etc." It was as if the entire plan were in microcosm in one conversation. They opposed the highway, its route, and its configuration. They saw speculators letting properties run down in hopes of getting a zone change and redeveloping. But they believed "if home owners were aware of what the future of the area would be, they would fix up their dwellings." They understood mixed land use was not a problem but "creates the quality in the area that we enjoy." They wanted to see fewer parking lots, curbs on automobile use, and better bus service. Asked what kind of people should live in the neighborhood, most replied, "all kinds," although there were "some reservations from two guests about 'hippies.'" But "guests felt that the 'powers that be' already have a plan for the area and that as residents of the NW they are really powerless and without voice."[75]

Gettel would conclude, however, that the meetings overall had created "a new sense of hope for many that residents working together can influence decisions which affect their neighborhood." More than 40 NWDA members had contributed as volunteer discussion leaders, hosts, and note-takers.[76] The records from the meetings varied in quality and depth of detail. But taken together, they constituted a rich and highly textured picture of life as lived in the neighborhood, exactly the kind of understanding of real, felt needs on which the professional staff had always wanted to base their planning. They offered no surprises for planners or NWDA leaders and produced no imperative to alter the basic goals and objectives of the plan. In fact, the thrust of resident comments, and the fact that such meetings had been held at all, reinforced the sense that people valued and cared deeply about their neighborhood, gave new power to the intent of the plan, and made the process more legitimate in the eyes of both participants and observers.[77]

The goals and objectives of the plan were also developed and tested as the neighborhood association fought various "brush fires" before, during, and after the planning. It is often observed that citizen activism typically emerges in response to specific, immediate threats. The neighborhood's response to the urban renewal plan, and later, the highway plan, were good examples of that. But a steady stream of other crises also stimulated the activists of the neighborhood. Far from being distractions, however, these emergent issues often provided a fulcrum for moving issues of ongoing concern, including urban design, housing, and transportation.

Just weeks after the NWDA was founded, neighborhood association stalwarts Waehrer and Glazer, as well as Roger Shiels, later a prominent architect, plus neighborhood merchants and residents, mobilized to oppose a plan to widen three blocks of NW 23rd Avenue by narrowing the sidewalks. "Pedestrian-friendly" design and engineering were not yet part of the Portland program, but the citizens made sure the City Council understood what a bad idea this was, and

pushed the process of policy development in an appropriate direction.[78] Later that year, the NWDA opposed a proposal to build a 101-unit apartment building for low-income elderly on NW Everett Street. The board made clear they favored low-income housing for the elderly, but not at the prices of destroying "residences of such irreplaceable and historic value," which would have to be demolished for the project. They suggested another site they would support, and later worked to save one of the buildings on the site, the historic Captain John Brown House.[79]

City staff also worked to alert the neighborhood association to such brush fires. Perry sent memos to members of the zoning sub-committee flagging pending Planning Commission action on matters such as a request for a zone change to allow a new gas station, or request for permission from a Northwest firm to continue use of an unscreened gravel parking lot. Such notice gave the members a chance to go downtown and, at least, speak against such threats.[80]

Eventually, developers and sponsors would come to the neighborhood association first to air their plans, although this didn't necessarily mean the NWDA would support them. The organization waged a long battle to stop another high-rise for low-income elderly. The leaders argued, variously, that the project would lead to a concentration of elderly in the neighborhood, something adverse to their goal of maintaining "diversity;" that the project violated HUD policy on metropolitan dispersion of units; that the high-rise design was inappropriate for the neighborhood; that the number and density of units was too great; that the site design was at odds with the urban character of the neighborhood. Ultimately, the association lost the argument and the building was built. But it developed in the process a number of key ideas that have become the basis for policy, not only in the neighborhood association, but in the city at large.

Every brush fire became an opportunity to set another precedent. Willamette Heights residents, weary of motorists cutting through their otherwise quiet side streets to get to Cornell Road and over the West Hills, asked for some strategic street closures. Perry discovered a provision in the city charter that would allow creation of a "pedestrian mall" by city ordinance. Closure of 30th Avenue NW might be a good test case, he suggested.[81] Later that year, Perry tipped off the coordinating committee to a conditional use application by Good Samaritan to create another parking lot. "The code permits paid parking lots in AO zones as a conditional use only where the parking is in excess of code requirements. What do you want to do with this?" Perry asked, then suggested: "This might be a good time to think through the process that should be used in the future for neighborhood review of zoning matters."[82]

The Northwest District Plan was, as much as anything else, a process of writing policy. From the first discussions of goals and objectives to the final draft of the plan, its authors left a long and dense paper trail, version after version of plan policies, making it possible to see how their ideas germinated, evolved, developed, and were refined. Yet what they wrote told a

remarkably consistent story about the neighborhood. From beginning to end, the policies spoke to the residents' desire to preserve a neighborhood for living, in which diversity was appreciated, and where the fabric of a real city district was understood and cared for, the destructive force of the automobile was limited, the impacts of industrial land uses were constrained, and the human needs of residents were attended to. In its essence, the story never changed.

By Spring 1971 the citizens had crafted a single, ringing declaration that would survive all versions of the plan: "The primary function of the Northwest District is that of housing a diverse population close to the center of the City." Northwest was blessed with a variety of housing types, but there were also trends toward deterioration, demolition, conversion to non-residential uses, and encroachment of "incompatible uses," as well as the threat of displacement to people living in the I-505 corridor. The goals they framed were straightforward: (1) "Protect and enhance the present residential areas. (2) Provide increased opportunities for families in all income ranges to receive good housing within the district. (3) Meet the immediate housing needs of those displaced by government action."[83]

As the residents talked, it became clear they needed to be more inclusive and more specific. They added language about their "attachment to the style and character" of older homes and the need "whenever possible" to preserve them. They said "a wide variety and effective distribution of adequate sound and well-maintained housing should be offered at all prices and rental levels." "Low and moderate-income families... should receive priority attention," to their "immediate housing problems." There must be "a replacement housing program" for those "to be removed by Good Samaritan Hospital and the I-505 Freeway." They added a new goal to "rehabilitate and preserve existing homes through concentrated code enforcement and similar programs," (Goal 4) as well as to "selectively remove dilapidated housing beyond repair and replace them with new housing or open space," (Goal 5). Their priorities were clear. Save housing if you can. Be "selective" when you can't. Replace housing with housing.

New ideas got added as they went along: "Increase the opportunities and economic feasibility for owner occupancy of existing single family homes," they said (Goal 6); "emphasize... smaller housing projects... over larger, hi-rise projects," (Goal 7); and promote property tax changes to "reward rather than punish those who maintain their residential property," (Goal 8). Incentives to ownership, disincentives to speculation, and a preservation of urban scale were all part of achieving the larger goal of the neighborhood as a place to live.[84]

The text got to be so elaborate that by November it was time to reorganize. All but one of the goals became "objectives," and the overarching goal took on a few new angles. The committee members still aspired to provide a "wide variety" of housing, at "all prices and rental levels," as previously stated, but also an "increasing amount."[85] Later still they tried to "get tough" on the

issue of displacement, proposing a requirement to: "cause any public body that removes housing in the course of developing a project to build replacement housing equal in number and rent structure to that which is removed." They added co-operatives and condominiums as necessary housing types to improve owner occupancy in a dense urban neighborhood, but also emphasized the need to "increase the quantity of housing within the district for child-rearing families."[86]

Like those working on housing, the land use and zoning committee found its mantra early. "Diversity is the essence of urban living," the members declared. "Without it the reason for city life hardly exists." It was a powerful and poetic phrase, encompassing not only their own deliberations, but the entire spirit of the plan. These words, too, would survive throughout.[87] If the phrase was catchy and simple, however, their policy-writing task was complicated by a fundamental ambiguity in their vision. They wanted a residential neighborhood of mixed uses – but not too mixed – a balance somewhere between the sterility of "little boxes on a hillside" and the chaos of the unregulated city. Sometimes the mixture could be "functional and stimulating." Sometimes, when "non-residential land use have become dominant" or industrial, institutional and commercial uses overwhelmed a neighborhood, it produced an "environment that is unworkable and unlivable." They did not call for "everything in its place." But they were seeking a certain kind of order.[88]

The goals were spare on the first type-script draft from the committee. The members sought to "increase the area of residential land use and the supply of housing," to "enhance the visual environment," and to "perpetuate" the diversity of land uses, people, and buildings "where it does not adversely affect the quality of residential living." A second draft soon added: "encourage land use that involves people, particularly pedestrians," and "encourage multiple use of land and structures."[89] As the summer wore on, they struggled with how to temper their call for mixed uses. "Incompatible land uses and blight factors," should be eliminated from predominantly residential areas and land use "mixtures should never be at the expense of residential stability." Non-residential uses in residential areas "should take on the scale and character of the surrounding homes." But they also suggested changes in the zoning code to "reward" plans or designs that "mix uses or increase residential densities" at the same time as they sought ways to "decrease the incentive for land speculation in residential areas" and to "stabilize the boundaries" between industrial and residential. They began a push for "stronger neighborhood participation" in zoning and in project proposal reviews – an impulse which would gather strength as the neighborhood association came to understand how things got built in Portland.[90]

Later, the members added detail to the notion of "enhancing the visual environment" by specifying regulation of "auto related functions" and other "visually blighting factors such as

heavy commercial developments with large parking requirements, gas stations and signs." One more key goal was added: "Re-zone residential areas to zoning categories that better reflect current density patterns." They had identified certain negative trends in the neighborhood; explained the role of overzoning in cycles of speculative investment and disinvestment; now they were stipulating the remedy.

Finally, the committee members had to face up to three crucial current issues: the proposed freeway, the hospital expansion, and the fate of the major business strips. They endorsed the "multiple use" concept for the proposed freeway corridor and argued for a design to "minimize the impact of the freeway and enhance the existing neighborhood." They asked to "preserve the commercial areas within the district for small scale, primarily personal and convenience businesses," with those that don't fit relegated to the periphery. And they declared that "Good Samaritan expansion should be integrated into the existing neighborhood fabric."

Their detailed demands for Good Samaritan formed the basis of NWDA negotiations with the hospital for more than a decade. Rather than take "a monolithic campus approach" that "would create an island within the larger neighborhood," they said the hospital should grow according to "a plan that fits in with the diverse and dense development pattern" of the neighborhood. They demanded Good Samaritan use the minimum amount of land necessary, project space needs on a mid-range rather than long-range horizon, and "accurately demonstrate" the need. NWDA didn't trust the hospital's projections and the association was just letting them know. In the meantime, Good Samaritan should leave buildings they owned in residential use until they actually needed them and minimize dislocation of residents in general.[91]

Not all of the groups were able to strike a perfect rhetorical chord from the very beginning. The subcommittee on traffic started out talking about "traffic" and ended up thinking, more broadly, about "transportation." The members began with a harangue against the automobile and ended up talking about transportation systems as a means to facilitate social contact and economic exchange. Still, their work remained consistent in spirit and intent throughout. Their opening salvo was magnificent:

> Facilitating the movement of automobiles has, in the recent development of cities, been given far too high a priority. The result has been an unbalanced transportation system – relying heavily on the automobile at the expense of other modes such as mass transit. Moreover, the attempt to move more and more cars, faster and faster, and to park these cars when they stop, has necessitated solutions that are often quite damaging to the livability and function of the city. The movement and storage of automobiles should be accommodated only to the extent that they serve the neighborhood.[92]

Committee members saw the choice as clearly as Jane Jacobs had put it in her chapter "Erosion of cities or attrition of automobiles." The demands of motorists for faster speeds, wider lanes, and easier parking were chipping away at what residents valued about city life. Cars degraded the environment with fumes and noise. Their accommodation tore at the physical fabric of neighborhoods. They made it harder for people to get around by other means. It was time to stop the trend.[93]

The members called for developing "diverse systems of traffic circulation within and beyond the district" to include walking, cycling, and buses in addition to cars, and to "reduce adverse impact of automobile and truck traffic on the district." They specified the need for greater "efficiency of on and off-street parking." Finally, they demanded action to "preserve streets within the district for local use; limiting, insofar as possible, through traffic."[94] As far as the residents were concerned, Northwest District had become a cut-through. With I-405 still un-opened, it was a state-designated cut-through (the NW 18th and 19th couplet was an official link in Route 30) clogged with trucks and cars. Houses were being razed to increase parking for Good Samaritan and Consolidated Freightways, but since neither institution shared its parking with residents, the on-street crunch got worse, too. Given the "us-or-them" dynamic of the conflict, it's a wonder the policy language the citizens produced was so cool.

Later committee members talked, not flatly about how cars were "damaging to the livability and function" of the neighborhood but more mundanely about how "the mere parking of cars has become a huge and costly problem... not only in dollars but in the livability of our neighborhoods." They tried pinning the blame on drivers from "suburban communities" or commuters on their way to "major employment centers." Such comments came and went as well. To the end, ideas continued to percolate – about "diverse systems of traffic" or "a network of exclusive bike lanes," connecting the neighborhood "to the downtown, schools and recreation facilities."[95]

By November the members had advanced from denouncing the car to talking about transportation in general. Now the goal was "the movement of people" in ways to "enhance their opportunities for work, trade and social contact..." and to "facilitate the exchange of goods and services at the least social and economic costs." They wanted to "integrate the systems of movement" and "promote their compatibility" so that the whole package "enhances and preserves the livability of the NW District." All of the earlier objectives were still there – bike lanes, mass transit, shared parking, and limiting through traffic – but the polemic had receded.[96]

A final version added two objectives. One specified that movement be at "least cost." This acknowledged the need to "promote customer and service accessibility to businesses" as a gesture to the concerns of merchants on NW 23rd, 21st and elsewhere. But it said this should be

accomplished through "improved transit, parking conditions and pedestrian amenities." A second new objective, anticipating expansion at both Good Samaritan and Consolidated Freightways, specified that "traffic generators, parking facilities and arterials, which serve major single uses should be located for minimum impact."[97]

Several founders of the NWDA had insisted the plan encompass provision of social services in Northwest, but by Fall of 1971, little if any progress had been made on the topic. Late in October, Perry and Richen convened a new group of area social services agency personnel to consider the "tentative goals and objectives for social services" previously developed by the neighborhood association. It was not much to work with.[98] But the new group met several times, and talked enough for Perry and staff to create a version of goals, problems, and needs inclusive enough to feed the plan.[99]

The committee's summary called out the need to coordinate social service delivery; publicize services better; work with businesses to create jobs; make available loans through a credit union; provide job counseling and referral; "provide increased opportunities for socializing" in the neighborhood; reduce crime by increasing police presence, improving lighting, and by involving the community; provide free legal assistance; improve transportation; improve and coordinate medical services especially for low income people; improve day care provision; provide better mental health services; improve recreation; and improve educational services across the board.[100]

By mid-November 1971 the NWDA and city planning staff had talked up a detailed outline of a plan. It still lacked all of the things that supposedly make plans real and effective – legislation, implementing agencies, action items, projects, budgets, etc. – but it possessed the great power of well-organized rhetoric. The plan was still nothing but words and familiar ones at that. They had coined a few phrases but few of them out of the ordinary. Everything else was borrowed from somewhere else. Still, it told a particular story about the way things were in Northwest, and the way some people there thought they ought to be. And that, in itself, had great power.

Still, the citizens in Northwest weren't very happy with the tools offered by conventional planning, nor with the processes and protocols of the planning system in Portland. As the work of writing policy continued, they also attempted to re-write planning by developing new implementation tools to serve their needs. They wanted staff to work on a new sign control ordinance and to investigate the possibility of undergrounding utility lines. Perry had to explain the political realities of each issue. The City had just worked on a sign control ordinance and the neighborhood association should concentrate on demanding good enforcement, perhaps getting a seat on the sign review committee. As for underground utility lines, lots of people wanted them,

but few property owners wanted to pay, which was what existing law required. The NWDA also wanted staff to prepare an accurate tabulation of land uses by category but Perry brushed them off. "(It) would involve a large commitment of staff time and, unless you feel quite strongly on the matter, I think we should skip it." Likewise, staff advised, trying to create new tax policies to discourage speculation or develop some kind of performance zoning "would be lengthy and costly, far beyond the limited time and resources we have in this study. I really hesitate to get involved in this," Perry wrote.[101]

Staff shared, however, the citizens' dissatisfaction with what could be accomplished using conventional zoning. They produced a dense, eight-page critique of existing mechanisms and suggested some correctives. The diversity and mixture of land uses they so much valued in Northwest had been developed before the advent of zoning. But, "this mixture is precisely what our present zoning laws are set up to prohibit." Nor did zoning do much to promote "quality development" or prevent "the worst in architectural design and site development." Over-zoning – zoning an area for more intensive and profitable uses than either existed or would likely be developed – sometimes led to speculation accompanied by disinvestment, other times to new development inimical to the existing pattern. Sometimes, developers who had won a zone change for a particular project would, instead of building it, re-sell the property in order to pocket the increased value provided by the new zoning.[102]

What the residents sought, instead, were regulatory mechanisms that would promote diversity, ensure quality, and prevent inappropriate development. They proposed several strategic down-zonings; suggested that re-zonings be made with conditions attached; offered a "Q" or "qualified" zone in which a new zoning designation would attach to a particular developer and project, but would revert to previous zoning if the property were sold before the project was built; suggested some kind of design review mechanism; and created a brand new zone to reinforce the distinctive pattern of Northwest's main shopping streets. The proposed C3 or "district commercial" zone would replace existing C2 "general commercial" zones, and impose new limits on auto-oriented uses, put a 4,000 square foot limit on storefront floor areas, reduce off-street parking requirements, and provide tougher regulation of signage.[103]

The staff critique extended to the whole process by which zoning, zone changes, conditional uses, and zoning variances were administered. Notification of pending decisions was limited and proceedings were held downtown during working hours. This made it difficult for a neighborhood association to review requests effectively, almost impossible for individuals. Public hearings were held only before City Council, at the very end of the process. Staff suggested pushing the work load down the organizational ladder, from Council to Planning Commission, and perhaps to a Hearing Examiner. They imagined a thoroughly decentralized system with the

process starting with review boards at the neighborhood level, professional planning assistance for neighborhood associations, evening meetings, improved notification procedures and scheduling, and expanded participation on the Planning Commission itself. The creators of the Northwest District Plan would not be satisfied with merely writing a plan. They wanted to restructure the way planning was done.[104]

Dress rehearsal for a plan

By October 1971, staff were ready to put plan alternatives on the table for review, first by NWDA and Bureau of Planning leadership, and quickly thereafter at a series of "open discussions" out in the neighborhood. Perry sketched a tight schedule to completion beyond that: an NWDA-sponsored public hearing; discussion and adoption by the neighborhood association; a briefing to the Planning Commission in early December; a draft plan to the printer by January 10; widespread distribution of the plan beginning in February; a public hearing before the Planning Commission; then, hopefully, to City Council. They missed their target by a month, but they had to push. Time – and money – were running out.[105]

The alternatives the planners presented were hardly alternatives at all. At the time, the differences were great enough for people to argue about, but from a distance of decades they seem almost identical. They covered a narrow range of variation on the central theme of residential preservation. The draft plan admitted as much: "The primary differences were in the amount of land distributed between residential and industrial uses, the manner in which these come together (or are separated) and in the amount of public investment required for implementation." The three concept alternatives were:

> (1) The "reinforced border," which would use new investments in housing, hospital, and possibly highway, to bolster a line of demarcation between residential and industrial.
>
> (2) The "linear boundary." which would "project current trends toward the gradual erosion of the residential edge," a kind of phased withdrawal of housing from the mixed residential area.
>
> (3) The "phased industrial removal," which reflected "the strong feelings of many district residents that industry should eventually be bushed back to a point where the freeway would serve as a natural border."

The strategy behind such an array was transparent and the end result predictable. Business and property interests favored the "linear boundary" concept. Residents preferred "phased industrial

removal." The obvious place to split the difference was with the "reinforced border" concept, which was fine with the NWDA since that alternative favored the residents, too.[106]

Four community meetings made little splash, and Bing Sheldon downplayed any conflict in a brief newsletter to NWDA members. More than a hundred people attended the final meeting on November 2 and "the majority" approved a plan to rehab housing on the industrial fringe of Northwest. But Sheldon expressed concern over the level of participation from neighborhood residents. The real political fight was beginning and he needed the NWDA to show its numbers.[107]

Staff at the Portland Development Commission panned the alternatives. Kenward said he approved of the overall goals, but he didn't see how they could be met with the tools provided by urban renewal.[108] Kenward's staff liked the "linear boundary" concept because it was made "implementation under urban renewal... most feasible." But they thought the other two alternatives were ridiculous, not to mention indistinguishable from one another. How, they asked, do you replace industrial structures that are in good shape and retain housing that is in poor condition? Even if it was possible, wouldn't an industrial phase-out take much longer than five years? And how do you motivate people to invest in housing in the meantime? What developer would ask to go first? Beyond that, they wondered, whatever happened to the needs of Good Samaritan Hospital?[109]

Both interests and ideology stood between the PDC and the neighborhood association. The PDC wanted to knock down some buildings and assemble sites for sale. The NWDA wanted to repair a residential neighborhood lot by lot. Their respective notions of "highest and best" uses and assumptions about neighborhood life cycles were totally at odds. Institutional rivalries also seemed to intervene. Keefe saw Kenward's letter and told Perry: "in general, I do not think that our plans should necessarily be based on urban renewal, as it exists today, for implementation, because (it) changes and evolves from day-to-day. Maybe some different direction can be suggested by NW."[110]

Nevertheless, the Northwest District plan challenged much of what Portland's conservative planning establishment cherished. For one thing, it sidestepped the Planning Commission's decision-making prerogatives. Perry presented the plan to them just before Christmas and they did not like what they heard. They demanded NWDA and staff reach agreement with the commission on a number of key differences before a consensus plan was either printed or sent to City Council. Dumbfounded, Perry wrote to his boss, "after Tuesday's meeting I am at a loss as to how to proceed toward final adoption of a plan for Northwest Portland." He had worked with the residents, just as City Council had asked, and he had followed the guidelines in the Planning Commission's own report to City Council on "district planning," which explicitly gave priority to the wishes of district planning organizations – in this case,

NWDA – and made the Planning Commission's role advisory only. Now the commission was saying, in effect, let's do it the old way.

Perry's memo to Keefe offered the Planning Commission the proverbial devil and the deep blue sea. They could take the Northwest District plan as advisory only and propose their own to City Council, which would be "an insult to what has perhaps been Portland's broadest based and most knowledgeable citizen planning effort," and know that "the resulting plan would be sure to lack relevancy and neighborhood support." Or, they could try to reach agreement with the neighborhood association, which would take lots of long meetings over the next few weeks, and was doubtful in any case.[111]

Keefe didn't exactly come to Perry's defense, but he did forward his memo to the commission with some comments of his own. The "big picture" of city planning had gotten quite complicated in the age of citizen participation, he pointed out. "If part of our staff is loaned to a district citizens' organization, how representative will such a group be?" he wondered aloud. And if factions in a neighborhood disagree, "will staff also prepare plans and reports for other groups in the district?" In recent years, sometimes plans had gone first through the Planning Commission, as in the case of the 1972 Downtown Plan. Other times, such as with Model Cities, plans had gone straight to Council. Clearly there was need to regularize procedures. In the meantime, Keefe said, maybe he would let staff print the plan before it was sent to the Planning Commission.[112]

They almost surely would not have approved it in that form. They didn't like it. Nor was it clear they understood it. They objected to the idea of promoting "diversity" "by increasing the number of child rearing families." It wasn't the right kind of neighborhood for children. Trying to get single family homes built was "unrealistic." There was no money to do that. And housing for families should not be pursued "in opposition to construction of the housing for the elderly." They were generally uncomfortable with the plan's activist use of zoning. They seemed to see zoning, not so much as a regulatory tool to achieve specified ends, but as a right held by property owners which the commission could fiddle with only at great political and financial cost. There would have to be compensation if we changed a property owner's zoning, the said. Or we would have to wait until they ceased their current use. Neither did the commissioners like the proposal to tax property as used rather than as zoned, something intended as a way to encourage property maintenance and discourage speculation. "It is not a legitimate area for inclusion in a district plan," Dale Cowan noted tersely. Maybe the entire goal should be struck from the plan. "Land speculation by itself is not bad," commented another commissioner.[113]

They attacked the plan on procedural grounds, too. Wasn't the Planning Commission supposed to be the citizen planning body of the City of Portland? Who were these people doing

this plan? They heard the goal statements as "completely tenant oriented" and wondered if apartment owners, industrial interests, and other property owners had been consulted. Was this neighborhood association "representative" or "just vocal"? They looked at the tabulations from the house meetings and wondered how such small numbers could be representative of such a large neighborhood. Cowan noted the assertion that professional staff would serve strictly as technical advisors and said, "I question whether this has been done."[114]

Such conversation only underscored how differently the residents and the Planning Commission saw the issues at hand, and how difficult it would have been for them to agree on a single plan. Criticism from other Bureau of Planning staff showed some of the same divisions of understanding. Dale Cannady, assistant director of planning, wrote to Keefe arguing against the proposal to change AO zones to A1 designations. The neighborhood association sought the change because AO zones had tended to encourage office rather than apartment development. The A1 zone would require new construction to be residential and protect the housing that was already there. Cannady was baffled. Where residents and staff saw valuable housing on compact lots Cannady saw a pattern of development that needed to be swept away. Abandoning the AO zoning, he said, was less likely "to encourage removal of these structures and accumulation of land into large sites." Or, he added rhetorically, "is the goal simply to preserve single-family dwellings even if they are substandard structures on substandard sites?"[115]

The NWDA agreed to delete references to "speculators" and "slumlords" but insisted that a goal of the plan was to "discourage the purchase and holding of property exclusively for its long range increase in land value if this results in the deterioration of existing improvements." [116] Otherwise, neighborhood association and staff stuck to their guns. The negotiating session the Planning Commission had sought never took place. Perry sent a memo to their clients in the NWDA and their supervising body, the Planning Commission, announcing a schedule for publication of the draft and public hearings to be sponsored by the neighborhood association. "The Planning Commission," the memo said pointedly, "should be present to hear the testimony, but these are not Planning Commission hearings." The draft plan, meanwhile, would be labeled as "prepared by the Northwest District Association with assistance from the Staff of the Portland City Planning Commission." The memo said both Sheldon and Ralph Walstrom, chair of the Planning Commission, had approved this approach. But it appeared that the NWDA had won the battle behind the scenes.[117]

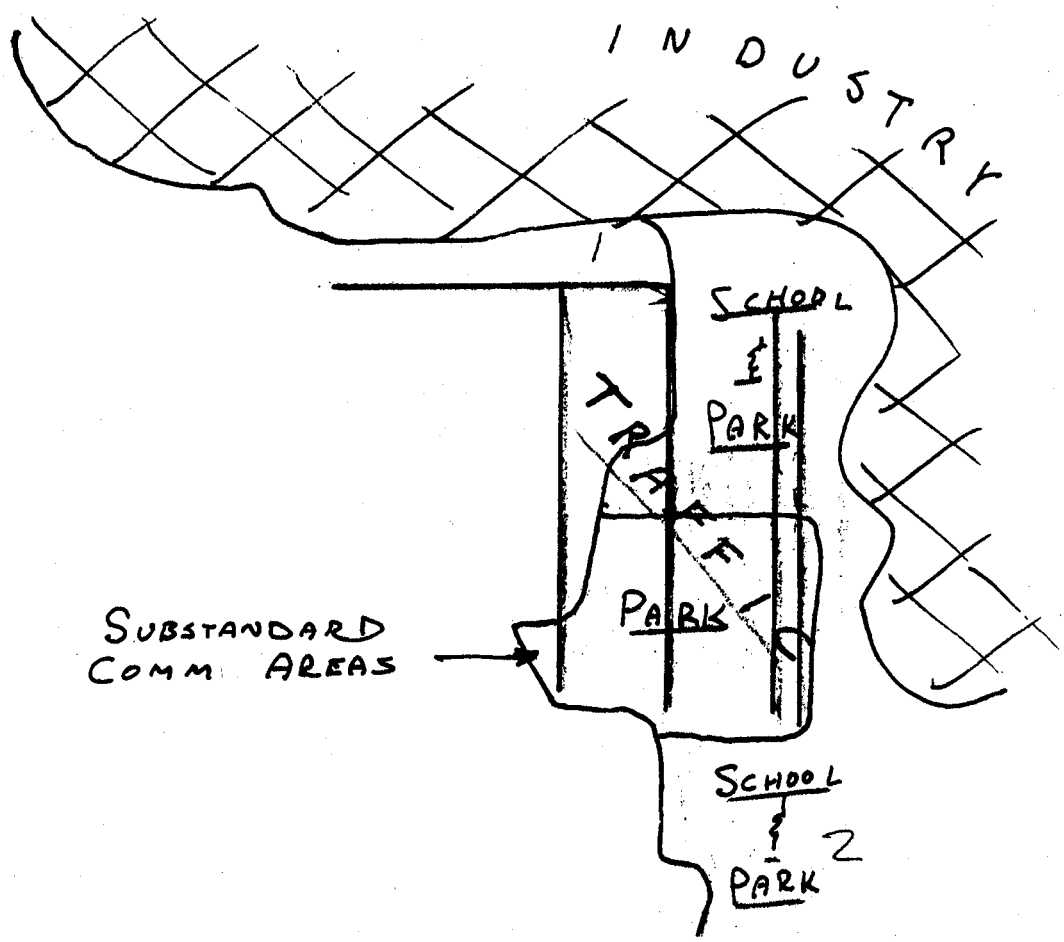


Figure 5.1 This early concept sketch (circa 1965) showed the influence of Clarence Perry's neighborhood concept on the thinking of Portland Planners. Portland City Planning Commission.

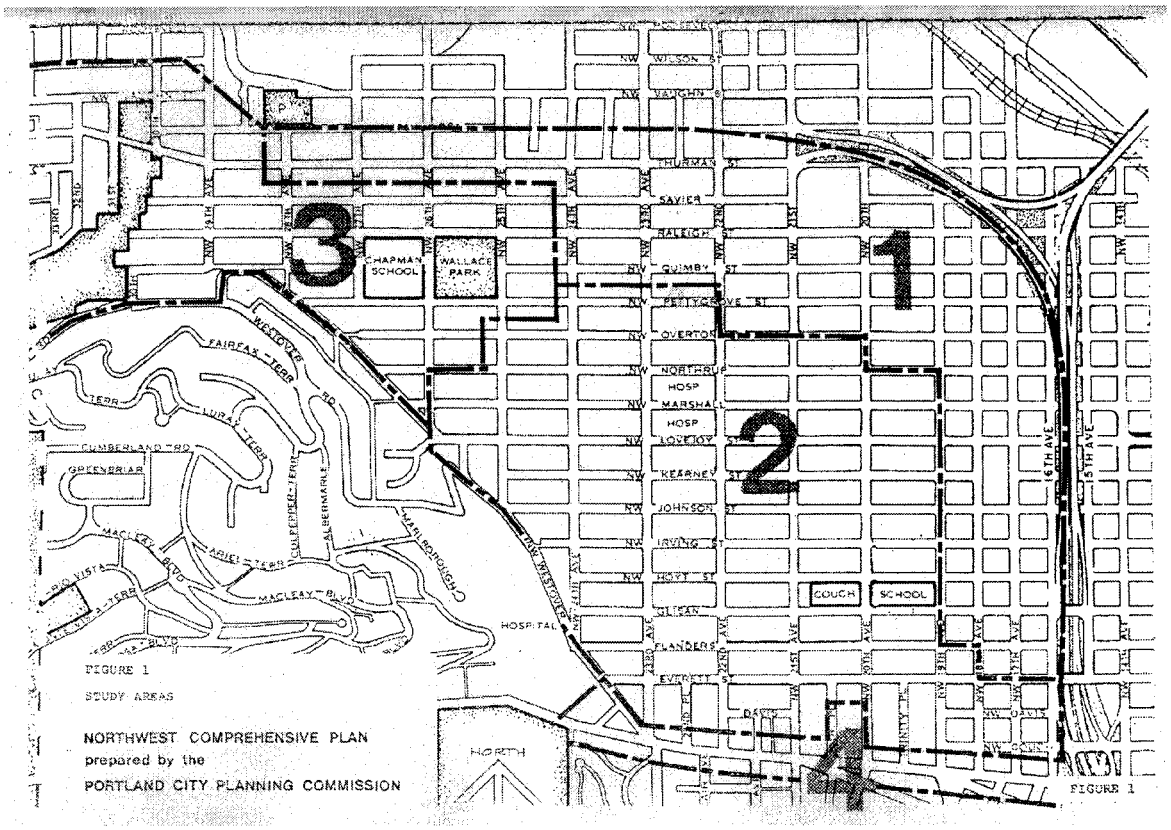
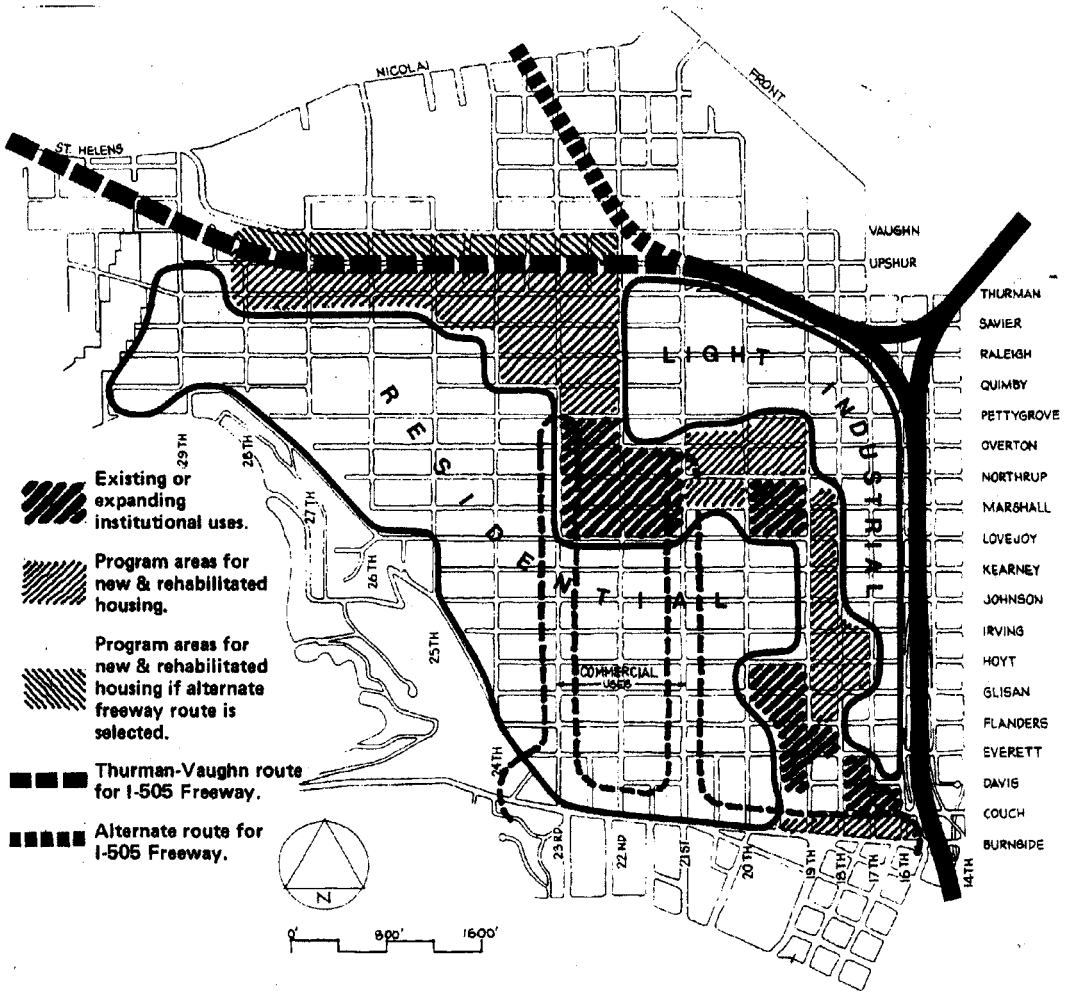


Figure 5.2 The "Interim Report" constructed study areas that reflected the planners' and residents' emerging strategy: 1. the industrial edge; 2. the mixed use core; 3. the single family enclave; and 4. the Burnside edge. Portland City Planning Commission.



Concept 1

. . . . . based on the strategy of linking solid institutional and residential use areas with "reinforced" areas of new and rehabilitated housing to form a solid zone of investment against the expansion of non-residential uses.

Figure 5.3 This "compromise" scheme supported most of the goals of the Northwest District Association. Portland Bureau of Planning.

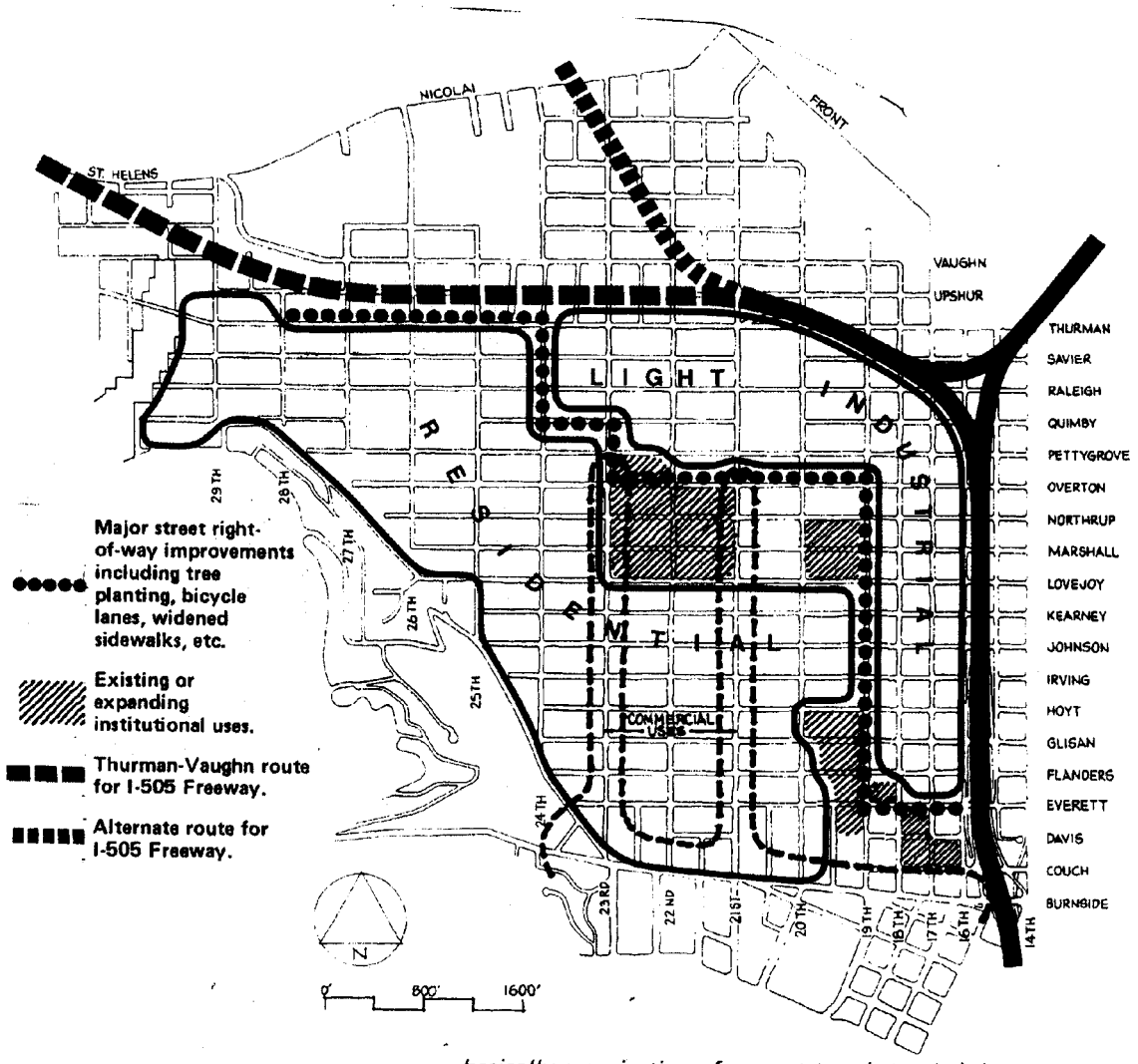


Figure 5.4 The threat of continued succession of residential uses by industrial ones, which this scheme assumed, is now a distant memory. Portland Bureau of Planning.

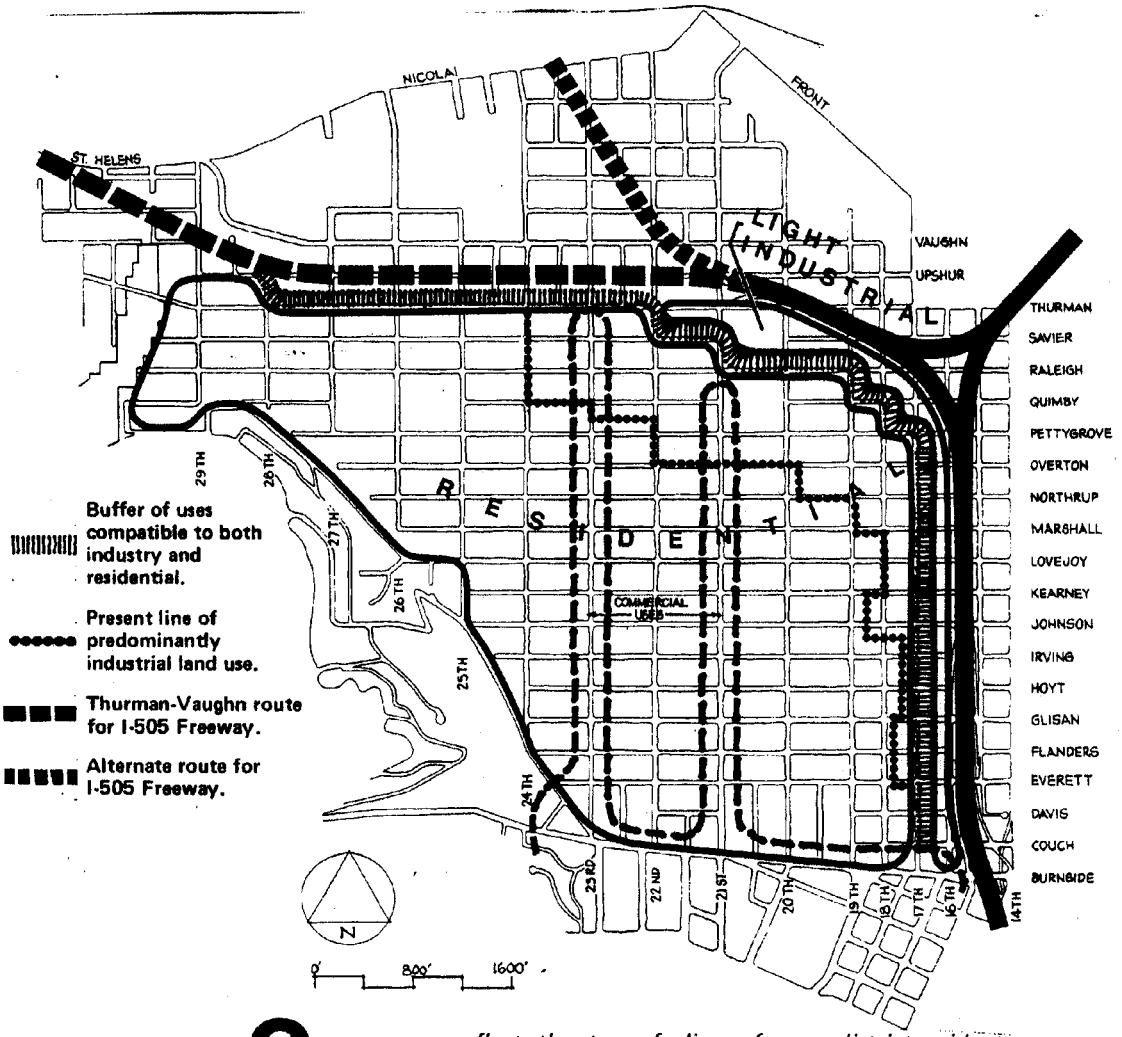


Figure 5.5 The "radical" scenario of "phased industrial withdrawal," not expressed in the final plan, has actually come to pass. Portland Bureau of Planning.

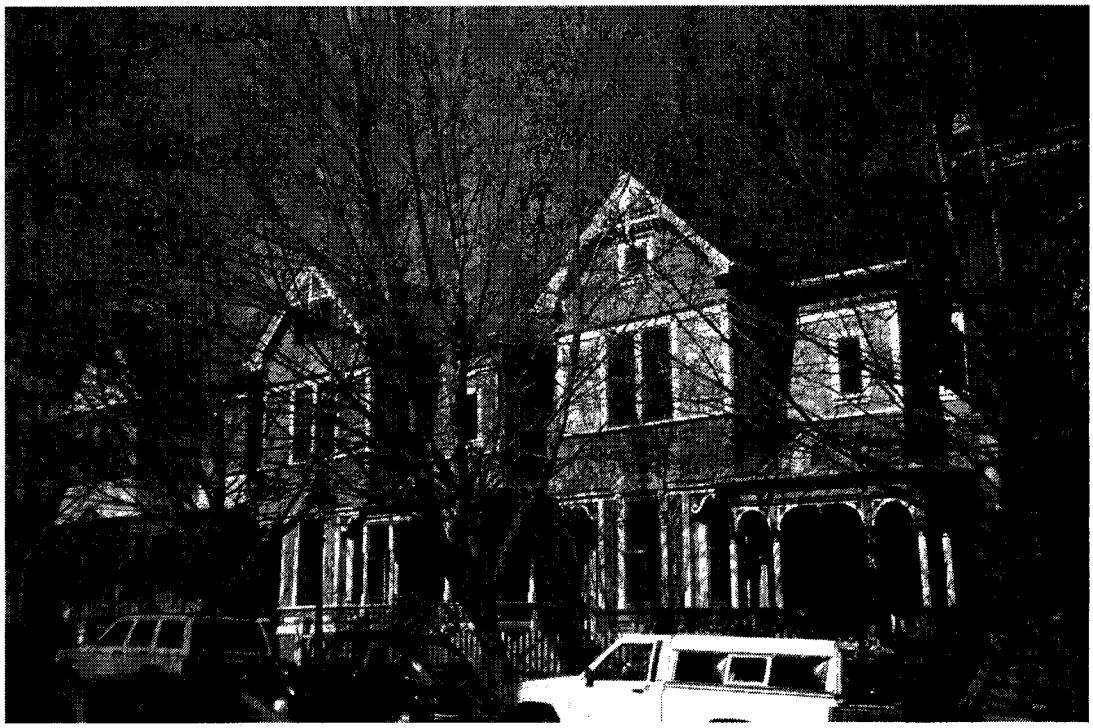


Figure 5.6 The old housing stock of Northwest District has been, in great measure, preserved by the residents. Photo by author.

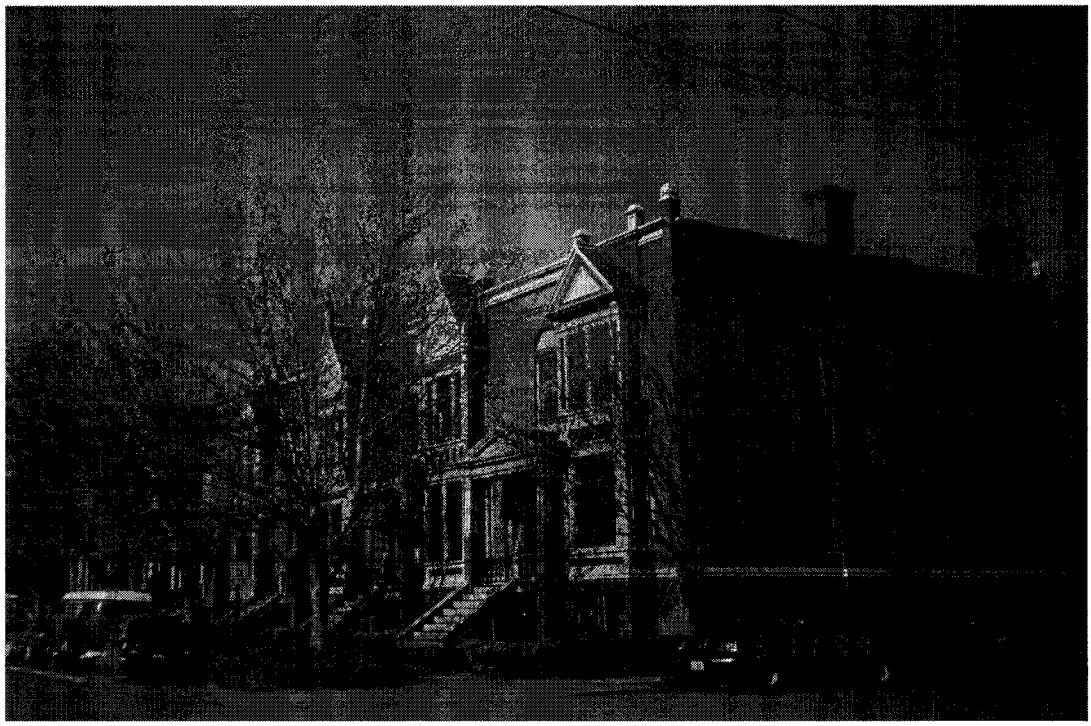


Figure 5.7 George "Bing" Sheldon renovated these rowhouses in Northwest District when planners assumed they were junk. Photo by the author.

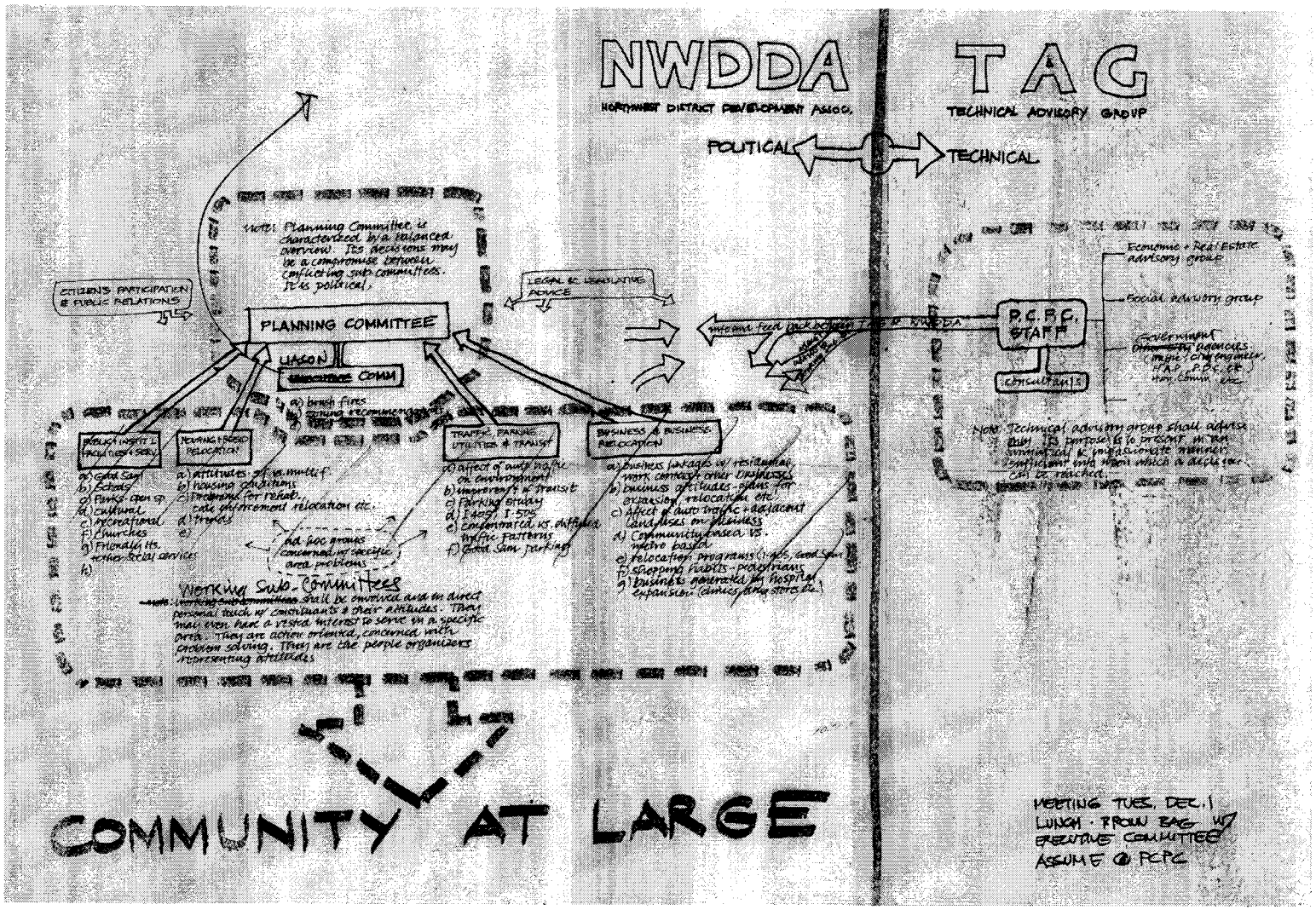


Figure 5.8 This process diagram shows how self-consciously planners separated their technical functions from the political role of the citizens. Portland City Planning Commission.

Notes to Chapter 5.

1. Carl Abbott, *Portland: Planning, Politics, and Growth in a Twentieth-Century City*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983. Pp. 161-162.

2. Portland City Planning Commission, Lloyd T. Keefe, "Tentative Plan for Northwest Portland," October 1, 1951, with map, "Plan for Northwest Portland," April 30, 1952. SPARC: Neighborhood Planning/ Northwest District [7706-10, 09-04-28, 9/39].

3. Portland Development Commission, hand-drawn map, n.d. SPARC: Urban Renewal 1962-64 [7706-10,10-10-14, 3/5].

4. Portland Bureau of Planning, "Northwest District," n.d. circa 1965, p. 1. SPARC: Bureau of Planning/ Urban Renewal Northwest [7601-05, 10-10-14, 1/20].

5. Untitled housing and urban renewal analysis, n.d., pp. 1-3. SPARC: Urban Renewal 1962-64 [7706-10, 10-10-14, 2].

6. *The Oregon Journal*, March 27, 1962; Marge Davenport, *The Oregon Journal*, March 12, 1965; *The Oregonian*, March 12, 1965; Marge Davenport, *The Oregon Journal*, June 8, 1965, p. 8; *The Oregonian*, June 9, 1965, p. 1; *The Oregonian*, May 24, 1967, p. 9.

7. *The Oregon Journal*, December 11, 1968.

8. Portland Development Commission, Urban Renewal Application, December 1, 1969. SPARC: Portland Development Commission/ Mayor's Office [14-07-20/ 2].

9. Ibid. "exhibit A."

10. Ibid. p. 8

11. Interview with George Sheldon.

12. Portland City Club, *Portland City Club Bulletin*, 1969, pp. 56-57.

13. *The Oregonian*, "People to get voice in Northwest Portland with formation of community action body." May 4, 1969, p. 31.

14. Northwest District Development Association, "Minutes of the Organizational Meeting of Northwest District Development Association," May 15, 1969. SPARC: Neighborhood Planning, Northwest District, [7706-10, Box 9/11, 9/42, 09-04-28].

15. Northwest District Development Association, "Northwest District Development Association," n.d. SPARC: Neighborhood Planning Northwest District [7706-10, Box 9/ 11, 9/42, 09-04-28].

16. George Sheldon, flyer, n.d. SPARC: Neighborhood Planning Northwest District [7706-10, Box 9/11, 9/42, 09-04-28].

17. William Sanderson, *The Oregonian*, "450 hear plans revealed for NW Urban Renewal." May 22, 1969. The article in the City Club bulletin estimated the crowd at 600 people.

18. The descriptor "gadfly" is used here advisedly since one person's gadfly is often another's visionary citizen. Louise Weidlich, however, has been involved in political affairs in Portland over many years in a way that has been both eccentric and ineffectual. It is worth noting that Weidlich was active in both planning

processes chronicled in this dissertation, in each case making arguments about the extra-constitutionality of city planning in general, in each case publishing her opinions in dense, single-spaced screeds, produced on the same old manual typewriter.

19. William Sanderson, *The Oregonian*, May 30, 1969. "New group takes steps against urban renewal."

20. Michael D. Stoops, "Urban Renewal Meeting." August 20, 1969. Memorandum from the Assistant Administrator, Good Samaritan Hospital, to Chester L. Stocks, Administrator. [NWDA Papers].

21. City Club, op. cit. p. 56.

22. Llano Thelin, NWDDA President, to Mayor Terry Schrunk, November 24, 1969, and a second version dated December 9, 1969. [NWDA Papers].

23. Ibid.

24. Ibid.

25. Portland City Planning Commission, Staff Report, "Development Commission Application for Grant for Survey and Planning Good Samaritan Hospital Project, November 28, 1969, by Dale D. Cannady [NWDA Papers and in Portland City Planning Commission proceedings, December 2, 1969, pp. 83-88. SPARC [04-03-63].

26. City of Portland, *Proceedings of the Portland City Council*, Vol. 215, pp. 153-54, December 10, 1969.

27. Ibid. p. 207.

28. Ibid. p. 166.

29. Howard Glazer's typescript text, dated December 10, 1969 [NWDA Papers].

30. City of Portland, *Proceedings* p. 168.

31. Ibid. pp. 175-180.

32. Ibid. pp. 154-5, 190, 192, 196-199.

33. Northwest District Association, Newsletter, Vol. 1, No. 1, January 1970. SPARC: Neighborhood Planning, Northwest District, [7706-10, Box 9/ 11, 9/42, 09-04-28].

34. NWDA, "Northwest District Development Association Planning Committee," September 8, 1970. SPARC: Neighborhood Planning, Northwest District [7706-10, Box 9/11, 9/42, 09-04-28].

35. NWDA, "Notice of meeting of the planning committee of the NW District Development Association," and Northwest Planning Committee," October 27, 1970. SPARC: Neighborhood Planning, Northwest District [7706-10, Box 9 of11, 9/41-42, 09-04-28].

36. Ibid.

37. NWDA, "Preliminary Report of the Housing Committee," January 5, 1971. SPARC: Neighborhood Planning, Northwest District, [7706-10, Box 9 of 11, 9/42, 09-04-28].

38. NWDA, "Preliminary Report, Land Use and Zoning Committee," January 26, 1971. SPARC: Neighborhood Planning, Northwest District, [7706-10, Box 9 of 11, 9/42, 09-04-28].

39. NWDA, "Preliminary Report of the Traffic Committee," January 26, 1971, SPARC: Neighborhood Planning, Northwest District, [7706-10, Box 9 of 11, 9/42, 09-04-28].

40. NWDA, "Northwest District Development Association, Planning Committee Minutes," November 24, 1970 and "Northwest District Development Association Minutes," December 8, 1970. SPARC: Neighborhood Planning, Northwest District, [770-10, Box 9 of 11, 9/42, 09-04-28].

41. Bureau of Planning, John Perry to NWDA, December 2, 1970, re: Northwest Comprehensive Plan. SPARC: Planning Bureau, 1967-70 [7602-17, 8/37, 09-04-28] and Attachments to December 2, 1970 memo from John Perry. SPARC, Neighborhood Planning, 1960-1977, [7706-10, Box 9/11, 9/42, 09-04-28].

42. NWDA, minutes "Planning Committee Meeting," Thursday, November 12, 1970 and agenda "NWDA Membership Meeting," January 19, 1971. SPARC: Neighborhood Planning, Northwest District, 7706-10, Box 9 of 11, 9/42, 09-04-28].

43. Interview with Dennis West, 1998 and Bureau of Planning, John Perry to "coordinating committee" April 8, 1971, SPARC: Bureau of Planning, Northwest District, January-June 1971, [7602-17, 8/38, 09-04-28].

44. John Perry to Coordinating Group re: Meeting with Commissioner Lloyd Anderson, December 21, 1970. SPARC: Planning Bureau, 1967-1970, [7602-17, 8/37, 09-04-28] and Ogden Beeman to Portland City Planning Commission, February 22, 1971. SPARC: Neighborhood Planning, Northwest District, [7706-10, Box 9 of 11, 9/42, 09-04-28].

45. Michael Fischer, San Francisco, to Dave Richen, December 4, 1970, and Dave Richen to James Goff, San Diego, December 7, 1970. SPARC: Planning Bureau, 1967-1970, [7602-17, 8/37, 09-04-28].

46. John Perry to City Planning Commission, Oakland, March 9, 1971 and Norman Lind to John Perry, March 19, 1971, SPARC: Bureau of Planning, Northwest District, January-June 1971, [7602-17, 8/38, 09-04-28].

47. Dave Richen to Prof. T.J. Kent, n.d., SPARC: Bureau of Planning, Northwest District, July-September 1971, [7602-17, 8/39, 08-04-28] and Richen to Kent, December 7, 1971, SPARC: Bureau of Planning, Northwest District, October-December 1971, [7602-17, 8/40, 08-04-28]

48. Perry to Grady Clay, December 16, 1971. SPARC: Bureau of Planning, Northwest District, October-December 1971, [7602-17, 8/40, 08-04-28].

49. Planning Director Lloyd Keefe to City Commissioner Lloyd Anderson, December 4, 1970 and John Perry to Samuel Chegwidden, December 10, 1970, SPARC: Planning Bureau, 1967-1970, [7602-17, 8/37, 09-04-28]; John Perry to James Apperson, December 30, 1970, SPARC: Neighborhood Planning, 1960-1977, [7706-10, Box 9 of 11, 9/42, 09-04-28]; John Perry to Ray Cruden, September 20, 1971, SPARC: Bureau of Planning, Northwest District, July-September 1971, [7602-17, 8/39, 08-04-28].

50. Portland Bureau of Planning, untitled organizational diagram, author unknown. The diagram bears the note "meeting Tues. Dec. 1 Lunch – Brown Bag w/ executive committee. Assume at PCPC." The use of the NWDDA initials on it and the prospective nature of the diagram suggest it is from 1970. SPARC: Neighborhood Planning, 1960-1977, [7706-10, Box 9 of 11, 9/ 42, 09-04-28].

51. Portland Bureau of Planning, "Study Sequence – Northwest Comprehensive Plan," December 7, 1970. SPARC: Neighborhood Planning, 1960-1977, [7706-10, Box 9 of 11, 9/42, 09-04-28].

52. Portland City Planning Commission, "Socio-Economic Data on Northwest Portland," Northwest Comprehensive Plan Studies, December 31, 1970. SPARC: Neighborhood Planning, Northwest District, 1960-1977, [7706-10, Box 9 of 11, 9/13, 09-04-28].

53. Ian L. McHarg describes such a technique in his classic, *Design With Nature*, New York: Doubleday, 1969.

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56. Interview with David Yaden, February 25, 1999; untitled interview script, n.d. SPARC: Neighborhood Planning, Northwest District, [7706-10, Box 9 of 11, 9/10, 09-04-28]; David Yaden to Selma Monsky, West Coast Community Surveys, April 29, May 24, May 28, and June 11, 1971, SPARC: Bureau of Planning, Northwest District, January-June 1971, 7602-17, 8/38, 09-04-28].

57. Portland City Planning Commission, *Northwest Comprehensive Plan, Interim Report No. 1, A Study of Conditions, Problems, and Potentials,* May 1971, and *Northwest Comprehensive Plan, Interim Report No. 2, A Study of Social Factors,* August 1971, SPARC: Neighborhood Planning, Northwest District, [7706-10, 9/19, 09-04-28].

58. PCPC, Interim Report No. 1, p. 13.

59. Ibid. pp. 13-16.

60. Ibid. pp. 17-23.

61. Ibid. pp. 24-25.

62. Ibid. pp. 6-8, 26-28.

63. PCPC, Interim Report No. 2, pp. 8, 16.

64. Interview with David Yaden, February 25, 1999.

65. PCPC, Interim Report No. 2. Pp. 33-34.

66. Ibid. p. 5.

67. NWDA, "Northwest District Development Association Minutes," December 8, 1970. SPARC: Neighborhood Planning, Northwest District, [7706-10, Box 9/11, 9/42, 09-04-28].

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69. Northwest Comprehensive Plan memoranda: "Miscellaneous Trips on 21st," March 25, 1971, by John Perry, Dave Richen, Rochelle Henniger, and "Interview with Northrup Food Center, Mr. Baldwin, April 1, 1971, by John Perry and Rochelle Henniger, SPARC: Neighborhood Planning, Northwest District 1960-1977, [7706-10, Box 9 of 11, 9/7, 09-04-28].

70. PCPC, "Notes by Bob Gettel on Burnside," n.d. but probably second quarter 1971, SPARC: Neighborhood Planning, Northwest District, 1960-1977, Box 9 of 11, 9/8, 09-04-28].

71. PCPC, John Perry, "Progress Report" to Lloyd Anderson, July 8, 1971, SPARC: Neighborhood Planning, 1960-1977, [7706-10, Box 9 of 11, 9/4, 09-04-28] and memorandum from David V. Yaden to Northwest Planning Staff, June 3, 1971, "Summary of Northwest FAIR Mail-Ins." SPARC: Neighborhood Planning, 1960-1977, [7706-10, Box 9 of 11, 9/11, 09-04-28].

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73. Bob Gettel and Watness, "Block meeting purposes and procedures," June 17, 1971; John Perry to Llano Thelin, Denny West, Tom Braunschweiger, and Bob Gettel, "Neighborhood goals and objectives meetings." June 1, 1971; and Dennis West to Executive Board and Planning Committee, Northwest District Association, "The status of planning for the Northwest and the purpose of community meetings," June 22, 1971, SPARC: Neighborhood Planning, Northwest District, [7706-10, Box 9 of 11, 9/42, 09-04-28].

74. PCPC, "A Record of NWDA Neighborhood Meeting," no. 32, July 27, 1971, SPARC: Neighborhood Planning, Northwest District, 1960-1977, [Box 9 of 11, 9/45, 09-04-28].

75. PCPC, "A Record of NWDA Neighborhood Meeting," no. 33, n.d., SPARC: Neighborhood Planning, Northwest District, 1960-1977, [Box 9 of 11, 9/45, 09-04-28].

76. NWDA, meeting notice, August 17, 1971, SPARC: Neighborhood Planning, Northwest District, [7706-10, Box 9 of 11, 9/43, 9-04-28].

77. Unfortunately, it is not specifically clear how the results of the meetings were summarized, analyzed, or incorporated into the planning process. The raw reports bear tell-tale marks of being tabulated and analyzed – check marks, code numbers, and the imprint of a rubber stamp with the word "COMPLETE." But a copy of a summary was not to be found, and key participants have no recollection of what happened to any summaries. John Perry mentions a partial tabulation" in a transmittal to NWDA planning sub-committee chairs, August 3, 1971, and refers in detail to an accounting of all 51 meetings in a memo to Planning Commission members, SPARC: Bureau of Planning, Northwest District, July-September 1971, [7602-17, 8/39/ 08-04-28].

78. The Oregonian, "Un-Public Hearing Hears Public's Protest Against Plan to Widen Part of NW 23rd Avenue." June 5, 1969, p. 23. The article refers to Roger Shields instead of Shiels, an apparent misspelling.

79. NWDA, *NDDA Newsletter*, Vol. 1 No. 1, January 1970, pp. 1-2; NWDA, "Captain John Brown House Conference of Concern," March 25, 1970, and PCPC, Captain John Brown House, Minutes of Meeting, May 8, 1970, prepared by Richard E. Lakeman, Senior Planner, all from SPARC: Neighborhood Planning, Northwest District, [7706-10, Box 9 of 11, 9/42, 09-04-28].

80. John Perry, memo to NWDA zoning sub-committee, April 13, 1971, SPARC: Bureau of Planning, Northwest District, January to June, 1971, [7602-17, 8/38, 09-04-28].

81. Letter from John Perry to Carolyn Sheldon, SPARC: Bureau of Planning, Northwest District, July-September 1971, [7602-17, 8/39, 08-04-28], and "Street Closures" memo from Perry to Carolyn Sheldon and Leroy Hathaway, November 17, 1971, SPARC: Bureau of Planning, Northwest District, October-December 1971, [7602-17, 8/40, 09-04-28].

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83. PCPC, "Goals and Objectives for the Northwest District: A Preliminary Staff Paper to be Used as a Guide by the Working Subcommittees of the NWDA Planning Committee." May 12, 1971, [NWDA Files] and "Northwest Comprehensive Plan, Area-wide Goals," n.d. [Bureau of Planning, Northwest District 1971, 7706-

02, 8/42, 09-04-28].

84. PCPC, "Preliminary Goals and Objectives for the Northwest Comprehensive Plan, Area-wide Goals and Objectives." August 17, 1971. [SPARC: Neighborhood Planning, Northwest District, 1960-77, 7706-10, Box 9 of 11, 9/ 2, 09-04-28].

85. PCPC, memo from staff to NWDA planning committee and board, "Goals and Objectives," November 2, 1971. [SPARC: Bureau of Planning, Northwest District, 1971, 7706-02, 8/42, 09-04-28].

86. PCPC, "Partial Preliminary Goals and Objectives for the Northwest Comprehensive Plan: Area-wide Goals and Objectives." November 23, 1971, Revised November 30, 1971. [SPARC: Neighborhood Planning 1960-77 7706-10, Box 9 of 11, 9/3, 09-04-28].

87. PCPC, "Goals and Objectives for the Northwest District: A Preliminary Staff Paper to be Used as a Guide by the Working Subcommittees of the NWDA Planning Committee." May 12, 1971, [NWDA Files] and "Northwest Comprehensive Plan, Area-wide Goals," n.d. [Bureau of Planning, Northwest District 1971, 7706-02, 8/42, 09-04-28].

88. The common phrase was applied to zoning by Constance Perrin, *Everything in it's Place: Social Order and Land Use in America.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977.

89. PCPC, July 12, 1971 and "Areawide Goals and Objectives: Land Use and Zoning." n.d. [SPARC: Bureau of Planning, Northwest District 1971, 7706-02, 8/42, 9-04-28.]

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91. PCPC, "Partial Preliminary Goals and Objectives..." November 23, 1971, Revised November 30, 1971.

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Chapter 6. Building the Neighborhood Association

The Northwest District Association came into being as a result of a threat – urban renewal – and its early existence was focused on a project – the neighborhood plan – but there were other projects to attend to in those early years, including the construction of a relationship with Good Samaritan Hospital, opposition to the I-505 freeway proposal, and an array of other issues. But in another sense, the real project of the Northwest District Association was its own formation. The project was the creation of an organized and effective neighborhood institution that could serve as a venue for public discussion of local issues and provide an officially recognized representative voice for the neighborhood in relation to other institutions – the hospital, local government, and others.

The emergence of the Northwest District Association began in 1969. By 1975 it was more or less fully fledged. During those years, at least two-dozen neighborhood associations were created by other Portland residents, the City began work on a new formal structure to regularize citizen participation, and the Bureau of Planning grappled with creating a protocol for incorporating neighborhood plans in the structure of City plans and policy. By the mid-1970s the status of neighborhood associations was clear. If you wanted to build something, you were urged to deal directly with the neighborhood association as early as possible in the process. They were an official conduit for public notices. Their opinions had weight before the Planning Commission and City Council and in the absence of contrary expressions from other residents, were considered authoritative.[1] The members of the Northwest District Association, in particular, knew their status had changed the day the hearing officer recessed proceedings to call the association office. He wanted to confirm that a developer was telling the truth about an agreement he claimed to have reached with the neighborhood association. He was.[2] But the emergence of this new status began with constructing a relationship with Good Samaritan Hospital.

Good Sam and the NWDA

Throughout the 1960s, Good Samaritan Hospital acted freely and unilaterally. They made their plans privately and announced them when they were ready. But all of that changed dramatically with the urban renewal plan. As opposition mobilized at the grassroots, approaches to urban redevelopment that included massive clearance and relocation schemes were discredited at the national level, and the public mood in the era of Civil Rights, Vietnam, and the

counterculture turned hostile to their cause. As events unfolded, Good Samaritan not only failed to gain participation in a federally-funded urban renewal project, they never even got the money promised for planning. Yet the hospital still had real and pressing needs for new and expanded facilities in a neighborhood where some residents thought Good Samaritan bent on destruction.

During the fight over the urban renewal proposal, Good Samaritan faced opposition, not only from the responsibly middle-class NWDA, but also from a younger, more radical, and far more confrontational group called Neighbors for Northwest Survival. On at least one occasion, the group organized picket lines in front of homes that the hospital had purchased and planned to demolish. They also put out a series of tabloid "underground" newspapers in the spring of 1971, attacking Good Samaritan for its designs on the neighborhood. The papers were wanly entitled *Willamette Bridge* but distinguishable mostly by a very large logo-like "NW" with a wrecker's ball smashing it from the side. The articles were characterized, likewise, by a kind of wrecking-ball prose in service to a left-ideological interpretation of the neighborhood situation and a simplistic attribution of evil to men of power: "What a lot of people in the Northwest are unaware of is just how serious the situation is," they reported. "This is no accident. The men who plan to destroy our community don't want us to know what they're doing until it's too late." Yet the basic facts were not so much in dispute:

> Over 220 housing units have been destroyed in the NW in the last few years. Only 41 have been built. The proposed I-505 freeway would displace another 400 people, while Good Sam Hospital wants to tear down 15 blocks of houses and apartments. On top of all this is a City plan to tear down 715 units between the Stadium Freeway and 19th St. This means a total of 85 blocks of houses and apartments will be destroyed unless we do something to stop it. [3]

Throughout these texts the rhetoric was blunt and the argument encompassing, addressing the aggressive nature of the plans, the inequity of the use of eminent domain, the role of speculators, the use of tax incentives for <u>dis</u>investment, the threat to the residential fabric from current zoning, "deliberate distortions" by planners about current land uses and quality of housing, the "Catch-22" of using clearance to protect the neighborhood, the lack of real service to the community by the hospital, and outright lies by Good Sam.

An unsigned article with the inside headline: "Good Samaritan Hospital... surgery with a bulldozer" said most people don't realize "that Good Sam has massive expansion plans on the drawing boards that would wipe out 15 blocks in the heart of our neighborhood." But the "nightmare" can only be accomplished with the use of eminent domain because there are a lot of homeowners there, "many of whom grew up in the neighborhood, who would never sell if the

choice remained theirs. This is where Uncle Sam comes in again on the side of the wealthy developers." The urban renewal law, executed by the Portland Development Commission on behalf of the hospital, would provide federal subsidies for this destruction and "the 'legal' right to force all property owners to sell."[4]

"In order to get HUD money, Good Sam must convince them that NW has big problems and that 15 blocks of concrete high rises and parking lots will solve those problems." Such reasoning is absurd, they wrote, but "we should be used to it by now, what with all the double talk about SE Asia, inflation, and the ABM." The real problems the neighborhood had were largely the fault of property owners who had allowed their holdings to deteriorate while they waited "to make a killing" when they sold land for the next supermarket, clinic, or business. "These people have nothing to gain by fixing up the apartments and houses they own but don't live in." Moreover, the property tax system provided a disincentive for any sort of reinvestment. Fix a place up, they wrote, and your taxes will go up. The zoning in place permitted commercial and industrial expansion in many locations throughout the neighborhood, and where it didn't, "City Hall will make an individual administrative decision allowing it. After all, what's a run down house compared to Consolidated Freight?"[5]

The article mocked the argumentation behind the urban renewal plan so specifically and directly that it is clear the authors had studied the application. They quoted the application saying the 15-block area is "not predominantly residential," then added: "this may come as a surprise to you folks who live there," including 104 families and 307 individuals. They cited figures directly from PDC analyses – that more than half the structures are in such bad condition that they should be demolished and that "another 42 percent 'warrant clearance due to various functional and environmental deficiencies...'" They add in sarcastic parentheses: "(whatever that means)."

> It is bad enough that Good Sam has encouraged deterioration by announcing their intention to acquire those 15 blocks one way or the other. Now they are justifying the destruction of all the housing in the area by calling beautiful, spacious, salvageable homes "substandard, deteriorating, and deficient." And worst of all they act as (if) we should congratulate them for saving us from this "blighted area." Incredible![6]

The attack on the "twisted reasoning" behind the urban renewal plan continued with jeers toward the notion that the hospital development will block industrial expansion and thus protect the neighborhood. "It's simple enough – they are going to rip up 15 blocks of houses and apartments to 'save' the residential area." Echoes of Vietnam-era talk of destroying the village in order to save it were probably not accidental. Here, the sins of the establishment interlock to form one vast affront on "the people." The article concluded with a brief critique of the health care system and

how it catered to the rich and ignored the poor.

The editors of *Willamette Bridge* used map graphics with the same brutal force they applied in their texts. Each of three proposals was shown on their map as a dark-shaded area, effectively lopping off two sides of the neighborhood, and blowing a large hole in the middle. The I-505 Upshur corridor alignment was shown as a 14-block swath on the north end of the district; a 48-block area was shown as ceded to industrial uses; and The Good Sam urban renewal area takes up its 15 blocks in the "heart" of the neighborhood: "featuring six high rises, four giant parking buildings, eight parking lots, and a motel!" Added together, their numbers seem to project a loss of housing in excess of a thousand units. "A look into the future," the headline warned.[7]

A subsequent issue of *Willamette Bridge* featured news of picketing the hospital and at sites where housing was being demolished. The rhetoric and line of argument were the same, but by that time a list of demands had been added. "Working people have always been the first to be pushed out and the last to be provided for when 'urban renewal' comes through." They called for "construction of low cost housing to be planned and controlled by the people of the community," a freeze on property taxes, property tax relief for property improvers, free medical, dental and child care, an elected neighborhood council with authority over local plans, and referenda on all major projects.[8]

Very much in tune with the times, the critique of entrenched political and economic power was merged with complaints about the use of the police for political ends. The organization mustered 60 picketers to protest the urban renewal plan – "despite an undue amount of policemen, who took pictures of everybody there." When the organization hung signs on two houses slated for demolition, "within five minutes there were three squad cars and two security cops taking down names as well as our signs (strange they haven't been able to stop the looters and scavengers who have gutted the insides of these perfectly good houses)." And Art Busse, one of the leaders of the organization, had been harassed, his house staked out, and neighbors warned against associating with him. The reason was clear: Busse is "a revolutionary dedicated to serving the people."

> Big financial interests want the NW, and they have gradually been stealing it through 'legal' agencies, commissions, and councils. Now that the people of the NW are rising up to save their community, it has become clear that downtown money interests will resort to intimidation, harassment, and violence to insure they get what they want.[9]

All in all, Neighbors for Northwest Survival and their organ, *Willamette Bridge,* purveyed an opinion and a style of expression guaranteed to drive conservative hospital administrators,

physicians and board members to absolute distraction. Yet the core of their argument was not much different from the one put forward by the ostensibly more reliable architects, lawyers, bureaucrats, and housewives of the NWDA: it's a good neighborhood, it should remain residential, the pending proposals would have the opposite effect, and the neighborhood should have a democratic voice in the decisions made. The main difference was in the populist pseudo-revolutionary rhetoric, the accusatory tone, and the broader class-conscious socio-political critique. For the NWDA the involvement of such radicals was, once again, serendipitous. The hospital was loathe to work with any neighborhood group. But to even communicate with people espousing "free health care" and "power to the people" was anathema to them. With Neighbors for Northwest Survival as their foil, NWDA was a far more attractive partner for the hospital.

The joint board meeting

With action pending on Good Samaritan's urban renewal application, and Neighbors for Northwest Survival picketing and publishing, NWDA suggested a meeting between their board and the hospital administration and trustees. Odgen Beeman circulated a draft agenda that identified the desire of the neighborhood association for a discussion on "a written policy on future institutional plans" including a "translation" of the same "to physical plans: i.e. how many buildings and what land is required;" a statement about the hospital's intentions about development activity not related to hospital operations; and a "continued, candid, and open disclosure to the neighborhood of Good Samaritan plans." They said they wanted the hospital to "accept the responsibility for relocation of persons displaced by hospital expansion," and an agreement to accept "neighborhood planning objectives," or to make "clear definition of areas of disagreement." In return, the hospital could expect "appreciation of the need of the hospital to continue providing medical service to the neighborhood and the community," and definitive "planning guidelines and objectives" regarding what the neighborhood wants.[10]

Most of the evidence suggests this conditional overture came at a time when relations between the hospital and the neighborhood association were distinctly strained.[11] Stanley Pansky, an architect with the Portland office of Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill, attended a variety of official and community meetings on behalf of Good Samaritan and produced a stream of opinionated dispatches back to administrator Chester Stocks. Pansky attended a City Council hearing in March 1971 at which neighborhood activists and Bureau planners discussed the requirements of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Land Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 in relation to the pending Good Samaritan urban renewal application. Pansky reported, "(John) Perry believes, and I think this represents the feeling of some of the NW Development Association people, that this material proves that Good Samaritan Hospital must provide replacement

housing before an urban renewal project can proceed. (PDC director) John Kenward says this is a fallacious view, and my reading of these documents certainly supports his conclusions." In another case, Pansky wrote, it had been good enough just to promise "to provide housing in the general area sometime in the future." That Northwest activists made the alternative interpretation was just evidence of their lack of competence, in Pansky's view.

> I believe, and I hope I'm wrong, that Perry and the NW Development Association presently lack the kind of strong leadership that can channel their efforts into positive, constructive paths... I think it will take some positive help on your part, possibly channeled through Friendly House, to get these people to assume their full responsibility... The reasons for getting more deeply involved include the protection of the Hospital's capital investment provided by a strengthened community, and the avoidance of some public resistance to the Hospital's expansion. I realize there is a risk that deeper involvement on your part may actually backfire and generate greater resistance, but I don't think these people are going to get past first base on their own.[12]

It was all reasonably good advice except for underestimating the mettle of the neighborhood association.

Sometimes Pansky attended the NWDA meetings, as in April 1971 when the topic was a Good Samaritan proposal to knock down two houses – known as the "William Temple-Emily House site" – and create new parking. Perry showed slides of the site. Pansky reported back to Stocks that the discussion was "more sympathetic in tone" than around other "zone change and conditional use requests" but that the association finally resolved to request "a moratorium on demolition" or opposition to parking "until a development plan for the Hospital was 'negotiated.'" Pansky framed the word "negotiated" in quotation marks with apparent irony. He seemed offended by how they talked about his client. "Howard Glazer insinuated that the Hospital was engaging in 'block-busting' tactics, and accused the hospital several times of inconsistency and deception in relating its future plans to the community." Pansky offered his estimate that at least a third in the group of 60 or 70 were actually against the moratorium resolution. "Several of the more rational speakers admitted that parking spaces were hard to find and suggested that the Hospital be asked to landscape the new lot in return for support of the parking request." Pansky also related an incidental encounter with Vera Katz," whom he referred to as "the Grape Lady" in reference to her activism on behalf of the United Farm Workers,[13] and who "snuggled up to me after the meeting and said it would be bad public relations for the Hospital to tear the buildings down. She also said that she didn't like cars and parking lots, but that she likes people."[14]

Nevertheless, Pansky was in favor of the joint meeting, although perhaps not for the right reasons:

> I think a joint Board meeting might be successfully used to generate some sympathy and cooperation from this organization. I believe their existing suspicions are the result of overheated imaginations and the malicious representations of one individual. A meeting featuring frank talk by your Board members concerning future plans should be persuasive in this regard.

It is not clear who the "malicious" person was. There was enough suspicion of the hospital among the members of the association that it might have been almost anyone. Even the staff members – Perry, Dave Richen, and David Yaden – had strong personal commitments to the neighborhood.[15]

On Monday, May 24, 1971, thirteen members of the NWDA board, including founding president Llano Thelin, Howard Glazer, George Sheldon, and Ogden Beeman, met in the Good Samaritan conference room with Fred Wessinger, the chairman of the board of trustees, Dr. Robert S. Dow, chief medical officer, Chester Stocks, hospital administrator, and eight other board members and staff. The purpose of the meeting, as expressed by the published agenda was simply "to develop communication and greater understanding" between the two parties, to allow each to "identify (their) needs and goals" to the other, and "to discuss ways to jointly work toward achievement of mutual objectives." They were, in effect, peace talks, and the minutes reflect a serious gathering.[16]

Wessinger talked about the goals for the hospital including their desire for "improvement of the range, quality and accessibility of health services, modernization or replacement of substandard or nonconforming hospital facilities compatible with neighborhood architectural and landscaping aesthetics." More importantly he talked about the neighborhood and the planning process. He passed out copies of "Goals for Northwest Portland," and copies of a letter from Wessinger to Mayor Schrunk. "We feel that we are faced with a critical turning point in the life of Northwest Portland, and the lives of its resident citizens, and its resident institutions," the letter said, and expressed unequivocal support for "comprehensive planning for Northwest Portland," specifically continued funding for the study then ongoing. "We feel that this study is well staffed and is progressing very well and holds the greatest promise for successfully overcoming the blighting conditions which threaten this part of the city." Whatever hospital officials might express in private, their public communications were generous and positive.[17]

Good Samaritan's statement of its goals was even more promising because it identified some key areas where hospital and neighborhood association might have a shared perspective. They acknowledged that Northwest "does possess distinct social and economic assets which can and must be preserved and strengthened if maximum livability is to be retained during the present period of change." They also noted that they shared some interest in the continued health of the neighborhood, saying the hospital's "total patient care program is directly dependent on the

physical and social environment." The goals restated their own interest in "improving the range and quality and accessibility of health services," but also bowed to neighborhood concerns by saying they wanted to modernize facilities "compatible with neighborhood architectural and landscaping aesthetics." Most fundamentally, they invoked the language of "livability" and promised to help retain "the essential residential quality of the neighborhood." They reiterated their support for the planning process and concluded by offering to "work in partnership" with those committed to neighborhood improvement. This was distinctly an olive branch from the hospital. Even the worst interpretation – that they were telling the neighborhood association what it wanted to hear – was an improvement on the past, because at least now it was clear that the hospital knew what the neighborhood association wanted to hear.[18]

When it was the neighborhood's turn, Beeman started with the NWDA's mission statement: "to preserve and to improve the livability of Northwest Portland while protecting the personal (human) and property rights of individual citizens." Beeman said "Northwest Portland should first be a residential neighborhood." And he repeated the association's position that "an up-to-date comprehensive study" of the area was "an absolute necessity," which must be accomplished before, or at worst, simultaneously with, the hospital's urban renewal study for the targeted 15-block zone. It was important, Beeman stressed, for the hospital and the association to make a "coordinated effort," toward "a plan for a well-planned neighborhood that would be for the good of the citizens as well as the hospital." The exchange was positive, but there seemed an odd mixture in the conversation of demands and acknowledgments, threats and concessions.[19]

Yet when it was the hospital's turn to speak again, they offered still further concessions. Wessinger handed out a copy of the hospital's "Suggested Policy Positions Regarding Planning for Northwest Portland." It said, "in good conscience," the hospital "will acquire only that land which is needed for the provision of high quality medical and supporting services." The hospital is "concerned with this loss of housing, and is firmly committed to sound planning for its replacement." They would also support "traffic planning which will reduce, minimize, or eliminate heavy through traffic on the regular city streets," and zoning to "insure the stabilization of the varied land uses in Northwest Portland," acknowledging these "contribute significantly to the distinctive characteristics of the neighborhood." They would also support "development of additional parks." These were generous gestures, not that many of these things would require the hospital to actually do anything, but at least it was clear they had been listening to what the neighborhood association had been saying over the previous two years.[20]

Good Samaritan representatives presented some stipulations of their own. Chief medical officer, Dr. Robert Dow, instructed the residents on changes facing the health care field, ones which the hospital would have to respond to. "With the aid of charts," administrator Stocks, "gave

statistics concerning: numbers of patients, employees, students, medical staff, and volunteers, indicating growth in all phases of the hospital's operations during the past five years and the need for additional facilities to house the operations planned for the next ten years – up-dated surgical facility, additional research facilities, a physician's office building and a parking facility." They had demonstrably real needs, too.[21]

As the meeting wound up, Beeman thanked everybody, and said "he felt that the air had been cleared somewhat." But he reminded the Good Samaritan contingent that "the people of the neighborhood must still be given assurance of the hospital's aims – they are not willing to give a square inch, much less fifteen blocks." Thelin suggested that "if the hospital does not have actual plans for some time in the distant future, they might be able to outline their plans for the immediate future, say the next year or two." The persistent, central issue for the neighborhood association was it seemed clear that all of the things on the hospital's list of projects would never come close to filling up fifteen blocks. In which case, why plan for fifteen blocks? A member of the Good Sam board, in reply, acknowledged that, no, the hospital would not need that much. A large portion of the land was for other institutions and had been included in the boundaries at the behest of the PDC.

The two parties exchanged views on a variety of other subjects. The NWDA warned the hospital it might be opposed to proposals to vacate any streets, based on the idea (rooted in Jane Jacobs' work) that such moves would make crime more likely. NWDA representatives said it was "the hospital's duty and obligation... to keep citizens aware of its plans and goals." They complained that the renewal application, itself, seemed to be contributing to "planners' blight" in the proposed urban renewal area. Someone talked about the "exploitation of property." Wessinger closed the meeting by admitting that "the Hospital had not done as good a job within the neighborhood as it should have done," and that they would try to change this by "setting up a better system of communications."[22]

If the joint board meeting had been historic, at least within this local context, the NWDA didn't crow about it. A four-line item in an association newsletter noted the meeting briefly and said they had "cleared some issues that have been in debate."[23] Perry reported to the City Council that "lately a number of meetings between the Planning Commission staff and Good Samaritan administrators," had taken place. "The results of these meetings has been a better exchange of information and Good Samaritan has shown a willingness to co-operate with the district and Planning Commission in the development of their plans."[24]

And they did communicate more frequently. Stocks wrote to Perry (and copied the NWDA executive) to fill him in on a meeting between Good Samaritan and Physicians and Surgeons Hospital on July 9. Good Sam had begun a parking study "including a survey of all

personnel regarding their parking practices and the problems which they currently encounter" – in essence, why are they parking on neighborhood streets instead of in the ramp? "I will be glad to share the information with you," Stocks wrote, when the study is done in August. The two hospitals talked about the study but "no specific conclusions were reached." Stocks also told Perry about Good Samaritan retaining Mary Pedersen, recently an instructor in Political Science at Reed College, to "objectively assess the social relationship of the medical center to Northwest Portland." Pedersen would be in touch with NWDA. Stock took pains to state, "I want to assure that we do not intend this study in any way to compete with or conflict with the Comprehensive Study of Northwest Portland."[25]

Stocks subsequently forwarded a summary of their parking study to Planning Director Lloyd Keefe with copies to all the members of the Planning Commission. Perry sent a copy on to Howard Glazer and Lu Himes. The report requested "that off-street parking regulations be amended to allow general hospitals to charge hourly fees for parking in off-street facilities..." This change would "shift the major burden of parking costs to the visitor and away from the patient," as well as to "provide an alternative to limited curb-side parking." The report also went to some lengths to show that the hospital actually lost money on the operation of the pay lot it already had. Allowing the hospital to develop off-street parking facilities would also ameliorate problems of crowded on-street parking. It was possible, it seemed, for Good Samaritan and NWDA interests to coincide.[26]

Beeman belatedly followed up on the May joint board meeting with a letter in September. He wrote, not gracefully, that NWDA believed the hospital "has an opportunity to make a positive and unique contribution to this neighborhood instead of contributing to its destruction." He continued, with a certain self-involvement, that "decisions you make in the next few years regarding your role in this neighborhood will, in the long run, be of greater consequence than your decisions affecting medical care." Nevertheless, he suggested a way of working together, and invited the hospital to put a staff member on the NWDA planning committee. This would help them define where they agree on things, and work through where they don't ("Such as size of hospital plan, destruction of usable housing...") When disagreements persisted, he suggested a kind of negotiating committee made up of himself, Llano Thelin, and Wessinger the chair, and Stocks the administrator, to consider recommendations to their respective boards.[27]

Beeman also asked that the hospital appoint a person to work with NWDA on "a housing pact to protect displaced people," consistent with the Federal law on relocation. The payoff for the hospital would be a promise by NWDA not to "interfere with open market transactions as Good Samaritan acquires property." But the hospital would also be expected to "instruct its architects to save housing" and to "commit itself to the principle that the resident population of Northwest

Portland will not be reduced by its action." The letter suggested a few other ways the hospital could improve its relationships with the neighborhood. For example, it could make sure that the expanding program of medical services "respond(s) to neighborhood needs..." that might be unique to the area. "Our extensive neighborhood contact and surveys should be helpful on this point." He suggested a "neighborhood health plan run by the hospital on a break-even basis," and "preferential treatment to neighborhood residents during hiring to fill vacancies." Beeman added, "This would tend to cement the bonds between the hospital and the neighborhood." Finally, he invited Wessinger or others to attend the NWDA retreat on "goals and objectives" which would be "an ideal opportunity for you to understand our plans better."[28] Clearly, the neighborhood association felt that it had the upper hand in this relationship. They demanded a lot and offered a little. Beeman's missive, moreover, was a jumble of insults and jibes, demands and concessions, constructive suggestions and conditional offers of cooperation.

A community relations strategy

Nevertheless, it continued to be in the interests of Good Samaritan to forge a partnership with a responsible neighborhood organization, however cranky and demanding its members might be. They had come a long way in the relationship, but hospital leaders felt they still had a long way to go. Even before the joint board meeting, they had begun to fashion a conscious "community relations" strategy toward the Northwest District and its representatives. They envisioned an exercise in what today we would call "stakeholder mapping" to help "analyze the nature, character and strength of the forces of various community groups." In turn they would "develop close working relationships with those groups which share the same general community goals," as the hospital, and "cultivate these organizations and work with them in achieving mutual goals." The hospital would include in its statement of long-term goals "some form of NW neighborhood services" to counter the criticism that they weren't really a neighborhood institution, but a metropolitan one. "To the maximum extent possible," they would "share these goals with community groups." A program of "community relations" should emphasize "frank and open communications," "a positive approach," "mutual support of NW agency goals," and a de-emphasis of "areas of disagreement." In short, the hospital management concluded they should get smart, stop fighting the neighborhood, and serve their interests better by having a relationship.[29]

If such a strategy was to succeed, however, Good Samaritan managers would have to bring the doctors along with them. Stocks addressed the general medical staff around the time of the joint board meeting to explain what kind of cooperation he needed. Five years previous, the hospital had not been in good shape. Most of their beds "did not meet state and federal

standards," service provision was hampered by "outdated and inadequate facilities," and "a great deal of up-dating of facilities or services was necessary." Starting in 1965 they began their expansion program to provide new low cost on campus housing for student nurses, to increase enrollment, remodel the hospital core, create new intensive care, intermediate care, and isolation units, to expand parking and acquire new property. They had come a long way, Stocks said, but had far to go. "An Urban Renewal project," he said, before even that possibility went by the boards, "appears to be the only viable method of obtaining the necessary land for health campus expansion." With extraordinary understatement, Stocks told the physicians "we have experienced a growing interest on the part of the community" in hospital expansion plans, and they would have to deal with these folks.[30]

Stocks described with similar understatement the attitudes of three groups that had become active in neighborhood affairs. First was the NWDA, "which has the purpose of studying and speaking out on living conditions of Northwest Portland." Second was "a splinter group, represented primarily by the youth," called Neighbors for Northwest Survival, whose "activities has (sic) included, recently, picketing the hospital and distributing published statements against future hospital expansion of any kind." Third, was the Northwest Protective Association, whose "primary interest is in the land and houses they currently own." However bland the delivery, Stocks' audience could hardly have missed the hint that one of these would make a better partner than the others.[31]

Stocks reported on recent efforts "to promote better understanding regarding the hospital's role in the community," how representatives of Good Sam had attended "most of the meetings" by NWDA, and how a meeting had been scheduled to "discuss mutual concerns." Meanwhile, they had "gone on record as supporting the continued funding of this study program," the NW District plan. And they had "developed a statement" about its concern for "preserving the quality of the Northwest neighborhood," including "comprehensive land use planning" toward "creation of an optimum environment for healthful and social productive living." The hospital, he said, was also undertaking its own "long-range master plan."[32]

The medical staff, Stocks told them, was crucial to the future of the hospital. They were the primary reason that Good Samaritan had a reputation extending well beyond Portland. They provided top-notch services all over the region, and beyond to the state, and the nation. "Yet, if this hospital is to survive," Stocks concluded, "it must have a stake in the Northwest community." If they wanted to survive, they had to grow, and if they were going to grow, they had to get along. "Community relations will play an important part in this orderly growth." The medical staff needed to be involved in the planning, including "planning the role of this health care center in the community." Of course, the bottom line issue is always parking. "In the future," Stocks

warned, "it is possible that certain plans, e.g. expanded parking facilities, may be obstructed by local community interests and the understanding and patience of the Medical Staff will be necessary in order to effect common understanding and agreement between the hospital and the community." Understanding and patience, indeed.[33]

The hospital continued to be preoccupied with its difficult relationship with the neighborhood. Director of public relations, James Burr Miller Sr., sought advice for their situation in the "consultation corner" of the newsletter of the American Hospital Association. Miller described the "population surrounding the hospital" as composed of "the elderly, hippies, numerous small businesses of varying degrees of importance and enormous numbers of houses of questionable endurance and a lot of people with limited income. Notwithstanding all this, the people who live here claim that it is the only place to live." Miller got no advice on how to work with an active neighborhood association, partly because he didn't mention one. Instead, he got suggestions on how to make the process of relocation and clearance of a more passive population go more smoothly. A hospital PR man from Chicago warned them of the years of work ahead. "A series of meetings must be held in the community to explain the reasons for the 'razing' and a corps of 'community representatives' must be recruited and trained to go door-to-door in order to provide a convincing explanation." A woman from a hospital in New Jersey emphasized that "a blighted area is usually full of psychological and emotional factors. Skepticism, distrust and antagonism have become a way of life." For such pathologies she recommended "a constant flow of communications," with the help of "teachers, social service workers or ministers to interpret these plans." Otherwise, they suggested, compensate the community with clinics, day care centers, testing programs, drug and alcohol de-tox facilities, job opportunities for the residents, houses for elderly. The exchange said little of relevance to Northwest District, but it spoke volumes about the "state of the art" in hospital-community relations.[34] In the meantime, Good Samaritan pursued the relationship with the neighborhood in more conventional ways. When the NWDA asked for money to cover the costs of a housing survey and planning study, the hospital anted up.[35]

Despite already employing a full-time public relations professional, Stocks decided he needed outside assistance and, on the suggestion of one of his physicians, hired Mary K. Pedersen to help the hospital connect with the neighborhood. Pedersen had recently been an instructor in political science at Reed College, and would go on to help found the Office of Neighborhood Associations, but for the time being she would work as a consultant to Good Samaritan. One of her early roles was to manage press coverage of hospital affairs. In May 1972 a hospital-owned building was knocked down for parking, displacing 14 people. Pedersen made sure the reporter knew that "any extra costs incurred by the moving or new rent costs (to tenants) were made up by

the hospital." She is also quoted saying "the hospital is slowly but surely becoming more community oriented," and praising Good Samaritan administrators "for cooperating with neighborhood planners for the total Northwest Plan." Later in the story, she added, "the hospital realizes that it is in its best interests to preserve the residential character of the neighborhood."[36]

Mary Pedersen's most important role, by far, however, would not be in working with the neighborhood. It would be inside the hospital, talking to physicians and board members. During June of 1972 Pedersen sat down for one-on-one interviews with Stocks, board chairman Fred Wessinger, vice chair Thaddeus Bruno, two other board members, and eleven members of the Good Samaritan medical staff. Her mission was to gather information for the preparation of an even more explicit community relations strategy and she needed to know just how far to push them. The interviews produced no clear answer, but they did suggest that managing hospital politics might be just as difficult as managing neighborhood politics. The people she talked to ranged from conservative to progressive, from well-informed to preoccupied with their own business, and from hostile to reasonably sympathetic to the community.[37]

Many were highly sensitive to the tension between the hospital's position in the neighborhood and its more fundamental city-wide and regional role in providing health care. "The hospital is in the community by accident," Dr. Spence Meighan said. "But it also needs to have specialized non-territorial service base." It can serve Northwest, Downtown, and Southwest with emergency care and out patient clinics, but it needs to serve the broader market, too. "After all," board member Frederick Torp said, "this is not just a Northwest hospital, it's the only westside metropolitan hospital, and it's a specialist hospital with a regional draw."[38] Others placed the emphasis in the other direction. Good Samaritan and Emmanuel both had all-city responsibilities, Dr. William Smith told Pedersen, "but Good Sam also has a responsibility to the Northwest." Dr. John Partridge said "he believed that the hospital should function as the family physician for the area," and if it did, the neighborhood might be less resistant to their expansion plans.[39] Others were less sympathetic. "The core area is a poor place for the hospital," Dr. Harry Lee said. "They should have torn it down and moved to an outlying community."[40]

Some of the doctors were clearly worried about trends in health care that seemed to threaten their financial position in the enterprise, and there was some hostility to the rising tide of demands being made upon them. Pedersen reported Dr. Nathan Shlim "is upset when community groups or people make demands on the institution as if it were a governmental agency." Shlim said "those who can't pay generally ask for more than those who can pay. They ask for so much, how far is the hospital supposed to go?" He added, "only the medical profession is asked to subsidize the welfare patient." Shlim's colleague, Dr. Smith, described such views as "me-oriented." Pedersen wrote, "he didn't use to see medical care as a right, but now he is moving

in that direction."[41]

Physicians and board members alike seemed to be well aware of the history of competing factions in the neighborhood, and reasonably well-satisfied that the "right" organization had survived. Chester Stocks suggested that community attitudes to the hospital might be changing, after all "there is no Neighbors for Northwest Survival" anymore, and the shelving of the urban renewal plan certainly helped. Dr. Dow said it was good they now had a working relationship with an effective partner in the NWDA, but he also gave credit to the militants. "They stirred the board to talk with the more reasonable group," Pedersen noted.[42]

Likewise, most of the interviewees believed that relations with the neighborhood had improved, although interpretations about why varied. Administrator Stocks said he thought there was a great improvement, in part because of Pedersen's work, and generally because of more frequent contact with the NWDA.[43] Dr. Smith got it by word of mouth that there was "less static from the Northwest neighborhood now."[44] Dr. McKirdie reported that more of the residents "accepted the hospital now not as a destroying institution but with the potential to help the community."[45] Although, Dr. Partridge suggested, this might be the result of "the administration soft-peddling the expansion in hope of calming the community."[46]

There was much discussion about the necessity for a give-and-take relationship. Board member Ron Handel, a stock broker, noted that hospital and neighborhood were "interdependent" and both needed to recognize their mutual needs.[47] Stephen Gilley, another board member, said recent meetings showed "they had some ground to work together," and that neither party could be allowed to dictate to the other.[48] Dr. McKirdie said the relationship must be a "two-way street" and that the hospital "can't shove anything down the community's throat."[49] This new relationship was manifest in simple ways. When Good Samaritan went to the neighborhood association to talk about their need for space, the response from the NWDA was, "well, just how much space do you need?" Dr. Dow recalled. "There is an improving relationship on both parts."[50]

Frederick Torp, an estate and tax lawyer and by then retired from the board, was one of the more astute observers of the relationship. "The hospital has become a quasi-public institution," he told Pedersen, "so it should be a complete citizen." But that might be easier said than done. He acknowledged what the NWDA activists had charged: the hospital never needed as much land as the urban renewal plan demanded. It was partly for Physicians and Surgeons Hospital, partly because the planners put them up to it. Nevertheless, it was the hospital that ended up "contaminated" by the proposal. Now the neighborhood wanted the hospital to spend its money on neighborhood improvements and land to buffer its facilities. But the hospital's needs required that it spend money to buy parking, in some cases taking down old houses –

"many of them below code" and "not monuments in any sense" – with sure dispatch. The relationship between hospital and neighborhood could never be completely cosy.[51]

Some in the Good Samaritan contingent were even less sanguine about the future of the relationship. Dr. Lee predicted "closer ties with the neighborhood will never happen," because Good Samaritan must serve more than that narrow community. Building an office building for the doctors was crucial, no matter what the neighborhood felt, because it would make them more competitive.[52] Dr. Jerome Goldman continued to lament the passing of the urban renewal proposal. "There has to be a well-developed hospital," Goldman told Pedersen, "even if there has to be some sacrifice of housing. The expansion would be desirable for the community."[53] Board member Gilley said, "perhaps the hospital has some responsibility to property owners, but not to a group of non-property owners."[54]

A persistent thread in these conversations involved making distinctions between community members who were "reasonable" or "rational" and those who were not, between a few citizens who might be knowledgeable enough to work with the hospital and the multitude who lacked the requisite knowledge. Torp "found the NWDA people to be an intelligent and articulate group," but "they were not prepared to assume that there were two sides to the issues. As the meeting went on, they began to see that the hosp(ital) had some problems other than their own." Ron Handel found that neighborhood activists like Bing Sheldon were "fiery," but the group had been "reasonable and rational" so far. Dr. McKirdie "saw the (NWDA) attitudes as less aggressive, more rational and more reasonable, more willing to talk rather than parade or write derogatory letters to the editor." For these folks, being "reasonable" meant speaking clearly, listening, and hopefully learning. For others being "rational" meant seeing things their way. Dr. Goldman chalked up neighborhood objections to hospital plans to "emotionalism and stubbornness." Dr. Lee saw the neighborhood activists simply as disruptive: "They have only one goal and they are non-compromising with regard to it." If only they weren't so "rigid."[55]

Pressed by Pedersen, many allowed that the neighborhood might have a role to play in planning for hospital facilities. Most, however, were highly skeptical about the possibility of citizens participating in anything that had to do directly with health care. Stocks told Pedersen that the hospital should continue working with the NWDA "for the development of the neighborhood, with the hospital playing a major supportive role." Torp agreed that the neighborhood association should have a say in decisions about hospital facilities – "insofar as being informed and offering comments," he said, "yes, but as for assuming direction, no." Some of the others, like Dr. Rabiner, the Chief of Medicine, and Dr. Wilbur Larson, weren't necessarily opposed to a role for the NWDA, they just didn't know what they had to offer. Others thought the whole relationship ought to be handled by public relations specialists. "If the neighborhood

doesn't know," what's going on, Rabiner said, "they (the hospital) must have bad PR."[56]

But if there was some room to negotiate on a role for the neighborhood in physical planning decisions, staff and board both drew the line at community involvement in health care decisions. Stocks was perhaps the most permissive, yet wondering aloud about "who would be acceptable" as community representatives in any process. Dr. Meighan, also somewhat sympathetic, said "citizen participation (in health care decisions) would be impossible where the physicians do not retain control." Dr. Dow allowed that citizens might play a role in clinic development, but in an advisory capacity only. Pedersen wrote, "he wouldn't want them to feel that they were coming in to run it." After all, what did the neighbors know about health care?[57]

There was even less enthusiasm for any kind of official representation by the neighborhood association on the Good Samaritan board of trustees – a proposal raised by the NWDA. Some kind of "formal channel," yes, Gilley told Pedersen, "but a board membership, no. It's an issue of running the hospital versus the neighborhood wishes." Not possible, Dr. Dow concluded. "If they feel left out, that's because they don't understand how the delivery of medical care is organized." Torp also opposed a board membership for the neighborhood, worrying about the confidentiality of major gift-giving, staff problems, research grants, and business negotiations. Whose side would they be on? Maybe, Dr. McKirdie, allowed, there could be a city representative. Maybe, Handel said, "if it were the right person."[58]

Hospital leadership was divided on some of these issues, something that can be seen in the differences of opinion between Fred Wessinger, chairman of the board of trustees, and Thaddeus Bruno, vice chairman. Wessinger was upbeat. Now that the urban renewal plan had been shelved and Good Sam's own plans pared down, things might return to normal. "Now that the hostility has died down," Pedersen wrote, "they should move on." Wessinger was concerned about the financial feasibility of the Northwest District Plan. But the hospital should not take a leadership role in the neighborhood, but a supportive one. It might be possible, Wessinger allowed, to put a neighborhood representative on a committee of the board. It just wasn't clear which one. Maybe there should be a new committee on neighborhood affairs. The only real drawback to a more formal relationship between hospital and neighborhood, he suggested was "it might not be too good for them to be associated too closely with the hospital from the political point of view." It might be an even better idea for hospital representatives to sit on neighborhood committees. There were limits to community participation because of the technical nature of hospital planning – "not even the Board can really get into it" – but the institution was prepared to "face up to its responsibilities, live with the community, and not run roughshod over them."[59]

Thaddeus Bruno, meanwhile, had attended a recent meeting with the neighborhood association "and found it unpleasant and unsatisfactory." He told Pedersen "the people wish the

hospital would go away; few felt that it was a valuable asset to the community. They had preconceived ideas." He didn't think they could see "the other side." Bruno claimed some experience with citizen participation. But he found that "it is an expensive and tedious problem to educate the public and it's not very rewarding." He had no appetite for expanding participation opportunities, "because they obstruct things that will help the community, not hurt it." Bruno had not yet given up on the urban renewal scheme. "He can't see that the hospital has created any problems outside its walls for the community," Pedersen noted. "The buildings they took down were below-code buildings." All the things the hospital planned to do, he said, would have been beneficial to the community. All of the areas they threatened to clear were "substandard or non-conforming." Why didn't the residents understand this? Bruno offered the time-worn big-planner rationale: "it's impossible to do anything without inconveniencing somebody, without some disruption." He stopped himself: "I'm saying all the wrong things." But one must only assume he was speaking his mind.[60]

Given the variety of views Pedersen heard from administrators, trustees, and medical staff, her re-presentation of these conversations back to the hospital community was extraordinary for its optimistic reading of their intent. "One need not ask whether the community should be involved in decision-making at Good Samaritan Hospital," Pedersen wrote, "because various elements of the community are already involved." She suggested, instead, that they consider "to what degree should the community be involved? How should the community be involved?" She continued: "As the hospital has undertaken the process of long-range planning and the evaluation of alternatives which accompanies it, the degree of lay involvement has not kept pace, but interviews with trustees and doctors on the Executive Board of the Medical Staff indicate substantial support for expanding community participation."[61]

If it was wishful thinking to believe there was "substantial support" for such a program, Pedersen's formulation of a program was nevertheless deeply thoughtful, both practical and idealistic. Rather than talk about "public relations," she insisted on a discussion of "community relations." PR is "one-way," she wrote, "the purpose of which is to impress or convince." CR is "two-way, the purpose of which is to consult or gain advice." PR "usually presents only the positive side." CR "tries to be objective, considering both advantages and disadvantages." PR involves a "position announced after a decision is made," but CR involves "alternatives considered as part of process of decision-making (with) laymen's reactions and input." With PR the "focus is on internal needs of the institution." With CR the "focus is multiple, but by nature of the process includes more than internal concerns."[62]

The suggestion for a "community relations" strategy was founded on a relatively more complex understanding of community itself. It wasn't an undifferentiated public. It was the whole

variety of populations served by the hospital: self-pay, insured, uninsured, inpatient, outpatient, etc. Beyond that it was the "third base," the residential community around the hospital. Here, right at Good Samaritan's doorstep, was a "group representing aims to restore the population base and social fabric" of Northwest. They faced serious trends of disinvestment. But if successful they would provide a huge benefit to the hospital, and so it behooved the hospital to help them, not fight with them.[63]

There were even more reasons for the hospital to commit itself to a real community relations strategy. "As emphasis in medicine shifts from treating the sick to maintaining the healthy, and from inpatient to outpatient treatment," Pedersen wrote, "(there is) increasing justification for the involvement of the community on many levels." The community was already involved as trustees, volunteers, and others. "The principle of voluntarism should be expanded for the purpose of recruiting the contribution of skilled... and those knowledgeable about the nature and the needs of the constituency to be affected. Thus citizen involvement would be extended to include policy-making at the early stages of consideration." In any case, with the "return" of the urban renewal application, and with the easing of relations between neighborhood and hospital, there was an historic opportunity to get people working together.

Pedersen used Sherry Arnstein's "ladder of participation" explicitly.[64] "What is appropriate for the hospital is not the case of citizen control or domination, but neither should it be a case of tokenism because will be difficult to motivate people to get involved at all." Pedersen continued "the trend in the political sphere in this country is toward citizen involvement, if the hospital wishes to achieve this change gradually they should start now." This is especially so since the hospital "have some reputation of standoffishness to live down." Towards these ends she outlined several purposes of a program to promote "increasing familiarity with the hospital, its strengths and it problems," "to recast the public relations approach employed in the past into a community relations approach," and "to create opportunities for citizen involvement (that are) meaningful and thus recruit additional skilled volunteers for hospital use not just in patient care, but also in physical and social planning."[65]

"To make citizen involvement work," Pedersen continued, hospital managers "need to provide not only the opportunity but the motivation to get involved." Good Samaritan had something of a reputation for keeping to itself, and it would have to live that down before it could gain the full trust of the participants. Beyond that, if the hospital were to succeed in motivating real involvement, they would have to assure members that they played "a contributory role rather than a rubber stamp role." In return, the hospital had a right to expect participants would take their responsibilities seriously.

The hospital had already taken some steps toward implementing the "community

relations" program, although not always with the clarity Pedersen would have preferred. The hospital trustees adopted goals for Northwest Portland, although unilaterally, which prompted the NWDA to offer some "friendly" amendments. The hospital presented facilities modernization plans to NWDA, "for their reaction, but not really for their input." The NWDA, in turn, included the hospital's plan in the Northwest Comprehensive Plan, and worked out the traffic pattern around the hospital district. By the time Pedersen got around to finalizing a strategy, it was already being implemented, if sometimes clumsily.[66]

It was pure serendipity that a person like Pedersen came along when she did. At the same time, all she suggested was that Good Samaritan do exactly what it had to do, which was to work with an energized neighborhood constituency. The relationship would take many years to mature, but Pedersen came along at a crucial moment and told both sides it was in their interests to collaborate.

As the NWDA and Planning Commission staff wound up their work that Fall, they met again with representatives of Good Samaritan to discuss the "comprehensive plan." If they had wanted give and take, then they both got it. John Perry was questioned about whether anyone beside participants in the neighborhood meetings had been asked their opinion. He reported they had talked to "businessmen, industrial people..." and even the folks at Physicians and Surgeons Hospital. They discussed the three alternative schemes for the plan (see Chapter 5) and Perry reported that "the majority attending" the neighborhood meetings supported concept number one – the "reinforced border" compromise position. The position of "businessmen" or "industrial people," however, was not mentioned in the notes for this meeting.[67]

Planning staffers proceeded to instruct Good Samaritan representatives on the likely impact of the emerging plan on the hospital. "It would be preferable," Dave Richen said, "if the hospital would try and place uses that relate to the people on the residential side of the hospital and uses of a larger scale could be located on the industrial side." Likewise, he added, "it would be better for Good Samaritan to aggregate the properties it already has," rather than continuing to buy land and spread out. "Size of expansion will be a major issue," he warned, and so would provision of housing to replace units torn down, but "there will be limited funds available." Richen made some suggestions about which blocks might be "best" for Good Samaritan expansion. Two blocks to the north – toward the industrial area – and one block in the "U" formed by existing hospital facilities would be fine. But not the block bounded by Lovejoy, Marshall, 20th and 21st. That one is "solid residential." So far, there was little in the plan that directly benefited the hospital, but Richen suggested, Good Samaritan would enjoy being part of an "improved residential area."[68]

The conversation turned to street patterns and parking. Richen discussed the relative

merits of a Kearney-Lovejoy couplet and a Lovejoy-Marshall couplet. Thaddeus Bruno pointed out that the Lovejoy-Marshall couplet would surround nearby St. Mark's Church with traffic. (It would also have bisected the two-block site on which Good Sam's main facility was subsequently constructed). The hospital's preference was for the Kearney-Lovejoy couplet with a switch-back to two-way on Lovejoy west of 24th Avenue. Richen and Perry both objected to a plan that would carry so much traffic through a residential area in the neighborhood. The planners asked if the hospital still wanted to put parking to the south of Lovejoy. Good Sam representatives demurred: people would then have to cross a busy street to get to the hospital. But, Richen pointed out, Good Sam "would get extra pieces of property with the plan he suggested" and keep traffic out of the central four blocks of the hospital complex. Why not keep Lovejoy two-way, someone suggested, and when traffic requires it, designate Northrup, Overton, or a street farther north as the other half of a couplet? Why not let Lovejoy be "another Burnside" -- two lanes in each direction and no on-street parking? The hospital's main objective, a Good Sam representative said, is to "let the traffic get through without going through the hospital." They would like to get 22nd, Marshall, and Northrup vacated "as soon as possible." The planners "would have no trouble" with the first two, Richen said, but "he did not feel it was possible at this time to close Northrup."[69]

Even from sketchy notes, it is easy to get a sense of planning as a "communicative" practice. The parties exchanged information, but also warnings, agreements, stipulations, reassurances and proposals. Hospital staff said they planned to put their emergency department entrance on NW 23rd Avenue and would not need any more space than already designated in the emerging plan. Perry asked if he could have text or drawings of "the hospital's immediate plans and their long-range plans." Good Samaritan staff described those plans briefly: a four-block core around the intersection of 22nd and Marshall; land to the north for other development; plans for a physicians office building. "It is hoped," they offered, "that this will discourage physicians from locating clinics in neighboring houses." They agreed that "final planning will be done before the NWDA meeting and will be presented to the neighborhood at that time." Perry "mentioned" that the issue of replacement housing was going to come up again. Had the hospital done anything? Not so far. Richen suggested Good Sam might find parking under the Stadium Freeway and could transport staff by shuttle. The hospital said "they would check into this." This was not easy, but it was a working relationship. Each party was staking out its own interests. But the issue of whether or not they should be talking at all seemed fully resolved. There was even a shadow of mutual respect in the record of the day.[70]

The decision by the leadership of Good Samaritan Hospital to accept the Northwest District Association as a legitimate decision-making partner was an important event in this story. It gave the association a level of credibility that it would not otherwise have had. But it would be

inaccurate to conclude that the hospital's willingness to deal with the NWDA was crucial to the survival and success of the association. Good Sam dealt with the NWDA and not the others because the hospital trusted their moderate middle-class ways. But the NWDA survived, while other organizations withered, because of the resources they brought to the work at hand. They made it on their own.

The neighborhood establishment

By the end of 1971 the people of the Northwest District Association were feeling a certain sense of accomplishment and looking forward to the work ahead. George Sheldon wrote in his year end wrap-up in the newsletter: "If we have made strides this year, the Freeway decision (see Chapter 7), the City Plan for Northwest Portland and many others, we have also assumed obligations which we must discharge." It was time to get on a "sounder financial basis," to incorporate with not-for-profit status, to start raising money for the long haul, and to set up a finance committee to carry that ball." Edgar Waehrer also reported for the planning committee: "we've tried to be the Northwest citizen's counterpart to the Planning Commission – by stating what it is we want for our neighborhood for the next 20 years." They had "been fortunate in that John Perry and Dave Richen" have been "sensitive to the neighborhood's input." But it was the neighbors that had "fought various brushfires on zoning and traffic. Results have been mixed, but we've won on most of the important issues."[71]

To some extent, they just expected to be involved. They expected that their work would bring results. In early 1971, for example, Lu Himes wrote to the executive director of the Columbia Region Association of Governments to ask that NWDA be included in transit planning that CRAG was then initiating. The neighborhood had something to offer. The bus system, Himes wrote, was vital to NWDA efforts to improve "livability" in NW District. "Therefore, we would appreciate being involved, formally, in the referenced plan to insure citizen involvement in all issues, i.e. route planning, conceptual design, fare-structures, bus shelters, etc." he added. "We feel that if we were able to have thorough briefings, our input could be of high quality. May we hear from you regarding the details of how and when we may participate."[72]

In May 1974, the NWDA held another annual membership meeting. The scope of affairs to be considered spoke to the strength and maturity the association had achieved.[73] They were following the progress of the Northwest Comprehensive Plan, then before the City Planning Commission. NWDA leadership was pleased that the plan had been well received but said, "thus far, too much emphasis has been directed to zoning aspects, to the detriment of other elements such as Human Resources and housing goals." After all, "it is from the wellsprings of these (housing and human resources) goals that the rationale of the rest of the Comprehensive Plan is

formulated, as it defines the desired lifestyle of the Northwest District." The board had also taken a stand on the I-505 controversy – in favor of the Long Yeon alternative – and framed a NWDA policy statement aimed at keeping traffic from the freeway out of the. Meanwhile, they recommended that the association make involvement in the Thurman Vaughn Corridor redevelopment planning a major priority for the coming year.[74] They also issued a call to arms for members against any who would undermine the trafficways plan in the NW Plan.

> There is a growing realization that if the Northwest District is to survive as a residential and small business area serving families and residents of all ages, it cannot continue to bear the brunt of through traffic in ever increasing volume, which would ultimately result in the destruction of A NEIGHBORHOOD, in the splitting apart of a communal group of citizens who for years have taken pride in their community and their city, reducing them to a "stop-in-the-road" status dangerous to pedestrians.

The report further urged that they "hold fast to the goals" of the plan, keep "vigilant communication" with the City Traffic Engineering Office, maintain the "mutual aid" relationship with Good Samaritan hospital on traffic issues, "retain on street parking on all NW area streets," monitor traffic flows, and "pressure" officials for changes in signalization.[75]

The association was flexing – and building – it's muscles on an array of more detailed matters, intervening in Planning Commission and City Council action, and even instigating litigation, on rezonings and conditional use permits for commercial uses; keeping an eye on the Good Samaritan planning; and establishing a range of on-going association programs. They participated in a city-wide tree-planting program, made liaison with the new Office of Neighborhood Organizations, and established a volunteer program to staff their new office.

The growing influence of the NWDA and its acceptance as the legitimate political voice of Northwest Portland was often represented in the story of the Kitchen Kaboodle development on NW 23rd Avenue. The Northwest plan had stipulated that the trolley-era commercial strips of NW 21st and 23rd be maintained and repaired. Housing would be encouraged on upper floors. Surface parking would be limited to the rear of buildings. Total square footage would be limited. Developers, as they were encouraged to do, consulted with the neighborhood association in the early stages of a project. The developer and NWDA negotiated and came to an agreement: retail in front, a minimum number of housing units above, parking in back. When it came time for the developer to go before the hearing officer for required variances, the neighborhood association didn't even send a representative. Knowing there would be repercussions if he approved the variance over the objections of the NWDA, the hearing officer called a recess and phoned the neighborhood association office. Oh, yes, the hearing officer was told, we have a deal. Give him

the variance. By now, the story has been told so many times – often by George Sheldon – it has taken on the character of fable. Nevertheless, it represents the status that the neighborhood association had achieved.

What the citizens of the NWDA exerted was a kind of cultural power, produced, in part, simply by being there (even when they weren't there). It is meant as something of a joke when people say that "eighty-five percent of success in life is just showing up." Yet there is always some truth behind any viable joke. Being a participant, having "a seat at the table," being a "player," all imply that being present in any political conversation inevitably changes the character of that conversation. At a minimum, it means that the other participants can't possibly "talk behind your back." Beyond that, being in attendance means both being a witness and bearing witness, listening or speaking, asking questions, and expressing opinions. The people of the NWDA were not only present, but they were organized, had a name, and a consistent "line" or message. Their presence helped transform the social contexts in which decisions were made about their neighborhood. Many public hearings are opened and closed without comment. Many public votes taken without discussion. But once someone with a contrary interest shows up, everything changes. After a while, if you aren't there, they wonder why. Thus, they demonstrated, that power is always at least two-way.

It must also be acknowledged that the citizen activists of the Northwest District inhabited and adapted cultural forms with which they were intimately familiar. As mainly middle class and professional people, they were well-versed in the protocols of the business meeting, official correspondence, public processes, policy language, and bureaucratic procedure. These forms had been used to impose a particular planning orthodoxy on the neighborhood. But they also provided resources for residents to oppose the same orthodoxy, and propose an alternative. With great skill and notable perseverance, Thelin, Sheldon, Waehrer, Beeman, and many others turned these forms to their own ends. But they also changed them in the process.

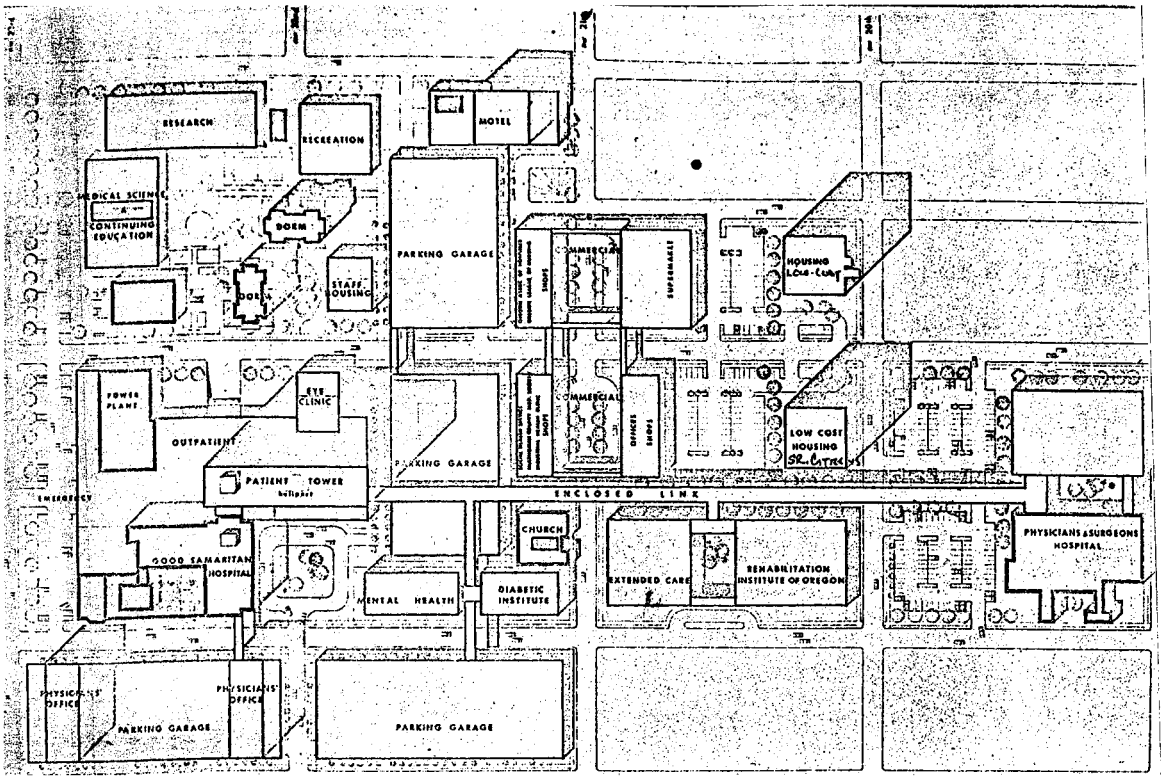


Figure 6.1 An early proposal for the Good Samaritan Hospital and Medical Center urban renewal plan would have consumed 15 blocks and included no fewer than four parking garages. Portland Development Commission.

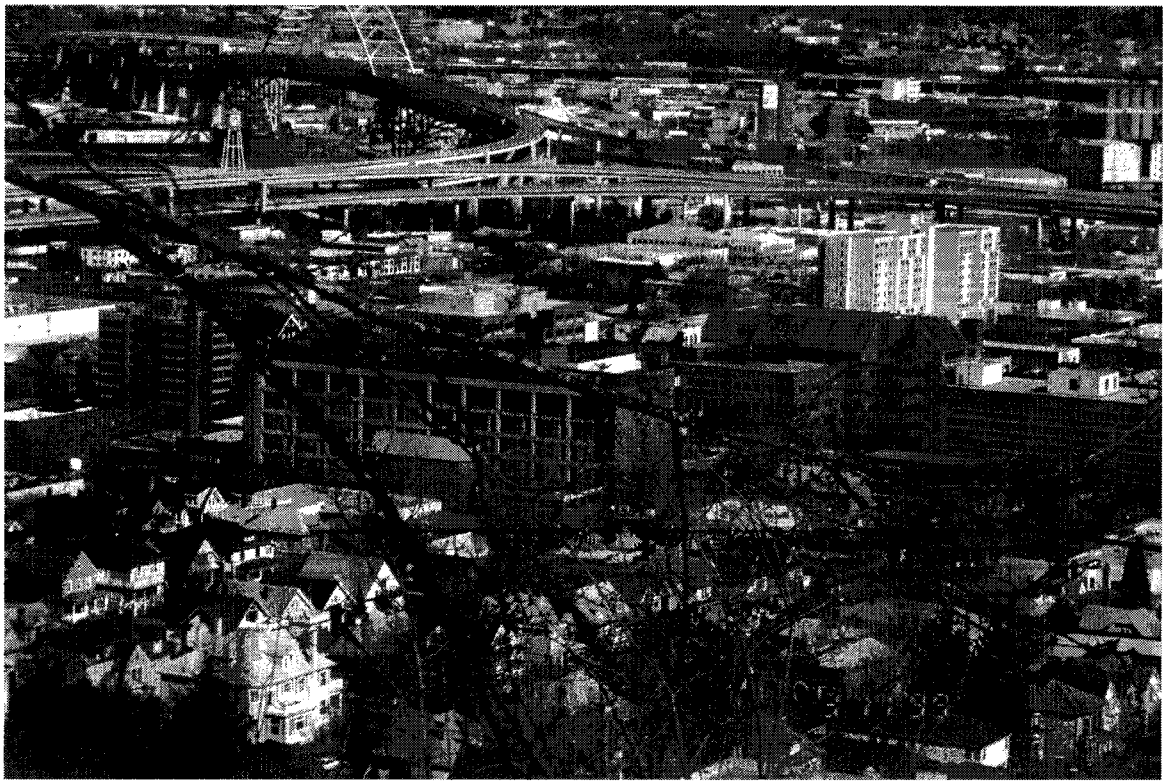


Figure 6.2 Even without the urban renewal plan, Good Sam has grown, and is a major element of life Northwest. See the I-405 interchange and Fremont Bridge in the background. Photo by the author.

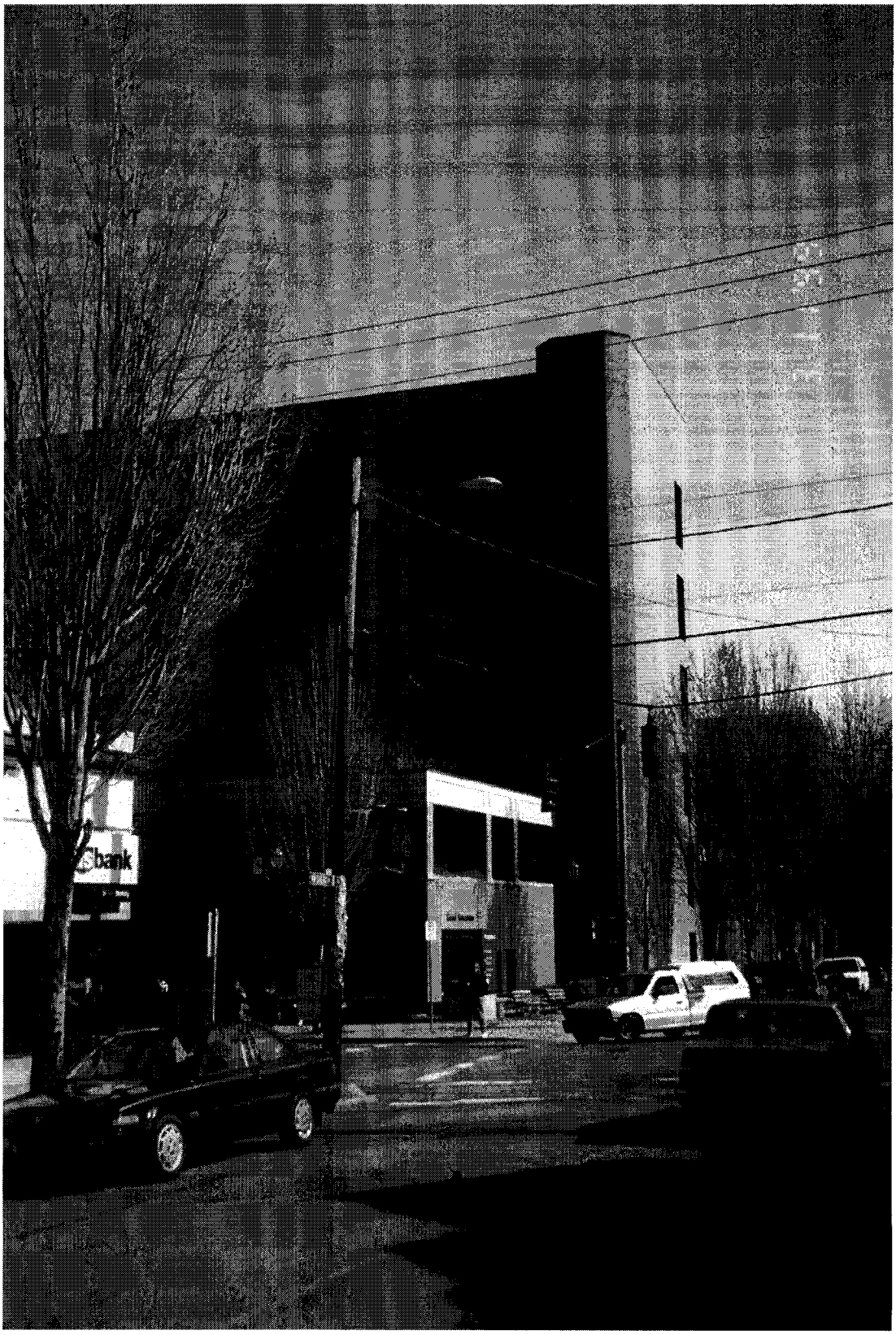


Figure 6.3 Good Sam is located at one of the crossroads of Northwest – NW 23rd Avenue and NW Lovejoy Street. Photo by the author.

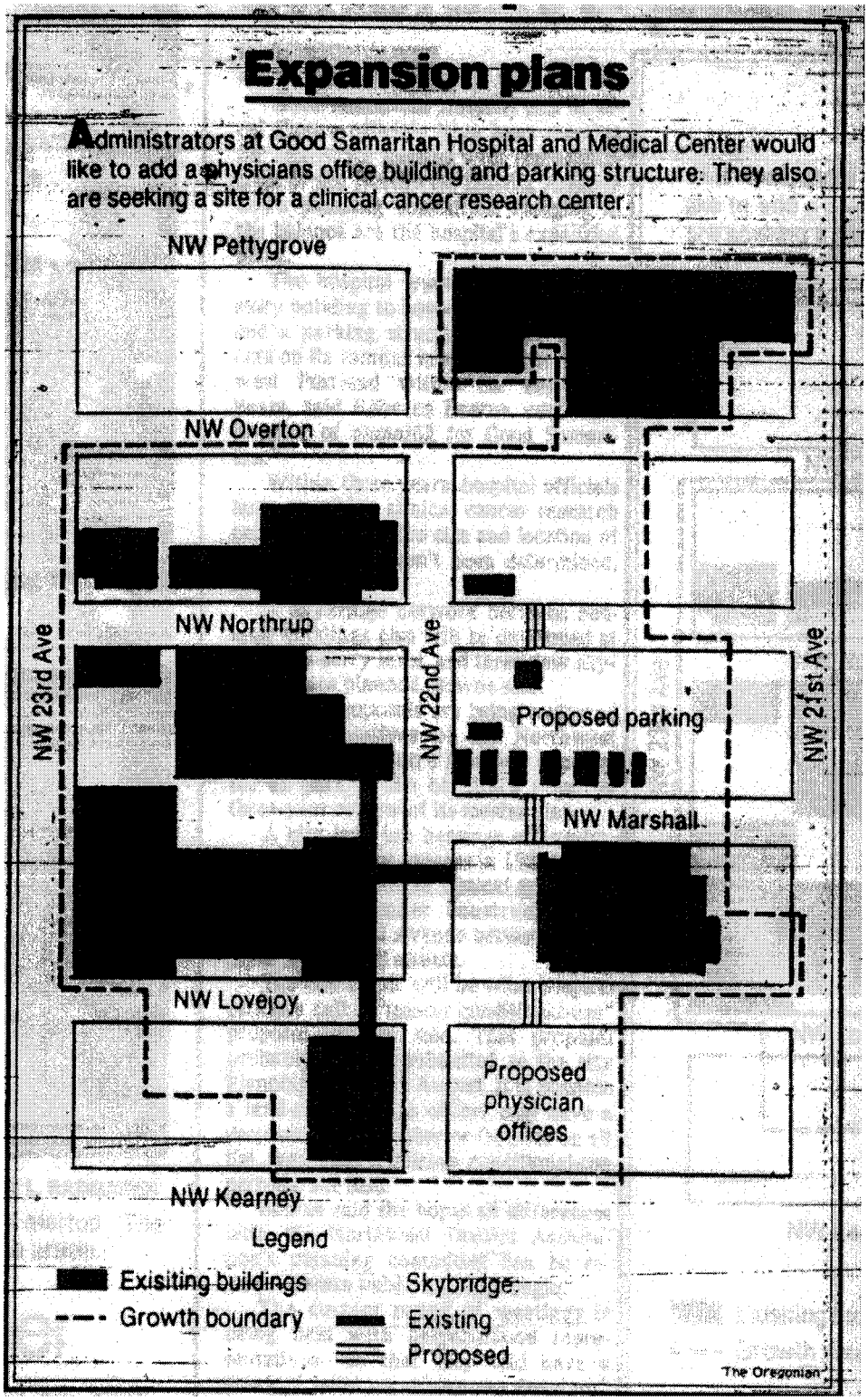


Figure 6.4 By 1984 Good Samaritan and the NWDA had negotiated a "growth boundary" that included territory half the size of the original urban renewal plan. *The Oregonian.*

Notes to Chapter 6.

[1] Abbott, Carl. 1983. *Portland: Planning Politics and Growth in a Twentieth Century City.* Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press. pp. 186-202.

[2] Interview with George "Bing" Sheldon.

[3] *Willamette Bridge,* March 25-31, 1971, Stanley Parr Archives and Records Center (SPARC): Neighborhood Planning, Northwest District: [7706-10 Box 10 of 11, 10/4, 09-04-29]. Four-page tabloid newspaper. No publisher information.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Ibid.

[8] *Willamette Bridge,* May 20-26, 1971, SPARC: Neighborhood Planning, Northwest District: [7706-10 Box 10 of 11, 10/4, 09-04-29]. Four-page tabloid newspaper. No publisher information.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Northwest District Association, Draft Agenda, April 13, 1971. [NWDA files].

[11] This includes most of the interviews done with key NWDA people.

[12] Stanley Pansky, Skidmore Owings and Merrill to Chester Stocks, Good Samaritan Hospital. March 25, 1971 re: "Good Samaritan Hospital & Medical Center Redevelopment." [NWDA files].

[13] Interview with Mayor Vera Katz, Portland City Hall, November 2001.

[14] Stanley Pansky, Skidmore Owings and Merrill to Chester Stocks, Good Samaritan Hospital. April 21, 1971 [NWDA files].

[15] Ibid.

[16] NWDA. "Minutes of joint meeting of boards of Northwest District Development Association and Good Samaritan Hospital and Medical Center," Susan Rathbun, Secretary, May 24, 1971; Good Samaritan Hospital. "Agenda: Good Samaritan Hospital & Medical Center – Northwest Development Association" [sic] May 24, 1971, [both NWDA files].

[17] Fred Wessinger, Good Samaritan Hospital Board of Directors, to Portland Mayor Terry Schrunk, May 11, 1971, [NWDA files].

[18] Good Samaritan Hospital, May 5, 1971, "Goals for Northwest Portland: A statement by the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees, Good Samaritan Hospital and Medical Center." [NWDA files].

[19] NWDA, Minutes, May 24, 1971. [NWDA files].

[20] Good Samaritan Hospital, May 20, 1971, "Suggested Policy Positions Regarding Planning for Northwest Portland." [NWDA files].

[21] NWDA, Minutes, May 24, 1971. [NWDA files].

[22] Ibid.

[23] NWDA, "News of the Association," June 1971, SPARC: Neighborhood Planning, Northwest District, [7706-10, Box 9/11, 9/43, 9-04-28].

[24] Portland City Planning Commission, "Northwest Comprehensive Plan: Progress Report," July 8, 1971, SPARC: Neighborhood Planning 1960-1977, [7706-10, Box 9 of 11, 9/4, 09-04-28].

[25] Chester Stocks, Good Samaritan Hospital to John Perry, Portland City Planning Commission, July 21, 1971 SPARC: Bureau of Planning, Northwest District, July-September 1971, [7602-17, 8/39, 08-04-28].

[26] Chester Stocks, Good Samaritan Hospital to Lloyd Keefe, Portland Director of Planning, August 11, 1971, SPARC: Bureau of Planning, Northwest District, July-September 1971, [7602-17, 8/39, 08-04-28].

[27] Ogden Beeman, NWDA, to Fred Wessinger, Good Samaritan Hospital, September 16, 1971, [NWDA papers].

[28] Ibid.

[29] Good Samaritan Hospital, May 5, 1971, "Good Samaritan Hospital & Medical Center: Long Range Recommendations for Community Development Strategy," [NWDA files].

[30] Good Samaritan Hospital, "The Interaction Between a Hospital and Its Neighborhood," May 22, 1971, with a hand-written note that says "Talk to Gen. Med. Staff." [NWDA Files].

[31] Ibid.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Ibid.

[34] "Consultation Corner," newsletter of the American Society for Hospital Public Relations Directors of the American Hospital Association, December 1971, with memorandum, James Burr Miller Sr. to Department Heads, December 8, 1971. [NWDA files].

[35] "In view of the interest of the hospital in functioning in a stable community," Robert A. Leedy, attorney for the Episcopal Diocese, wrote to Chester Stocks, "it would appear to me that this is a proper expenditure provided that it is specifically designated for the intended use and that reasonable assurances are provided that they will not be diverted to other uses." Letter from Leedy to Stocks, December 17, 1971, [NWDA files].

[36] *The Press* (City NW edition) May 10, 1972, "Northwest makes room for Good Samaritan," [NWDA files]. The photocopied clipping carries on the reverse a handscrawled note, perhaps from Pedersen ally Spencer Meighan saying "it sure gives the hospital support – I hope that it deserves it and only time will tell – but if the (illegible) is taken – wow!".

[37] Pedersen produced a page or two of single-spaced notes for each of the interviews on various dates in June 1972. [NWDA files].

[38] Mary Pedersen interviews with Spence Meighan, June 6, 1972 and Frederick Torp, June 20, 1972, [NWDA files].

[39] Mary Pedersen interviews with Dr. William Smith, June 28, 1972, and Dr. John Partridge, June 23, 1972, [NWDA Files].

[40] Mary Pedersen interview with Dr. Harry Lee, June 21, 1972, [NWDA files].

[41] Mary Pedersen interview with Dr. Nathan Shlim, June 9, 1972, and Smith interview, [NWDA files].

[42] Mary Pedersen interviews with Dr. Dow, June 29, 1972, and Chester Stocks, July 6, 1972, [NWDA files].

[43] Stocks interview, [NWDA files].

[44] Smith interview, [NWDA files].

[45] Mary Pedersen interview with Dr. McKirdie, June 14, 1972, [NWDA files].

[46] Dr. Partridge interview, [NWDA files].

[47] Mary Pedersen interview with Ron Handel, June 19, 1972, [NWDA files].

[48] Mary Pedersen interview with Stephen Gilley, June 22, 1972, [NWDA files].

[49] McKirdie interview, [NWDA files].

[50] Dow interview, [NWDA files].

[51] Torp interview, [NWDA files].

[52] Lee interview, [NWDA files].

[53] Mary Pedersen interview with Dr. Jerome Goldman, June 13, 1972, [NWDA files].

[54] Gilley interview, [NWDA files].

[55] Torp, Handel, McKirdie, Goldman, and Lee interviews, [NWDA files].

[56] Stocks, Torp, and Rabiner interviews, and Mary Pedersen interview with Dr. Wilbur Larson, June 13, 1972, [NWDA files].

[57] Stocks, Meighan, Dow interviews, [NWDA files].

[58] Gilley, Torp, Dow, McKirdie, Handel interviews, [NWDA files].
[59] Mary Pedersen interview with Fred Wessinger, June 13, 1972, [NWDA files].

[60] Mary Pedersen interview with Thaddeus Bruno, June 20, 1972, [NWDA files].

[61] Mary K. Pedersen, handwritten draft report, n.d., [NWDA files].

[62] Ibid.

[63] Ibid.

[64] Sherry Arnstein, 1969. "Ladder of Citizen Participation," *Journal of the American Institute of Planners*, 35: 216-224.

[65] Pedersen, n.d., [NWDA files].

[66] Ibid.

[67] Informal meeting notes, Good Samaritan Hospital and Portland City Planning Commission, November 9, 1971, [SPARC: Neighborhood Planning, Northwest District, 7706-10, Box 9 of 11, 9/43, 09-04-28].

[68] Ibid.

[69] Ibid.

[70] Ibid.

[71] NWDA, Meeting notice and newsletter, for meeting of December 21, 1971. SPARC: Neighborhood Planning, Northwest District, [7706-10, Box 9 of 11, 9/43, 09-04-28].

[72] Lucian Himes, NWDA, to Columbia Region Association of Governments, March 29, 1971, SPARC: Bureau of Planning, Northwest District, January-June 1971, [7602-17, 8/38, 09-04-28].

[73] NWDA, "Northwest District Association Annual Membership Meeting Agenda" May 21, 1974, and "Northwest District Association Annual Report for 1973-1974," [NWDA files].

[74] Ibid.

[75] Ibid.

Chapter 7. The Interstate Highway in Northwest

It did not immediately dawn on the citizens of the Northwest District that they might successfully oppose an established plan to build a spur of an Interstate Highway through the edge of their neighborhood. For nearly a year after the founding of the NWDA it was their policy to accept the highway route in the Thurman-Vaughn "corridor" and direct their planning efforts to mitigating its worst impacts on the neighborhood. In 1971, however, they would reverse that policy, thanks to a push from an adjacent neighborhood association, legal action made possible by the advent of federal environmental impact statement requirements, and not insignificantly, the policy impulses organized by their own planning process.

For many of the same reasons that the north end of the neighborhood had been a target for urban renewal, the parallel streets of Thurman, Upshur, and Vaughn were a civil engineer's obvious path of least resistance for a highway alignment. The old bungalows, run-down little apartment buildings, and marginal storefront businesses seemed perfectly expendable compared to the active factories and warehouses along other potential routes for the designated I-505 "Industrial Freeway."

The push for construction of this little stub of highway came as a result of a series of other new highway projects, including the West Hills Freeway, the Stadium Freeway, and the new high-speed, high-level Fremont Bridge across the Willamette, in short, the entire I-405 inner loop around (and partly through) downtown Portland. With both the Stadium Freeway and the Fremont Bridge expected to open in the early 1970s, it seemed imperative to the highway planners that a spur be built to serve the Guilds Lake and Northwest Industrial areas just north of the residential core of Northwest District. Until that happened, the stumps of off ramps from I-405 would hang menacingly above the northeast corner of the neighborhood.

The initial plan for connecting 1-405 to the industrial area involved creation of a "couplet" of Thurman and Upshur each converted to one-way traffic and scoured of on-street parking to promote the free-flow of automobiles and trucks.[1] The Oregon State Highway Division held a public hearing on the proposed route in January 1964 and the Portland City Council passed a resolution in support of the Upshur route a full year later. In 1968, however, the Federal Highway Administration approved the request of the OSHD to replace the proposed couplet with a freeway spur. At the same time, they accepted the 1964 hearing as adequate to cover the requirement for public review of the proposal without a new "corridor hearing."[2]

Two years later the Portland City Planning Commission issued its study of the adopted route, entitled "Multiple Use and Joint Development of the I-405, I-505 Freeway Corridor." Planning director Lloyd T. Keefe announced the proposals contained in the study as "a new approach to highway planning and development... the first of its kind in Oregon."[3] The report acknowledged that $50 billion invested in 40,000 miles of the Interstate Highway System had generated "growing criticism by the general public" which, in turn, had "prompted freeway planners and builders to reconsider their approach to transportation planning." The negative impacts of urban highways were so serious that a "total comprehensive freeway corridor planning," was required that "related to the physical, social, and economic needs of these communities."[4]

What they proposed, as shown in an artist's conception, was a vision of a highway swaddled in sylvan beauty, cut below grade for seven blocks, with a "complete open space and pedestrianways system along the south side" of the freeway, new multi-family housing to "replace existing deteriorated dwellings," and a local shopping center at NW 23rd and Thurman. Federal regulations no longer limited property acquisition to land "specifically required for the safety, maintenance, and operations of the freeway," but allowed them to create the kind of "buffer" that they hoped the freeway would provide between industrial and residential areas. There was an off-ramp yet to be located somewhere between NW 21st and NW 24th. The study concluded that the economic potential for joint development on top of the freeway was not great enough to justify the cost of constructing a basic platform over the cut. Yet the report was able to stipulate that the "representatives of the Residential District and representatives of the Industrial District" had both endorsed the depressed alignment of the highway along NW Upshur Street.[5]

Indeed, as the NWDA planning committee worked to get organized in late 1970, their support for "multiple use and joint development" along a depressed Upshur alignment seemed perfectly uncontroversial.[6] Later that same winter, members of the NWDA were still talking about measures for mitigating the impact of a highway along the Upshur route. Ogden Beeman sent a letter to the City Council stipulating that support from the neighborhood association for the approved route depended upon the highway being carried in a cut below-grade, a guarantee that any residents displaced have assistance with relocation, that relocation options be provided in Northwest for those who wanted to stay in the neighborhood, and that no off ramps be located so as to allow traffic to flow directly south from the freeway. There was work being done "on the legal aspects of enforcing re-location housing in the Northwest," Edgar Waehrer remarked, but still in response to the Upshur route as *fait accomplis*.[7]

Protecting the neighborhood from the impact of traffic going to and from potential I-505 on and off ramps would not be easy. John Perry and his staff prepared a map for the NWDA

planning committee that detailed potential barriers, bottlenecks, and conflicts street by street throughout the neighborhood. The map was ostensibly prepared to point out "north-south streets which might be used with the least amount of upset to the area," but the overall impression it gave was just the opposite – a thicket of notes and numbers documenting all the reasons that through traffic couldn't be accommodated.[8]

NW 25th Avenue, Perry's map explained, "carries as much traffic as it can being a neighborhood street" but it is also in "conflict with residential, school and playground." "Access is restricted" at three different spots on NW 24th, in "conflict with on-street industrial use" on the far side of Vaughn, and "narrow pavement one-way north" at the other end. In between there is "conflict with residential (24th presently signed to discourage through traffic)." NW 23rd Avenue "has highest vehicle to street condition, rated first for hazards," and a "conflict with high-pedestrian commercial." The list goes on: street vacations, freeway interruptions, "weak connections." The "couplet" along NW 18th and 19th would probably remain a state highway and "accidents on couplets are very low." "Maybe NW 14th" – on the other side of Stadium Freeway from the neighborhood – "might take some of the commercial traffic." But beyond that, the ability of the neighborhood to absorb additional traffic was severely constrained. The members of the committee responded to Perry's intuitive and politically-sensitive observations with a request for more data – just like planners. They might have agreed with the analysis, but they wanted it to be technically stronger.[9]

At the same meeting, the NWDA planning committee received a visit from representatives of the Willamette Heights Neighborhood Association, Morton Paglin and Jim Stroup. They presented their proposal for an alternative to the approved Upshur route. While the depressed alignment of the highway along the edge of the Northwest District seemed acceptable to residents there, the proposed highway would have quite a different impact on people in Willamette Heights, uphill and just to the west. Beyond NW 29th Avenue the highway would rise from its cut into an elevated structure. As such, the highway would be highly visible – and audible – to residents on the hillside. Instead of the highway, they suggested multiple routes leading from the I-405 off ramps, including a couplet of Vaughn and Upshur and other city street connections into the heart of the industrial district. Such a design "would disperse traffic more easily through the area." In any event, the Planning Commission's multiple use study did not provide "the best possible solution," and "more work should be done on alternate plans with more information on the economic and social impact."

Paglin and Stroup argued that the Upshur route would cost the city a lot of money, even though as much as 92 percent might be paid for by the federal government; that it would reduce the tax base because of displacement; would cut income and employment for the same reason;

would take traffic around the industrial area when the real need was to take traffic to it; and, most important for them, "downgrade" Willamette Heights. Yet the planning staff and the NWDA reps tried to rebut. David Yaden argued that "there (was) already a human barrier in the area because the people know that the area will soon be industrial and they will have to move," (even though the emerging Northwest District plan would be aimed to reverse this trend). The couplet, Yaden added, would produce stop-and-go traffic which would produce "a greater noise and pollution factor than would a freeway." Waehrer underlined the fact that NWDA planning committee accepted the highway route as a "given" and "the aim of the committee is to minimize the impact on the neighborhood." Nor did they question the assertion that the freeway would become a barrier between residential and industrial development. They were more worried about making sure that the highway department did its duty in terms of housing relocation. Lu Himes concluded by saying the Willamette Heights proposal was "an alternative which would not change anything or provide any benefits to the area. Whereas the NWDDA is trying to produce a plan which will handle some of the problems of the area such as relocation housing, bus and transportation improvements."[10]

Yaden was the author of a staff report prepared in cooperation with the NWDA and based in part on an extensive survey of residents in the Upshur corridor. This "neighborhood of necessity," Yaden wrote, "is a mixed blessing." The residents suffered from living in deteriorated housing near an industrial district. "At the same time, the neighborhood has high utility for its residents, primarily low rents, proximity to work and shopping, and convenient public transportation." The residents were divided between the elderly and the young, and nearly half living in single-person households. Nevertheless, many of the longer-term residents had "strong emotional attachments," to the neighborhood, "and a strong sense of community." The challenge, the report asserted, was "to preserve this functional community." But its recommendation, almost unaccountably, was to "preserve" that community by moving it.[11]

"The conclusion flows from the survey with great force," Yaden wrote, "that the proposed depressed freeway (I-505) can lead to a creative and stable reconstruction of a neighborhood seemingly fated for industrial development." If freeway design and construction were to proceed as usual, he predicted, "the sweep of industry toward the south will only be hastened, as it will easily 'jump' the concrete freeway." Under the multiple use and joint development concept, however, an effective barrier – a firewall perhaps – might be constructed. "In short, housing and commercial development, and green space on the south side of the corridor must create a wholesome and attractive living environment, primarily for the low income, if the northern Northwest and perhaps the entire Northwest community is to be saved as a residential area."[12]

At the corridor hearing held March 10, 1971, the NWDA promoted their position in favor of the Upshur route (with the same stipulations noted above).[13] But the Willamette Heights residents went in with leaflets blazing. "Have any alternate transportation studies been made to find out if their might be a better system and a better location?" they asked on a broadsheet. Had anyone studied the possibility that industrial encroachment might be inhibited by rezoning? And did anyone realize that new federal regulations required the highway planners to look more deeply into these and other questions? The newly mandated environmental impact statement "is the ONLY chance our area has to stop the freeway: it is a powerful tool that gives us a tremendous advantage IF THE PEOPLE WILL SUPPORT THE USE OF THESE GUIDELINES!" They urged everyone to send telegrams to Secretary of Transportation John A. Volpe, one dollar for fifteen words: "Do not support Portland Oregon I-505 freeway proposal. Demand impact study per federal guidelines."[14]

As events that year unfolded, and as the NWDA proceeded with its neighborhood plan, the association reworked its policy on the freeway. The emerging policy language in its plan, emphasizing balanced transportation modes in support of neighborhood livability, was increasingly at odds with the car-moving goal of the freeway. Plan participants began to question whether the OSHD would actually carry out measures to mitigate the impacts of the freeway on the neighborhood. The association also received legal advice that recently enacted federal environmental regulations did, indeed, require that a full environmental impact study of alternative routes be conducted. One attorney told them "the best course of action would be for the NWDA (and) WHNA to sue the State Highway Commission and Federal Highway Administration in a class action (on behalf of the citizens of the Northwest area) in Federal Court seeking an injunction against granting of any federal highway funds to the state until all environmental guidelines are met."[15]

By late summer, the Northwest District Association had joined the Willamette Heights Neighborhood Association in demanding the I-505 project be postponed until a full study of the alternatives could be conducted. Both neighborhood associations demanded a "location and design of the transportation system to be selected not only with a view toward moving traffic, but with the broader view of preserving the qualities and amenities of the affected neighborhoods." The NWDA held that the OSHD had failed to proceed on the four-point program of multiple use, housing replacement, relocation, and traffic routing to protect the neighborhood. The WHNA charged they had failed to study alternatives, failed to establish liaison with affected communities, purchased right of way prematurely, and failed to hold a proper "corridor hearing." The 1964 hearing designated a corridor but not for a freeway, they said. The March 10, 1971 hearing was about a freeway corridor but did not include consideration of alternative corridors. Neither

fulfilled the requirement, nor had any impact statement at all been done. These were not mere procedural errors, they emphasized. They went to the heart of the willingness of highway planners "to adequately investigate the social environmental impacts of these facilities." To achieve those ends, the neighbors would, indeed, go to court.[16]

WHNA and NWDA were joined in the suit by the Oregon Environmental Council, a handful of small business owners, and a similar handful of individual residents "on behalf of themselves and all other persons similarly situated." They asked U.S. District Court Judge Alfred T. Goodwin, to compel OSHD compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) by conducting the requisite environmental review and holding public hearings on both corridor location and design. Yet it was not NEPA that saved the day for the plaintiffs. Rather, Goodwin held, it was the Department of Transportation's own recently revised regulations that required both a public hearing on any design, as well as a new hearing on the location. He rejected the claims by state and federal highway officials that the 1964 corridor hearing satisfied those regulations. And since they were taking two steps backward in the process, the requirements of NEPA now applied, too. Given all the planning data on alternatives that must have been already compiled, Goodwin concluded, a draft environmental impact statement could be prepared in a month – due January 7, 1972.[17]

Although the leadership of the NWDA had been on the other side of the issue less than a year previously, they were still able to crow about the results. "As many of you know," George Sheldon wrote in his year-end reflection in the association newsletter, "the decision of the proposed I-505 Freeway was recently made public by the Federal Court. The effect of the judge's ruling is a moral victory for the neighborhood groups and individuals who took the case to court. The way is now clear to be part of the process that finally selects the best solution to serving the needs of Northwest Portland."[18]

The Oregon State Highway Division met its court-imposed post-holiday deadline for releasing an environmental impact statement, but even by the standards of the newborn NEPA process, the result was noticeably cursory. Including maps and photographs, the double-spaced report consumed only 37 pages. It purported to examine four alternative routes: one traveling 2.7 miles along NW Yeon Street and tentatively priced at $95 million; a second that would connect I-405 to a revised street network – similar to the previously suggested couplet solution; a third, shorter route, using either NW Nicolai or NW Industrial Streets for $29 million and $38 million, respectively; the NW Upshur route, implausibly estimated at $27 million given the combination of depressed and elevated alignments involved; and a "do nothing" alternative, rhetorically forbidding and rejected almost out of hand by the report.[19]

Nevertheless, the report was a clear statement of official views on I-505, concluding that a new freeway link between I-505 and St. Helens Road (U.S. Route 30) would create several positive impacts: "a general increase in land values in Northwest Portland; the reduction of auto, truck, rail and pedestrian conflicts; and the reduction of traffic congestion on surface streets." Acknowledging *sotto voce* that the highway would also cause "changes in location and degree of noise levels," as well as "increased traffic density within the freeway corridor," and require "the relocation of individuals and commercial/ industrial entities," they presented the choice as simple. Whatever the potential impacts might be, they could do something, or they could do nothing. And for the OSHD, doing something meant building a highway.[20]

From the perspective of the traffic engineers, the need for a highway was indisputable, although they provided little in the way of data to support this conclusion. Traffic congestion in Northwest was already "intolerable" during morning and evening rush hour. Trucks loading and unloading blocked streets. Railroad tracks and traffic arterials conflicted. The small-block platting of Northwest created a large number of intersections, and therefore friction for traffic when stopping and turning. Although it had nothing directly to do with transportation, they were moved to mention the inconsistency of "old apartment houses... surrounded by industrial structures of the lowest quality" and "modern industrial plants ... located alongside deteriorating residential units." Once I-405 and the Fremont Bridge were opened, "traffic is expected to increase substantially on U.S. 30 and Vaughn Street will be unable to handle this traffic volume."[21]

Much of the statement simply reiterated material lifted from other reports, including the Planning Commission's multiple use study, the NWDA "Interim Reports," and even the NWDA's citizen survey. State highway officials also believed that the community encompassing the Upshur corridor was a "mixed blessing." Likewise, they concluded that housing in the corridor was "deteriorating and generally beyond rehabilitation," and a well-located highway could provide a desired "buffer." Other elements of the report relied on readily available, though limited, scientific data. The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality had been monitoring air quality on West Burnside Street downtown since 1966 during which time readings for carbon dioxide persistently exceeded federal standards. Yet, they could project carbon dioxide levels would decline by 1990; although traffic was expected to triple, pollution control devices were expected to slash carbon dioxide emissions by 86 percent.[22]

The main problem with the draft environmental impact statement, however, was that it did little to differentiate the potential impacts of the various alternatives in a way that allowed them to be compared with one another. The only specific information provided on impacts created by each alternative was a total of the number of residential, commercial and industrial

structures that would need to be relocated for that alternative to be constructed. Otherwise, the report noted only that the Yeon Street alternative was relatively very expensive and would fail to create the kind of buffer or boundary to industrial encroachment they understood the neighborhood desired, and that the couplet and "do-nothing" alternatives would exacerbate traffic congestion to the point that it "would eventually deteriorate the economic and residential climate of the region."[23]

One of the most extensive passages in the statement – three and a half pages – was also the most mystifying. It was devoted to the analysis of noise impacts. But the description of methodology used was confusing and incomplete. They identified three sites at which ambient readings were taken and stated that "post freeway noise levels at the subject sites were calculated from mathematical traffic noise models," but it seems there was only one scenario tested. Was it the Upshur corridor? Could it have been some kind of generic freeway? The statement didn't say. There was no comparison at all of potential noise impacts between the Yeon Street route, the Upshur route, or any of the others. Nevertheless, the authors found it possible to predict there would be no impact in Willamette Heights or at 23rd and Savier in the heart of residential Northwest. It also speculated that "the removal of much of the heavy truck traffic from Vaughn and Thurman Streets to the freeway could lower community ambient noise levels."[24]

Within the month, the now-unified opponents of the freeway launched a withering rebuttal of the OSHD environmental impact statement, charging that the basic research design underlying the statement was fundamentally flawed; that it failed to describe fully the actual environmental impact of the proposed project; that it did not provide information to allow clear consideration of the alternatives proposed; and that it did not fully consider the "long-term productivity" of the facility as required by regulation. The "critique" was nearly as lengthy as the original impact statement yet seemed more rigorous. The EIS was a relatively new form for highway planners and presumably they were still learning how to do them. But the residents learned quickly enough how to take one apart. Perhaps OSHD could be excused for producing this report. After all, they had only four weeks in which to do it – and over the Christmas holiday at that. No pardon was forthcoming from the opponents of the highway.

Typically, they used the bureaucrats' own words against the bureaucracy. They found Federal Highway Administration Policy and Planning Memorandum 90-1, which required that state highway departments use "a systematic interdisciplinary approach which will insure the integrated use of the natural and social sciences and the environmental design arts in planning and decision making which may have an impact on man's environment." Surely, they had not done that, the residents said.[25]

Recently adopted policy emphasized the *process* by which highway planning and design decisions were made. Procedural elements that would improve decision making included not only careful science but robust public participation. They found "A Statement on National Transportation Policy" and quoted that, too: "The social and environmental fruits of past transportation projects carried out according to a centrally directed design with little or no effort to secure advice or consent of those affected, have frequently been bitter," the message said. "Maximum public participation in the process itself," was a necessary remedy to such errors. Yet the process followed by state highway planners had not included "official liaison with representative neighborhood groups," nor had such groups been included in "the planning, policy, and decision making structure" for either I-405 or I-505 "as outlined in PPM 20-5, 20-8, and 90-1," nor had they "identified the relevant goals and objectives of all the constituent neighborhood groups within the affected communities," for inclusion in the decision making process. Overall, OSHD hadn't demonstrated any interest in public involvement "except the type of involvement that would not alter or change preconceived ideas and plans that have been in the hopper for many years." The highway opponents waggled the regulations in official faces at every possible opportunity.[26]

The freeway opponents also faulted state highway planners for failing to consult with even their own bureaucratic brethren "that have special expertise." Much of the critique was a peppery string of questions along this line: "Have economists, sociologists, pollution control authorities, urban planners and other experts been consulted?" Had they ever talked to anyone who had a different perspective on these matters than themselves? "Were the findings of such consultation, if any occurred, coordinated in a fashion that could be described as interdisciplinary?" Where in the plan did they describe any of the local, city-wide, or regional planning that might have an impact? Where was the description of basic factors such as zoning? What were the basic transportation needs of Northwest District and "how the proposed freeway fits into an overall plan for meeting these needs?" The statement didn't even include such planning basics as a population projection. Nor did it even pretend to consider what might happen if industry migrated out of the neighborhood or Willamette River port facilities were relocated. What would the transportation needs be then?[27]

The critique also zeroed in on the most fundamental flaw of the statement. It did not, they wrote, "provide sufficient depth or documentation to allow a reviewing agency to make an independent judgment regarding the project. Further, in many parts of the discussion, the reviewer is not informed of the methodology employed in gathering information. Likewise, the source of much of the information is not identified." Again, the critique quotes chapter and verse, in this case from Environmental Protection Agency regulations. These required that the EIS make

it possible for reviewers to "independently judge if the environmental impact results from trying to gain maximum economic return or are inherent to the whole project," and provide "sufficient analysis of such alternatives and their costs and impact on the environment... in order not to foreclose prematurely options which might have less detrimental affects."[28]

Ultimately, they charged, "the Highway Department has failed to establish that the proposed project is needed." They continued:

> Where is the data on traffic flow and road capacity to justify the conclusion that rush hour traffic is 'intolerable?' Just what does the term 'intolerable mean in this case? To what extent is traffic delayed? How many people are affected by any such delays? Are these delays of enough significance to justify construction of a freeway that will have major environmental consequences?

The neighborhood residents insisted that highway officials "should have... conducted studies of alternate plans or transportation systems to the currently proposed I-505 Freeway corridor between Thurman and Vaughn Streets (not simply studies of alternate freeway locations since this has not been established as relevant to the communities' goals and needs.)" They were quickly developing arguments that attacked highway planning orthodoxy from an unexpected angle. Highways had negative impacts, yes, but highways might also be inferior to other possible ways to meet demands for mobility in the city.[29]

Beyond that, the critique charged that OSHD had simply failed to touch all the bases of the EIS. The statement had identified the number of business establishments that would be displaced by construction, they said, but it had not considered how "traffic flow, parking, noise levels, air quality, access to various areas, number of people living in the area and a host of other factors" would impact small businesses. It had likewise failed to address the impact on secondary streets in the neighborhood. "Will the proposed freeway draw more traffic into the Northwest area, thereby increasing congestion?" The statement didn't say. Nor did it address fully the potential impact on property values. It did not address the impact of any highway alignment on that most elusive of qualities – "neighborhood character." The critique noted the claim that the highway would provide a protective buffer between industrial and residential neighborhoods, but contended that "the statement does not substantiate that the project would, in fact, function as a buffer without the support of zoning regulations." The residents' critique similarly faulted the EIS for its failure to fully consider relocation arrangements, impact on air quality, noise, visual and aesthetic values, parks, public safety, geology, climate, and so on.[30]

Finally, the critique hammered home the complaint that the environmental impact statement as submitted by OSHD failed to do the one thing that any such statement must do,

namely allow the comparison of multiple alternatives across a range of potential impacts. "In light of these requirements, the statement's treatment of alternatives is not satisfactory," they railed:

> The statement does not describe the differing impact of the proposed alternates relating to such considerations as noise and air pollution, visual impact, social and economic impact, and effect on neighborhood park areas. Will the alternate routes that are less direct result in significantly greater amounts of air pollution? Will alternate routes that locate the freeway closer to residential areas greatly increase the risks to public health resulting from vehicle emissions? What will be the noise impact of the various alternate routes on residential and industrial areas? The statement indicates that a "great noise impact" can be expected in some areas, but does not differentiate between the impacts of the alternate routes. How will these various alternate routes affect the neighborhood character, commercial development, and long-term prospects for the Northwest area?"

The questioning goes on and on, stopped only by the conclusion that "the statement's discussion of alternates is simply inadequate to answer these and other related questions of much significance to the Northwest area."[31]

Seemingly oblivious to the gathering opposition in the neighborhood – or perhaps trying to preempt it – City Commissioner Lloyd Anderson offered a resolution to his colleagues to re-endorse the Upshur route regardless of the state's failure to fully study the alternatives. Anderson deserved high marks for frankness in a measure that began: "whereas the alternative corridors to the Upshur proposal should have been studied in comparable depth by the State Highway Division and the City but were not..."[32] But his argument, elaborated in a memo to his City Council Colleagues, had in it a number of fatal gaps. The draft environmental impact statement, now on the table, he wrote, "indicates that the adverse impact" on adjacent neighborhoods "is generally minor." Moreover, if they started a study of the alternative routes immediately, they could not possibly finish before the federal Interstate Highway program was scheduled to expire. But if they proceeded with the Upshur route they would not only get their highway money, but help in relocating people who would inevitably be displaced from the neighborhood in any case because of its continuing deterioration. Rather than focus on studying alternatives, he continued, they should focus their efforts on providing "new low-rent housing units equal in number to those removed" within the immediate neighborhood, and on making sure "land uses are developed on the south side of the corridors which will make it an effective barrier to further encroachment of industry." They wouldn't get money to do those things if they didn't build the highway. To make sure these things were accomplished, Anderson proposed creation of an "I-505 Impact Task Force," including representatives of the Northwest District. "If citizen participation is to be

meaningful," he added for good measure, "then those affected must be involved in the development of projects and not just belated reviews."[33]

The response by City Commissioner Neil Goldschmidt, soon to undertake his first run for Mayor of Portland, demonstrated that it might be better to present no argument at all than to offer an argument with holes in it. It was true that the Interstate Highway legislation was soon to expire, Goldschmidt allowed, but even a brief round of phone calls to federal sources confirmed that "the Interstate program itself is likely to be renewed in its present form." Besides, he suggested, the "availability of federal money at a given ratio (to state and local funds) should not be a basis for making route decisions," that would change the face of the city forever. As for the reliability of the conclusions of the EIS that adverse impacts from the Upshur route would be "generally minor," Goldschmidt noted that "it is agreed by all" that the environmental impact statement was inadequate. Even Judge Goodwin had called the report "slipshod." He also questioned the idea that the highway would form a "so-called buffer" between industrial and residential uses. "I believe that this misconceives the effect of freeways... Generally a freeway creates a 'vacuum' around it in which people spend as little time as possible... Instead of acting as a buffer, the freeway will predictably spread the blight further south." Likewise, he questioned the idea that the freeway would minimize traffic congestion; even highway engineers were coming to understand that new roads would bring new traffic. He concluded: "To argue that we should destroy Northwest Portland, as we know this freeway route can, because it is 'now or never' is spurious reasoning. If we mean business about stabilizing neighborhoods, then this route should not be approved."[34]

Planning Director Lloyd T. Keefe added his weight to the opposition to Upshur. He told a reporter that the Upshur corridor plan was "going to be seriously attacked and I don't know how we can defend it." So much information from the state was missing that "we have to just sit and guess." Even the pricetags for the various alternatives were just "horseback" estimates.[35]

The City Council convened the following day for a public hearing on the question of the I-505 corridor. Anderson, whose administrative portfolio gave him responsibility for the issue, intended that the Council take a position that it could take to the scheduled OSHD corridor hearing the following day. The Council heard from 21 different witnesses, including state and local highway planners, business people who supported the Upshur route, as well as all the familiar neighborhood representatives. They also spent a long time talking among themselves, at the end of which time it became clear to Anderson that he would not have support for the resolution he desired.[36]

After the last witness had testified, Mayor Schrunk asked "what is the pleasure of the Council?" At which time Anderson rambled through his arguments one last time. Despite some

suggestions to the contrary, he still thought they needed to build some kind of a freeway in Northwest. Continued access to the industrial area, and preservation of employment there, depended on a new highway. He repeated his concern that delaying a decision until a new alternatives study could be completed, given the possibility that federal funding formulas would be less generous in the future, meant that the freeway might never be built at all. Even with a new alternatives study, they would not know as much about the other corridors as they already knew about the Upshur route. If they went forward with the Upshur route they would at least know a lot about what they were doing, even if they didn't know much about what they were not doing. What should they say tomorrow at the state hearing? If they weren't ready to pick the Upshur route, perhaps they could at least say that "from the information we have now, (Upshur) looks like it will work." Or perhaps they could say that they wanted an alternatives study to be done within a year, and then decide. Or the Council could supplement a resolution with Anderson's suggestions about a task force on housing, relocation, and other issues.[37]

Perhaps a bit impatient at Anderson's soliloquy, Commissioner Frank Ivancie interrupted, "Mr. Mayor, I just wonder if the Commissioner has a recommendation." Understanding where the votes were, Anderson said he would like to support an alternatives study to be completed by January 1, 1973.

"Why don't you make a motion?" Ivancie suggested.

"Why don't we recess for five minutes and rewrite it?" Goldschmidt said.

Anderson agreed. A new resolution was drafted and discussed, including an amendment offered by Goldschmidt that the alternative that would become known as "Short Yeon" not be eliminated from consideration at the start. Then the resolution was passed, in proper Portland fashion, 5-0.[38]

The Oregon State Highway Department was required by the order of Judge Goodwin to go forward with the hearing scheduled for the following day. But given the action of the council the day before, the upshot of the hearing was assured. The state would conduct the full alternatives analysis and no corridor or route would be chosen any time soon. Nevertheless, 53 people, including Lloyd Anderson, took the time to testify. The hearing from the City Council meeting the day before was incorporated into the record. Another 169 people submitted handwritten cards – fully 96 of them in favor of the Upshur corridor – describing their opinion on the matter. Company and union representatives at Northwest industrial facilities submitted nearly 2,000 signatures on petitions either endorsing the Upshur corridor, opposing the Yeon corridor, or both. For all the concerted effort by NWDA and WHNA, there was no community consensus about the freeway.[39]

What was remarkable about this hearing, and many other public hearings held in Portland over the years, was that it wasn't just about a show of force. All sides in any controversy like to call out their troops whenever a public debate is staged. The battle lines here were generally defined by advocates of the neighborhood position against the Upshur route (and perhaps any highway) and business and labor interests whose establishments might be displaced or inconvenienced by one of the other corridors. But it was the richness and the depth of argumentation and counter-argumentation in this event that deserved recognition. Many speakers added to the criticism of the Environmental Impact Statement, yet some used it as evidence for their case anyway. Some attacked the notion of highway as buffer, others used it to justify their support of the Upshur route. They disagreed over the character of housing in the Upshur corridor and governmental promises of relocation assistance. They argued about the necessity for this freeway and the utility of freeways in general. They filed their claims of potential injury, individual or collective. Speakers on each side attempted to align their specific personal or corporate interests with some concept of the public interest. They submitted complaints about the process itself, including the location of the hearing. And, typical of public hearings, many speakers sought to establish for themselves some kind of special status to speak.

Claiming to represent groups larger than oneself was, perhaps, the simplest tack. Robert C. Blensly, spoke on behalf of the Columbia Region Association of Governments. Mrs. John Bentley (sic) represented the Chapman School Parent Teacher Association. Sam Oakland spoke for the Bicycle Lobby. Al Clark appeared for an advocacy group called Sensible Transportation Options for People (STOP). All of the major neighborhood associations were represented, as were business and industrial establishments to the north, recently organized as The I-505 Committee of the Concerned, with a series of spokesmen on behalf of more than 40 firms and their employees. Yet some of those who appeared made more pointed appeals for special status. Clifford B. Alterman, spoke on behalf of the Graphic Arts Center, representing 200 employees, an annual payroll of $2.5 million, and a newly constructed plant. Glenna Delaney presented herself as "a mother and a teacher" whose "primary concern is children." Joseph Erceg, perhaps annoyed or bored or intimidated by such claims to status made it simple: he was a homeowner "representing no one other than myself and my wife." Sometimes the claim was made on behalf of longevity of tenure. Paul Woelfel, had "lived there about 17 years" and "own my own home there." Others, such as Leslie Busch, spoke to their recent arrival in the neighborhood and their hopes for the future. Only a small minority seemed to feel it was enough just to give their name, as if there were some way to make a claim that would give what they had to say more force or more weight.

As is often the case, aggrieved citizens attacked officials not only the substance of the issue, but on a range of procedural and logistical issues. Most substantively, environmental

activists in attendance pointedly demanded to know if the OSHD planned to submit their plans for review by regional and state air quality authorities as required by a new implementation plan adopted by the Oregon State Environmental Quality Commission two and a half weeks before. Barbara Lucas, of the League of Women Voters of Portland, asked that "hearings on any proposal be held at an earlier time in the planning process so that the public can help shape plans rather than merely react to pre-formed proposals." Edd Crawford, of Friendly Houses, thanked OSHD, on the one hand, for providing mobile briefings on the corridor alternatives, but chastised them on the other hand for "the manner in which residents were indoctrinated as to the preferences that the Commission held." Finally, Crawford and others blasted state officials for holding the hearing at the Civic Auditorium downtown instead of a friendlier, more accessible place in the neighborhood. "Chapman School in the heart of the Northwest area would have been a more suitable place than the opulent setting of the auditorium," Vera Katz suggested. These critiques were strong evidence of the growing sophistication of citizens in engaging the public planning process.[40]

The Environmental Impact Statement was dead on arrival. Even the State Highway Administrator, George M. Baldwin, made little attempt to defend it. "It should be understood," he offered, "that we were allowed 24 days by the Court to prepare a statement that deserves a considerably longer time." Besides, it was "only a preliminary statement used primarily to invite comments." In that it had succeeded, he insisted. Still, opponents of the highway dumped on the EIS less than they might have. Vera Katz, still a private citizen, called it "incompetent" and "superficial, even though it is a draft," a "mockery of the National Environmental Act." Martin Davis, of the Oregon Environmental Council, said the draft statement amounted to "shooting from the hip." Clark, representing STOP, critiqued the draft item by item, and asked state officials for a new version "to portray a total picture of the effects on the Northwest area of all proposed corridors for I-505." Many mentioned the discredited EIS, but focused on other arguments. Still, none of this stopped proponents of the Upshur route from citing the impact statement as evidence that their preference was "the most favorable of the proposals submitted."[41]

At some level, public debates such as these are always about the quality of knowledge presented on behalf of one side or the other. When the issues are technical or claimed as the province of a particular profession, lay citizens are presumably at a disadvantage. Yet citizens quickly make up for such handicaps by mastering elements of the dominant discourses. All of the organizational representatives of the anti-freeway contingent easily penetrated the intricacies of the environmental impact statement, emerging air quality regulations, and noise monitoring. Businessmen spoke knowledgeably about their businesses. Residents addressed issues of local micro-climate, hydrology, unstable soils, and more. Other times citizens compensated by

acknowledging their lack of technical competence and claiming some privilege for common sense. "I am giving subjective reactions, as I am a social worker and not an engineer," Leslie Busch admitted. "Although I feel that there is a lot of human engineering involved in this situation." There is an odd point of rhetorical leverage available for persons who stake out a position against expertise. Sam Oakland found this moment in a recitation of a children's book, *Make Way For The Freeway:*

> "Sorry Ma'am," (Mike) said politely, "but we will have to take this house down."
> "No, you haven't," said the little old lady.
> "But the freeway must go through here."
> "No it doesn't," said the little old lady.
> "You will be paid for your land."
> "Money isn't everything in this world," said the little old lady.
> Mike scratched his head. "I will have to ask the big boss," and Mike climbed in his bulldozer and drove away.
> The next day the big boss drove to the little old house. "I am sorry Ma'am but the house must come down."
> "Young man," said the little old lady, "I have lived in this house for seventy years. I have watched those trees grow. I planted the rose bush. I am not leaving."
> "But the freeway must go through," said the big boss. "People want the quickest, shortest way these days."
> "What's their hurry," asked the little old lady?
> The big boss shook his head. He didn't know.[42]

The same sort of tension was evident at the state corridor hearing after a member of the I-505 Committee of the Concerned suggested that opponents of the Upshur route had neglected "the three Es – economics, environment, and effectiveness" in their choices and succumbed to "emotionalism" instead. "We do not have any quarrel with the fourth E, emotionalism," Robert J. Wilhelm declared, "but believe it should be kept in proper perspective. Emotionalism that restricts and negates sound judgment should not be allowed to prevail." This kind of commentary is bound to rankle. Morton Paglin, president of the Willamette Heights Neighborhood Association, replied that the emotionalism was really on the other side. "I think it is pure emotionalism," he said, "to jump at the Thurman-Upshur corridor before all the facts and all of the alternatives are in on the other possibilities." But Elsa Erceg was happy to own up to her personal "emotionalism."[43]

> I am very surprised that there is no value placed upon emotional involvement. Everyone here is denying emotional involvement as if it were the plague. I am very emotionally involved, and I think it is a very valuable and meaningful feeling. We are homeowners.

> We hope to live in Northwest Portland the rest of our lives. We love the neighborhood. We feel at home there and we don't want to become a slum. We certainly do not want to live in the suburbs. I like knowing the merchants. I like knowing the neighbors. And I like the fact that we are not isolated from people that are different from ourselves... It's a beautiful place to live and I am very emotionally involved, and I want that to go on the record.[44]

It is a common ploy to attempt to discredit the perspectives of political adversaries by tagging them as emotional, irrational, or subjective. Mrs. Erceg's reply was significant, however, because it dared to challenge the logic of the gambit itself, rather than simply turn the tables, as Paglin's retort did. If they were to successfully challenge, not only a particular highway corridor, but the rational for urban highways in general, they would have to do so on their own terms, as well as on the terms of the highway builders.

The fulcrum of the debate however, was located on the familiar ground of who would be benefited or injured by which highway, of who would get and who would pay. The spokesman for The Graphic Arts Center said he "would strongly oppose destroying this industry in order to benefit others." Irving Friedman, an elderly resident and homeowner in the proposed Upshur corridor said, "I beseech the Board to please consider us who are no longer able to get along without our own immediate neighborhood." Residents in Willamette Heights would be subject to noise and visual pollution by the Upshur route. Companies in the industrial district, if not displaced altogether, would see their access to roads or rails cut off by the Yeon route. The claims were laid end to end over the course of the five hour hearing. Residents said only the industrial district would benefit from the road. Industrialists told the residents they would benefit from the highway, even though they refused to see it.[45]

It is never quite enough, however, simply to identify the tort against oneself. The key to winning the debate about benefits and burdens is in arguing the identity of the individual interests of particular beneficiaries or victims with some concept of the broader public interests. "If the Nicolai corridor route were selected," Sam Lee told the hearing, "my company, Schmitt Steel, Inc., with some 100 employees would be completely shut down." But more important to his argument, he said, without a selection of the Upshur route, many other firms would suffer a similar fate. And that would be bad for the community as a whole. "Everybody loses," Lee said. "Industries are lost; thousands of jobs are placed in jeopardy; the City of Portland loses tax money it could ill afford to lose. Other local businesses are adversely affected by the loss of these industrial plants."[46] Neighborhood advocates, meanwhile, were constructing an argument that the first stirrings of resurgence in Northwest District were important, not only to the people who

lived there, but for the entire city. A highway that degraded the liveability of the area was bad for all of Portland.

For the business and labor interests, it was comfortable to argue the economics of time and money involved. Jim Galligan, a member of the I-505 Committee of the Concerned, explained their support of the Upshur route simply because "it makes good sense. It is the best, shortest, most practical and most efficient of all the alternatives from every standpoint," not the least of which was that it would cost the least to build. Sam Lee argued, further, that the Upshur route should be favored because the federal government had already committed funding for it, but not necessarily for the other, more expensive, alternatives. Further study, meanwhile, didn't make sense when "inflation in construction costs is rising seven to eight percent annually." Besides, the OSHD had already invested $800,000 in the purchase of property in the Upshur corridor and spent another $200,000 on studies. It was ridiculous, from this perspective, to think about any other possibilities.[47]

The idea that the Upshur route would provide a needed buffer between the industrial and residential neighborhoods continued to be debated. Galligan, for example, emphasized the fact that Upshur Street already was a kind of "rough line of demarcation" between industrial and residential. "The depressed freeway would make the boundary even more pronounced," he said. "A green parkway planted with trees and grass as recommended would separate the two areas." If necessary, "zoning regulations would ease the mind of those who fear the encroachment of industry into the residential areas."[48] The problem was that by this time the only people still arguing for the efficacy of a buffer were those whose own interests were located in the industrial area. "The buffer argument is spurious," Martin Davis, of the Oregon Environmental Council, declared. Rather than creating a buffer, the freeway would create "great pressures for intensive land usage in its vicinity," which would drive costs up and residents out. "Residential zoning south of the Upshur corridor is unlikely, in the present political climate, to long withstand the pressure for commercial and industrial development."[49] This reversal of opinions signaled the death knell of the buffer idea.

Likewise, by the time of this hearing, the only ones arguing that housing in the corridor needed to be replaced, or that a crucial opportunity was about to be missed for aiding the relocation of displaced families, or building new low income housing, were those people whose only interest was to protect factories and warehouses from similar displacement, or to guard free access to rail spurs and loading docks. Residents displaced by the freeway, Sam Lee reminded the hearing, "will receive substantial benefits under the Federal Relocation Act of 1970." They would be better off getting relocation assistance if they had to move because of I-505 than if the neighborhood continued on its downward spiral and they had to leave because their homes fell to

ruin. "Most of the housing in the area is substandard," Jim Galligan added, "and 84 percent of the occupants are renters rather than owners." Those people should take the help when they can get it.[50]

Highway opponents, however, had grown skeptical of OSHD promises to help displaced residents relocate. The state's initial "plan" for relocation recommended no provision for replacement housing at all, arguing that the metropolitan housing market would provide plenty of choices for people moving out of the corridor.[51] Beyond that, Edd Crawford, charged, there was "a hiatus between practice and policy" with regard to relocation. What the highway division was actually doing, Crawford said, was conducting "scare relocation... when people hear about what is coming and they move without the benefits of the relocation policy of the Highway Commission." More than that, relocation under any circumstances was difficult for older people, of which there were many in the Upshur corridor. "Relocation shock... shortens their life span because they have to make new adjustments. They tend to be recluses. They tend not to form new social patterns that they have enjoyed in the past that have been so dramatically broken."[52]

While the expressed purpose of the hearing was to consider a route or corridor for a freeway, the debate resolved around a question of whether freeways were good for urban life in general. Those who favored the Upshur route as less likely to disrupt their industrial operations by displacing less valuable homes and shops generally accepted the utility, necessity, and inevitability of this freeway and freeway building in general. Linden Bowman, president of the Portland chapter of the Society of Industrial Realtors, argued that the freeway was needed to clear up the obvious traffic congestion in the neighborhood. "I think we all know that it is a fearful experience to drive through the Northwest part of Portland going to or from most any place at certain times of the day," he said. Wasn't one of the clear benefits of the freeway that it would "remove the heavy traffic from the arterials throughout that area and channel it through the depressed freeway?" Neil Austin, representing Mercer Industries Inc. and the I-505 Committee of the Concerned quoted from the EIS: "The Northwest area suffers from surface traffic congestion. The freeway would alleviate congestion by reducing conflict between industrial and residential traffic," which "during morning and evening rush hours becomes intolerable." Austin added: "the author of those sentences understates the problem." Jim Galligan declared, flatly, that "it is a certainty that the Industrial Freeway in Northwest Portland is needed and will be built."[53]

But even as they argued the details of the environmental impact statement, issues of noise and air pollution, and adverse impacts on traffic and land use, the neighborhood forces began to construct an argument that an entirely different set of measures was needed to cope with their mobility problems, that perhaps the freeway was the problem itself. "The automobile and its convenience are no longer number one," Marvin Witt, an architect, declared. "The covering of the

earth with concrete does not solve our transportation problems. The more fragile aspects of our community become increasingly important. And these aspects cannot be measured always in terms of economics." Morton Paglin, perhaps the most important activist against the Upshur route, had a specific plan that embodied Witt's vision. If the off ramps from I-404 could be swung around to align with NW 21st and 22nd they could distribute traffic variously along Front, Yeon, Nicolai and other streets – where the trucks were headed anyway – and an upgraded Yeon "could carry the small percentage of traffic that's headed out St. Helens Road." It wouldn't have to be a freeway all the way.[54]

Whatever the specific solution in Northwest, Barbara Lucas declared it was time to talk about urban and regional traffic issues as part of a big picture. "The members of the Portland League (of Women Voters) have made it quite clear – they want not further proliferation of urban freeways. Urban freeways have destroyed enough Portland neighborhoods." She continued:

> We can no longer look separately at the bits and pieces of the plan. Last year it was hearings on Harbor Drive closure. Today it's I-505. Will tomorrow bring a Rose City Freeway and the day after that the St. Helen's Freeway. We believe it is time for the Highway Division and the Columbia Region Association of Governments to open for public discussion the regional long-range highway plans. Only in that way can the public, who pays the bills, see the true picture.[55]

It was possible to argue against the freeway at a sort of meta-level. But, ultimately, the residents needed an argument that would at least protect them from the most damaging plan and design for I-505, which brought them back to Paglin's scheme.

NWDA president George Sheldon pointed out that the state's own studies indicated 83 percent of all the traffic expected to travel I-505 was going to or from the industrial district. Why should the residential district bear the brunt of highway construction? And how would a high-speed, limited access highway serve the multiple origins and destinations within the industrial district?[56] Kristine Ludwig underlined Sheldon's argument with eloquent simplicity:

> I would think that for the reasons of the people, the trucks should move where the trucks belong. They belong in an industrial area. They go to an industrial area and the come from an industrial area and they shouldn't have to move through an area where people live. Trucks are for industry and people are for houses and lawns and schools, and therefore a mode of transportation shouldn't trample people for the machines. The machines are here to serve the people and not the people to serve the machines.[57]

Stripped to these essentials, Ludwig's plea was not what these days we would call a "NIMBY" appeal. It was a call for fundamental justice and an appeal to the foundations of the structure of our morality.

Still, the most important witness of all that day was Lloyd Anderson, bringing tidings from City Council about their recent resolution. He spoke for himself on the subject of the necessity of a freeway. "Without a freeway, both the residential and industrial development in the area will be undermined, and the District will deteriorate," he predicted. "The freeway offers a real opportunity to strengthen the social fiber of the area and to ensure its strong economic growth." But speaking for the council as a body he said the alternatives study they had requested was "not only to determine the best corridor for construction, but to provide a searching review of the impact on housing, open space and all consequences of freeway construction."[58]

The next item of business on the Portland civic agenda was not, however, a new alternatives study and EIS. It was a Mayoral election. Commissioner Neil Goldschmidt, still in his first term, and only 31 years old, positioned himself as the spokesman for the emerging neighborhood movement in Portland. He enunciated a simple strategy for Portland's rebirth: make the city an attractive place to live by working with citizens at the neighborhood level for practical improvements. "We've got to stop talking gibberish about city wide planning," Goldschmidt told a reporter during the campaign, "and realize that the only workable city wide plan is a series of neighborhood plans."[59] In the first-round voting in May 1972, Goldschmidt swamped businessman R.W. "Bill" DeWeese and two other candidates with 57 percent of the vote. In most of the precincts in the Northwest District, Goldschmidt's share of the vote hovered above 60 percent.[60] Goldschmidt's May majority was crucial. Rather than having to contest a runoff in the November 1972 election, he would spend the rest of the year as the "Mayor-elect," using this status to begin immediately to take a firmer hand in shaping the City's policy agenda.

In June the City and OSHD selected the Portland based firm CH2M-Hill to lead the new alternatives study and to handle planning, design, engineering, and communication. They were joined by two well-known national consulting firms: Alan M. Voorhees and Associates to study traffic conditions and transportation needs; and Economics Research Associates to study employment, land values, and taxation. The Burke Associates, a Seattle firm, was included to provide liaison with community groups and to study social impacts, housing, and urban design. It seemed as if everything they did was geared toward avoiding the mistakes that the Highway Division had made previously. If the first EIS had been attacked as superficial, incomplete, and flawed, the new study would be painstakingly thorough. If the first review process had drawn political fire from at least two directions, the new process would at least make sure that all the potential stakeholders were involved from the beginning.[61]

They opened a project field office at 1919 NW Thurman Street and another office for community outreach at 1818 NW 27th Avenue. They sent out their first newsletter within six weeks of getting organized to announce their initial public meetings, explain the process, and define ways that citizens could participate. They formed "the I-505 Contact Committee" consisting of representatives of NWDA, WHNA, Friendly House, the I-505 Committee of the Concerned, and the Neighborhood Improvement Committee, another business-oriented advocacy group, to serve as a close sounding board for the consultants.[62] They offered to send members of the consulting team out to meet with community and business groups to explain the project, show maps and slides, and answer questions.[63]

The public participation consultants on the team deliberated on how best to engage their multi-faceted publics. Some worried that their materials might be easily accessible to more sophisticated "cosmopolitan-planning-for-quality-of-life" readers and members of the business community but that the "guy on the street" might find their communications boring or baffling. They should keep it simple[64] and use visual aids. Participation consultant Jack Ellis critiqued their opening community meetings at the end of September. "I think we were overly cautious about giving too much information, and thus gave the appearance of groping around ourselves," Ellis opined. "As I have said on other occasions, we need to give citizens all the data we have, including the data that we don't know what it all means." They needed to develop a dual relationship with members of the public, Ellis added, as educators of citizens and as planning partners. Developing a relationship of trust was crucial in that regard, and that meant "giving them all the information we have at hand, at any time they want it."[65]

They conducted a series of meetings in November 1972 to help the study team refine a list of alternative corridor alignments to be compared. At the first session they handed out nearly 300 "do-it-yourself" information kits intended to help citizens "design their own alternatives." The packets included a dozen maps with statistics for the area on housing patterns, rates of owner- and renter-occupancy, age distribution, traffic patterns and volumes, land use, geological characteristics, as well as some suggestions for potential corridor alignments. A week later, 25 of the packets were returned as presentations were made by the neighborhood associations, business groups, and others. Three weeks later, the study team presented "the six alternatives it had chosen to study in greater depth," presumably based in part on input from the community.[66]

As the study team got organized to tackle issues of highway geometrics and engineering, housing, land use, urban design, social analysis, transportation, environmental impact, and economics, they also set up working groups involving representatives of the various communities. This, they understood, would "provide a consistent and orderly arena in which information can be shared and disseminated. Also, such a format will be a concrete and tangible display of the

commitment by the study team to avoid preconceived 'final' solutions to transportation problems."[67]

Meanwhile, they tried to come to grips with all the various issues to be addressed and the resultant research and analysis tasks. There were an extraordinary variety of issues to contend with: the political hot-button issues of air quality and noise; questions about soils and slopes at the west end of the Upshur route; surveys of housing quality in the various corridors; investigations of federal relocation requirements, programs, and funding; estimates of firms and jobs likely to be displaced by different alternatives; detailed accounts of railroad facilities and service and potential conflicts with highway traffic; estimates of taxable properties to be removed from the "tax rolls" by various options; just how to "winnow" the alternatives in a way that would be fair to all; what did the "do-nothing" option require be done; and more.[68]

There study team appeared to address these questions in a straightforward and even handed way. But they did make a crucial decision. They would not weight the importance of the various impacts. They would measure the impacts. They would describe the impacts. But they would not assign relative values to the impacts. Which was more important? Six or seven hundred residents displaced? Or 1,200 jobs dislocated? It would not be up to them to decide. Indeed, when they issued their March 1973 newsletter each of six alternatives, including the "no-build," was described, and its impacts quantified, but the alternatives themselves were not ranked.[69] "Each alternative is being designed in enough detail to determine its environmental impact on the community," they reported. But the significance of those various impacts would be left for others to decide.[70]

While the consultants labored to construct a "credible" study, the battle lines in the community became more deeply entrenched. Schnitzer Industries, a Northwest industrial concern, had their attorney write a letter to George Baldwin, head of OSHD, to complain about Mary Pedersen's inclusion on the study team. "We are advised," he wrote, "that Dr. Pedersen has served, or may still be serving, as Executive Director of the Northwest District Association," which "has assumed positions concerning the I-505 location which are adverse to certain residential, industrial, and commercial interests" in Northwest.[71] The conflict of interest was clear enough, but Pedersen stayed on the job.

More significantly, business and neighborhood interests vied throughout mid-1972 to influence City Council and OSHD decisions on an interim traffic plan for Northwest – the interim being the time between opening of I-405 ramps in Northwest in fall 1972 and the construction of an Interstate 505. The crux of the dispute was between industrial firms in the neighborhood that wanted to use both Thurman and Vaughn Streets for the passage of trucks and residents who objected to the same. That summer, the City Council adopted a plan that relegated truck traffic to

Nicolai Street, avoiding most of the residential area. "We've contributed to the economy of this city," a steel company representative complained. "We don't shirk any of our civic duties." Yet the business interests lost again.[72]

As the official I-505 study team was gearing up for their project, so was an effort underway by the Western Environmental Trade Association to conduct an "economic impact study" of the issue. As a coalition of business and labor organizations, WETA responded to the need for "an organization which would positively and responsibly speak for those who were reeling under the unreasonable and unyielding quest for an ideal environment." The study they planned would "scientifically determine what economic effects the freeway project will have on jobs, profits, tax base and business and residential property throughout the area."[73] An item in the WETA newsletter said the study had been "presented without recommendations as a public service to the Portland City Council." Walter Larsen, a member of the board, is quoted saying, "WETA is not at this time recommending a 'preferred corridor.' We believe the data, properly evaluated, will speak for itself."[74]

A newspaper reporter, however, said that WETA had identified the Upshur corridor as preferred. In support of this conclusion, he wrote, were study findings that there was "a trend toward industrial, rather than residential, use" in the corridor; most of the residents in the area were renters who moved frequently; half of residents and three quarters of businesses and workers surveyed "favored the freeway"; the Upshur corridor represented less than the other corridors in "land and improvement values, attendant tax base, relocation costs, and potential loss of taxes and payroll"; and deteriorated housing in the Upshur corridor would be supplanted by industry even if the freeway was not built.[75] The organization expressed its hope that it had helped "restore the balance" lost since the passage of the National Environmental Policy Act.[76]

CH2M-Hill submitted its report to OSHD in April 1973.[77] The State Highway Division and the Federal Highway Administration reviewed the document throughout the summer and approved it without changes on September 5.[78] It was reduced to a summary report – in tabloid format strikingly similar to the Northwest District Plan of the previous year – for public distribution in September.[79] The long-awaited corridor hearing was scheduled for October 1973 – at Chapman School, as witnesses at the previous hearing had demanded.[80]

The arguments on each side ran parallel to the arguments presented at the previous corridor hearing 18 months earlier. For one thing, the alternatives offered were basically the same as before. Industrial interests favored the Upshur corridor because it was cheapest, eliminated run down housing, spared their factories and warehouses, didn't interfere with industrial rail access, provided superior highway service, and provided a buffer between industrial and residential areas. Neighborhood forces organized behind the "Long Yeon" alignment because it

took the freeway – and attendant noise and air quality impacts – as far away as possible from residential neighborhoods in Northwest and Willamette Heights. It also spared the most housing, whatever its condition, and left room for residential regeneration in a wider area of the neighborhood.[81]

What was different about the second hearing was the relative lack of general emotive arguments and broad moral claims. Instead, specific and relatively technical arguments predominated. Railroad executives conferred at length with the hearing panel on the details of potential conflicts between existing rail spurs and an increase of traffic on Yeon Avenue – something anticipated under the Long Yeon and Short Yeon alternatives. Neighborhood residents developed both a critique of the EIS treatment of the no-build option as well as an argument for an end to all freeway building. Partly as a result, this hearing went on for a full seven hours. During the first hearing much of the debate had surrounded the inadequacy of the environmental impact statement. At the second hearing, the new draft EIS was generally accepted by all sides as a reliable factual basis for a decision. The only thing left to argue about was the relative importance of a wide range of carefully quantified impacts, environmental, social, economic and otherwise. Ironically, the witnesses did this only indirectly, by talking about those factors that mattered most to them.

Art Chenoweth presented on behalf of the I-505 Committee of the Concerned. The case for the Upshur route was clear: "Costs least – $29.7 million; Destroys Fewest Jobs – 927 jobs affected; Takes Least From Tax Base: $4.9 million; Removes rotten decayed Buildings – Eyesore section along Upshur Street; Best preservation of scenic skyline – depressed freeway is out of sight; Natural Boundary Between NW industrial and NW residential district; Original Route – Selected by state 10 years ago, approved by City Council and Federal Highway Commission." By comparison, the Long Yeon route, favored by the neighborhood, cost the most, "destroys more jobs," reduced the tax base the most, removed "fine buildings" of "modern businesses," was an elevated freeway with the "worst affect on skyline," was "not a natural boundary," but an "artificial route," that "treats the whole freeway as a nuisance whereas it is a necessity."[82] Nowhere in this calculus were the neighborhood concerns about air quality, noise pollution, housing displacement, and protection of the residential neighborhood. Yet, the presentation did include a side-by-side analysis of selected factors for the three most-discussed alternatives.

The most crucial testimony at the hearing, however, was the testimony that was never given. Mayor Goldschmidt prepared a six-page typewritten statement but never read it at the hearing, perhaps because he was sitting on the panel that hosted it. The text identified his support for the Short Yeon alternative, with the "no-build" option as his second choice. He acknowledged that although Short Yeon would cost more and dislocate more businesses and jobs than Upshur,

"it comes in a relatively close second... in these two categories." But he added, "on the other hand, the housing, social, and environmental and land-use impacts of the Vaughn-Upshur corridor tend to be considerably more negative than those of Short Yeon." There was not only a loss of low-income housing, dangers to elderly relocatees, and noise and air quality impacts on Willamette Heights and Forest Park, there was also the potential loss of a great redevelopment opportunity in the homes and storefronts of the Upshur corridor that so many others regarded as hopelessly obsolete and deteriorated. Combined with the tendency of a freeway along Upshur to "immediately drive down values on residential properties directly to the South of the freeway," leading to the eventual "conversion of these residential properties to industrial" use, Short Yeon made the most sense.[83]

Thus Goldschmidt made explicit – although not yet public – the logic behind a *de facto* weighting of the various impacts that would influence the continuing decision making process. It included, not only a strong commitment to neighborhood preservation, which had been the cornerstone of his last campaign. It belied a deep skepticism about the underlying logic of urban freeway building. Why, for example, did the traffic analysis in the EIS predict more vehicle miles traveled in the corridor under the no-build scenario than any of the others? Wasn't the most basic impact of freeway construction to make automobile travel easier, and therefore to make trips and miles traveled increase? What would be the impact on total travel if they refused to make automobile travel easier by increasing freeway capacity? What would the impact be on other modes of travel, like public transit? "I do not see these factors built in," Goldschmidt would have said, "factors which would reduce the total auto trips taken in the corridor if a freeway is not built." Moreover, he wrote, "at no point do I find the true system-wide effects of auto capacity in one part of the system analyzed." Which was to say, if we continue building an automobile oriented way of life, won't we get more of the problems that come with it?[84]

The Portland Bureau of Planning, newly under the direction of Ernie Bonner, reviewed the environmental impact study and offered a summary analysis for the members of the Planning Commission and City Council. Their narrative discussion of the various factors was generally even handed. Some impacts, such as air quality and noise pollution, would be similar regardless of the choice of routes. The total numbers of businesses and jobs to be displaced was not that different from one alternative to the next, either. Even the construction cost differential between Long Yeon ($72 million) and Upshur ($30 million) was not so great if you took into consideration that the former route would provide freeway-level service two miles farther west on U.S. 30 than the Upshur alignment. Making the service on Upshur equal to that on Long Yeon would cost another $30 million in highway construction. Likewise, the Planning Bureau analysis suggested that

much-discussed conflicts between rubber-tire traffic and railroad traffic in the Short Yeon scenario could be managed through scheduling, safety technology, and rerouting some rails.[85]

The Planning Bureau, however, also produced a tabular analysis of the findings of the EIS, which produced an overall effect extremely prejudicial to the Upshur choice. The table arrayed 42 individual factors in six major categories (dislocation; redevelopment potential; transportation service; cost of improvements; future flexibility; and environment) against the five corridor alternatives plus the no-build option. The analysis still did not place a relative weight on the factors, but it shaded cells in the matrix to indicate the "most favorable" alternative in terms of each factor. In the resulting graphic, the Upshur alternative had the fewest cells shaded. The Long Yeon alternative had the most factors for which it was "most favorable." Some, however, were beginning to question whether the Federal Highway Administration would fund a road with that big of a price tag. So, on a second matrix, Bureau staff compared Goldschmidt's favored alternative, Short Yeon, with the Upshur alternative. Short Yeon won hands down. The analysis found it superior in 28 of 42 individual factors, and overall in terms of avoiding dislocation, maximizing redevelopment potential, flexibility in terms of transit potential and land use control, and environmental factors. In terms of transportation service, the picture was mixed. Only in terms of construction cost was Upshur superior.[86]

The Bureau's most incisive analysis in the package lay outside the realm of strict planning knowledge. Although business interests had fought hard against Short Yeon and Long Yeon alike, planners suggested that "industry generally has the skills, the money or credit, and the will to adapt to changing circumstances," in a way that residents did not. At the same time, a choice of the Upshur alignment, or its neglected variant, Upshur-Yeon, would likely work against the "political goals of effective, strengthened local government." If these alternatives were to be selected, residents "may lose faith completely in the political system. No amount of rational explanation may dispel the conviction that this whole exercise was a sham and they have been 'sold down the river.'"[87]

The Portland City Planning Commission, meanwhile, held its own public hearing on November 30, 1973 and voted to recommend the Long Yeon route, suggesting that it be built in an elevated alignment for nearly its entire length, adding significantly to its already hefty price tag. While it was similar to Short Yeon in terms of environmental impacts and required displacement, it was superior in terms of safety and level of service. Ninety two percent of the cost of construction would be paid for by the federal government.[88] *The Oregonian* disagreed, ignoring arguments for Long Yeon, and favoring Short Yeon over the Upshur route as less likely to damage the adjacent neighborhood.[89] During the same period, the idea of building the Upshur route as a covered freeway was surfaced, first by the OSHD, and later by Commissioner Lloyd

Anderson, who hungered for a technical solution that could satisfy both business and residential interests. The additional cost of tunnel construction was first pegged at $9 million,[90] but later recalculated at about $24 million – or a total of about $54 million.[91] At the decisive meeting of the City Council in January 1974, Anderson argued that the covered Upshur route would provide better transportation service, protect industrial jobs, and offer a unique opportunity for neighborhood redevelopment.[92] Goldschmidt countered that Anderson was advising them to dislocate hundreds of people, destroy hundreds of homes, and spend millions of extra dollars to gain "a maximum of two blocks additional residential development."[93]

But the Mayor's rationale for Short Upshur went far beyond that narrow issue. He suggested that their selection of a route that day "may well mark the end of freeway construction within the city limits and should herald the beginning of the City's commitment to neighborhood survival." Goldschmidt covered all the narrow issues. For example, he said the City possessed both the legal and technical ability to manage highway-railroad conflicts on Yeon Avenue. It was, however, the larger, long-range issues that motivated his choice. "In an era where the continued use of the automobile and its present share of total transportation activities is almost certainly doomed," he said, it was important to consider the ability of highway facilities to support a shift to public transit. The Upshur route was not that facility. Rather, Goldschmidt said, it "is much more likely to be the last dinosaur of the age of unlimited energy and single-mode transportation."[94]

Of course, they were not finished. Adoption of the Short Yeon route prompted a lawsuit by members of the I-505 Committee of the Concerned. The suit was soon dismissed,[95] but the interests represented hoped that the action would "indicate to members of the City Council that the business community must be taken seriously."[96] Not long afterward, the OSHD, surely unhappy with the sub-optimal transportation program represented by Short Yeon, and likely hearing from friends in the industrial sector, suggested that getting the money from the federal government for Long Yeon might not be so difficult after all. Would the City reconsider? As long as the Highway Division was willing to pay all the local costs associated with the project, this was okay with Goldschmidt, and on May 30th the Council rescinded its endorsement of Short Yeon in favor of Long Yeon.[97]

Half a year later, the City Council was passing resolutions urging the state to get moving with design work and right-of-way acquisition for I-505.[98] Little prodding was needed to get neighborhood folks working on the redevelopment of the Thurman-Upshur neighborhood. Marvin Witt, an architect and NWDA activist, talked up the potential for regeneration and applied pressure for the state to divest itself of property it had purchased for highway right-of-way. "I feel the Mayor should tell the state people," planning director Ernie Bonner offered, "'You've used those properties long enough, now turn them back to us.'"[99] With help from Bonner

and his staff, the NWDA and the recently-formed Northwest Industrial Neighborhood Association developed a plan to protect and redevelop mixed use activity along Thurman and Upshur while backing the widening of Vaughn one block to the north.[100]

Meanwhile, the whole context of transportation policy, not only in Portland, but in the nation, had begun to shift. While citizens in Northwest were fighting I-505, a similar cadre in Southeast Portland were turning back the Mount Hood Freeway. Meanwhile, Congress was passing the Federal-Aid Highway Act that would allow localities to "withdraw" segments of the Interstate Highway system and use the money for other federally-approved uses. The City had begun to implement its new bus mall downtown, and using what came to be known as the "trade-in" of federal highway funds for transit, resolved to spend the Mount Hood money to pay for the first leg of a regional light rail system. By August 1977, the Federal Highway Administration had finally approved the final EIS for the Long Yeon corridor. But with Northwest industrial firms now worrying about the impact of a long, elevated highway down Yeon Avenue, local officials thinking differently about transportation solutions, and federal money available on more flexible terms than before, the City Council called "time out" to consider another alternative to Long Yeon.[101]

The single alternative proposed was modest and simple. It extended the offramps from the I-405 freeway a mere half a mile directly north to the intersection of Nicolai and Yeon. There the freeway would end at a traffic signal, with the arterial further north widened to five lanes, and removed of all but two railroad crossings. It required the relocation of only eight business establishments. It removed the spectre of half a decade or more disruption during construction throughout the industrial district. And it provided direct, if not high-speed, access to every remaining factory and warehouse in Northwest. At $46 million it was also cheap, since the price for Long Yeon, once estimated at $72 million, had by then risen to $168 million.[102] Which meant that remainder of $122 million could be reprogrammed for other transportation projects.[103]

In 1971, neighborhood leaders had treated I-505 as a foregone conclusion, something to be planned for, but not to be avoided. By 1978 it was a dead issue. Just as important, the hopeful, perhaps even romantic, policy language that was included in the Northwest District Plan, rhetoric about neighborhoods for people rather than cars and trucks, had become not just neighborhood policy, but citywide policy with continuing impacts on planning and design for decades to follow.

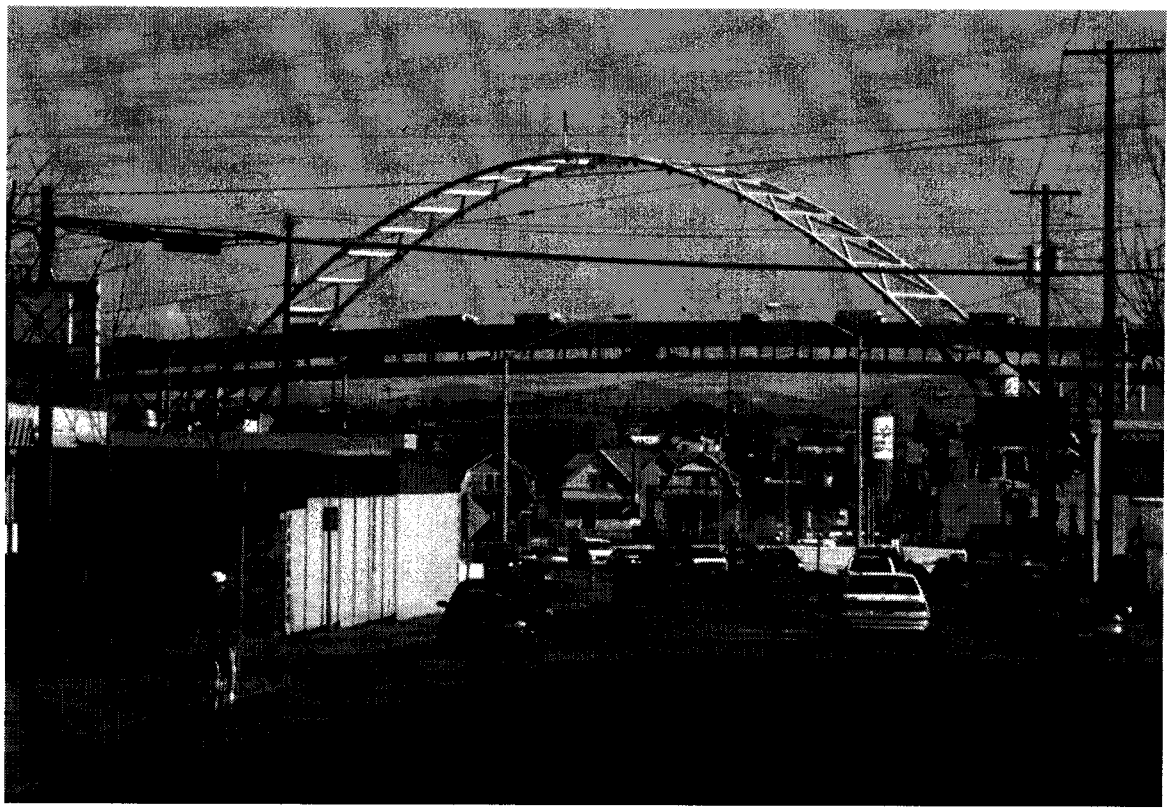


Figure 7.1 Once imagined as the route for Interstate 505, Vaughn Street now carries heavy auto and truck traffic along the northern edge of Northwest District. The Fremont Bridge is in the distance. Photo by the author.

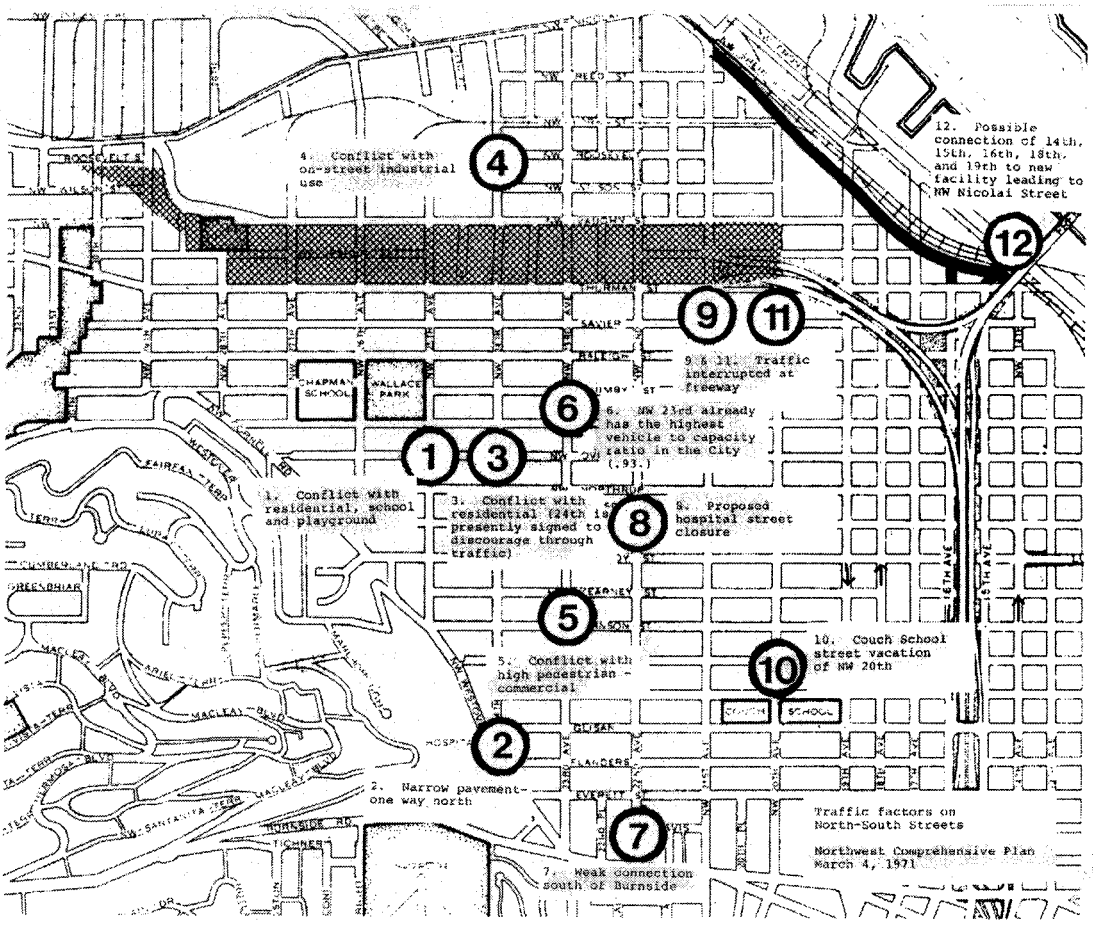
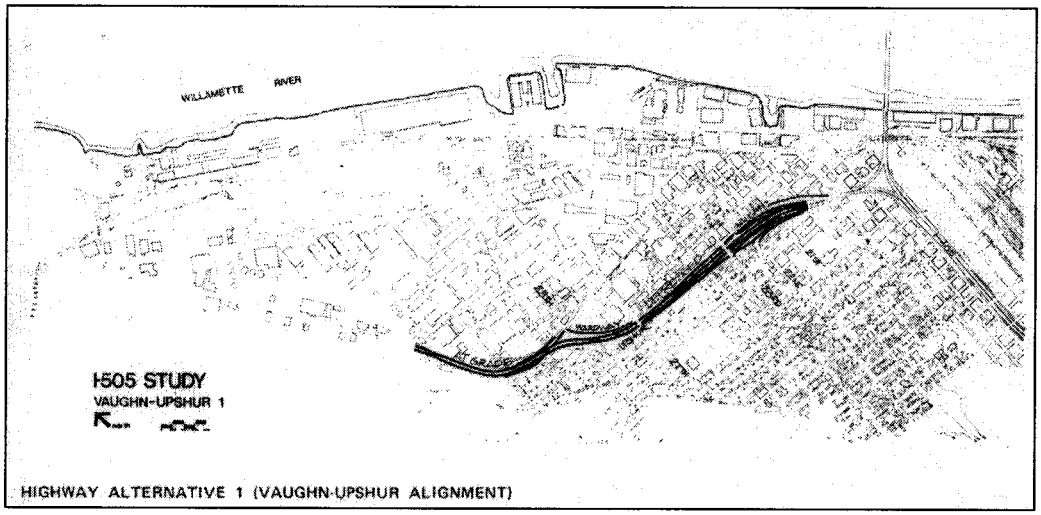
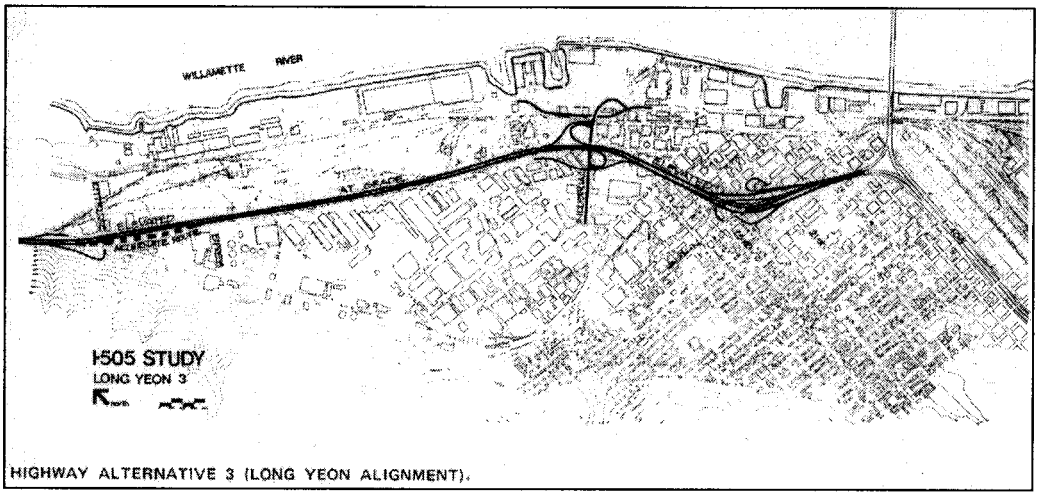


Figure 7.2 Staff on the Northwest District Plan produced this analysis of potential traffic problems that would occur if I-505 was built along the Upshur route. Portland Bureau of Planning.





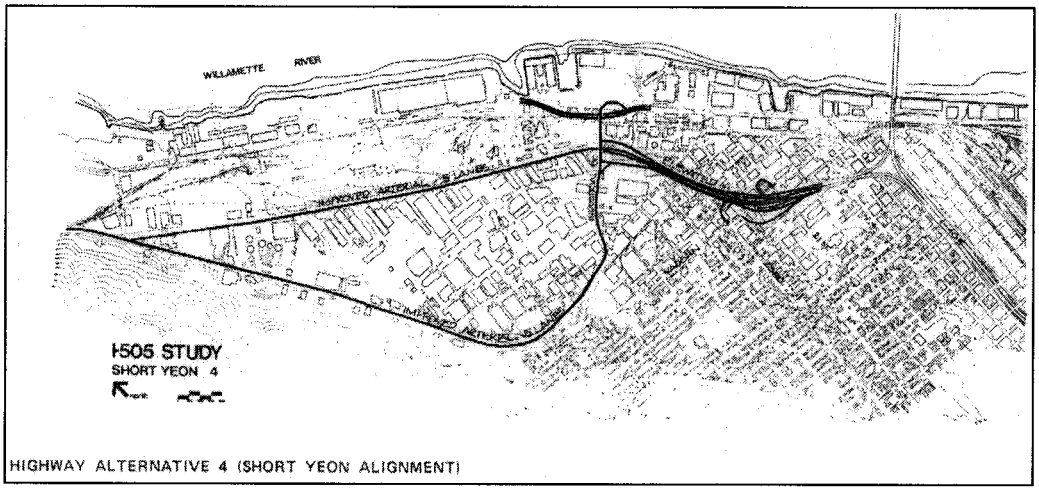


Figure 7.3 Five alternatives were studied for I-505. Residents opposed Vaughn Upshur (top). Industrial interests opposed both Long Yeon (middle) and Short Yeon (bottom). None were built. Oregon State Highway Division.

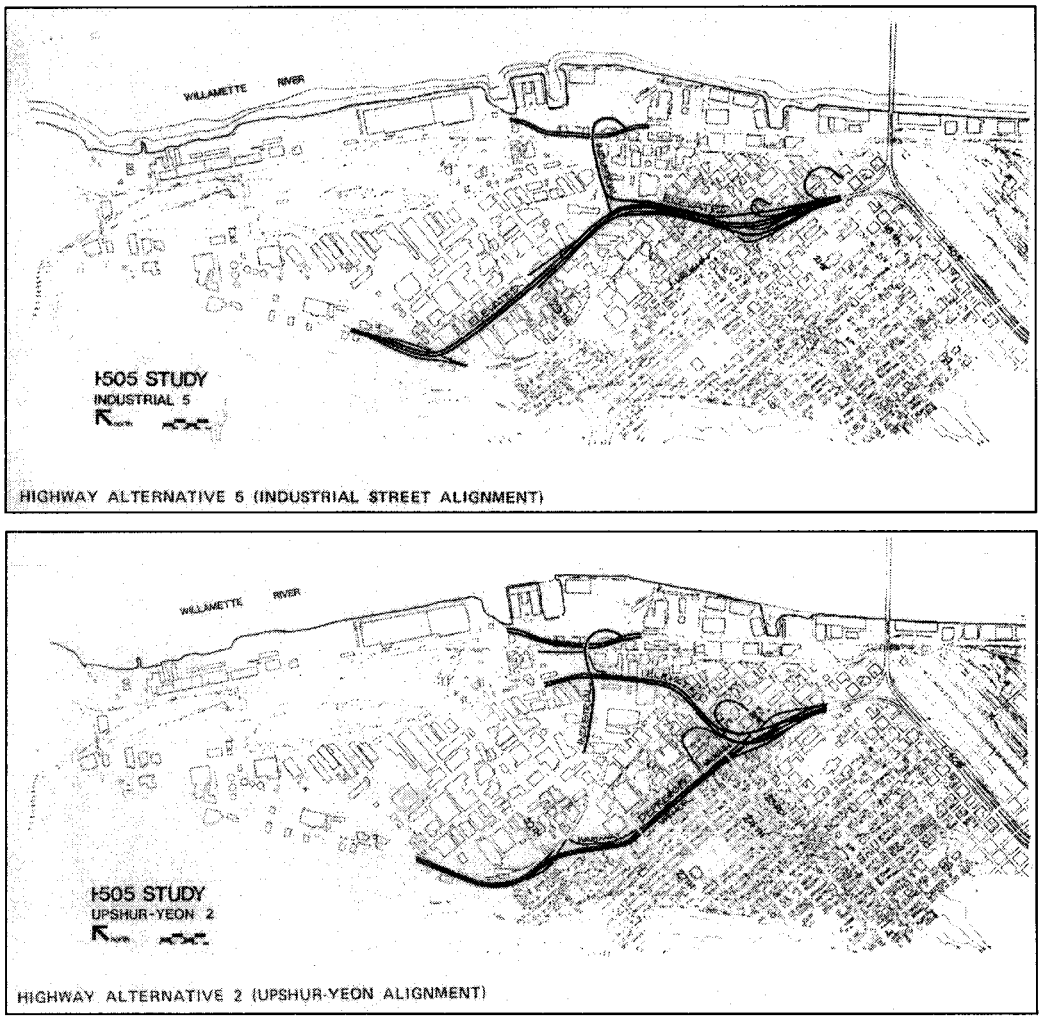


Figure 7.4 Two other I-505 alternatives received far less attention. Oregon State Highway Division.

Notes for Chapter 7.

[1] "The State Highway Commission will schedule public hearings..." map and caption in the Oregon Journal, December 25, 1963. [NWDA Files].

[2] Oregon State Highway Commission, "Corridor Public Hearing, February 10, 1972, Civic Auditorium, Portland, Oregon, RE: Industrial Freeway (I-505) Multnomah County," transcript of the public hearing, p. 3 and p. 181. [NWDA Files].

[3] Portland City Planning Commission, Lloyd T. Keefe to Roderick L. Porter, Chief Highway Engineer, Oregon State Highway Commission, October 19, 1970. Stanley Parr Archives and Records Center, [SPARC]

[4] Portland City Planning Commission, "Multiple Use and Joint Development of the I-405, I-505 Freeway Corridor," October 1970, p. 4. SPARC.

[5] Ibid. pp. 2-4, 42.

[6] NWDA, "Northwest District Development Association Planning Committee Meeting Minutes," November 24, 1970. SPARC: Neighborhood Planning, Northwest District, [7706-10, Box 9/11, 09-04-28, 9/42].

[7] NWDA, "Northwest District Development Association Planning Committee Meeting Minutes," March 4, 1971, SPARC: Neighborhood Planning, Northwest District, [7706-10, Box 9 of 11, 9/42, 09-04-28].

[8] Portland City Planning Commission, "Traffic factors on North-South streets," Northwest Comprehensive Plan, March 4, 1971, Exhibit B. SPARC: Neighborhood Planning, Northwest District, [7706-10, Box 9 of 11, 9/42, 09-04-28].

[9] Ibid.

[10] NWDA, "Northwest District Development Association Planning Committee Meeting Minutes," March 4, 1971, SPARC: Neighborhood Planning, Northwest District, [7706-10, Box 9 of 11, 9/42, 09-04-28].

[11] NWDA, "The I-505 Freeway Corridor: A Citizens Survey of a Northwest Portland Neighborhood," March 1971. SPARC: Frank Ivancie papers, [0449-01, 14-06-34, 60/1]. This copy carries a hand written note on the cover that says "Data collected by residents from neighborhood. Tabulated, analyzed, and report written by David Yaden, PCPC staff member." It also bears the slogan, "Let's Plan for Liveability."

[12] Ibid.

[13] Keith Tillstrom, "Vote Asks Retention of School," *The Oregon Journal,* February 17, 1971.

[14] Willamette Heights Neighborhood Association, "READ THIS," March 1971. [NWDA Files].

[15] "Re: I-505 Freeway Project and Federal Environmental Guidelines," unidentified attorney to the Northwest District Association, n.d. [NWDA files].

[16] NWDA and WHNA, "Joint Policy Statement on the I-505 Freeway Project (Proposed)" August 25, 1971, [NWDA files].

[17] *The Willamette Heights Neighborhood Association, an unincorporated association, et al., v. John A. Volpe, Secretary of Transportation, et al.,* United States District Court for the District of Oregon, Civ. No. 71-641, order and opinion, December 3, 1971. [NWDA files].

[18] NWDA, Meeting notice and newsletter, for meeting of December 21, 1971. SPARC: Neighborhood Planning, Northwest District, [7706-10, Box 9 of 11, 9/43, 09-04-28].

[19] Oregon State Highway Division, "Draft Environmental Impact Statement, Administrative Action for Industrial Freeway (I-505) Multnomah County," for the Federal Highway Administration, January 5, 1972. [NWDA files].

[20] OSHD, "Draft Environmental Impact Statement," 1972, summary pp. 1-2.

[21] Ibid. p. 4-5.

[22] Ibid. pp. 6-11.

[23] Ibid. pp. 17-18.

[24] Ibid. pp. 19-23.

[25] Northwest District Association, Willamette Heights Neighborhood Association, Oregon Environmental Council, and Friendly House, "Critique of Oregon State Highway Division Environmental Impact Statement for Industrial Freeway (I-505), Multnomah County, Oregon." February 4, 1972. Pp. 1-2 SPARC: [2001-09, 311-1-352, 04-06-42, 24/ 16, 1972].

[26] Ibid. pp. 2-6.

[27] Ibid. pp. 8-9.

[28] Ibid. pp. 10-11.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Ibid. pp. 14-23.

[31] Ibid. pp. 23-24.

[32] Portland City Council, unnumbered draft resolution by Lloyd Anderson, February 4, 1972, SPARC: [2001-09, 311-1-352, 04-06-42, 24/16, 1972].

[33] Portland City Council, Lloyd Anderson memorandum, "Subject: I-505," to Mayor Terry Schrunk, et al, February 8, 1972. [NWDA files].

[34] Portland City Council, Neil Goldschmidt memorandum, "Resolution on I-505 Freeway," to Mayor Terry Schrunk and Council Members, February 8, 1972, SPARC: [2001-09, 311-1-352, 04-06-42, 24/16, 1972].

[35] "Approval without new study urged for Upshur corridor," *The Oregonian*, February 9, 1972.

[36] Oregon State Highway Division, "Corridor Public Hearing," February 10, 1972, pp. 181-231 "Transcript of the public hearing held on February 9, 1972 by the Portland City Council concerning the location of I-505." [NWDA files].

[37] Ibid. pp. 227-228.

[38] Ibid. pp. 228-231.

[39] OSHD, "Corridor Public Hearing," February 10, 1972, 231 pp. [NWDA files].

[40] Ibid. pp. 43, 22, 23, 29.

[41] Ibid. pp. 2, 29, 32, 26, 37.

[42] Ibid. p. 21. *Make Way for the Freeway,* New York: Random House, 1961.

[43] Ibid. pp. 34, 48.

[44] Ibid. p. 52.

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Chapter 8. Adopting the Northwest Plan

Throughout the battle over the I-505 Industrial Freeway, NWDA representatives invoked their emerging neighborhood plan as part of an argument against the Upshur route. It was inconsistent with the goals of their plan, they would say, to put the highway right there. At other times they pointed out that the logic of neighborhood regeneration was contrary to the logic of urban freeway building. Sometimes they simply said that it was time for the Planning Commission to take up the process of adopting their neighborhood plan as City policy. It was one thing to have a grassroots neighborhood-generated plan for Northwest District. It would be a very different and more significant thing to have a grassroots neighborhood plan passed into local law. Likewise, it would be no small feat to translate the popular, hortatory, urban romantic language of the 1972 draft plan into the necessarily formal, legalistic, and technical-rational language of contemporary planning. Nor would it be easy to resolve the persistent differences between the residents of Northwest and their industrial neighbors.

At least the neighborhood folks knew how to use their plan in the meantime. The draft that was given to the public in February 1972 was still waiting for official review in November 1973. A new Mayor had taken office that year, and an interim planning director, Dale Cannady, waited for his permanent replacement through most of 1973. Still, one reporter observed, the NWDA had "waved a brand new comprehensive plan like a banner against freeways, industrial expansion, land speculation and general deterioration." The problem was that more than a year and a half later that banner, though still waving, was "tattered by bedraggling delays." It would have been nice, as the Planning Commission and City Council took up the I-505 decision, if the Northwest plan had more than rhetorical power.[1]

Milling the language of goals

When Goldschmidt brought Ernie Bonner from Cleveland that fall to take over the Bureau of Planning, the neighbors gained a key ally. "These, simply, are to retain Northwest as a viable residential neighborhood," Bonner said of the plan goals under review late that fall, "a district to house a diverse population close to the center of the city, free of traffic and providing a stimulating environment." Bonner's line on the plan was no different from that of Edgar Storms, now president of NWDA. The Northwest plan wasn't just important to the neighborhood, Storms said. It was important to all of Portland. "If the Northwest area goes down the tube," he warned, "the rest of the city's neighborhoods will go too."[2]

The official adopted version of the Northwest plan would not – indeed, could not – be like the original citizen version. First of all, professional planners were different from the residents. They were trained as planners, thought like planners, wrote like planners. Secondly, an adopted plan could not be the statement of any particular group of citizens, however broad or open they might have been. It had to be a statement of public policy, which would mean it was balanced with other interests. And, third, there was a new and rigorous framework for local planning on the horizon for Oregon. Senate Bill 100, adopted that year, would mean that municipalities would have to write plans that were laws. What began that fall was in part a process of negotiation with other members of the community over the substance of the plan. But the plan also underwent a kind of rhetorical milling or refinement by the members of the City planning staff.

"The staff has concluded," read a report on the neighborhood's plan issued that fall, "that some of the goals are more important than others. Some are desirable and attainable, some are desirable but not easily attainable, and some may not be achievable at all."[3] As a draft produced by the neighborhood association, the 1972 plan was a compendium of political desires, however coherent it may have been as a strategy for renewal. The professional planners knew that it needed to become much more of a legal document if it was to mean anything. They seem to have taken it at face value as the legitimate expression of the community. But it was their job to make it work. If it couldn't be implemented through zoning or other regulations, or through programs which either existed or could be funded, it probably didn't belong in the plan, as far as they were concerned. If it involved a matter of city-wide policy, or even state-wide policy, it didn't belong in a neighborhood plan, either. So, they took it apart point by point.

The staff's first move was to collapse the four separate goals of the overall plan into a single goal. Such a stroke brings to mind Kenneth Burke's definition of man as "the symbol using animal," "goaded by a sense of hierarchy... and rotten with perfection."[4] For the planner this hierarchy involved a precise categorization of plan statements, starting with goals, moving downward to the more specific policy, so on to objectives, and then to programs. Such elements fit together like Russian nesting dolls. If a plan was to have many goals, then perhaps it should have a sort of "meta-goal" as well, or in today's parlance, a "vision." The planners proposed as a "major goal" that "the Northwest District serve to house a diverse population close to the center of the City, and consist of a mixture of land uses which is relatively free of through traffic and parking of cars and provides a functional and stimulating environment for its residents." Having set the top of the pyramid, they could work on the lower courses.[5]

Staff approached this goal language skeptically – but not too skeptically. The planners were dubious about the goal of attracting "child-rearing families" back to the Northwest. "The

staff wonders which parts of the district family groups can be attracted into and how such is to be accomplished." When the neighborhood said they wanted to "create circumstances that will offer a greater sense of meaning and purpose" for Northwest residents, staff said this was "highly general," and "difficult to achieve," but nevertheless, "acceptable." Goals about coordinating human services and delivering them closer to where people lived, or improving "recreational, cultural and socialization opportunities," were also "acceptable" but would require the involvement of a lot of different organizations that normally didn't get involved in city planning. Staff had reservations about many of these goals, but they survived in the plan anyway.[6]

The neighborhood housing goals seemed more sensible to the staff reviewers, perhaps because housing is often the centerpiece of neighborhood planning. Still, they noted that programs and funding to achieve the goals "are not readily available." Staff found the neighborhood's goals for land use "acceptable" in general, but worked to weed out statements that were either too general to be meaningful or lacked some practical means of implementation. To "enhance the visual environment," was "a general goal, acceptable to everyone," but without a concrete program. To "improve present zoning regulations and procedures," was laudable but "the ways to accomplish (this) will require much work and discussion." Discouraging land speculation was "accomplishable only through more strict enforcement of housing and building codes." Likewise, the neighborhood's transportation goals were "acceptable" in their intent, but problematic in their implementation. The review represented a kind of dialogue, with staff pressing to make the goals real and practical, but not yet responding to the neighborhood demand to expand the regulatory and programmatic tools for making the plan work.[7]

On November 13, 1973, the Planning Commission approved, on the recommendation of staff, five housing goals for Northwest. It was merely the first step in an extended process of staff reviews, public debate, and Planning Commission deliberation on the Northwest plan. Already it was possible for one reporter to describe the situation in terms of "lengthy hearings which have reached near stalemate." Edgar Storms waved the plan at the commission and implored, "this is worthless unless you act on it. How much time – citizens' time and effort – does it take to save a neighborhood?" Yet, the members of the Planning Commission knew as well as anyone that the Northwest plan "would set the pattern for the entire city," so they took their time, devoting four full hours to hearing the public and discussing the merits before voting to adopt the housing goals.[8]

Both sides contested the refinement of goals language word by word. Harold Schnitzer, representing the industry-oriented Northwest Improvement Committee, attacked the housing goals as best he could. "All we hear (in the plan) is how badly we need housing for single families with children."[9] What about housing for the elderly? "There's too much enthusiasm in the plan for

single family housing," Schnitzer continued. "I certainly would not want to raise my children next to streets with 5,000 to 7,000 cars a day going by." Schnitzer was less than compelling in arguing someone else's interests. His partner, Mitchell Drake, however, spoke for their own interests: "The Northwest Improvement Committee feels the Planning Commission staff report and the NW Plan speak only to the residential parts of the neighborhood," Drake said. "Industrial and business interests should also have an equal vote." Presumably, the Planning Commission could hear Schnitzer better when he warned, "those people who purchased property bought it with real intent... Down-zoning would be confiscation or condemnation without compensation."[10]

Both sides worked behind the scenes to influence the process. Ogden Beeman wrote to the Planning Commission to emphasize that both residential and industrial interests were working "for the reconciliation of conflicting views," and the NWDA, for their part, were willing to continue to do so. But at some point, the Planning Commission would have to choose:

> While I believe there are areas for compromise, there are basic concepts that may be irreconcilable. Rather than using conflict as a reason for inaction, this should be seized by the Commission as an opportunity to choose between alternatives and advocate its vision for the future of our city.

It wasn't up to the neighborhood to create a plan that was consistent with city, state and federal policies on community development. "We have done our work," he wrote. The rest was up to the Planning Commission and its staff. But he left them with a warning: they had the power to make changes, but, "to the extent these changes are made, it becomes more of the Planning Commission's plan, and perhaps, less the neighborhood's plan."[11]

The Planning Commission did choose. After the housing goals, they turned next to consider language on land use and transportation. They started with the text directly from the neighborhood's 1972 draft and, for the most part, made only minor adjustments to the language in a way that usually preserved the original intent. Instead of "enhance the district as an urban residential area for a diverse population," the commission wrote "enhance *the desirability of* the district..." Instead of "limit through traffic..." in the neighborhood, they wrote "discourage." A few of the changes were more substantive. Instead of "enhance and protect the residential or predominantly residential areas that border on industrial or commercial areas," the Planning Commission adopted the goal to "enhance and protect residentially *zoned* areas that border on industrially or commercially *zoned* areas." The original language seemed to say that the plan would protect non-conforming uses, which the commission would never accept.[12]

Even when the Planning Commission voted to adopt language offered by the industry-oriented Northwest Improvement Committee, it did little damage to the residential cause. The NWDA had set as the "major goal" that "the Northwest district serve to house a diverse

population close to the center of the City, and consist of a mixture of land uses which is relatively free of through traffic and parking of cars and provides a functional and stimulating environment for its residents." The adopted language simply struck the reference to "traffic and parking," which was dealt with in the transportation goals anyway, and it added the boilerplate term "livable." They adopted a batch of the goals on November 20, 1973, and passed the rest on January 3, 1974.[13] The major casualty in this process from the NWDA perspective was the deletion of the land use goal: "increase the area for residential land use." Preserving residential uses was one thing, increasing the area zoned for them was another.[14]

Goals for "human resources," which the Planning Commission set aside until mid-1974, fared less well, mainly because the City was unwilling and unprepared to be the implementing agency for many of the goals. Where the 1972 draft talked about coordination, planning, and distribution of human services, the Planning Commission insisted that the goal statement read "encourage appropriate agencies to" undertake such work. It was a worthwhile goal. But it wasn't going to be the City that fulfilled it. The commission also struck language about creating a "greater sense of meaning and purpose in the lives of the people of the Northwest." There was no way a city plan could do that, they believed, so they couldn't put it in. Finally, the commission also deleted language about "attracting family groupings back into the district." For the commissioners, such a statement smacked of social engineering. Yet they were happy with a goal to "achieve a diversity of population." Overall, the neighborhood's original goals held up well under the scrubbing. Some poetry was lost in the process, but the Planning Commission's edits didn't alter the main thrust of the plan.[15]

Reconstructing the Northwest Plan

Adopting the goals was only the first part of a multi-step process by which the staff of the Bureau of planning, in effect, reconstructed the work that had already been done by John Perry and the NWDA. This was a delicate balancing act, because it was imperative that the City respect the work that citizens had already done, yet just as important from a political perspective to attend to the demands of business and industry in Northwest. At the barest minimum, the work of the staff treated the 1972 draft as the starting point for their work. Beyond that, staff trusted their own perceptions. But what they saw in the neighborhood was not fundamentally different from what the citizens had seen.

The clearest reality was that residential uses throughout the Northwest District had been severely eroded over the previous two decades and only "substantial changes in public policy" would reverse that trend. On this fact there was no dispute. The combination of up-zonings, conditional use permits for office and commercial space in A1 and AO zones, and other revocable

permits had converted 26 acres of residential land to other uses since 1959. A modest decline in the total number of housing units during that period – from 8,321 to 8,302 – combined with a broadscale decline in household size to reduce the Northwest population from 14,358 to 13,495 – 863 persons or about 6 percent.[16] Yet staff framed their statistical analysis in a way that actually understated the decline. From 1950 to 1970 the Northwest District had lost nearly a thousand units of housing while the population tumbled from more than 21,000 to less than 14,000. The picture was even more different at a finer grain. The three census tracts at the core of the neighborhood had actually gained housing units (although not total population) over the two-decade period, while the loss of housing was concentrated in the census tracts that encompassed areas north of NW Thurman Street and east of NW 18th Avenue that had become predominantly industrial.[17] In some ways, both sets of planners were warning against trends that had mainly run their course. Nevertheless, they agreed:

> If the trends documented above continue, the Northwest District will not serve and house a diverse population, nor will it consist of a mixture of land uses which provides a functional, stimulating and livable environment for its users. It will be an area populated by the young and old, both relatively low income; it will be dotted with professional and medical offices, hospitals and parking attendant to those uses; and it will experience increasing deterioration of those residential units located in non-residentially-zoned areas of the district.[18]

The popular embrace of Northwest District by urban pioneers had already begun to reverse those trends. But both citizens and planners wanted reinforcement from public policy to guide the trend in the future.

So far, planning staff, commissioners, and citizens had agreed on an analysis of existing conditions and trends, and on the language of goal statements, more or less. But the central issue of the plan remained to be decided. As a staff report put it, "a land use plan for the Northwest District – and the instruments for its effectuation – must ultimately decide the simple question: how much land for residential, how much land for non-residential?"[19] They called for the division to be a matter of "public policy" and to be "equitable." But the meaning of "equitable" in this context, not surprisingly, was not a matter of easy consensus. Bureau staff were under pressure to be more accommodating to industrial and business interests in Northwest, and in response constructed a brand new array of three alternative plan concepts which, when compared with the three alternatives considered in the 1972 draft, shifted the ground for decision-making distinctly to the disadvantage of residential interests.

Given the clarity of opposing interests in Northwest, it was inevitable that any plan concepts would be arrayed along a continuum between those most supportive of residential

uses and those most permissive of industrial uses. This was the case in the 1972 draft when the alternatives ranged from the self-explanatory "phased industrial removal" (Concept 3) to "linear boundary" (Concept 2) which extrapolated the trend of industrial expansion to what the planners considered its likely maximum extent. Such an array of alternatives (discussed in Chapter 5) necessarily defined an obvious compromise concept. In the 1972 draft this was the "reinforced border" (Concept 1), which recommended the strategic use of investments in housing and institutional uses to buttress the line of demarcation between industrial and residential areas. Striving to appear reasonable, accommodating, and moderate, the NWDA rallied its forces behind the compromise position. Unfortunately for them, when the Bureau of Planning constructed its three alternative concepts it positioned the "generalized NWDA scheme" as the option most favorable to residential interests and eliminated any expression of the "industrial removal" concept. What had been the "compromise" position thus became extreme, and positioned a new "compromise" alternative even farther away from the neighborhood's true aspirations.[20]

From a broader perspective, however, the naming of the three new alternatives served to exaggerate the differences among them. Alternate 1, the "Generalized NWDA Plan" promised "reduced residential density/ expanded residential area/ reduced industrial area." Alternate 2 described "high-density residential and limited industrial expansion." And Alternate 3 – the new "compromise" position, called for "reduced residential density and expanded light industrial buffer." The similarities among the three alternatives could be read in the language of location-specific objectives identified for each of the schemes. All three alternatives identified common aspirations to "minimize detrimental effects of hospital expansion on surrounding residential neighborhood;" to "preserve and enhance existing low-density residential areas;" and to "encourage medium-density residential north of Upshur between 28th and 30th." Likewise, all three proposals provided for the continuation of industrial uses in areas already zoned for industry, and major commercial uses at the south edge of the neighborhood, also already zoned and established for such uses. Even where the language of objectives differed from scheme to scheme, the distinctions were less clear than the names of the alternatives seemed to promise.

There were, however, clear and significant differences among the three alternatives in four specific areas. Alternate 1 (NWDA scheme) provided for significant residential downzoning in both the core of the neighborhood and in lower density areas to the west of NW 23rd Avenue. It would have changed the better part of twelve blocks in the heart of Northwest from A0 to A1 zoning – reducing the density and eliminating the possibility of commercial office development under the conditional use process. Alternate 2 (Industrial) would have left all of the existing high-density residential zoning in place. Alternate 3 (Compromise) reduced residential density only in

areas west of NW 23rd. Here, the proposed "compromise" was only minimally acceptable to the neighborhood and of little interest to industrial interests.

The three schemes also varied in their approaches to commercial development in the neighborhood's two main shopping strips. Alternate 1 (NWDA scheme) would have applied the proposed new C3 "district commercial" zoning classification (reduced parking requirements; limits on total square footage) to promote "pedestrian oriented" shopping on most of NW 21st and much of NW 23rd. It would also have extended commercial zoning north on NW 23rd all the way to Thurman Street – an area designated in both other concepts as "light industry buffer." Alternate 2 (Industrial) left existing C2 zoning in place – with all of its acknowledged short-comings for an urban, neighborhood shopping districts. Alternate 3 (Compromise) offered a limited application of a "special" variation on C2 zoning, similar to the proposed C3, but not expansion of the zoned commercial district north on 23rd. Again, the "compromise" proposal seemed to offer the neighborhood something less than half a loaf.

Both Alternate 1 (NWDA scheme) and Alternate 3 (Compromise) moved to protect the Thurman-Upshur-Vaughn corridor from further erosion by industrial uses, while Alternate 2 (Industrial) left the area in the M3 "light industry buffer" category. This was important, given the recent victory for the neighborhood against the Upshur route for I-505. But, again, the difference between what was proposed in the 1972 draft and what was offered as a compromise were different in important ways. Alternate 1 would have provided for mixed-use commercial and residential development in a C3 zone that extended east on Thurman all the way to NW 23rd while Alternate 3 would have zoned most of the area for medium density residential with the Thurman-NW 23rd Avenue intersection left in the "light industry buffer." The ostensible "compromise" didn't so much split the difference as it failed to provide a strong regulatory basis for future development.

Finally, the three alternatives provided varying approaches to the creation of the "light industry buffer" between the core residential neighborhood and the adjoining industrial neighborhood. In all three alternatives the buffer is defined in terms of M3 light industrial zoning – a zoning category that allowed a broad mixture of uses. Alternate 1 (NWDA scheme) provided for a relatively narrow light-industrial/ mixed use buffer. Alternate 2 (Industrial) provided for significantly more of such zoning but largely at the expense of residential zoning. Alternate 3 (Compromise) extended the M3 zoning a bit farther in the other direction, reducing the amount of M2 zoning within the arc defined by I-405. Still, the "compromise" retained one rather objectionable element for the neighborhood, namely M3 zoning on the northern end of NW 23rd Avenue. If the commercial strip and the adjoining residential areas were to be part of a cohesive neighborhood, this corner of the neighborhood could not be industrial.

For all the disappointments that the "compromise" held for the NWDA, Bureau of Planning staff were still able to present it as a pretty good deal for the neighborhood interests. After all, they recommended a plan that "reverses the existing allocation of land between residential and non-residential." On the face of it, this was the case. The recommended compromise concept proposed to increase residential zoning from 267 acres to 291 acres – a net gain of 14 acres – while the total area zoned for industrial or commercial uses combined would be reduced from 291 acres to 267 acres. "This may appear to swing the balance too far in favor of residential," they suggested. But because non-conforming residential uses in industrial zones were likely to be displaced over time, while non-conforming commercial and institutional uses in residential zones were likely to survive, the land uses were actually in balance.

Such a presentation offered an illusion of the political happy medium. But it was based on a simple assertion that an *equal* distribution of land uses was also an *equitable* one. Yet industrial interests had never asked to be treated equally or equitably. They had argued that the highest and best use of this land was industrial. Likewise, the neighborhood argued that maintaining a strong residential neighborhood close to downtown was in the broader public interest. Besides, within the nice round numbers of the staff analysis there was only a single real concession to residential interests – in the Upshur corridor. All of the other "gains" in residential zoning came from rezoning property in the residential heart of the neighborhood from commercial to residential.[21]

The Planning Commission on May 30, 1974 adopted the recommendation of the planning staff. A news account noted flatly that "the Northwest District Comprehensive Plan adopted by the commission represented the defeat of a two-year study conducted by the Northwest District Association."[22] While it was less than they had hoped for, it remained a substantial achievement for the NWDA. For one thing, the package adopted included a "Trafficways Plan" that was even more restrictive of automobile through traffic than the one proposed in the 1972 draft, deleting the designation of several side streets as "secondary collector-distributors," and eliminating a proposed connection along NW Westover that would have made NW 25th a convenient cut-through from Burnside to Thurman. They also rejected a proposal to merge a Marshall-Lovejoy couplet at a Y-shaped intersection at NW 21st Avenue, which would have required acquisition and demolition of an entire block.[23] But most importantly, this "defeat" was palatable simply because the fact that there was any plan at all with a goal of preserving the residential neighborhood was already a victory.

Towards adoption

As staff prepared to bring the evolving plan before the City Council, Ernie Bonner became its champion. If he and his staff had framed the preemptive "compromise" concept, they also

continued to support the fundamental goals of the neighborhood association. Bonner talked about the danger of encroachment by non-residential uses and the 26 acres of residential land that had been lost to housing since 1959. He underscored the need to preserve housing, and how without such efforts Northwest would lose the qualities that had "made it a truly unique neighborhood in the city." And from his vantage point, the remedy was simple: "Let's strike off some turf for residential use, strike off some turf for industrial use and have a mixed area in between."[24]

This did not mean that the contest was over, however. A kind of political trench warfare continued between what a veteran reporter called "one of the oldest and strongest of the neighborhood associations and "an articulate, well-organized industrial lobby." Each side understood that the ultimate impact of the plan would be found in the details as finally adopted by the City Council. The NWDA was particularly unhappy with the Planning Commission's action on the land use concept. "Members feel that their plan..." as expressed in the 1972 draft, "was a legitimate attempt to be fair to all segments of the community," the reporter wrote, "and they resent it being made the starting point for further compromises with the industrial group." Edgar Storms said of their rivals in the Northwest Improvement Committee, "I doubt if they could have produced a plan as fair and well thought-out as this one." Vera Katz, recently elected to the state legislature added, "they're penalizing us for being responsible and trying to look out for everyone's interests."[25]

Industrial interests, meanwhile, mounted a concerted counter-attack. The Northwest Improvement Committee (NIC) drafted a policy statement in which they rebutted the residents' fundamental argument that industrial uses were "encroaching upon" or "displacing" residential uses. "Industrial firms," the NIC corrected, "have been expanding in an area which has been planned and zoned for industry." When Portland's first zoning code was adopted in 1924, they pointed out, this part of Northwest was zoned for industry. Therefore, "industrial firms in the area cannot be considered as encroaching upon the area which has historically been intended for residential use." At the very same time, they seemed to be arguing that the erosion of residential uses was also a natural economic process:

> Through the years there has, indeed, been a loss of residential units in non-residential zones. We do not agree with the Planning Commission that this has been primarily affected by speculation in land. The change of residential to non-residential use in non-residential zones appears to be in response to normal influences of land economics. To attempt to counter these influences through restrictions in policy and zoning is inappropriate and will create severe pressures in the overall City structure.[26]

Such logic was more convoluted than it first appeared. First of all, an area that was "intended" as industrial had actually been developed in the era before zoning in mixed uses with a significant proportion in housing. Like many early zoning ordinances, Portland's provided far more industrial and commercial land than was ultimately needed.[27] It could easily be argued that the erosion there of residential uses over half a century was caused, not by "normal influences of land economics," but by the area's zoning classification as industrial. In any event, they found themselves defending both sides of the debate between government regulation and unfettered markets. It was okay to use "restrictions in policy and zoning" to support the supposed economic rationality of industrial use but it was "inappropriate" to do so to protect residential uses that somehow had survived fifty years as non-conforming uses. Besides, since when was "speculation" not part of the "normal" process of land economics?

The Portland Chamber of Commerce also weighed in on the side of the industrial property owners. They had liked the "compromise" plan at first, but now they weren't so sure. When Alternate 3 was first adopted "it appeared that the business interests felt they could live with it." Since then, however, the NWDA had waged a campaign to keep the Donald M. Drake Company from rezoning its property in Northwest. "It appears that the residential group expects to fight any rezoning to business purposes to the last ditch," they wrote. "Their present intention is to go to the City Council with the request that Alternate 3 be eliminated and Alternate 1 adopted." More than that, the cooperative relationship that NWDA representatives liked to talk about had evaporated. The Bureau staff had tried to broker a meeting to work out a further compromise but it was called off. "At this time it appears that the opposite sides are so far apart that they could not reach an agreement."[28]

If the neighborhood was going to retreat to earlier positions, the Chamber intimated, it could too. Business remounted earlier arguments against "obsolete" housing and for facing the facts of the real estate market. Existing housing wouldn't survive, new higher-density housing was unlikely without public subsidy, and if the industries didn't get the property they would be forced to move to suburban locations. Alternate 3 was a fair compromise, they said, but they could go no farther. The proposed rezoning from AO to lower densities (and less favorable conditional use regulations) should be scrapped, and "any modifications concerning the buffer strip and industrial areas should be favorable to commercial and industrial needs for the reasons outlined above."[29]

The picture some industrial property owners painted was even more dire. Alan Lane, of the Lane-Miles Standish Company, printers of business forms, wrote to Mayor Goldschmidt to say that a national insurance company had inquired about purchasing their property for a "substantial" expansion of their business. When they heard about the Northwest plan, however,

they dropped the idea and said they would head straight for the suburbs. "If the total plan as now proposed is approved by the Council, it will most certainly result in the eventual exodus of substantial, highly taxed business from the Northwest District," wrote Lane.[30]

John Wilson, representing the business-labor collaboration Western Environmental Trade Association, Inc., criticized Council and Planning Commission for failure to conduct an "economic impact study," including "changes in the tax base, shifts in the attractiveness of an area for housing, changes in the area's employment level, and costs to modify transportation systems and other utilities to serve the community." Wilson further argued that statewide efforts to "alleviate urban sprawl and preserve the employment base in the existing cities" would be undercut by the move to reduce allowable housing densities through down-zoning. There had been some successes in preserving historic building stock, but most of this was due to growth of more intensive uses, Wilson wrote. Rehabilitating housing for use as housing would not work. Only a transition to higher density housing was a feasible way to maintain residential uses. The main problem was that loss of industrially zoned land hurt manufacturing. Nor did it make sense to build or maintain any housing within hailing distance of I-405. If the residents wanted to improve the neighborhood, Wilson suggested, change NW 21st and NW 23rd from two-way streets to one-way arterials "to improve traffic circulation and consequently reduce the air pollution generated from the current slow moving inadequate traffic system."[31]

The members of the NWDA were also capable of digging in their heels. At one of their meetings that fall "it was suggested that the district must maintain a supply of *substandard* housing, this being the only kind that people on fixed incomes can afford."[32] Overall, they held fast to their goal of preventing the further erosion of residential land. But they resisted any temptation to abandon their stance as the moderates in the mix. They did not, as their adversaries predicted, press the City Council to reconsider Alternate 1, the "generalized NWDA scheme." Instead, they endorsed the Planning Commission's adoption of the "compromise" and formulated a slate of amendments to address their specific objections.

All of these provided modest, incremental improvements. They asked for somewhat lower residential densities in one area west of NW 23rd. They wanted some changes in rules governing "primarily pedestrian oriented commercial uses" on the two shopping strips. They wanted some adjustments in the "guidelines for future development" around the hospitals. More significantly, they proposed to create a "special design and redevelopment" area in the Thurman Vaughn corridor to shift the emphasis from light industry to mixed use and residential. They proposed to extend high density residential zoning farther east where some housing renovation had already taken place. They also proposed creation of a "special impact buffer area" with new review procedures and design requirements. And, they called for more restrictive procedures on the

granting of conditional use permits in the AO zones.[33] When it came time to go to City Council, the NWDA forces announced their support for Alternative 3, but with three amendments encompassing the changes above. One was to "strengthen the eastern edge" based on a report by Max Bolte; another to "severely limit conditional uses in AO zones" based on a report by Bill Deming; and the third was to "develop the northern edge," based on the "Marvin Witt Report."[34]

In effect, the residents had decided to let the industrial interests be the radicals. They called their membership, not to the barricades, but to participate. It was the obligation of NWDA members to speak up and be heard at the City Council hearings, the leadership advised. But they would continue to argue for moderation. "In general," they advised, "a better practice (at the City Council hearing) on the 13th would be to accept the Planning Commission's recommendations with modifications that the neighborhood would wish to make." Meanwhile, they emphasized all that would likely be achieved. Although, the Planning Commission had made many changes to the goal language originally offered by the 1972 draft, there were "no strong arguments" against the goals adopted by the commission. The Trafficways Plan adopted by the commission, they said, was the same as their own (while in fact, it was even tougher on through traffic, and less disruptive of neighborhood life). "If the plan is adopted, it will be the first of its kind," they wrote. It will help maintain the "livability, the diversity, and the vitality" of Northwest by providing "the framework for making decisions about what will happen to our community," and it will lend "a degree of stability" to things. There might have been some inclination to criticize the Planning Commission, staff, or City Council for compromises pressed upon them. Instead, their report simply underlined the legitimacy of the plan as a community document, grown from the bottom up.[35]

The City Council held two long hearings on the Northwest District Plan goals, one in November and another in December 1974, and finally adopted a package of goal statements "closely resembling those recommended by the Planning Commission," on January 15, 1975.[36] Business and industrial interests, however, were able to wrest a few additional concessions from the Council. To the land use goal "enhance and protect the residentially zoned areas that border on industrially or commercially zoned areas," they added for even-handedness sake, "and protect the industrially or commercially zoned areas that border on residentially zoned areas." In the transportation goals they slipped in a single phrase: "protect streets within the *residentially zoned* districts insofar as possible for local use." By implication, then, industrially zoned areas weren't to be protected in the same way. Yet, some of the amendments also cut in the other direction, in favor of the residents.[37]

Next in the arduous step-wise process of plan adoption was consideration of land use policies for the Northwest District, in effect, detailing how the adopted goals would be met. Staff

assembled a hefty notebook for the use of each member of the Council, each containing important background on the plan – a chronology of events, major findings by the staff, goals already adopted by the Planning Commission and City Council, recommendations for policy statements, critiques on each policy area from the NWDA, NIC, and the Northwest Industrial Neighborhood Association, sections of relevant testimony on key policy issues, other documentation, and more. Presumably, anything that could help City Commissioners make their decisions was included.[38]

Staff had also worked out a scheme for applying the various policy statements in a geographically specific way. Different parts of the neighborhood demanded different treatment because circumstances on the ground were different in each. West of NW 23rd and south of Northwest Thurman was the lower-density residential area of "Hills and Westside." Between NW 23rd and NW 19th Avenues, north of Burnside and south of Overton, was the "Central" sub-area. From NW 19th Avenue over to the I-405 freeway, north of Burnside to NW Marshall, and then bending westward south of NW Pettygrove, was the "Eastern Edge." North of that was the "North Industrial Area," and the "Thurman Vaughn Corridor." Within each of these five areas were one or more geographically-specific policy areas, each with a governing statement. Ultimately, every statement of intent or desire about the entire neighborhood came to ground in some specific place. As these statements coalesced into a proposed plan they mapped the political conflict over Northwest.

It mapped their consensus, too. For the North Industrial area there was a single simple policy, "encourage and reinforce industrial uses in M2 and M1 industrial zones." On this there was little discussion and no dispute. In an area that encompassed roughly a third of the Northwest District, there was relatively little housing left and thus no residential environment over which to argue.[39] The Hills and Westside sub-area was, likewise, uncontroversial, although somewhat more complex, reflecting the range of housing environments and zoning categories it encompassed. In the main, it called to "maintain" or "preserve and enhance" the medium density (zone A1) or low density (zones A2.5 and R5) housing in the sub-area. Significantly, however, it also called out a ten-block sliver along NW 23rd Avenue and between Everett and Lovejoy to "limit further high-rise residential west of 23rd." Although occupied mostly by one, two, and four family homes, it was zoned AO and vulnerable to redevelopment for office uses. But for the Hills and Westside sub-area, this was the only issue that remotely verged on controversy.[40]

The Thurman-Vaughn corridor, in contrast, was one of three sub-areas in Northwest where land use interests were in conflict, and one of two where the industrial claim on territory by right of zoning collided with a claim by residential interests by virtue of occupancy. While this 22-block sliver of land on the northern edge of the residential neighborhood had been zoned for industrial use on its eastern half, and a combination of commercial and residential use on its

western half, it had been predominantly residential in character since its initial development. From the turn of the 20th Century it had been inhabited by Irish, and later Swedish and Finnish immigrants working in nearby sawmills and other industrial concerns. The contemporary reality was that about 830 people still lived there in single family houses and small apartment buildings. The claims by – and on behalf of – these residents were crucial in exerting leverage against I-505. That the Thurman-Vaughn "corridor" was now a special object of policy was a legacy of that fight.

Representatives from NINA staked their claim, nevertheless, in the debate before Planning Commission and City Council that spring and summer. They questioned the emerging NWDA plan for mixed-use development in the area, opposing a proposal for a "special urban renewal development district," insisting on private-sector development instead, and suggesting that the area was no good for residential development anyway. Because of the underlying zoning, they said, land was already too expensive for residential development. Nor was it true, they argued, that the corridor was "predominantly" residential already. Staff findings identified 11 acres as residential, 9 acres industrial or commercial, and 8 acres as vacant. All of the vacant land, NINA implied, was really industrial or commercial by virtue of prevailing market conditions. They asked that action on the area be withheld pending further study and urged a plan that would promote "commercial and industrial uses as well as supportive residential services." Which is to say, make residential secondary.[41]

The response by the NWDA came in a distinctly different rhetorical register, one which presupposed the rightful priority of residential development, and focused on defining the terms on which residential redevelopment and expansion might take place in relation to all existing uses. They endorsed the idea of a "Special Urban Redevelopment Area for Residential and Compatible Commercial and Office Uses." Parts of the corridor already zoned for housing should remain so. Existing uses should be encouraged to remain, they said, but along NW 23rd commercial uses should be supported. Significantly, they called for zoning regulation to allow development of truly mixed uses "such as housing above offices or commercial," which might be desirable both in terms of the kind of living and working environment it created and in terms of the potential to make development deals more attractive financially. While the lines on the map might be similar – no outright rezoning was proposed – the vision was distinctly different from that put forward by industrial interests. One saw an industrial area with "residential services"; the other imagined a residential neighborhood with offices, workshops, stores, and maybe the odd factory.[42]

Votes by the Planning Commission in May and the City Council in July reflected the latter vision. At the western end of the corridor the policy was to "encourage medium density residential development north of Upshur between 28th and 30th." In the central and eastern part

of the corridor they voted to "promote joint public/private redevelopment and rehabilitation in the area between Thurman and Vaughn, 23rd and 30th for mutually compatible medium-density residential, commercial and office use," with an understanding that planning would continue to determine how to make that happen. Around the corner on NW 23rd, in an area of M3 zoning, they voted to "maintain and encourage light industrial use." This was not the outcome the NWDA had requested, but they had won most of what they wanted, nevertheless.[43]

Policies in the Central sub-area were not contested by the industrial and business interests, but the area was crucial for the NWDA. Three of their most important goals would be won or lost in that area bounded by Overton on the north, NW 19th on the east, Burnside on the south, and the rear lot line west of NW 23rd. Here were the pedestrian shopping streets they wanted so much to preserve; the housing they wanted to protect from the pressures for demolition and conversion; and the hospital whose appetite for space had prompted the formation of the NWDA in the first place. There was no organized opposition from real estate interests, and the management at Good Samaritan Hospital, having negotiated a master plan with the neighborhood and the City, was fully on board.[44] But the geography was complex, and so was the policy, as a result.

The Central sub-area contained six distinct policies areas – six geographic territories in which a distinct policy would be enforced. Policy 8 would be applied along Burnside, acknowledging the increasingly auto-oriented character of commercial uses. Policy 7 called to "maintain and support existing commercial areas and uses along the southern portions of 21st and 23rd." Policy 6 applied to the central sections of the two main shopping streets and encouraged the development of activities that "are primarily pedestrian oriented and related by scale and market to the Northwest District." Policy 5, in effect in the core area of the hospital complex asked for new facilities and alterations to be "compatible" with surrounding uses. Policy 4, to be applied on the periphery of the hospital complex allowed for hospital expansion but called to "maintain and encourage high-density residential uses" otherwise. Finally, Policy 3 for the two large residential areas braced by the shopping streets, would "maintain and encourage high-density residential uses," and allow conversion through the conditional use process only when the new uses were "substantially residential," and allow new construction under the same process when the new uses were "predominately residential."[45]

However measured this policy language may have been, the adoption of these policies was a clear victory for the neighborhood. The strong policy prose of the 1972 draft had been dried and processed by the bureaucrats, and it lost much of its allure in the process, but it would have much the same effect. All of the collected narrative – testimony from the neighborhood association, findings by the planning staff, the adopted goals, and finally the adopted policies, not

to mention the map – reflected the same story. Housing must be preserved. The pedestrian-oriented shopping streets are precious and need to be protected. Hospital expansion must proceed with full consideration to its neighbors. The erosion of residential stock through conversions and demolitions under the conditional use provisions of the AO zoning must be stopped. It was all there. There would be no rezoning, at least right away. But there was an explicit public promise made by Planning Commission and City Council in these policies that would stand up over time.

Which left the neighborhood's "Eastern Edge." It was politically the most divisive issue on the agenda, and technically the most difficult. The policy sub-area encompassed 38 city blocks, mostly between 16th and 19th, between the "Central" sub-area and the I-405 freeway. In general, the neighborhood forces wanted to preserve residential uses and promote rehabilitation of existing housing in what was a thoroughly mixed use area. Industrial and business interests, in a typically deterministic fashion, envisioned the area as naturally fulfilling the destiny indicated by its zoning classifications – as long as planners didn't interfere to stop it. The problem was that the zoning in the area was also quite mixed, including significant chunks of high-density residential and neighborhood commercial zoning as well as M2 and M3 light industrial zoning. Likewise, existing land uses included a significant measure of industry – small shops and warehouses – but also nearly a thousand units of housing in single-family structures and small apartment buildings, a smattering of residential structures converted to commercial use, a couple of churches, a school, and other institutional uses. If some natural process of land use succession was going on it was taking an awfully long time.[46]

The findings of the planning staff generally supported the position of the residents. In fact, it confirmed many of the issues they had been harping on throughout the entire planning process. Staff's map analysis of existing land uses in the area dramatized the extent to which residential uses were present – they used solid black shading to indicate residential, and colored in the whole parcel, not just the footprint of the structure. They acknowledged that housing in the area was in demand, noting that while the total number of units had declined slightly (from 1,062 to 999) over two decades, that total population had increased significantly (from 1,195 to 1,406). They highlighted the ongoing loss of residential land through rezoning and other ill effects of manipulating the zoning map. There was an example here of the kind of speculative rezoning that enriched developers at the expense of neighborhood stability. An entire block of single family houses had been rezoned from A0 to C2 in anticipation of redevelopment. The following year three of the houses were destroyed by fire. Seven years later, no development had taken place. It was true that many of the apartment buildings were not up to code, but this was at least partly due to the inability of owners to get financing because of bankers' concerns about conflicts

between zoning and actual use. Residential uses persisted in the area despite higher-than-usual property tax rates, also the result of over-zoning. They dismissed the idea that an area so close to the freeway was unsuitable for anything but industry; recent studies they cited found that the impacts beyond 200 feet "are very minor and generally create no health hazard or discomfort." If the City Council was to fulfill its goals of preserving a "a mixture of land uses" including "a wide variety and increasing amount of sound and well maintained housing... throughout NW Portland," they needed to protect the Eastern Edge.[47]

The difficult part was how to do so without imposing any down-zoning on property owners who would consider such action a "taking" or a "confiscation" of value. The planners considered zoning a blunt instrument in any case. What they devised was a kind of gauzy policy overlay to a jumble of land uses and zoning districts. The overarching policy language was simple: "maintain and encourage mixture of uses" in the sub-area. But the implementing guidelines were a bit obscure. They demanded that any changes in zoning, "including rezoning, conditional uses, or revocable permits" be accompanied by a "showing of public need." What this meant was not specified, but rather implied by reference to the overall Northwest District Plan. The guidelines insisted that the "burden of proof" was on the applicant, and required them to disclose their plans for any new use in terms relevant to "the criteria upon which the change will be judged." What these criteria were, however, was only implied – in staff findings, in the other goals of the plan, and in background papers by the planners. The intention to preserve housing as an important element of the mixture of uses was in the air, but it wasn't on paper in this policy. The implementing guidelines did allow for owners to apply for rezoning on their own property but only to a "more restrictive use." In effect this invited owners of residential property to downzone to the appropriate residential classification, with the stipulation that this would impose no new requirements on abutting property owners.[48]

For industrial and business interests, the more objectionable element in the implementing guidelines was a requirement that all demolition permits for residential buildings be reviewed by the Hearings Officer "to determine if such housing could be rehabilitated by public and/or private action." The requirement only applied when the property owner lacked a building permit for structures to replace the housing, and the review period was limited to 30 days, but for the business interests it represented an unwelcome opportunity for neighborhood busybodies and city officials to interfere with their dealings.

Perhaps the most instructive element of the implementing guidelines was the one which called for the promotion – it didn't say by whom – of "joint public/private improvement and rehabilitation for mutually compatible residential, commercial and light industrial uses." The key was the concept of "mutually compatible" uses. Conventional zoning practice was founded on the

idea that residential, commercial, and industrial uses were inherently not compatible. The argument of the neighborhood, and the finding of the planning staff, was that such uses worked together pretty well on the Eastern Edge of the Northwest District. As long as industrial uses didn't generate too much noise, traffic, or noxious emissions, they weren't a problem. And as long as zoning practices and real estate deals didn't combine to destroy housing, the presence of industrial or commercial uses wasn't a problem, either.[49]

The industrial interests railed against this judicious construction. At Planning Commission hearings that May, Mitchell Drake repeatedly invoked the claim that since the area had been zoned for industry since 1924 it should continue to be so. He suggested that recent urban pioneers were simply being selfish in demanding regulatory support for residential redevelopment. "Now the tail is beginning to wag the dog," Drake said, "in the fact that they want to make sure that they maintain their investment to the exclusion of those people who have been there for a much longer period than they have." He was all for diversity, he continued, but not if "this diversity means that the residential community is to have a paramount place." Besides, the guidelines for implementing the policy were "unworkable," on the one hand because of their "lack of clarity," and on the other hand because they seemed to say that "this area is residential and basically nothing else."[50]

Harold Schnitzer, speaking for the same side, attacked the idea that preserving the housing in the area was even possible. "If somebody wants to fix them, God bless them," Schnitzer said mockingly of a block of old houses at 17th and NW Flanders. "In my opinion, if I were a banker, I wouldn't loan a dime on them. I would say get yourself a good arsonist or get yourself a bulldozer in order to build some good housing there." If housing was desired, the City should buy the site and put up high rise housing. "But any policy which is restrictive and says that that type of deteriorated housing should be maintained is a blemish and a flaw and is destructive of the community." Drake had argued that you couldn't preserve such a "status quo." Schnitzer said it was impossible to "freeze" housing and invoked principles from high school physics about nature abhorring a vacuum.[51]

The problem with such arguments was not just that they were just as self-serving as those of the residents, or that they misrepresented the facts of the case, or were sometimes self-contradictory, they were also contradicted by the reality on the ground. People were fixing up many of those homes. George Sheldon, sitting in the same hearing room, had bought a beat-up swack of rowhouses on NW Irving and made them beautiful. Just as bad, the industrial interests didn't put anything on paper for the hearing. All the City Council saw from them that summer was the verbatim transcript of their extemporaneous ramblings before the Planning Commission.

The folks from the NWDA, meanwhile, made their own territorial claims. While housing

was present throughout the policy sub-area, it was, in fact, predominant in an eight-block strip between 17th and 18th Avenues. Nor was the area all zoned for industry and much of what was had been a mistake. "The zoning errors of the past have not as yet created a wholly irreversible situation," they wrote. "Taken as a whole, the Eastern Edge is a good place to live and with proper planning can remain so." Moreover, the health of the core of Northwest, the Central policy sub-area, depended on maintaining the edge. "We urge you not to jeopardize their viability by abandoning the adjacent Eastern Edge to speculators and traffic engineers." But in this instance, good planning would have to mean a policy that was more explicit and guidelines more rigorous.[52]

The NWDA argued that the policy language: "maintain and encourage a mixture of uses," was inadequate. Without the additional phrase, "which is compatible with the viable residential and institutional components within and adjacent to this area," the policy would be open to hostile interpretations from Planning Commissions yet to be appointed. "The 'mixture of uses' referred to could one day be construed to mean any mix of elements whatever irregardless (*sic*) of their compatibility and effects on their surroundings." More than anything else, the plan needed a policy for the Eastern Edge that "is a clear definition of what really should be done." When Planning Commission reviewed applications for changes in use they should "determine the extent of its effect on the deterioration of housing stock in the City."[53]

They wouldn't get their way. The City Council had found their middle ground on the issue and would stick with it. The arguments had become familiar, the rhetoric predictable. The ground for agreement had become increasingly firm, and it was time to put the plan to bed. But one more issue needed to be resolved before that happened. Was this Northwest District Plan, indeed, the first "chunk" in the City's state-mandated comprehensive plan? Neither Bonner, the planning director, nor the City Attorney, nor the Planning Commission or City Council were quite ready to cross that bridge in 1975. As John Osburn, the attorney, pointed out, "the comprehensive plan is not just a series of New Year's resolutions for objectives that are being worked toward, but are sufficiently defined that the City or County has an obligation to translate them directly into zoning laws." The quickly-evolving case law in Oregon had confirmed that localities had a duty to enact comprehensive plans consistent with the state-wide land use goals, that people had "a right to rely" on such plans, and that any zone changes be made based on a demonstrated "public need." Calling the Northwest District Plan a "comprehensive" plan would have been to endorse the entire process as having defined Portland's "public need." Although it was left unsaid, the plan's grassroots beginnings gave pause to the decision makers. Calling it a "comprehensive plan" would also have been to chart a course in which the ultimate citywide comprehensive plan would be a patchwork of neighborhood plans. The planners wanted a comprehensive plan that was

made of whole cloth, and the City Council agreed. This would be the Northwest District *Policy* Plan. In ultimate effect there was not much difference. It served as well to protect residential uses in Northwest. But it allowed officials to put off a final decision on a plan on which all citizens could "rely."[54]

The City Council passed the plan. They were tired of the controversy. The planners were frazzled. The citizens were feeling defeated, even the ones who had won. The plan was really a great achievement. It had translated powerful popular aspirations into explicit public policy. If not "carved in stone," the principles of the plan were written in the public consciousness and could not be denied. But it should be remembered that it did not feel like a victory for the residents at that moment. Lucian Himes, who had spent five years working on the plan, addressed the City Council that July in utter exasperation:

> Here we are again. How many times have we been here? My state is one of abject frustration... But I'm more than frustrated. I'm angry. I know that's not good. But we've attempted accommodation, compromise from our earliest deliberations. The original draft plan – it's spirit has been wrecked. The goals and policies have been badly twisted and eroded. My constant litany has been to keep reviewing the original work – to hold on to its spirit and rationalities. Each time a new production appears there is less and less remaining.[55]

Yet the plan would ultimately do the trick, more or less. It served as a continuing framework for refinements and elaborations of policy and procedure. In 1977 the City Council adopted several amendments to the Policy Plan that made previous decisions easier to implement. Where the policies adopted in 1975 would allow conversions of residential property in the Central sub-area only in cases where the proposed new uses were "substantially residential and if the residential character of the building is retained," a new administrative procedure specified the meaning of "substantially" as 35 percent of the gross floor area. When the conditional use permit was for new construction in place of an existing residential use, and the new building was required to be "predominantly residential," the meaning of "predominantly" was specified as 50 percent of the gross floor area. In the Hills and Westside sub-area one big chunk of territory was rezoned from AO to A1 and another chunk zoned A1 was rezoned to A2.5, in keeping with the existing pattern of development on that middle class, single family, high ground. Still another amendment incorporated in policy language the outlines of the planning work then recently completed in the Thurman Vaughn corridor. It was bleached-beige bureaucratic prose, devoid of all idealism and heroics. But it made the neighborhood's intentions real. That couldn't be a defeat.[56]

Good Samaritan and the Growth Boundary

One of the great ironies in the conclusion of the Northwest District Policy Plan was the lack of conflict between the neighborhood association and the hospital whose expansion plans had prompted its creation. The adopted policies recognized Good Samaritan's position in the neighborhood and defined its limits as negotiated with the NWDA. This agreement was rooted in the now-stable relationship between the two parties. Each had acknowledged the necessity of accepting the legitimate needs of the other and limiting their own actions accordingly. The hospital hired Skidmore Owings and Merrill in 1974 to create a master plan for the campus. The resulting plan was reflected in the Policy Plan, and became, in turn, the basis for a "Memorandum of Understanding" between Good Samaritan and the NWDA that defined a "growth boundary" for the hospital.[57]

The MOU read like a treaty or a contract. "The Hospital" and "the Association," it said, "are jointly committed to preservation and enhancement of neighborhood uses consistent with the Policy Plan and to hospital development consistent with the Master Plan." NWDA agreed that "it will, at the Hospital's request, actively support the Hospital's acquisition and development of property within the boundary... as long as reasonably consistent with the Master Plan and Policy Plan." Furthermore, it said, "the parties recognize that development at the edge of the boundary is particularly important to neighborhood livability and the Hospital agrees to allow the Association to review and comment on major design decisions with respect to such development." Good Sam swore off the practice of tearing down old houses without firm and timely plans for new construction in their place. Meanwhile, the Hospital agreed that "property acquired by any means outside the Master Plan boundary... will be maintained, developed or disposed of in a manner consistent with the Policy Plan. The Hospital further agrees that the agreement of the Association will be obtained prior to any hospital facilities development on property outside the Master Plan boundary and within the Policy Plan boundary."[58]

Good Samaritan did not always adhere to the agreement, but as a going concern, the NWDA was vigilant in calling them to account. The neighborhood association complained about a series of alleged violations of the MOU including leasing office space,[59] creating a communications center, opening a dialysis unit, and building a new parking lot, all outside the growth boundary and, according to one reporter, "all initiated without consultation with the neighborhood association." The story continued, "hospital spokespeople respond that the facilities outside the boundary have been leased, not purchased, and therefore not covered by the provisions of the master plan." The neighborhood association wasn't buying that explanation and received staunch support from the City Council, including from Commissioner Margaret Strachan, a former NWDA staffer. She raked one unfortunate hospital bureaucrat over the coals and Good Samaritan was forced to make some accommodations. [60]

Members of the neighborhood association sometimes resorted to strong language against the hospital, challenging motives and character. But mostly they kept the relationship in perspective. "I think you negotiate with people the same way no matter who they are," said John Werneken, NWDA chair in 1983.

> You treat them as if they were trustworthy, but be prepared for the possibility that they aren't. If Good Sam were an individual and did the things they did I'd say they were untrustworthy, but they're not an individual. They're like any bureaucracy. That a neighborhood association and the city's second largest hospital won't see eye to eye is to be expected. I'm optimistic for the future. They're stuck with us the same way we're stuck with them, and they have a vested interest in maintaining peace and quiet. We have more political power than they do in areas that count, like planning and zoning decisions. Current reality conforms more closely to neighborhood desires than it does to their 1950s development plans.[61]

Later that same year, Good Samaritan and NWDA began negotiations on a revised Memorandum of Understanding. Both sides pursued their respective interests vigorously, but the talks were cordial enough to be productive and they reached agreement by early in 1984.[62] The neighborhood association agreed to a revision to the growth boundary, omitting some residential territory while including some new industrial property. They each agreed to negotiate the hospital's revised master plan as part of master conditional use permit application to the City (in which the hospital was forced to swallow some unwelcome concessions). The hospital, for its part, agreed to move one parking lot back inside the growth boundary and to construct a small park at Lovejoy and 21st.[63]

Rebecca Bowne, Good Samaritan's director of planning, transmitted the draft agreement to the NWDA with the observation: "I believe we are making progress to ensure the successful mixed-use and residential character of Northwest Portland... the negotiations and communications with the Northwest District Association Planning Subcommittee have been an excellent vehicle to further our mutual interest." She suggested a "signing ceremony." In September, they had one, and Kathy Sharp, lead negotiator for the NWDA announced, "Things have never felt so good... We've signed the agreement twice before. This is the first time we've felt like celebrating." The NWDA "has real credibility with the city," Bowne said. "And so we are looking for them to be an ally in our development."[64] This didn't make them best of friends. But it showed two institutions that had each gained in maturity, and a relationship between them constructed through their collective work and tempered by their experience of conflict.

Conclusion

This chapter, and chapters 5, 6, and 7 before it, have catalogued a series of important

events in the history of a neighborhood. They saw a group of citizens come together to protect their neighborhood from the threats of urban renewal and urban highway building. They saw a nascent neighborhood organization mobilize to create a plan that expressed its collective aspirations for the future of the neighborhood. The members constructed a cordial, if not warm, working relationship with their initial adversary, the hospital. Though it is not chronicled here, they eventually established a similar relationship with their neighbors in the Northwest Industrial Neighborhood Association. The NWDA also worked closely with the Bureau of Planning and other elements of City government to achieve their ends. The association gained stature, not only as the recognized political voice of Northwest District, but as constructive and trustworthy partners in the processes of city making. Its members did all of this working through, and sometimes against, a structure of ideas, language, practices, and organization that constitutes planning, public administration, placemaking, and urban development. Sometimes they used the terms and forms that were offered. Sometimes they adapted these for their own purposes. But they created something. It may not be lasting in a deeper historical sense. At least it continues to reverberate to the present moment.

The work of the citizens of Northwest District also reverberated throughout the development of the "Portland way of planning." If neighborhood associations in Portland today are recognized as legitimate voices of residential communities and, indeed, if they are sometimes criticized as having too much power, the NWDA deserves a fair share of the credit. If expectations about citizen involvement, the right to be heard, and the right to influence decisions that will affect the places people live are part of the bedrock of Portland politics, it is partly because of the precedents they set in Northwest. If the value of diversity, the function of mixed-uses, the role of neighborhood shopping streets, the need to limit the use of the automobile, and many other ideas in planning are part of the accepted conceptual framework of planning in Portland, all of those ideas were developed and applied early on in Northwest. As noted above, Northwest District also provided Portland with a generation of political leaders who shared these ideas and propagated this sensibility. What they did in Northwest Portland helped create the structure of planning politics in that city.

They weren't the only ones. There were other citizens in other neighborhoods who also made a difference. There were, of course, political leaders at a broader scale – Goldschmidt and McCall foremost among them – who also contributed to this construction. But if the Mayor's leadership and the Governor's sponsorship of Senate Bill 100 changed the face of Portland planning politics, so did the thousands of citizen activists who worked in places like Northwest. What they did was made possible by changes made at the larger scale, but the opposite is just as true. Neither McCall nor Goldschmidt could have succeeded without the work citizens did at the

smaller scale.

The citizens of Northwest continue this work today. Some of the issues they confront are the result of the success of the Northwest District Plan of the 1970s. Residential development has filled in the empty spaces, hardened the neighborhood's edge along Thurman and Upshur, and pushed industrial uses to the periphery. Rents are high, not low. The commercial strips of NW 21st and 23rd are bustling tourist destinations, thick with fancy restaurants and high-priced shops, to the point where some residents complain that their neighborhood has become an "urban theme park." New development threats, like the proposed redevelopment of nearby Civic Stadium, have cropped up. Yet they continue to work in a similar way. As the century turned, Northwest District prepared a new neighborhood plan. The institutional context in which they worked was a bit more rigid than before, but that was due, in part, to the work of their predecessors in the neighborhood association. The issues were different, also partly for the same reasons. But the ideas about planning, democracy, and urbanism through which they worked were very similar. And, as before, the process of participatory neighborhood planning was difficult, frustrating, time consuming, and not much fun.[65]

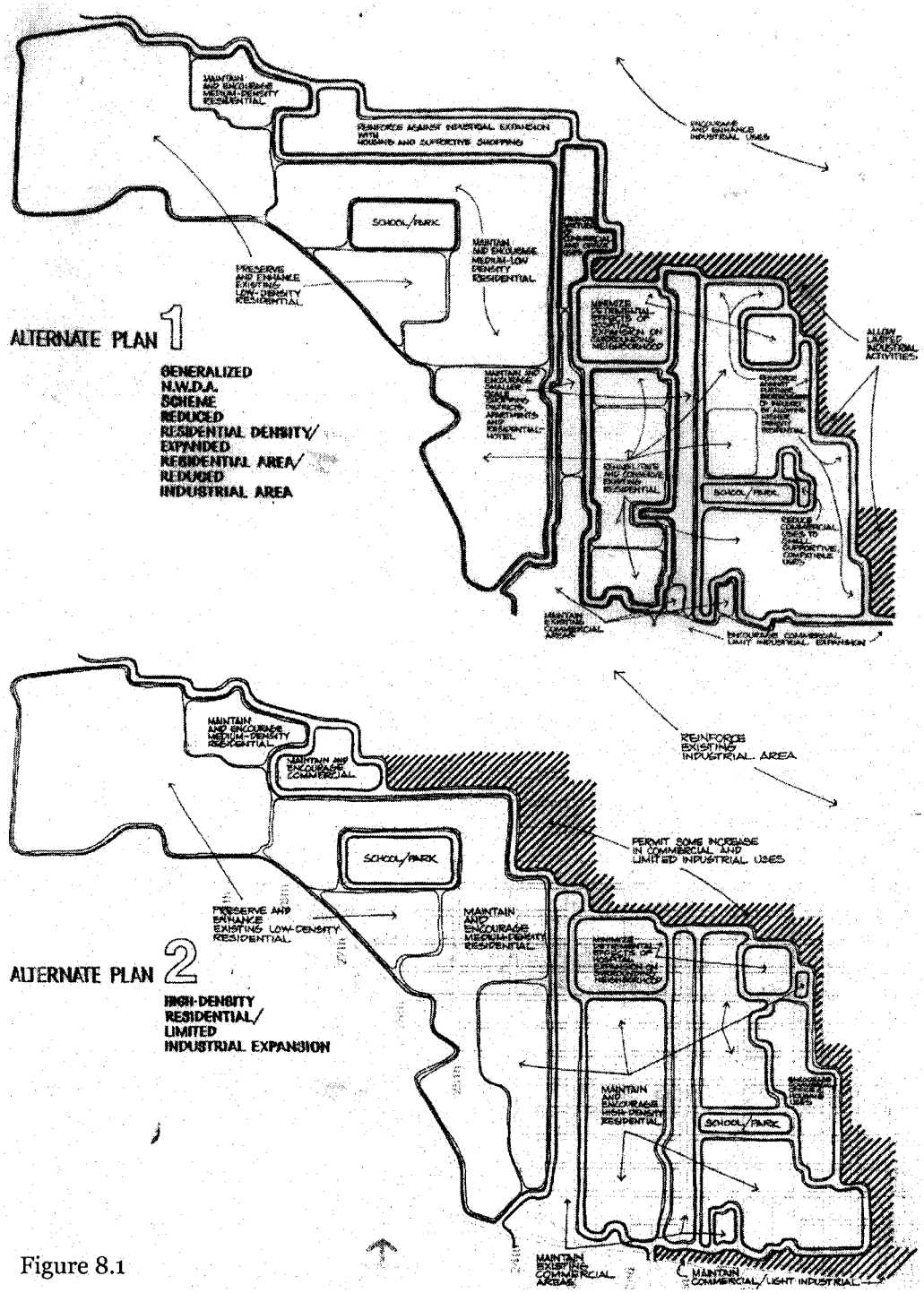
ALTERNATE PLAN 1
GENERALIZED
N.W.D.A.
SCHEME
REDUCED
RESIDENTIAL DENSITY/
EXPANDED
RESIDENTIAL AREA/
REDUCED
INDUSTRIAL AREA
MAINTAIN AND ENCOURAGE MEDIUM-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
REINFORCE AGAINST INDUSTRIAL EXTENSION WITH HOUSING AND SUPPORTIVE SHOPPING
SCHOOL/PARK
MAINTAIN AND ENCOURAGE MEDIUM-LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
PRESERVE AND ENHANCE EXISTING LOW-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
ENCOURAGE AND ENHANCE INDUSTRIAL USES
ALLOW LARGER INDUSTRIAL ACTIVITIES
ENCOURAGE COMMERCIAL LIMIT INDUSTRIAL EXPANSION
ALTERNATE PLAN 2
HIGH-DENSITY
RESIDENTIAL/
LIMITED
INDUSTRIAL EXPANSION
MAINTAIN AND ENCOURAGE MEDIUM-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
MAINTAIN AND ENCOURAGE COMMERCIAL
SCHOOL/PARK
PRESERVE AND ENHANCE EXISTING LOW-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
REINFORCE EXISTING INDUSTRIAL AREA
PERMIT SOME INCREASE IN COMMERCIAL AND LIMITED INDUSTRIAL USES
MAINTAIN AND ENCOURAGE HIGH-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
MAINTAIN EXISTING COMMERCIAL AREAS
MAINTAIN COMMERCIAL/LIGHT INDUSTRIAL

Figure 8.1

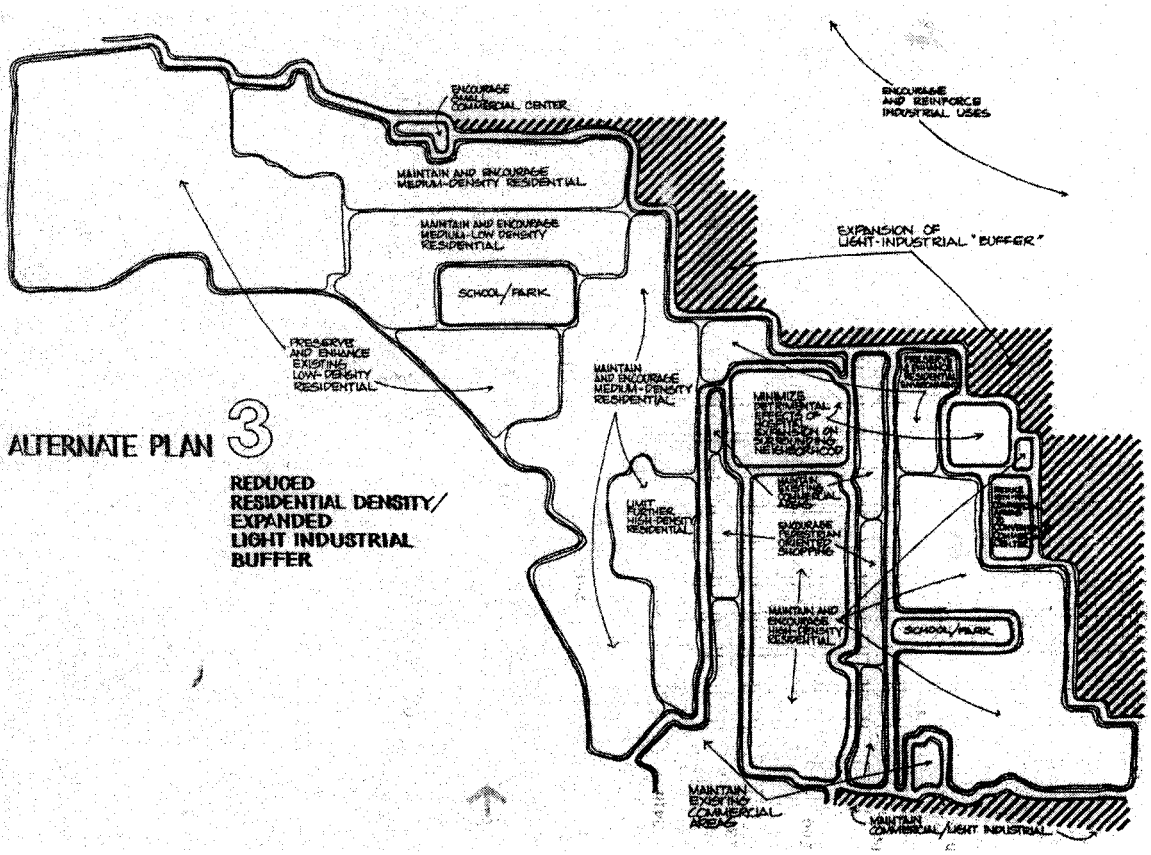
ENCOURAGE SMALL COMMERCIAL CENTER
MAINTAIN AND ENCOURAGE MEDIUM-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
MAINTAIN AND ENCOURAGE MEDIUM-LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
SCHOOL/PARK
PRESERVE AND ENHANCE EXISTING LOW-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
ENCOURAGE AND REINFORCE INDUSTRIAL USES
EXPANSION OF LIGHT-INDUSTRIAL "BUFFER"
MAINTAIN AND ENCOURAGE MEDIUM-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
ALTERNATE PLAN 3
REDUCED RESIDENTIAL DENSITY/ EXPANDED LIGHT INDUSTRIAL BUFFER
LIMIT FURTHER HIGH-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
ENCOURAGE PEDESTRIAN-ORIENTED SHOPPING
MAINTAIN AND ENCOURAGE MEDIUM-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
SCHOOL/PARK
MAINTAIN EXISTING COMMERCIAL AREAS
MAINTAIN COMMERCIAL/LIGHT INDUSTRIAL

Figure 8.2

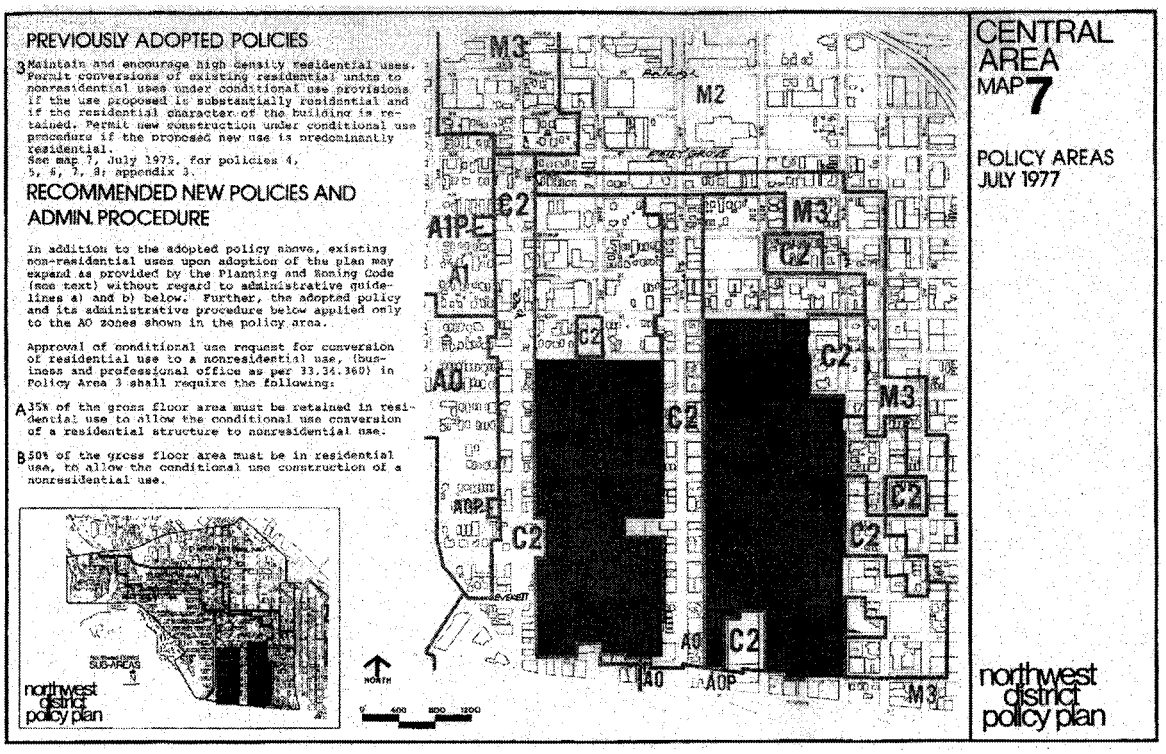

Figure 8.3

Figure 8.4

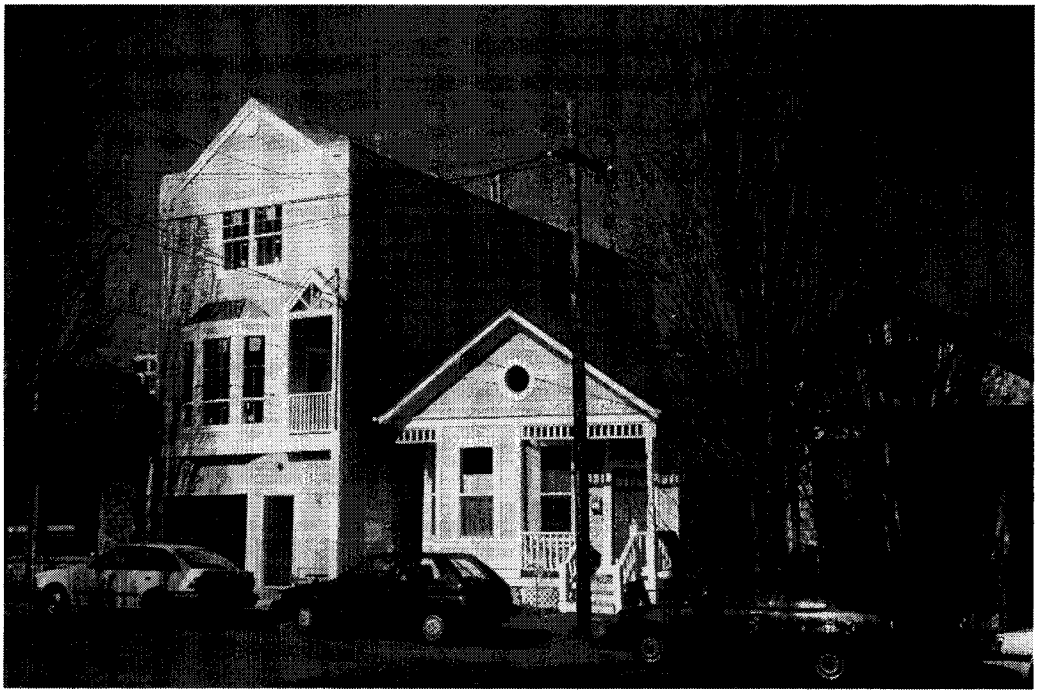

Figure 8.5

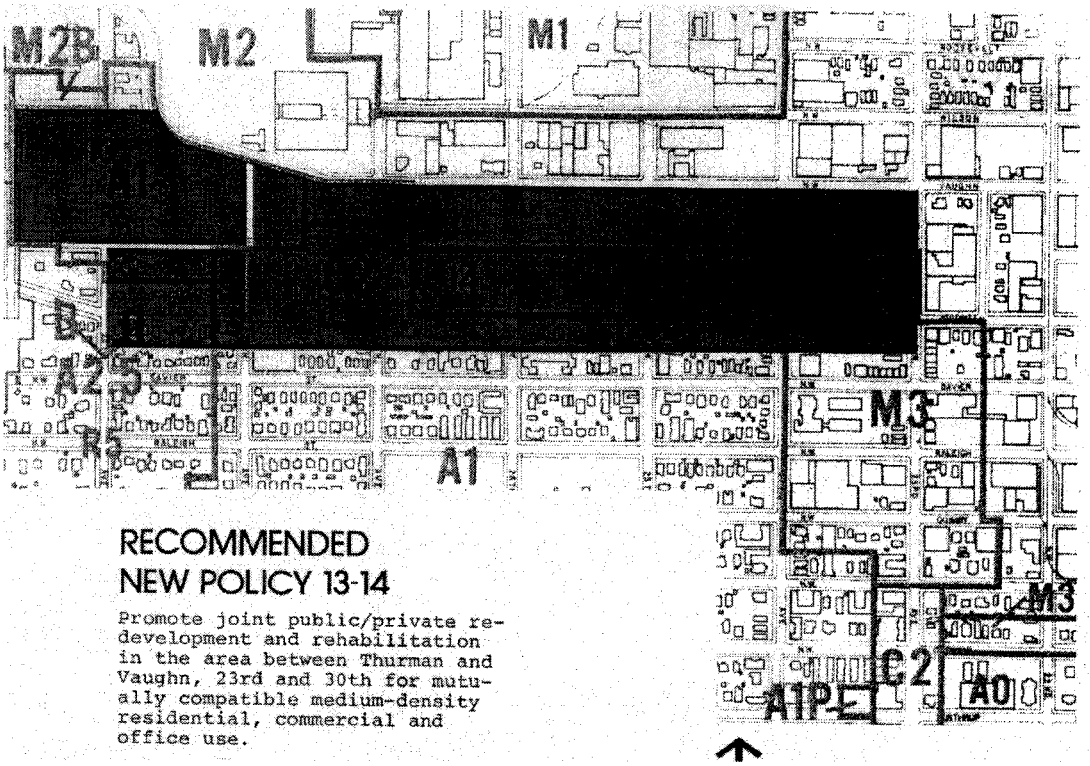

Figure 8.6

Notes for Chapter 8.

[1] Paul Pintarich, *The Oregonian*, November 11, 1973, p. 4F.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Portland City Planning Commission, Staff Report, November 6, 1973, p. 4, Stanley Parr Archives and Records Center: [7706-10 box 9/11, 09-04-28, 9/24].

[4] Kenneth Burke, *On Symbols and Society*, Joseph R. Gusfield, ed., Chicago: University of Chicago, 1989, pp. 69-74.

[5] PCPC, Staff Report, November 6, 1973, p. 3.

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[7] Ibid. pp. 5-6.

[8] "Planners accept District housing goals," *The Oregonian*, November 14, 1973.

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[10] Patty Mantia, "Planners approve housing goals for NW," *The Press,* November 21, 1973, [Ernie Bonner papers].

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[12] Portland City Planning Commission, Ernie Bonner to Planning Commission members, Northwest District Association, and Northwest Improvement Committee, "Adoption of Goals from the Draft Northwest District Comprehensive Plan," March 1, 1974. SPARC: Council Documents, 1974, [2001-09, 01-07-16, (41/ 16-17)].

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[18] PCPC, "Northwest District Plan Alternatives," n.d.

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[20] Ibid. pp. 12-15.

[21] Ibid. p. 19.

[22] "Planning Guidelines Adopted," *The Oregon Journal*, May 31, 1974, p. A7.

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[26] Northwest Improvement Committee, "A case for industrial zoned lands in Northwest Portland," November 12, 1974. SPARC: Council Docs. 1974, [2001-09 Box 41/16-17 01-07-16].

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[36] Portland City Planning Commission, "Northwest District Plan Notebook," June 1975, p. 1, SPARC: Council Documents, [2001-09, 01-06-16, 1912, 1974, (41/16-17)].

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[42] Ibid.

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[51] Ibid. pp. III-19 to III-22.

[52] Ibid. pp. III-7 to III-13.

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[58] Ibid.

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[61] Ibid.

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[63] Good Samaritan Hospital and Medical Center, Rebecca Bowne, corporate director of planning, to NWDA planning committee, April 4, 1984, [NWDA files].

[64] Richard Colby, *The Oregonian*, September 9, 1984.

[65] Personal correspondence with Ernie Bonner, member Portland Planning Commission, January 2003.

Chapter 9. City, Region, State

Between the first public rumblings of an urban renewal plan for the Northwest District in 1969 (Chapters 5-8) and the last anti-climactic gasps of the Southwest Community Plan in 2001 (Chapters 10-13) was a period of more than three decades that transformed Portland's political way of life and approach to city-making. At the beginning of the period Portland was governed by a narrow and aging regime of conservative white businessmen who presided over an undersized administrative apparatus attempting to implement dubious and outdated planning ideologies unwatched and unmoved by an inert public. At the end is a broad, robust, and unusual coalition of business interests, professional groups, environmentalists, and "quality of life liberals," who support visible, activist elected leaders, who manage a large, powerful, and interlocking set of planning bureaucracies, which are enacting a previously untested set of policies and principles for city and regional development, and in a community where citizen participation has become so embedded in civic life that Carl Abbott could write off-handedly of Portland's "top 10,000 leaders."[1]

It is hard to exaggerate the density of institutional engineering, political innovation, civic enterprise and, especially, rhetorical creativity that was involved in this process of cultural production. Any story is necessarily a reduction of what happened and how the participants experienced and understood the events involved. But to summarize the thirty year development of the "Portland way of planning" is to reduce a massive cultural process to a mere spirit of the experience. Indeed, over the years tens of thousands of Portland citizens – and for the purposes of this overview, Oregonians in general – have been actively involved in one way or another in the work of creating and re-creating a distinctive and democratic way of governing the process of city-making. The process has encompassed everything from neighborhood planning and the close civic combat involved in zoning and regulation at the smallest urban scale to the creation of a statewide system through which every acre of Oregon is planned, zoned, and regulated. It has also included distinctive achievements in downtown development, transportation planning, regional governance and growth management, and citizen participation. The reality from which a story is abstracted is enormous.

A great deal has already been written about the Portland way of planning. The achievements of the regime have attracted admirers from around the nation.[2] Even more has been

written by Portland-based scholars and journalists who are generally sympathetic to the regime but often cast a critical eye on the experience.[3] As a city that scholars love to study, Portland now approaches the status of New Haven, Atlanta, Chicago, or Los Angeles. The history of the evolving regime has, likewise, been heavily documented both by a Fourth Estate highly attuned to planning issues, and by the organizations of planning themselves. This chapter can add little new to our substantive knowledge of the history of Portland planning. It is based mainly on the work of others who, in many cases, have studied the topic in greater depth than I have. Such a chapter can only skim the surface of a story that is as broad, deep, and dense as this one is. What I offer here instead is an interpretation of a history that can provide a context for understanding the two case studies on which I focus, and suggest how citizens acting in relatively small events within narrow compass can have an impact on the bigger picture, as well as the other way around.

It is difficult to draw the causal arrows either from up to down or down to up. No doubt the creation of statewide land use planning in Oregon had a powerful impact on planning at every level in Portland. Yet, there was also a powerful upwelling of citizen demand for neighborhood planning and improvement at the same time. Senate Bill 100, the legislation which launched the statewide land use planning system in 1973, did grant authority to metropolitan entities to develop land use planning. Yet it also relied on early efforts on the local level to organize metropolitan governance. Likewise, the impulse for more meaningful citizen participation in planning came from both above and below. A demand that was expressed in scattered planning conflicts was soon thereafter codified as state policy in land use Goal 1. As I have argued above, the relationship between broader structural features of society and local action is reciprocal and recursive. The causal arrows point in both directions.

In the pages that follow, I provide a brief treatment of the history of planning in downtown and the neighborhoods of Portland, the creation of a citywide system of planning and participation, the establishment of institutions of regional governance and the evolution of a practice of regional growth management planning, and the development of the statewide system of land use planning. While any of these could be examined discretely, the stories of their emergence are interconnected and their current realities are intimately interrelated. The values produced in one arena of planning have influenced the values brought to the work of planning in general. The terms, rules, and practices at one level have been shaped by those at another and the structuring forces are not always from the top down.

And the process continues. The participants in any phase of this evolution have worked with the cultural materials that the past has provided them. But they have also left a legacy of concepts of planning and democracy, of organizational structures, and more, that will both bind

and empower future participants. Those who care about Portland often wonder if they can keep it going, if a powerful system of growth management planning can be sustained in the face of unforeseen changes in economy, politics, and society. We must wait and see. But what is certain is that they will address their future from a different position than many other regions. What they have done, and especially what they have said, has provided them with a quite different kind of equipment for seeing, understanding, and directing their city. The Portland way of planning is rooted in mere words and ideas, yet it will require a very powerful and coherent apparatus of language and all that language makes possible to supplant what is already in place.

Downtown planning in Portland

Like a lot of the stories about planning in Portland, the tale of the 1972 Downtown Plan has been burnished to a high gloss by repeated retellings. The problem is not that the plan wasn't a resounding success. It was one of the great successes of 20th century urban development. In the decades following the adoption of the plan Portland's downtown improved along all of the indicators contemporary planners would consider important. Downtown employment grew by roughly a third by 1980 and by another 25 percent by 1993. Retail sales rebounded as a percentage of the metropolitan market. The proportion of commuter trips to downtown by transit surged.[4] Controls on the design of new buildings and programs to preserve old buildings improved the physical environment of the downtown.[5] Public efforts to stimulate the construction of new downtown housing began to bear fruit. The 1972 Downtown Plan did what any good plan is supposed to do: it reduced the uncertainty for both public and private investment in the downtown space by announcing a compelling strategy for renewal and enforcing its conditions. It did so, in part, by making sure that the planning process had a broad base in citizen participation. As a result, not only did the elements of the plan get implemented, but other good things, not necessarily named in the plan also began to happen.

The problem with the tale of the 1972 Downtown Plan is that it reduces what we might learn from the experience of making the plan to a kind of civic parable, a story that is simplistic and uninstructive. It presents the bold moves of the plan as the result of little more than genius on the part of leaders and citizens. It elides the inertia, conflict, challenges of genuine consensus-building, tedium, and continuing mundane work required either to produce a plan or to put it into effect. It makes cornerstone projects seem as if they popped out of the heads of their sponsors like so many soap bubbles. In short, the oft-told tale of the downtown plan lies by making it look like it was easy. It wasn't.

While much historical analysis of urban politics focuses on conflicts between competing

interest groups, the first problem confronting those who wanted a plan to save downtown Portland was inertia, the sheer cussedness of trying to get anything done in an environment of many players. The planning process that finally emerged in 1970 was preceded by a series of false starts during the 1960s. While awareness was growing that Portland needed a plan for its downtown to solve problems of access, to protect retail and office activity, and to improve the public environment, actually organizing a planning process proved a difficult challenge. The Building Owners and Managers Association opted out of the process on a couple of occasions, with fatal results.[6] Rather than mobilizing the power of a cohesive center city business elite, early attempts to make a plan set loose chaos and ineptitude. When a planning effort finally did get off the ground, they struggled to raise money, both public and private, and to assemble a staff. The downtown plan effort borrowed County Planning Director Bob Baldwin to run it and farmed out much of the work to consultants. The firm CH2M Hill actually provided office space and furniture for the City-employed planners assigned to the project.[7]

No sooner had the business community – the big property owners, big employers, banks and utility companies – finally solved the problem of collective action, raised money, and organized a staff, that they were joined by others who wanted to put their mark on the planning. The character of local political culture required that the process be more broadly based than it might have been in another town. The initial steering committee was composed of mostly business people, but also included were members of the Planning Commission, representatives of relevant agencies, plus professionals (American Institute of Architects), civic activists (League of Women Voters), and organized labor. This group kept the focus on key business concerns – parking and transportation – for most of a year. But soon others were beating on the door, and consistent with Portland political culture even then, the demand for still broader participation was impossible to deny. Architect Jon Schluening organized a citizens group, arranged to meet with Mayor Terry Schrunk and Commissioner Frank Ivancie, and demanded they be let into the process. Ivancie appointed a five-member committee to talk about broadening participation that quickly blew up into a 15- or 18-member committee with 150 people involved in subcommittees. He appointed Ron Cease to chair the committee, but when it first met, the membership elected Dean Gisvold. As one key participant recalls, it took some work to convince the business leadership that it was a good thing that all these people be involved. Yet, in the end, extensive participation gave the plan a mark of legitimacy it could have gained no other way.[8]

The key elements of the 1972 Downtown plan are well-known. It incorporated the removal of the Harbor Freeway, by then already under way, and the creation of what was later named Tom McCall Park, intended to retrieve the Willamette riverfront from its historic

industrial and transportation uses. The centerpiece of the plan was a determined effort to shift the balance in transportation from making downtown Portland accessible by car to making it accessible by people using public transit and other modes of travel. One study in the late 1960s said they needed an additional 10,000 parking spaces. Instead, the plan put a cap on new parking and focused on the systemic rationalization of bus routes along a two-street transit mall.[9] Part of the genius of the scheme was that it resisted the temptation to create a single, transit-only street, and used, instead, two parallel streets with limited automobile traffic. The spatial structure of the plan organized downtown land uses in one broad stroke, focusing office development along the 4th and 5th Avenue bus mall and promising further transit investments to catalyze retail redevelopment along the perpendicular of Morrison and Yamhill. Finally, at the intersection of these two axes, the plan featured a proposal for one grand new public space – what became known as Pioneer Courthouse Square – as the new civic "living room" for Portland.

What is less well appreciated is the fact that many of these elements had their origins in ongoing public conversations that suggested change long before it seemed possible. The bus mall was an adaptation of a similar project in Minneapolis. But the removal of Harbor Freeway was a stroke that had been talked about locally for years. The preservation of downtown retail was also a goal expressed in ongoing talk. The eventual imposition of a parking cap arose partly from the emerging discourse on the threat of cars to the city, partly from broader conversations about clean air. Even the glossy stories identify Pioneer Courthouse Square as a project with deep roots in public talk. Not only had the idea of a new civic square been proposed for years, the idea built on the meaning given to this site by those who remembered the Portland Hotel that sat there for roughly a century. When business interests suggested the site was ideal for a new parking ramp (five times the size of the one that was already there) the idea was blown away by public protest. Such protest was not mere talk. It was a powerful form of rhetorical action.

What people in some other communities may find remarkable about the 1972 Downtown Plan is how assiduously government, business, and citizens advanced its implementation. This occurred on many fronts: the design and construction of the bus mall as a major public works project; the development and adoption of detailed urban design guidelines for the downtown; creation of regulatory and development programs for historic architecture; and the creation of revised zoning ordinances incorporating height and density bonuses for public art, child care, and affordable housing. Some of the pieces, such as the recruitment of Nordstroms to build a new department store opposite the new public square and the creation of the Pioneer Place shopping mall, required the active involvement of Mayor Goldschmidt. Others involved more quiet and technical work by professional planners such as Rod O'Hiser. Still others needed a return to

political organizing.

Because of Goldschmidt's leadership, or because of the broad-based involvement of citizens (rather than just businessmen) in the development of the 1972 Downtown Plan, or perhaps because of the conceptual power and simplicity of the plan itself, it did not operate as the proverbial "plan on a shelf." It was treated instead as a public agreement about the future of downtown Portland, serving as an always-available rhetorical prod for anyone who wanted to invoke its provisions. This was most clearly seen in the fight for Pioneer Courthouse Square. When then-Mayor Frank Ivancie (who might be understood as the anti-Goldschmidt) declared that the city would not pursue the new civic square project, citizens organized to push it ahead on their own. They raised money to build the square by selling commemorative bricks to the public. And they pressed the other members of the City Council to support the project. After all, it was in the plan. It was inconsistent with the emerging protocols of planning statewide to discard a project that was stipulated in an adopted plan. It wasn't something they might do. It was something they must do.

In these ways, the 1972 Downtown Plan became embedded in Portland culture. It persisted as a resource for those who sought to improve downtown. Likewise, it continued as a defense against those who would violate its rules in the pursuit of narrow self-interest or expedience. It expressed and embodied a whole range of crucial values about the physical and social city: the importance of public spaces, pedestrian environments, urban parks, housing, mixed uses, density, historic architecture, and high quality transit. It made it possible to evaluate any proposal in terms of an established set of criteria. It was "the word" on downtown Portland.

Much less celebrated, but no less important, was the Portland Central City Plan, adopted after much turmoil in 1988. It did not generate any new ideas or values about the creation and use of urban space, but it reconfirmed, recodified, and extended the reach of those created as part of the earlier planning process. The plan went beyond the geographic bounds of the original plan, incorporating areas north of Burnside Street, Goose Hollow to the west, North Macadam to the south, and East Side industrial area and Lloyd Center on the opposite bank of the Willamette to the east. It projected the expansion of the transit mall and new office and residential development several blocks to the north and new development on the East Side. It was criticized in some quarters for a lack of "vision," but this was inevitable because it basically called for more of the same as had already been provided. When the earlier plan brought about what people understood as a transformation of the old downtown, how could the new plan measure up?

Indeed, some visionaries deemed the Central City Plan a failure. The plan-makers discussed the possibility of making a bold statement through the removal of Interstate 5 on the

East bank of the river, but they did not follow through. They preserved East Side light industrial and warehouse uses with the creation of an "industrial sanctuary" zone, which limited the ability of potential developers to transform the East Side into a new area of mixed use residential and commercial activity in new and renovated building stock. But the plan did lead to the development of the Pearl District, the River District, and North Macadam as new residential and mixed use neighborhoods, and provided for new office development along the extended transit mall near China Town. It foreshadowed, as well, redevelopment in the West End, and continued expansion of residential uses in the Northwest District.

What was remarkable about the Central City Plan was not the product, but the process, and the civic ambition by which it was propelled. It came after roughly a decade of implementation of the 1972 plan, so it was time to do an update. But it was initiated in a most unusual way, by a City Commissioner not in charge of the Bureau of Planning, and suspicious of the leadership of that Bureau. Instead of a "staff-driven" process, Commissioner Margaret Strachan engineered a "citizen-driven" process, with a Citizen Steering Committee rather than Bureau executives in charge of the plan. The arrangement was part expedience, part ideological thrust, and the result was likewise ambiguous, despite Strachan's subsequent assumption of the Bureau of Planning after Bud Clark beat Frank Ivancie in the 1984 mayoral election.[10]

Not surprisingly, a 19-member citizen steering committee got bogged down in the decision-making necessary to produce a finished plan, and when Strachan lost her bid for reelection in 1986, her successor as commissioner-in-charge quietly dismissed the committee and handed the plan back to the professionals. Not dismissed, however, was the product of an aggressive citizen participation effort. While the committee members were pushed aside their recommendations were preserved as best as possible by the staff in charge (in this case, the redoubtable Michael Harrison). Citizens, staff, and politicians alike endorsed the core values of the Portland planning program. So, despite some misgivings about the results, they had a new plan that built on the successes of the previous one.

Two details in the story are illuminating. First was the ambition for the plan expressed by the chair of the Citizen Steering Committee, Donald Stastny. Early in the process he wrote a letter to Strachan expressing his confidence that the product of their work would not only be a productive plan for a greater downtown Portland, it would help Portland define the character of the successful 21st century city. That such a statement, even made privately, did not sound totally ridiculous or incredibly arrogant is testimony both to how far Portland had come in developing its downtown and at the same time to the extraordinary reach of its supporters. Likewise, it spoke to the ways that their successes in planning had bolstered citizens' sense of their city, as well as

themselves, and Portland's place on the national stage.

A second detail of the story demonstrated how deeply embedded Portland's commitment to planning and to downtown had become after just a decade and a half. A number of explanations were advanced for Margaret Strachan's defeat in 1986. She was replaced by a law-and-order candidate who criticized her refusal to support an expansion of staffing in the police department.[11] Strachan also ran a complacent and distracted campaign. But it could not have helped that her planning process was widely seen as over budget and overdue. When the City Council reorganized in January 1987, however, Strachan's replacement didn't get the Planning Bureau. Earl Blumenauer, later to become "Mr. Smart Growth" in the U.S. House of Representatives, was given the assignment instead. Rather than squashing the Central City Plan, he moved to rescue it from its supporters, which made it possible to say, as Portland always wishes to do, that the plan was adopted and it is a success. Five years later Harrison would describe the award-winning plan as largely implemented.[12]

Downtown planning in Portland continues to be goaded by the words and deeds of those who came before. The judgment that the Central City Plan lacked vision stung those who felt responsible for it. When Vera Katz became Mayor in 1993 she revived discussion about the removal of I-5. If a multi-billion dollar public works project to retrieve the other side of the Willamette riverfront wasn't visionary, what possibly could be? Later she would propose capping sections of I-405 on the West End of downtown as a way to muffle the traffic and create new development sites at the same time. When the city's reputation is so strong, the impulse to try to top the previous act is irresistible.

The same dynamic applied with the Portland streetcar project. The new line connects Northwest District and the adjacent Pearl District with the West End and Portland State University with a planned extension to the North Macadam district. Such a route could have been served more easily and cheaply with buses, but buses would not have provided the kind of public sensation that the streetcar has caused. Even among private sector actors, the impulse is there. A 100 percent location developer offered to create a 21st century addition to the 19th century Park Blocks as a sweetener for his high-rise office proposal. It never came to pass, but more recently, citizens have organized to connect the North and South Park Blocks by acquiring and demolishing buildings on the intervening blocks. Portland is a city in which the developers, as much as the government, must provide the incentives. But the question remained the same: how can Portland out-do Portland?[13]

Meanwhile, downtown continues to grow – to the extent that it was finally necessary to remove the cap on parking that had been instituted so many years earlier. Certainly, many

property developers have gotten rich building office space in downtown Portland. They have roughly doubled the square footage of office space in downtown since 1972. Several thousand new housing units have been added, as well. Downtown continues to be an increasingly inviting place to be, something which started with an assertion that it ought to be.

Neighborhoods

Like many broadly-based social movements, Portland's "neighborhood revolution" broke out in a number of different places at the same time. The Northwest District was one of the most important points of origin, but there many others. This was surely because the circumstances that the residents of these neighborhoods faced was similar from place to place. Urban renewal plans stirred up opposition in Lair Hill. Model Cities programs created new constituencies in near Northeast neighborhoods like Eliot and Albina. The processes of housing deterioration and land use succession mobilized residents in Buckman, Brooklyn, and much of the Southeast. The Mount Hood Freeway proposal was certainly a catalyst for grassroots action. Even citizen involvement in the downtown plan might be seen as a kind of neighborhood uprising given the type of people who participated in the Citizens Advisory Committee.

Yet, residents held a common intuition that somehow planning could play an important role in reviving Portland's neighborhoods. Residents seemed to be saying that if neighborhoods were going to be saved people had to get together, talk about their problems, agree on what to do about them, work together, and enlist the city in their cause. Given the disrepute in which planning was held at the time[14] it might be seen as surprising that people made planning the answer to the problems they faced. On the other hand, the idea of a plan is something much more expansive than is generally understood within the purview of city planning. A plan in the larger sense is exactly what citizens imagined: an agreement about problems, solutions, and courses of action. Organized neighborhoods would be less happy as planning got to be more about zoning patterns, overlay districts, and design regulations, and less about their visions. Either way, however, neighborhood associations in Portland have always been more about planning than any other thing. Neighborhood associations engaged in planning always grow. Those otherwise engaged may not.

In any case, the idea of neighborhood associations caught on quickly in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Within a few years there were about two dozen active neighborhood associations in Portland, with more in formation. The response on the part of members of the City Council was to institutionalize citizen participation through neighborhood associations as quickly as they could. Many observers have interpreted this simply as an attempt to "coopt" the power that

neighborhood associations organized,[15] but there are a number of problems with this view. First, the people who supported the development of a system of neighborhood participation had been elected in significant measure because of the support of these constituencies. As both candidate and Commissioner, Goldschmidt was an unequivocal supporter of neighborhood power, and Lloyd Anderson was also sympathetic. There is no reason to doubt that these sponsors of what were initially referred to as the District Planning Organizations, and later the Office of Neighborhood Associations, recognized an important role for organized residents in the redevelopment of the city. Nor is there anything particularly sinister about their desire to create a system that would channel a growing stream of demands from neighborhoods in an organized way.

More fundamentally, however, the process of cooptation involved in the creation of ONA must be understood as one that worked in both directions. It is undeniable that creating a system of neighborhood participation with staff, hierarchies, budgets, protocols, and a culture of its own served to domesticate street-level activism. No doubt that was the intention. It is also true that some political entrepreneurs, in this case Goldschmidt and others, gained and sustained power through institutionalizing neighborhood participation. But the benefits of this process also accrued to residents. The creation of ONA gave neighborhoods clear channels of redress and supported the continuity of neighborhood associations through staff and programming. In the crudest sense, city officials may have wanted neighborhoods to behave, but they didn't want them to go away. By recognizing and rewarding neighborhood organization ONA stimulated more of it. Over time the total number of neighborhood associations grew to nearly 100. As Raymond Williams might argue, the neighborhood system in Portland produced both pressures and limits.

The creation of the Portland neighborhood system was nothing if not deliberate. Staff for the Portland City Planning Commission – one John Perry, just then buckling down to do a neighborhood plan in Northwest District – drafted a "policy statement on district planning" in early 1971. The commission quickly adopted the policy and forwarded it to the City Council which, in turn, took up the matter that same summer. After some conscientious deliberation on the substance of the proposal, they agreed that fall to create a citizen task force to develop the idea. The task force was duly named in January 1972 but didn't actually meet until May.[16] When they finally did convene, Schrunk's choice to chair the group had declined the honor, and Odgen Beeman, one-time president of the Northwest District Association, was elected by the members instead. They met 37 times that year and hammered out a report they delivered to Goldschmidt, just installed as Mayor in January 1973.[17] Yet the process was not nearly done. The Planning Commission considered the report, an ordinance was drafted, an implementation plan developed,

and the whole assemblage forwarded to the City Council, which finally passed the measure that created the neighborhood system in early 1974.[18]

What took so long? There were no outright opponents of creating a city-wide structure of neighborhood participation in planning, although there were some skeptics. Rather, those involved in the discussion understood quite well that great care was required in designing a new element of local political architecture. Supporters of the concept made no secret that one of the main purposes of such a system was to help manage conflict. The initial policy statement said a new system of neighborhood participation "must redirect the powerful force of citizen involvement from its present role of opposition to the much more meaningful task of creation."[19] City Council members talked about how to make participation "constructive." Yet the intent was not to deny that force, merely to channel it, to make it more predictable. Lloyd Anderson declared "we cannot continue to give lip service to neighborhood involvement in planning without providing the procedure for making it a reality."[20]

Perry's original policy statement focused on some of these issues. A district planning process should help resolve conflicts, define roles and responsibilities of participants, create a systematic method of sharing ideas and information, and most of all, ensure that neighborhood plans, once adopted, would actually be followed and implemented.[21] But, Goldschmidt aide Ron Buel wrote to his boss, "how much power is the council willing to delegate to the neighborhoods?" That would need to be defined. How could planning staff provide technical assistance to all these neighborhoods when the Council refused to give adequate funding to the Bureau as it was? How would the boundaries of such organizations be established? How would they determine if each was "representative" of all the residents? "Someone," Buel added, "ought to make clear that in setting up these neighborhood organizations we are not going to take away the right of any individual to remonstrate or appeal." When the Council passed the issue on to the task force it was clear they were asking for *procedures* – procedures that would be the framework of an ongoing practice of neighborhood planning.[22]

The outlines of the system were apparent from the early discussions: a two-tiered structure of neighborhood and area organizations; staff and budget to assist in the work; mechanisms of communication between city and citizen; and some specific criteria for boundary making and recognition. But the members of the appointed task force asked many questions that would continue to be asked for the next quarter century. Were self-defined neighborhoods the right size for planning? Would neighborhood leaders really be representative of their fellow citizens? How would minority groups be represented, especially those geographically scattered across the city? Was there too much emphasis in the system on territory and not enough on

interests and identity? Perhaps most importantly, they asked, would the "process invest people with more power or will it make them powerless?" Would it help neighborhoods focus their demands or would it help City Hall deflect them? Would it facilitate complaint or would it muffle it in a tangle of bureaucratic procedure?[23]

The task force report and continuing discussion among elected officials provided the opening answers to these questions. One alternative proposed the creation of a "council of districts" – in effect a third tier of representation to deal with city-wide issues. The City Council rejected this idea as redundant to their own role, and to that of the Planning Commission, and as a needless additional layer of bureaucracy. Twenty-five years later, however, neighborhood associations were still struggling with the problem of how to aggregate their demands on a city-wide basis. Similarly, the Council also declined to designate the "District Planning Organization" as district planning boards. That, too, was too much decentralization for their tastes.[24]

They also provided a reasonably definitive answer to the question of what balance of power would exist between city and neighborhood. The task force stipulated that "no city or private agency shall write physical, social, or economic plans or programs for the neighborhood or district without first involving the planning organizations concerned," and that no "plans of proposals be funded and/or approved that do not have the approval of the neighborhood or district involved." But the Planning Commission tacked on crucial modifying language: "... unless overall City policy articulated by the City Council and approved by the majority of the neighborhoods is involved." In the end, the City Council assigned an even weaker role to the neighborhood associations. They would recommend policy, advise on priority needs, review budget proposals, collaborate in planning, and even manage projects, but they would not have formal veto power over anything.[25]

Nevertheless, they were creating a robustly self-regulating structure. Any neighborhood could form an association, draw its own boundaries, and be recognized as long as it maintained open membership, charged no dues, operated by approved by-laws, sought advice from residents, and recognized dissenting voices. The Office of Neighborhood Associations, likewise, had more obligations than it did prerogatives. They would serve to notify member associations of meetings, hearings, elections and other events; to provide information to associations; make referrals or provide liaison between neighborhood associations and appropriate agencies; help with mailings and newsletters; and facilitate communication overall.[26]

By 1975 there were 47 recognized neighborhood associations in Portland representing roughly 80 percent of the land area of the city. More than half of those were established after the discussion on a new neighborhood system had begun. In those early years these associations

created community gardens, planted trees, organized recycling programs, conducted housing surveys, fixed up houses, conducted neighborhood clean-ups, demanded changes in bus routes – and pursued neighborhood plans. The Office of Neighborhood Associations, meanwhile, carried out its assignments of assisting associations in formation, opening lines of communication between city and citizens, publishing newsletters, and opening up district offices.[27]

It proved impossible, however, to stave off the process of bureaucratization. Before the end of the decade Mary Pedersen, the first director of ONA, would report that the original spirit of neighborhood activism had been muffled. Yet ONA had done exactly what it was intended to do – set down clear procedures for city-neighborhood communication and collaboration, institutionalize participation, and make the whole process more predictable and manageable for elected officials.[28] Some of the disappointment must have been due to Bureau of Planning decisions about the uncertain status of neighborhood plans in the emerging Comprehensive Plan (see below). But part of it was simply the maturing of a cultural movement, and perhaps the passing of the 1970s zeitgeist and the arrival of the 1980s.

Still, both ONA and the neighborhood associations that it served remained a force. There continued to be new neighborhood plans, including a flurry in the early 1990s, although they were incorporated within a stiffening structure of city planning policy. There also continued to be a fair amount of public work – tree plantings, clean-ups, neighborhood watches, and so forth – produced by the neighborhood associations. As had been predicted, neighborhood associations sometimes fell dormant when there were no threats against which to mobilize. Still, they were always there, like a car waiting at the curb to be started up and driven away, when necessary.[29]

Mainly, though, the neighborhood associations grew through planning, their self-generated neighborhood plans, or the community plans sponsored by the Bureau of Planning. When the city undertook the Albina Community Plan, the Outer Southeast Community Plan, and finally, the Southwest Community Plan, there was, or soon developed, a full complement of neighborhood associations to join in the work. Other neighborhood associations, as in Hillsdale, Creston-Kenilworth, Sellwood-Moreland, and other associations took up their own plans, and grew in the process.

By the 25th anniversary of ONA, there were a lot of people in Portland questioning whether the "neighborhood revolution" was still a good thing. Progressive forces across the city saw neighborhood associations as inherently conservative forces, fighting affordable housing and social services wherever they could. Indeed, maybe they always were. The SWCP was a fight against upzoning, but so were the Northwest District, Buckman, Irvington and other neighborhood plans. The opposition in both Albina and Outer Southeast came from citizens

opposed to higher densities. In some quarters, this was just evidence of the natural "NIMBY-ism" of middle class homeowner based groups. Members of the establishment noted the irony in the situation: the system they had created to challenge the system from the approximate left, was now being used to attack it from the right.[30]

ONA itself was in a bit of a crisis. Southwest Neighborhoods Inc. was up in arms; the North Portland coalition had split into two warring factions; and the East Portland coalition had decided that it didn't want the city's help. Mandated ONA programs like community policing were being administered in both North and East Portland from downtown, without active participation by coalition boards. During the same period, a review panel was named to consider the state of the neighborhood system and suggest any necessary changes. One of the primary recommendations harkened back to the birth of ONA, that there should be more effort to involve ethnic and cultural minorities that were not territorially based and to reach out to renters. In the same spirit the agency was renamed the Office of Neighborhood Involvement.[31]

For all of this, the neighborhood system seems as relevant as ever in Portland. It might be permissible to talk about the excesses of neighborhood associations in generic terms. But to suggest that a specific neighborhood association or coalition of associations might somehow be turned away or discounted would be another matter entirely. Some efforts to "streamline" the regulatory processes governing development might constrain neighborhood opportunities for participation (see below) but only to a degree. There are just too many people who participate in these organizations, too many people who have served as an officer at one time or another, and too many who believe they represent an important element of local democracy, to think they will be supplanted any time soon.

Planning the City

From the beginning of the era covered in this dissertation, planning for downtown and neighborhoods was seen in the context of a broader effort to sustain Portland as a city that was the center of its region. This unifying idea emerged during the first mayoral campaign of Neil Goldschmidt, advanced by David Yaden, a public opinion specialist, and one of the members of the Northwest District planning team. His memo to candidate Goldschmidt said that Portland was faced with the same sort of problems as many other cities that were poorer and blacker than Portland. When the people with choices – mostly the professionally-oriented middle class – decided that the daily quality of living in the city had deteriorated below an acceptable level, they would leave. As they left, they would take their resources with them, and the bad schools, shabby parks, and deteriorating housing would grow even worse and still more would leave. "For too

long," Goldschmidt said soon after first taking office as City Commissioner, "we in Portland have assumed that our urban crisis is still over the horizon. We'll choke on the litany, 'We've still got time.'"[32]

The response, in the estimation of historian Carl Abbott, was a coherent package of policy initiatives, both technically and politically sound, and effectively carried out. The decision to remove the Harbor Freeway from the edge of the Willamette River and build a new waterfront park was, in effect, the eye-opener for the process. It made a dramatic change to the face of the city and transformed its relationship to the waterfront, and thus became a symbol of what was possible in the making and remaking of the city. Moreover, it has become an iconic story of Portland planning heroism. Other elements of the story – and the policy ensemble – are just as well known and as widely celebrated. The construction of the downtown bus mall was noted above. It made downtown the preeminent center of the system, with a large proportion of bus routes beginning, ending, or crossing through bus mall. Stopping the construction of Interstate 505 in Northwest has been overshadowed by the fight to stop the Mount Hood Freeway and the subsequent trade-in of highway money to build the East Side MAX light rail line. But both were powerful statements in favor of an alternative vision of the city.

Abbott describes the coalitions that supported these developments in terms of the convergent interests of neighborhood residents protecting their home turfs and downtown business interests opposed to constructing the infrastructure that would allow their customers and tenants to be siphoned off to suburban locations. This analysis in terms of interests is useful enough. But it also helps to look at these events in terms of the rhetorical construction of the possible, the necessary, and the dangerous. In many other cities, downtown elites supported radial super-highways and beltways as essential to saving center city business interests. It is thus crucial to understand interests, not as simply material or self-evident, but as always rhetorically constituted, merging the material and the linguistic. Interests must always be described in order to be mobilized.

A definition of the public interest in reinvigorating close-in neighborhoods in Portland was likewise produced and reproduced continuously throughout the development of the Portland way of planning. Corbett Terwilliger Lair Hill, Irvington, Brooklyn, Buckman, and a number of other neighborhoods in addition to Northwest District, all produced neighborhood plans during the 1970s. Although facilitated by City planning staff, these plans reflected the local aspirations of residents to control and transform their immediate environments. During that period, city officials faced the challenge of how to incorporate these plans into City policy and law. Several of the plans prompted selective down-zonings to protect existing housing stock from deterioration

caused by over-zoning and these were prepared one at a time by staff, and passed in turn by the Planning Commission and the City Council.[33]

Meeting the new demand for mandatory comprehensive planning as required by Senate Bill 100 would be a challenge. But the pressure for some kind of regularity, if not rationality, came from other quarters as well. David Yaden, recently established as a private planning consultant, was retained by the Bureau of Planning, then under the leadership of Acting Director Dale Cannady, to create a proposal for development of a "policy plan" for Portland. His primary recommendations were that the City Council should mandate comprehensive planning, as the state was about to do, and provide opportunities for citizens to be involved, set city-wide goals, establish means of coordinating neighborhood, citywide, and regional efforts, concentrate on implementation, and, in short, make policy be something that people feel they must follow.[34]

Cannady's successor, Ernie Bonner, had recently arrived from Cleveland, where their policy plan would eventually become famous. But Bonner had mixed feelings about policy. "Who wants public policy?" he would wonder aloud. Not elected officials "unless it keeps all their options open." Not planners "if they ever saw what an articulated public policy looks like." Not property owners, even those looking for a little certainty, if they understood how rigid it would be. On the other hand, a "policies plan" would allow there to be expressions of the public will in a way that was more adaptable than a traditional comprehensive plan. Such plans often provided too little guidance in that they attended only to land use and not other factors, too much guidance when they became specific and rigid. Still, Bonner would soon be the leader of a mandated Comprehensive Plan process.[35]

Bonner and staff designed a planning process rich in information and discussion. They published copiously on the issues involved, and they organized an ambitious set of public workshops and hearings. Just two years into the process, however, many of the citizens involved were beginning to rebel. Near the end of 1977, the chairman of the Committee for Citizen Involvement tendered his resignation. The process lacked "administrative and management control," he said. It focused too much on the regulatory mechanisms of planning. "A zoning map ain't a comprehensive plan," he wrote. But worst of all, he wrote, "I labored under the apparent misconception that Portland would allow neighborhood associations to develop individual plans or, at the least, plan strategies at the neighborhood level." He must have been an "idiot" not to see this coming. The chair was Michael L. Burton, later to lead Metro further into the world of planning as regulation. It wasn't true, Bonner replied, that the city wouldn't recognize neighborhood plans, only that "the Bureau of Planning will not be able to contribute staff attention" to such work.[36]

Still, one neighborhood activist would complain at a "town hall meeting" that none of the Comp Plan alternatives "adequately represented" the substance of the previously adopted Northwest District Plan. Another complained that the plan didn't provide for maintaining affordable housing. Still others said that the plan was too much about zoning, didn't preserve small housing, wouldn't protect against "wall to wall apartments." Surprisingly, perhaps, some in Southwest Portland seemed in tune with the emerging program. If we wanted to have good transit, they said, there would need to be more density. If we were going to capture a share of the region's growth we would have to fill in undeveloped lots and grow denser. Others, of course, wanted things to stay as they were.[37]

The Comprehensive Plan was adopted by the City Council on October 16, 1980. It was not, as Abbott wrote, a political success. That same year, long-time City Commissioner Frank Ivancie beat Connie McCready, who had been appointed mayor when Goldschmidt went to Washington to serve as Jimmy Carter's Secretary of Transportation. Ivancie campaigned as much against the Comp Plan as he did against McCready, suggesting that the changes the plan was intended to prepared for could be avoided by changing the plan. Ivancie's tenure brought a period of retrenchment in the Bureau of Planning. Yet many things had already been established in law. Like the state, Portland also adopted citywide planning goals. They made residential density, support for transit, energy conservation, clean air, and strengthening neighborhoods the law of the city. They made Goldschmidt's aim of maintaining Portland as the predominant center of the region official policy. While it deemphasized neighborhood plans it expressly incorporated the city Housing Policy, Energy Policy, Economic Development Policy, and the Arterial Streets Classification Policy. It established the commercial storefront zone and the R2.5 rowhouse zone. It was not welcome in some neighborhoods that hoped to maintain their historic low-density character. But neither was it inconsistent with the ideas, terms, and values of Portland planning up until then. What it did, however, was establish as law decisions that neighborhoods had previously been free to make – or not make – on their own.[38]

A few short years after adoption of the Comp Plan, the Bureau of Planning began to work on the updating of the plan, district by district throughout the city, starting with the Central City Plan. The Albina Community Plan was next, followed by the Outer Southeast Community Plan, the former taking up Portland's only substantial minority neighborhoods, the latter addressing the needs of recently annexed suburban areas. Both processes were highly contentious as citizens fought against the imposition of policies and regulations only recently promulgated. The Southwest Community Plan was next, and is the subject of Chapters 10-13. No one could have imagined it would be easy.

Despite the tension between planning as democratic participation and planning as bureaucratic regulation, planning has continued to be the mode of choice for decision-making in Portland. The City Council adopted plans for the Macadam Corridor (1985), the Wilkes Community (1987), Kerns and Sullivan's Gulch (1987), the Willamette River Greenway (1987), Powellhurst, Centennial, and Hosford-Abernethy neighborhoods (1988), Buckman (1991), Brooklyn, Cully, and Brentwood/ Darlington neighborhoods (1992). Each involved significant citizen participation. Each meant the further application of citywide policies. More recently, during the time when Southwest Portland residents were fighting the Bureau of Planning over density, the Sellwood-Moreland neighborhood was planning their own more intensive zoning pattern, and the Hillsdale neighborhood was running charettes with New Urbanism guru Peter Calthorpe. It hasn't been all one way.[39]

But it has been, on the whole, more difficult for citizens to take part. The policy framework is not an easy text to master. The issues are more complicated and more technical than ever before. Some of the issues have been removed to what we might think of as "meta-planning" venues: the streamlining of the permitting process under "Blueprint 2000"; the separation of long-range planning from development regulation; and the revision of Title 34, Portland's subdivision code. Yet, whatever the difficulties, Portland's citizens continue to care, and they continue to find ways to get involved. After all, being involved is an important part of what it means to be a Portlander.

Metro and the Region

Portland is regarded with envy around the nation by many planners and some citizens for its apparent successes in planning at the metropolitan or regional scale. Some must look at the Metro government, with its elected council and stouthearted growth management program, and ask themselves, "why can't we do that?" Others will wonder, "how did they do it?" The answer to the second question, it turns out, is similar to the punch line to the old joke, "How do you get to Carnegie Hall?" Practice. Portland created regional planning and governance through repeated practice. The process began, by one reckoning, more than half a century ago and has proceeded through a series of institutional inventions and reinventions, sometimes pushed by demands from state or federal government, and supported locally by the idea that it makes sense to plan together, but always prodded by a rhetoric of cooperation, regional solidarity, and preserved local sovereignty.[40]

Abbott and Abbott trace the beginnings of metropolitan forms of planning and governance in Portland back as early as 1944 when the League of Oregon Cities first warned

against the problem of "sporadic, scattered, and unregulated growth of municipalities and urban fringes," and the waste of money and resources that resulted. As a remedy they called for the state legislature to allow "creation of metropolitan or regional planning districts and ... commissions." More discussion along these lines followed, and after the federal Housing Act of 1954 made available Section 701 planning funds, the Metropolitan Planning Commission was established in 1957. While it was "a research organization more than a planning agency," it did lay the groundwork for regional planning in the form of base maps, data collection, and studies. Likewise, the Portland-Vancouver Metropolitan Transportation Study, established by the state highway commission in 1959, provided the first systematic regional data on land use, transportation, and growth. While a long way from providing any sort of comprehensive regional planning, these entities set the precedents for looking, talking, and acting toward the three or four county area (including Clark County, Washington) as a whole thing.[41]

As suburbanization proceeded into the early 1960s, Portland community leaders began to worry aloud about not only leap-frogging growth but also the proliferation of special districts for fire, water, sewers, zoning, parks, and lighting. As suburban areas rushed to incorporate as cities, Portland tried to catch up through annexation. The League Women Voters issued a paper called "A Tale of Three Counties," to decry "wasteful, fragmented, and uneven urban services," and "fragmented local government." A business group called Metropolitan Area Perspectives called for further study of regional solutions to such problems. The Chamber of Commerce endorsed further exploration of metropolitan approaches to governance. The eventual upshot of such advocacy was the creation of the Portland Metropolitan Study Commission in 1963 to address suburban growth and the problems in basic service provision that it had caused and that were beyond the immediate ability of municipal governments to solve. The PMSC set an agenda that would rule for years to come – for service district consolidations, formation of a regional council of governments, and even consideration of a "supercity."[42]

Rebuffed by the state legislature on the issue of a new regional government, the PMSC suggested creation of a voluntary association of counties and municipalities. Established in 1966, the Columbia Regional Association of Governments came along just in time to be designated as the region's Metropolitan Planning Organization as mandated by new federal legislation. In the next few years the region would create other regional entities, including the Tri-County Metropolitan Transportation District (known as Tri-Met), a consolidation of agencies such as the Port of Portland, and, by vote at a referendum, a new Metropolitan Service District (MSD).[43]

Tri-Met and the Port of Portland each had clear missions and reliable resources. The same was not true of CRAG and the MSD. The former suffered from tensions between local and

regional perspectives, unsteady funding, and the uncertainties caused by voluntary membership (although this was remedied in 1974 by the state legislature). The Metropolitan Service District had clear authority, but no resources, and gained functions slowly, first solid waste, then the Zoo. Still, the simple fact that such regional institutions existed was something to build on. One more planning study, under the auspices of an ad-hoc organization called the Tri-County Local Government Commission, was undertaken to design the successor to CRAG and MSD. They recommended that the two be merged into a single Metro entity; that the new government be run by an elected executive; and that it be overseen by a council elected for the purpose rather than those already elected to county or municipal positions. Metro was given a small assessment to support its operations and was approved by the voters at referendum in 1978.[44]

A new government led largely by inexperienced officials made its share of early mistakes, but its capacities grew steadily, encompassing solid waste management, operation of the zoo, regional transportation planning, siting and construction of a new convention center, and most significantly the drawing of Portland's first urban growth boundary. Such successes made it possible finally for Metro to win the power to tax, and laid the groundwork for what Abbott and Abbott called the "fourth wave" of Portland's extraordinary metropolitan evolution.[45]

What is not well-appreciated about the Portland Metro growth management program is that it is a fairly recent creation. While the initial urban growth boundary was set in 1979, Metro did little else to plan or manage growth for the better part of a decade. The original boundary was a loose one, and throughout the recessionary 1980s was largely irrelevant. Once growth resumed, Metro leaders realized that without other planning tools, growth within the boundary would be nearly as destructive as if there had been no boundary at all. Sprawl is still sprawl wherever the line is drawn.[46] A new home rule charter for Metro, passed by the voters in 1991, made regional land use planning Metro's primary function. Throughout the 1990s the burgeoning Metro bureaucracy laid down layer after layer of the new planning framework, first a generalized statement of Regional Urban Growth Goals and Objectives, then an expression of these in a "Growth Concept" for their anticipated 2040 Plan, later the Regional Framework Plan as the implementation mechanism of 2040, and in more detail through the Urban Growth Management Functional Plan.[47]

One of the keys to creating the Metro 2040 Plan was the secret ingredient in every Portland recipe: broad-based participation. It brought an infusion of new ideas into what might otherwise have been a wholly technical process, and it provided a new measure of legitimacy for the result. What emerged from the process was an understanding that the public – or at least an active segment of it – was committed to the idea of the urban growth boundary. The growth

concept called for holding the UGB tighter rather than looser, organizing growth in nodes around high-frequency, high-capacity transit service. The "town centers" and "main streets" which would be so controversial in the Southwest Community Plan were the result of a rather vigorous engagement with a broad public. Other means for holding the growth boundary were also reviewed in this process – including the Metropolitan Housing Rule, which stipulated that 50 percent of all new housing should be built in multi-family configurations, and a goal of increasing the average net housing density by two units per acre.[48]

One of the great points of tension in the Metro growth management plan is between the alluring simplicity of its self-promotional rhetoric and the baffling technical complexity of its application through planning regulation. Metro's summary explanation of the plan, entitled "The Nature of 2040," emphasizes deeply-rooted public values of protecting the natural environment, safeguarding residential neighborhoods, and ensuring the efficient use of common resources. Your neighborhoods will stay fundamentally the same, they say. You will have more choice in housing and transportation. Steady regulation is good for business investment. Most of all, the pamphlet notes repeatedly, the plan was developed according to what citizens said. The problem is that once these values are translated into regulatory mechanisms they become something else again. The periodic argument over whether to expand the UGB or leave it where it is involves, among other things, a mind-boggling quantitative methodology for determining if the region has its state-mandated 20-year supply of buildable land. When such methodologies are applied in individual neighborhoods the results are predictably difficult.

Metro, like statewide land use planning overall, has attracted its fair share of resistance. Property rights advocates and conservatives attempted to mount an initiative campaign in 1998 to have Metro dissolved. That same year municipal officials in Milwaukie, Oregon were swept out of office for cooperating too eagerly with the growth management program. Bond issues for major rail transit expansions have failed, as well. But others in the region, like Gresham Mayor Gussie McRoberts, have supported the program full-square. Portland's elected officials are sometimes rabid in their defense of growth management, and some from the suburbs seem to have bought into the idea that a strong center makes for a strong region, too.

David Bragdon, elected as presiding officer of Metro in January 2000, addressed his colleagues at his inauguration, and spoke, by extension to all the residents of metropolitan Portland. Metro acting as the agent of the state had "converted Oregon's once-vaunted system of land use planning into an exercise in bean-counting." Government regulation alone could not build "livable communities," he said. "Planning in Oregon has lost its soul."[49] This was demonstrably not true by the fact that he had said so. Bragdon went on to invoke all of the values

familiar to Portlanders: their affection for their neighborhoods, their love of the land, their belief in democratic practice, their confidence in collective action, and their conviction that what they do today will have an impact decades, even centuries, into the future. Portland faces challenges of traffic congestion, species protection, housing affordability, and the simple uncertainty of the future. They also face the challenge of maintaining and expanding planning as democratic practice. But they have not lost their ability to respond, nor have they remotely lost their souls.

The Statewide System

Like many of the other elements of the Portland way of planning, the origins of state-mandated land use planning are legendary. It is extraordinary, approaching forty years after the fact, that people remember the words McCall uttered to spark the effort for a statewide system of land use planning, the indictment of the "grasping wastrels of the land," the invocations against "coastal condomania," and much more. It was McCall's special gift to produce such galvanizing rhetoric. It is crucial to remember that the entire process began with that speech to the legislature. The word, indeed, was the command. It meant much more, of course, that the word came from the elected leader of the entire state. Words, we often say, can fall on deaf ears; yet McCall's did not. It is also crucial, then, to remember that the successful emergence of statewide land use planning required that many others take up the terms that McCall had coined.[50]

The development of "planning the Oregon way" required the transformation of McCall's summons into other more specific terms, discrete practices, and over times, new organizational forms. The effort for statewide land use planning began, not with Senate Bill 100, but with Senate Bill 10, which established mandatory planning as state policy but failed to create any sort of mechanism to implement the policy. Even Bill 100 was considered at the time a deeply flawed measure, the result of a compromise that supporters believed went much too far in responding to the concerns of conservatives, rural interests, and others. Land use planning legislation might have slipped farther and farther away from the spirit and simplicity of the Governor's original call to action. But it didn't, because the echoes of his words brought it back from adulteration.[51]

One of the key provisions of Senate Bill 100 was for a process of citizen review of policy goals for statewide land use planning. In 1974, the year after the measure was passed, the state hosted an extensive series of local meetings at which individual citizens were invited to share their thoughts about what land use planning ought to accomplish. Those who attended were, to a great extent, those members of the public who had most responded to McCall's initial challenge. The words they spoke, agglomerated by the participation consultants, reviewed by the bureaucrats, and accepted by elected officials, nevertheless translated into a clear, coherent, and, on the whole,

progressive list of policy statements. As is often noted, the statewide planning goals began with a vow to "insure the opportunity for citizens to be involved in all phases of the planning process."[52] Originally 14, later expanded to 19, these goals became the Ten Commandments of the Oregon Way of Planning. If the word is the command, then perhaps the command is the law.

After citizen participation, the goals demanded that all engage in land use planning and policy making; that agricultural land be maintained and preserved; forest lands be preserved for economy and environment; open spaces, scenic, and historic areas be preserved; the quality of air, water, and land be safeguarded; life and property be protected from natural hazards and disasters; recreational needs be met; economic opportunity be provided; choice in housing be supported; public facilities be developed efficiently; balanced transportation systems be developed; energy be conserved; and urban development be made orderly and efficient. Five goals added later called for the protection of the Willamette River Greenway, preservation of estuarine resources, coastal shorelands, beaches and dunes, and ocean resources.[53]

The elaboration and evolution of Oregon land use law after Senate Bill 100, of course, was subject to the existing process and structure of law. The specific meaning and requirements of the statewide goals, of rules and regulations stemming from the goals, and of the development, review, and application of comprehensive plans all were subject to legal test. A series of important cases helped establish one of the key features of the system: that policy language in comprehensive plan documents would take precedence over regulatory designations on a zoning map, and that comprehensive plans were binding legal documents and must be implemented. What these two cases (*Fasano v. Board of County Commissioners of Washington County and Baker v. City of Milwaukie*) established was more or less that the words in a plan must mean what they say.[54]

At the same time, the state established a brand new bureaucracy to interpret and enforce the emerging requirements of statewide land use planning. The Department of Land Conservation and Development – its very name expressing the tension between structure and agency – was established to promulgate the regulations that would implement the broader policy doctrines of land use planning. Also created was the Land Conservation and Development Commission, empowered to settled disputes on matters of application and interpretation, and brought to bear through the Land Use Board of Appeals. The creation of two bodies – one administrative and the other adjudicative – reflected the embedded American constitutional concept of separation of powers. New legal material was made out of the old.[55]

Once established, such structures predictably drew opposition from those impacted by their ruling power. Several attempts to overturn Senate Bill 100 and the system it had spawned

were made in the succeeding years. The most serious came in 1982 , with Oregon in the grip of one of its characteristically deep recessions, and Republican Vic Atiyeh in the Governor's chair. Too much regulation was bad for the economy, proponents of a statewide ballot initiative argued. Where once Tom McCall had famously invited people to visit Oregon, "but for heaven's sake, please don't stay," Atiyeh made an unqualified invitation. The mood had shifted, and September polls showed support for repeal of statewide land use planning was surging. In mid-October, however, McCall, then almost 70, and sick and dying of cancer, went on television in a last attempt to save his legacy. Land use planning, he said, was one of the great innovations that made Oregon a special place and an inspiring example for the rest of the nation. It was also his achievement that he cared about most. Playing on voters sense of the state and their abiding affection for him, McCall turned the election around with a single speech.[56]

The irony of these challenges was that they confirmed and reinforced the land use planning regime. Not only had the legislature acted to create the system, and citizens participated directly to define it, the people of the state had voted to keep it on three different occasions. This is not to say it was beyond further challenge. In the 2000 election voters narrowly approved Measure 7 (discussed at greater length in the succeeding case study) which would have provided compensation for property owners who lost value as a result of land use regulation. The organized supporters of land use planning – 1,000 Friends of Oregon and others – consider this electoral defeat an anomaly in the sense that opposing the measure was not a priority on a cluttered November ballot. Measure 7 received only 44 percent of the vote in Multnomah County, the heart of statewide support for land use planning, but the issue was split nearly fifty-fifty in the Metro Portland territory overall. The statewide vote was 53 percent in favor, 47 percent opposed. The measure was challenged in court and overturned for having violated a requirement that constitutional amendments offered by voter initiative contain only one issue. Still, supporters of land use planning got the message.

On the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of Senate Bill 100, Carl Abbott argued that too much distance had opened up between an increasingly powerful land use planning system and the grassroots political impulses that had helped create it in the first place. He suggested that the political mandate bestowed by the combined action legislature and participation of the public needed to be renewed. This would mean making the fundamental principles of the regime – the statewide land use goals – vulnerable to change. But it would also mean reinvigorating the system's claims to democratic legitimacy. This hasn't happened yet. And the decade following Abbott's proposal has not been an easy one for land use planning, to which the following case study will attest.[57]

Conclusion

After he retired, Ernie Bonner, the 1970s-era Director of Planning, started interviewing folks about their experiences back "in the day." Later, after he had succeeded in getting a number of these interviews transcribed, he established a web-site where these recollections about the origins of Portland planning could be read by the public. There are extended memoirs from a large number of the major and minor actors in that saga, including many who played a role in the Northwest District Plan, and many others who were involved in the 1972 Downtown Plan. The interviews are and will be an extraordinary resource for historians of the period. The chronologies aren't always clear or the dates correct, but they seem somehow to capture the flavor of the times. For several years running Bonner has hosted a reunion of said folks, partly to raise money for his ongoing historical work, but largely to get together and remember how it all got started. It's a nice thing.

Yet there is a subtext in the enterprise that is somewhat troubling. Namely, that planning was better then than it is now. Back then planners were visionaries, heroes, radicals, boat-rockers. Now they are merely bureaucrats or worse. But the reality is that if all that was good about Portland planning had expired at the dawn of the "Me Decade" this particular dissertation would hardly have been worth writing. It is true, those folks started something quite extraordinary. But it is also true that succeeding cadres of citizen activists, professional planners, and political leaders have sustained and develop the Portland way of planning. What's more they have done it, not just in the aftermath of Vietnam, but through the Reagan era, and beyond; not just in times of social and cultural ferment, but in times of conservative retrenchment; not just in times of economic stagnation, but also during periods of rampant growth, as well as crippling recession. Contemporary participants in Portland planning owe a great debt of gratitude to those who came before. But likewise, the progenitors of this political way of life owe a great deal to those who have carried on.

Some of those who have written about Portland have resorted to a conventional analysis of interests to explain what has happened.[58] That business people, home owners, environmentalists, developers, property owners, and others have interests is interesting. But a focus on interests inevitably brings us around to a predominantly deterministic explanation of events. In such a framework people only do what their interests tell them to do. Abbott, as the preeminent interpreter of Portland planning and politics, acknowledges both interests and "structure" on his way to addressing the issue of culture. But the structure he talks about is one that is given, not made. The racial make-up of the community, the relative balance in socio-economic status from center to periphery, the architecture of local political institutions, all seem

simply to appear out of the past. How did those things come to pass? My explanation must be that these things, too, are the product of cultural processes.

Over the years, Abbott has focused increasingly on culture, and political culture in particular, to explain what has happened in Portland. He has borrowed from the schema of Daniel Elazar to write of their "moralistic" political culture. He has talked about the values they express about urbanity, the natural environment, reason, democratic discourse, and so forth. These are all immensely important to the constitution of civic life in Portland. But he misses the point by saying that political talk in Portland is "value laden." Whether we know it or not, all talk is value laden. This is by way of saying that an appreciation of the role of culture in the history of Portland planning must go beyond a select few defining values to examine the entire rhetorical equipment of the regime. There is a vast array of meanings and terms that constitute knowledge and belief about the city, democracy, and planning in Portland. These elements, in turn, animate the practices, organizations, and institutions of the Portland way of planning. A nod to a few of the key values therein acknowledges the role of culture in this story. But it doesn't fully celebrate how painstakingly, how purposefully, all of the elements of that culture have been forged and fitted into the structure we see today.

Figure 9.1 With the removal of the Harbor Freeway as an example, today's Portland visionaries talk about removing i-5 on the other side of the river. Photo by author.

Figure 9.2 Portland's Park Blocks are the legacy of great 19th century planning, prompting contemporary Portlanders to suggest their expansion. Photo by author.

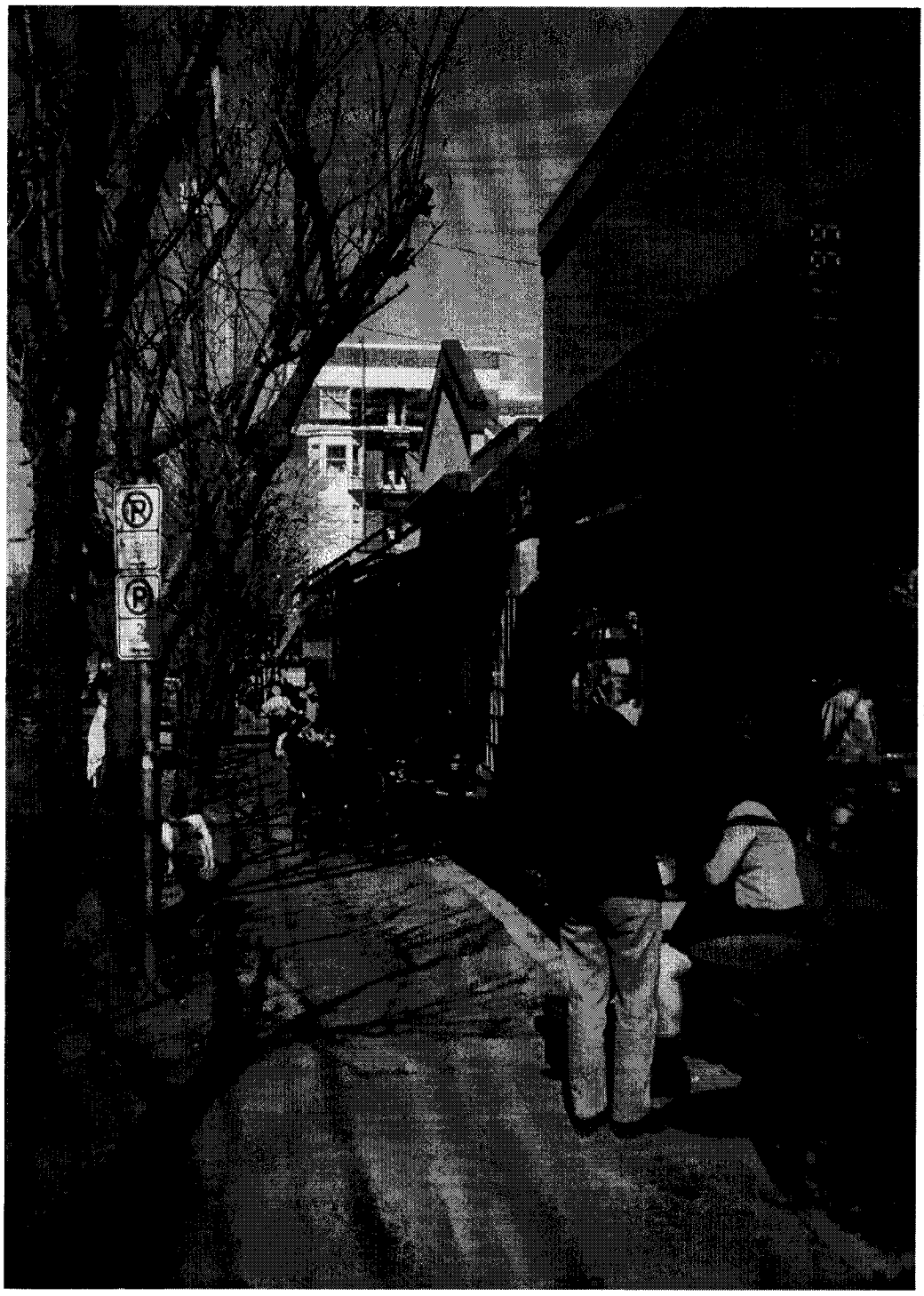


Figure 9.3 The active street life that inspired early Northwest District citizen planners still thrives today, here on NW 21st Avenue. Photo by author.

Figure 9.4 Tom McCall Park, which took the place of a freeway, continues to speak to all Portlanders about shared values in planning. Photo by author.

Figure 9.5 Shrouded in mist, Southwest Portland is the antithesis of urban Portland: rolling, leafy, and suburban. Photo by author.

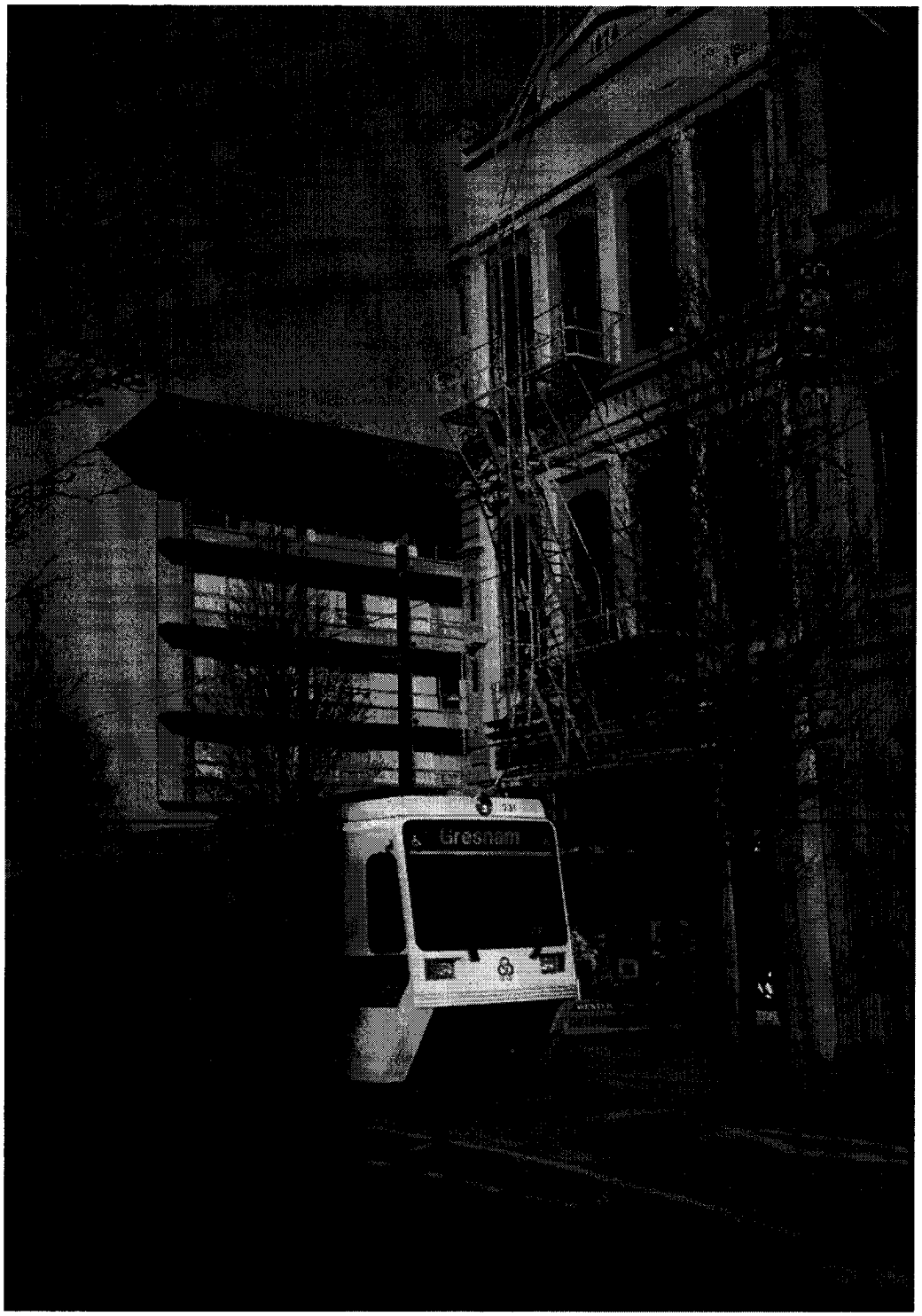


Figure 9.6 Investments in public transit and historic preservation have been key policy elements in Portland. This is the MAX in Old Town. Photo by author.

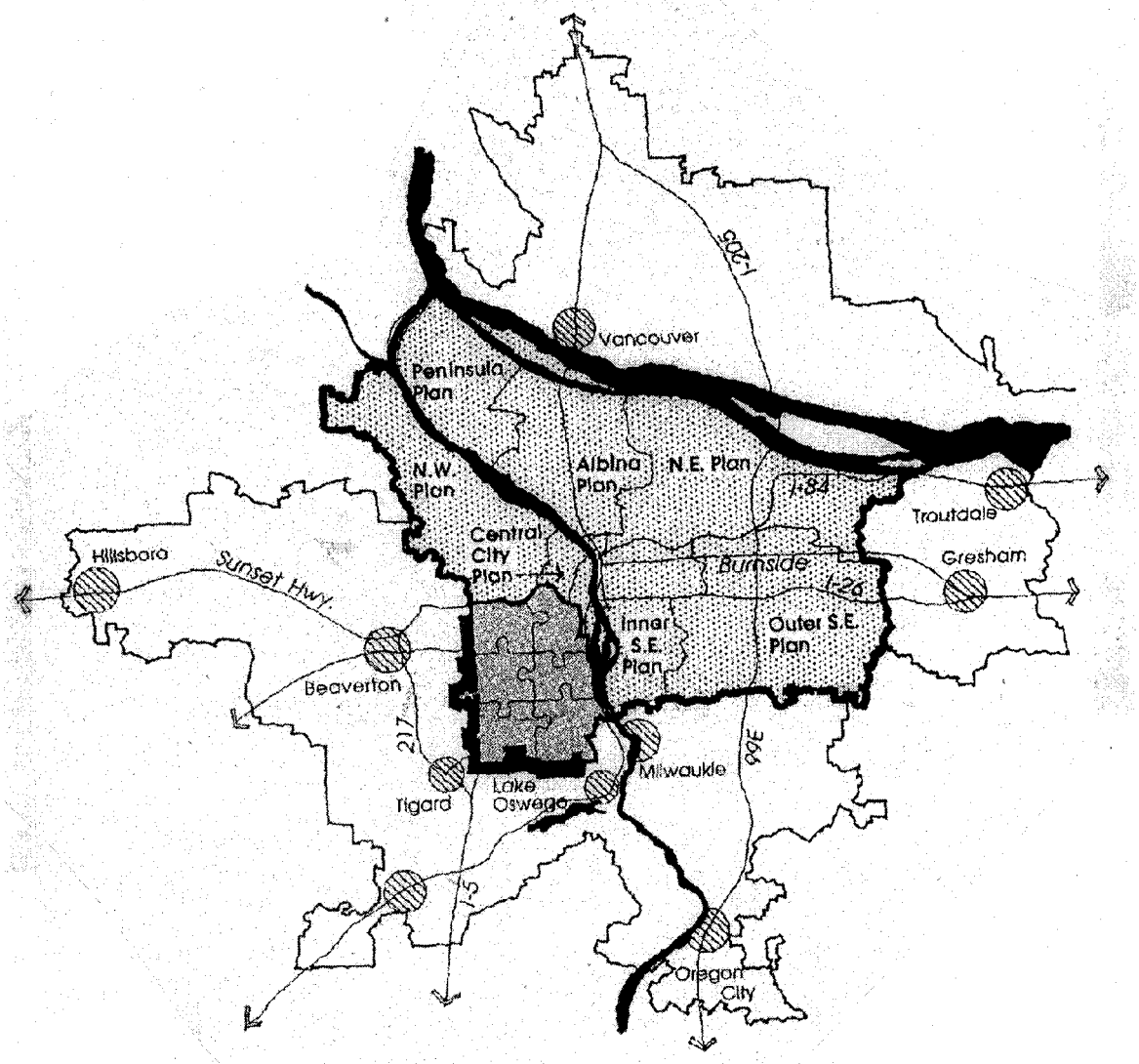


Figure 9.7 Portland pursued its Community Planning Program in the context of an emerging regional vision and plan. This shows Southwest Portland as a puzzle, with the urban growth boundary the outermost line. Portland Bureau of Planning.

Notes to Chapter 9.

[1] Carl Abbott, "The Capital of Good Planning: Metropolitan Portland since 1970," 2000. in Robert Fishman, ed. *The American Planning Tradition: Culture and Policy*, Washington: Woodrow Wilson Center Press.

[2] Peirce, Neal R. and Robert Guskind. 1993. *Breakthroughs: Re-creating The American City*. New Brunswick: Center for Urban Policy Research; Ehrenhalt, Alan. 1997. "The Great Wall of Portland." *Governing*. May, pp. 20-24; Langdon, Philip. 1992. "How Portland Does It: A city that protects its thriving, civil core." *The Atlantic Monthly*. November, pp. 134-141; Hovey, Bradshaw. 1998. "Building the City Structuring Change: Portland's Implicit Utopian Project." *The Journal of Utopian Studies*. 9:1:68-79.

[3] Abbott, Carl, Deborah Howe, Sy Adler, eds. 1994. *Planning the Oregon Way: A Twenty Year Evaluation*. Corvallis: Oregon State University Press; Knaap, Gerrit J. and Arthur C. Nelson. 1992. *The Regulated Landscape: Lessons on State Land Use Planning from Oregon*. Cambridge: Lincoln Institute of Land Policy; Seltzer, Ethan. 1995. "Planning in the Portland Region: Lessons and Legacy." From remarks delivered to the Conference on Cities in North America, New York University, June; Witt, Matthew. 2000. *Portland's Wheel of Citizen Participation*. Doctoral Dissertation, Portland State University. Bello, Mark R. 1993. *Urban regimes and downtown planning in Portland, Oregon and Seattle, Washington, 1972-1992*. Ph.D. Dissertation, Portland State University.

[4] Abbott, 2000, p. 243.

[5] Abbott, Carl. 1991. "Urban Design in Portland, Oregon, as Policy and Process: 1960-1989." *Planning Perspectives*, No. 6 1-18.

[6] Ernie Bonner has compiled an exhaustive time line of events in the history of Portland planning with special emphasis on work done during the 1970s. See his web site, www.pdxplan.org for additional material.

[7] Interview with Dick Ivey by Ernie Bonner, www.pdxplan.org.

[8] Interview with Rod O'Hiser by Ernie Bonner, www.pdxplan.org.

[9] Langdon, 1992; Peirce and Guskind, 1993.

[10] Hovey, Bradshaw. 1993. "Towards a Democratic Planning." Paper presented to the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning conference, Philadelphia, PA.

[11] William Fulton,"Distinguished Leadership: Margaret Strachan." *Planning*. Chicago: American Planning Association. April 1988, 54:4:17.

[12] Hovey, 1993.

[13] Byles, Jeff. 2001. "O Rose City, Art Thou Sick? A model city discovers that there may, in fact, be such a thing as too many parks." *Metropolis*. New York. July.

[14] One only needs to chart the line formed by Martin Anderson on the Right, Jane Jacobs in the middle, and Robert Goodman on the Left to understand the breadth of this disrepute. Anderson, Martin. 1965. The Federal Bulldozer: A Critical Analysis of Urban Renewal, 1949-1962. Cambridge: MIT Press; Jacobs, Jane. 1961. *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. New York: Random House; Goodman, Robert. 1971. *After The Planners*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

[15] Abbott has written repeatedly about the neighborhood revolution, but in "The Capital of Good Planning" he gives short shrift to the institutional development of ONA as other than a coopting move. Witt, 2000, likewise, spins an elaborate theory about the effect of the neighborhood system in domesticating neighborhood activism.

[16] Portland City Council, Ron Buel memorandum to Neil Goldschmidt, circa July 1971; Portland City Planning Commission, "City Council and Planning Commission Policy Statement on District Planning," March 5, 1971; Planning Commission Minutes, April 6, 1971, p. 12; City of Portland, Memorandum from Lloyd Anderson to Connie McCready, "Neighborhood Development Task Force," December 16, 1971; Correspondence from Mayor Terry Schrunk to Lloyd T. Keefe, Director of Planning, January 28, 1972, all SPARC: Neighborhood Planning, 1966-1978, [7706-10, 09-04-20, Box 1 of 11, 1/24].

[17] District Planning Organization Task Force, Ogden Beeman to Neil Goldschmidt, December 29, 1972, SPARC: Neighborhood Planning, 1966-1978, [7706-10, 09-04-20, Box 1 of 11, 1/8].

[18] Portland City Council, Ordinance No. 137816, "An Ordinance amending Title 3 of the Code of the City of Portland by adding a new chapter thereto, relating to neighborhood associaions." Adopted February 7, 1974. SPARC: Neighborhood Planning, 1966-78, [7706-10, 09-04-20,Box 1 of 11, 1/9].

[19] *The Oregonian*, "New Planning Procedures Urged For City," April 23, 1971, p. 23.

[20] *The Oregonian*, "Neighborhood voice in planning urged." July 28, 1971.

[21] PCPC, "City Council and Planning Commission Policy Statement on District Planning," March 5, 1971.

[22] Portland City Council, Buel Goldschmidt, circa July 1971; also City of Portland, Anderson to McCready, "Neighborhood Development Task Force," December 16, 1971.

[23] District Planning Organization Task Force, "Minutes From Task Force Meeting," November 29, 1972, SPARC: Commissioner Ivancie Subject File, [0449-01, 14-06-33/2, Box 57 of 77, 57/10].

[24] Portland City Planning Commission, "Recommendations on DPOs Task Force Proposals," May 9, 1973, SPARC: Neighborhood Planning, 1966-1978, [7706-10, 09-04-20, Box 1 of 11, 1/28]; *The Oregonian*, "City drops district planning board concept," January 31, 1974."

[25] PCPC, "Recommendations on DPOs Task Force Proposals," May 9, 1973; Portland City Council, "Ordinance No. 137816, Chapter 3.96 Neighborhood Associations," adopted February 4, 1974, SPARC: Neighborhood Planning, [1966-1978, 7706-10, 09-04-20, Box 1 of 11, 1/9]. See also, Office of Neighborhood Associations, Mary C. Pedersen, "Neighborhood Organization in Portland, Oregon, First Annual Report," August 1974, SPARC: Neighborhood Associations, 1975, [0462-01, 8-02-61, 13/1].

[26] Portland City Council, "Ordinance No. 137816." February 4, 1974.

[27] Office of Neighborhood Associations, "Citizen Participation in Portland, Oregon: Second Annual Report on Neighborhood Programs," Revised December 1975. SPARC: Neighborhood Associations, 1975, [2012-35, 03-06-15, (92/16).

[28] "Ranjana's Story," by Ranjana Blackett, nee Mary C. Pedersen, unpublished manuscript.

[29] Interview with Ethan Seltzer, June 1997.

[30] Young, Bob and Ruth Rowland. 1998. "NIMBY (Not in My Back Yard): Are a bunch of neighborhood activists threatening the city?" *Willamette Week*. February 18, 1998, 24:16:1; see also author's interview with Diane Linn, June 1997.

[31] Portland City Council, "Report and Recommendations of the Task Force on Neighborhood Involvement," February 7, 1996; Wade Nkrumah, "Portland agency becomes of Office of Neighborhood Involvement," *The Oregonian*. January 26, 1998.

[32] Morton Spence, *The Oregon Journal*, "Goldschmidt Deplores Lack of City Planning," circa February 1971.

[33] Ernie Bonner timeline of Portland planning, www.pdxplan.org.

[34] SRG Partnership, "Planning for Portland: Program Design of a Comprehensive Development Planning Process and Policy Plan for the City of Portland, January 31, 1973, SPARC: Neighborhood Planning 1966-1978, [7706-10, 09-04-20, Box 1 of 11, 1/16].

[35] Ernie Bonner, "The Comprehensive Plan as an Expression of Public Policy," Notes for his talk at a seminar on land use at the University of Oregon, August 19-21, 1974, [Ernie Bonner Papers].

[36] Bureau of Planning, Ernie Bonner, "A Proposed Comprehensive Planning Process for the City of Portland," June 23, 1976, [Ernie Bonner Papers]; Michael L. Burton to Mayor Neil Goldschmidt, November 21, 1977, and Ernie Bonner to Jane Rhodes, December 27, 1977, SPARC: Comprehensive Plan/ Town Hall Meetings, [5800-1000-01, 09-07-19, (1/18)].

[37] Portland Bureau of Planning, "Northwest District Town Hall Meeting: Testimony," June 14, 1978, and "Far Southwest Town Hall: Testimony," June 1, 1978, SPARC: Comprehensive Plan/ Town Hall Meetings, [5800-1000-01, 09-07-19, (1/18)].

[38] Abbott, 1983., pp. 204-205. Interview with Michael Harrison, principal planner, Portland Bureau of Planning, Friday, January 29, 1999; Jerald M. Powell, AICP, memorandum to Northwest District Association Policy Committee, May 20, 1991, [Northwest District Association Papers].

[39] Ernie Bonner timeline.

[40] Carl Abbott and Margery Post Abbott, "Historical Development of the Metropolitan Service District," Prepared for the Metro Home Rule Charter Committee, May 1991; See also, Carl Abbott, 1983, pp. 241-266.

[41] Abbott and Abbott, pp. 4-7.

[42] Ibid. pp. 6-9.

[43] Ibid. pp. 10-12.

[44] Ibid. pp. 15-25.

[45] Ibid. 26-32.

[46] Seltzer, 1995.

[47] Portland Metro, *Regional Urban Growth Goals and Objectives,* amended and adopted December 14, 1995; *Metro 2040 Growth Concept*, December 8, 1994; *Regional Framework Plan*, December 11, 1997; and *Urban Growth Management Functional Plan*, July 2000 Update.

[48] Seltzer, 1995. See also, Portland Metro, "The Nature of 2040: The Region's 50-year plan for managing growth," n.d., from the Metro website.

[49] Portland Metro, David Bragdon, Address to the Metro Council, January 6, 2000, from the Metro website.

[50] Walth, Brent. 1994. *Fire at Eden's Gate: Tom McCall and the Oregon Story.* Portland: Oregon Historical Society Press.

[51] Walth, 1994. See also Gerrit J. Knaap. 1994. "Land Use Politics in Oregon." In Abbott, Howe, and Adler, 1994, p. 9.

[52] "Oregon's Statewide Planning Goals," Appendix in Abbott, Howe, and Adler. 1994. pp. 299-303.

[53] Ibid.

[54] Edward J. Sullivan. 1994. "The Legal Evolution of the Oregon Planning System," in Abbott, Howe, Adler, eds. pp. 50-51.

[55] Ibid.

[56] Walth, 1994.

[57] Carl Abbott. 1994. "Introduction." In Abbott, Howe, Adler, pp. xxi.

[58] See Knaap and Nelson, 1992; Bello, 1993.

Chapter 10. Normal Planning

The disquiet before the storm

The defining moment of the Southwest Community Plan process will always and inevitably be the night the public ripped the discussion draft map at Wilson High School. A response had been gathering for many weeks as the significance of swatches of burnt orange on a glossy zoning map penetrated the public consciousness. R 2.5. Rowhouses. There was a large swath across the Hayhurst neighborhood, another in Maplewood, a big chunk in Hillsdale, and patches deep into more remote Arnold Creek and Collins View. West Portland Park was marked for even higher densities. And the territory claimed by the Multnomah Neighborhood Association was seemingly covered with rowhouse zoning. Twenty-five hundred square foot lots. Fifteen units to the acre. In Southwest Portland, with its rolling terrain, bigger hillsides, and "canopy of trees," its modest single family homes on one-eighth and one-quarter acre lots, and its rustic feeling despite the suburban development pattern, R 2.5 zoning seemed like a holocaust.[1]

Four or five hundred people showed up at the high school on the evening of October 15, 1996. The meeting had been designed and billed as a "workshop." But with so many people so angry and no tolerance for being process-managed by the planners, the crowd simply vented. And the planners stood there and took it, offering neither explanation nor defense for their proposal. If the Bureau of Planning, the City of Portland, and Portland Metro had intended to simply trace on Southwest Portland their growth management template of higher residential densities and mixed-use transit-oriented urban nodes, it became clear that night that it would not be easy. It would be an error, however, to believe that the public reaction was either sudden or surprising. The planners knew long before that this would not go down easy, and public concern about the future of these neighborhoods had been simmering for a long time.[2]

Indeed, one of the great ironies about the Southwest Community Plan was that activists from the neighborhood asked for it, demanded it, and lobbied City Council to get it. Under the city's Community and Neighborhood Planning Program,[3] the Bureau of Planning was to take each section of Portland in turn for an update of the comprehensive plan. The Central City Plan (1988) was first and then the Albina Community Plan. By 1994 the Outer Southeast Community Plan was well on its way to completion. Southwest neighborhood association leaders made it clear they wanted to be next. As a desirable area of the city with more undeveloped land than other parts of town, they argued, Southwest was most vulnerable to development and ought to be planned first. An updated plan, they believed, would protect Southwest from the worst impacts of rapid growth.

To delay new planning would be to expose Southwest to grave damage.[4] In May 1994, the City Council agreed, and money began to flow to the Southwest Community Plan with the fiscal year budget starting July 1 that same year.[5]

But there were hints of trouble long before the publication of the disastrous discussion draft map. The despised rowhouses, where the existing Comp Plan allowed them, had already debuted in Southwest, drawing opposition from some. Residents battled for several years to prevent a rezoning for eight rowhouses at the corner of SW Miles Street and Capitol Highway. When they lost they had nothing to do but complain about storm runoff, construction schedules, and the "ugly fencing of the type used around junk yards." Judy Bloodworth, who lived next door and downhill from the site, said "the City of Portland just doesn't seem to care." But their basic objections were about increased traffic, loss of trees, stormwater erosion, and a design image they loathed but could not describe beyond hackneyed references to the "character of the neighborhood." Somehow, the rowhouse – more than the blocky clapboard apartment complexes, the roadside commercial clutter, or increasing traffic – symbolized everything residents felt they were losing as Southwest Portland continued to develop.[6]

Heavy rains during the winter of 1995-96 dramatized one of the dangers of development in hilly Southwest Portland. First in December 1995, and then the following February, heavy rains loosened unstable soils on steep slopes with the resulting landslides wrecking streets, and covering homes with mud, or pitching them into ravines. Forty-four homes were damaged, including the Norris House where the Friends of Terwilliger had hoped to create a nature center. Such little disasters set off intense debate over who had to pay to fix the damage and who was responsible in the first place. Ultimately, Southwest residents would finger the villains of "development" and "density," and the issues of erosion, water pollution, fish habitat, and the overall environmental quality of the community would roll into one. All these problems are "compounded by increased density," wrote newspaper editor Rick Seifert. "More construction means more water-impervious surfaces – roofs, driveways, patios, and roads," and that meant more runoff. Later there would be pressure to rule steep sites off-limits to development, protect upland streams, invest heavily in storm water infrastructure, and especially to limit residential densities. But early on there was only dread.[7]

The question of who represented Southwest Portland was already at issue, and it would be a major point of contention throughout much of the planning process to come. Southwest Neighborhoods Inc. (commonly known by its acronym , SWNI, and pronounced "sweeney") was beset by internal conflict. The two officers who led the effort to get the SWCP, Kay Durtschi and John Alland, were criticized for overstepping their authority and failing to consult with member neighborhood associations. At their annual meeting in June 1994, Durtschi was replaced as

president, but Alland was elected vice president, and all vowed to try to work together despite the factionalism. In one form or another, however, the question of who had a right to speak for residents of the community would be debated continually.[8]

What poisoned relations most then – within the community, and especially between neighborhood activists and city government – was the controversy over the Southwest Community Center "swim-gym." Made possible by passage of a city-wide bond issue for parks and open space in May 1994, planning commenced early the following year with calls for participation from Parks Bureau staff. "We want to know what the public wants, and what are the strengths and weaknesses of the competing sites," Zari Santner, a bureau supervisor told a reporter. "We want many options and we have no preconceived notions."[9] But by the end of the process, many were convinced the eventual selection of a site in Gabriel Park had been a foregone conclusion – despite citizen protests against building on public open space – and that the city didn't care a whit about what the residents of Southwest wanted.

City Commissioner Charlie Hales, who oversaw the Parks Bureau and would make the decisive recommendation on a location for the facility, named a 13-member citizens task force to advise him on the matter. The roster of people chosen for the panel included a physician, planner, housewife, several business people, a retired executive, and a young man studying for his masters in public administration. They were active in organizations for the arts, sports and recreation, the environment, accessibility, and neighborhoods.[10] It should have been the kind of group to inspire confidence in the process and give it legitimacy. They met in public and set aside time each session to hear from citizens in general. But when, with a strong helping hand from city staff, they quickly whittled a long list of sites from 30 to three, and then on October 25, 1995 voted 10-4 to recommend Gabriel Park as the preferred site, there were howls of protest, not only about the inappropriateness of the location, but also about the fairness of the process.[11]

Once Commissioner Hales announced his decision to take the advice of his own appointed citizen task force, opponents resolved to oppose the decision at every possible future opportunity. The battle would run from late 1995 until almost the end of 1997, when all avenues of appeal had been exhausted and construction had already commenced. Opponents testified at two City Council "informals" urged on Hales by colleagues feeling the heat from constituents; explained their opposition at a design review open house sponsored by the Parks Bureau in March 1996; and most critically, presented six hours of testimony at a quasi-judicial session before a city hearings officer in October 1996 to rule on the conditional use permit needed to build the facility in the park. When the hearings officer ruled against them, neighborhood opponents steeled themselves for a long series of appeals – before the City Council, to the state Land Use Board of Appeals, and on to the State courts – all to no avail.[12]

The main arguments in favor of the Gabriel Park location were simply that site work and acquisition costs there would be less than at the alternative sites, allowing more money to go into the facility itself, and that a small corner of a large park was a perfectly appropriate place to locate a recreational facility. Opponents argued that no loss of public open space was acceptable, that city and regional planning frameworks prohibited it, and that it would damage the neighborhood as well as the park. But as such public debates go, any and all arguments were brought to bear on either side and the heat of language rose as the conflict continued.

Opponents of the Gabriel Park site held that open space was in such limited supply that it should never be built upon. "Open spaces are scarce and treasured in Portland," two residents wrote. "That is why the citizens of Portland just voted millions of dollars in taxes to protect such spaces." Even blocking the view into the park was a problem, Martie Sucec testified, because the view "provides scenic relief for those who never even go into the park." Rose Florek said the view from the intersection of Vermont and 45th gave her "a daily source of renewal and sanity." When Hales noted that the Gabriel sisters who donated the land for the park had long envisioned a recreational facility there one resident replied, "That was then; this is now. We don't want that park taken bit by bit."[13]

They also argued that building in a park was forbidden by the city comprehensive plan, and that according to the spirit of the just-completed Metro 2040 Plan such a facility should be in an active, urban node. "The plan is a contract between the city and its citizens," wrote opposition leader Anthony Boutard, and "a contract is a contract." Becky Miller,[14] another opposition leader, pointed out that regional planning strategy suggested one of two alternative sites: "Hillsdale and Multnomah are destination town centers where things are happening. Both are on busy streets, pedestrian and transit accessible." Opponents pointed out over and over again that Gabriel Park was served by only one bus line with relatively infrequent service, also contrary to the intent of the 2040 Plan. Finally, however, the argument degenerated into a lawyer's quarrel about "shoulds" and "mays" versus "musts" and "shalls." Opponents argued that comp plan language was mandatory; those on the other side said it was "aspirational" but not binding. Neighborhood activists lost the argument legislatively and legally, but gained the term "aspirational" as a synonym for planners' falsehoods.[15]

Proponents of the site drew on another time-honored source of rhetorical power – references to the needs of children. One couple wrote to the paper to say that any 90 acre rectangle of Southwest Portland contained more children than the 90 acres of Gabriel Park ever did. "That's a shame. The park is designed for and used by adults and our dogs. Kids are largely left out." Jim McCluskey told the City Council, "Southwest children are largely underserved by parks and recreation." As the process dragged on, Hales, himself, warned that if legal opposition

continued "we'll have another whole winter where there won't be a pool for kids in Southwest."[16]

But opponents had the trump card in the Portland deck – process. Newspaper editor Donald Snedecor identified the "lack of due process" as one of the main issues driving the opposition to the Gabriel Park site. "Opponents argue that the final siting decision of Hales' handpicked citizens' advisory committee was a foregone conclusion," Snedecor wrote. "In my opinion, the park bureau did in fact ramrod Gabriel Park through the siting process." Nickie Lynch, a member of the task force, wrote in rebuttal. People voted for the bond issue, Hales was elected, and he picked the committee. That was fair process, she said. "Every meeting was open to the public and the public was allowed to speak at every meeting. The meetings were broadly publicized." Martie Sucec responded that it was "patronizing" to say that "citizens were allowed to talk." Besides, "holding lengthy meetings in public where citizens are only allowed to comment for 20 minutes is not involving them substantively in any process."[17]

From beginning to end, neighborhood activists complained about process. It almost seemed as if their definition of a fair process was one in which their side won. One writer said "we need a definition of 'citizen input' that we all understand. If a citizen recommendation is one thing and policy quite another why should citizens spend the time?" After the city hearings officer listened to nine hours of testimony – two thirds of it given by the opposition – and ruled the facility could be built in the park, Becky Miller derided the decision as a "rubber stamp" and said "we wondered if we were at the same hearing she was."[18]

It was difficult to judge popular opinion based on the various votes taken on the issue. The citizen task force voted overwhelmingly for Gabriel Park, but they were either hand-picked dupes for Hales or conscientious, independent citizens, depending on one's point of view. The Hayhurst and Maplewood neighborhood associations cast lopsided votes to pursue legal action against the selection, but even the biggest turnout represented a tiny percentage of the neighborhood population. Multnomah Neighborhood Association also voted against the Gabriel Park site, but narrowly, and Bridlemile-Robert Gray voted for it. The Wilson Neighborhood Association, meanwhile, voted against putting the facility in their neighborhood where many Gabriel opponents thought it should go. The number of speakers at the conditional use hearing was evenly divided – 37 in favor of Gabriel Park, 40 against. Very late in the process, the SWNI Parks Committee reversed itself and voted 8-0 against the Gabriel Park site.[19]

As the issue progressed, the bitterness deepened and the rhetoric grew more harsh. On October 6, 1997, Hales led the ceremonial groundbreaking for the Gabriel Park Community Center and a cadre of opponents attended raising placards that read "don't pave our parks." A week later, there was a nighttime rally in support of the continuing court case, also in the park. Martie Sucec was there with a bullhorn, imploring "stop this destruction of open space," and

waving a placard that read: "The City of Portland: The City That Works You Over," a cutting play on words of the Portland municipal slogan, "The City That Works." Relationships were torn all around. Deb Stryker, a member of the citizens' task force, noted "the vengeance and hostility of the people in opposition. Sometimes I feared for my life."[20]

Rick Seifert wrote a column – partly, but not wholly, tongue-in-cheek – suggesting, in the interests of accountability, that the new facility be named after Charlie Hales. If it turned out to be a good thing, he would get the credit he deserved. If it turned out to be a permanent blot on the park and neighborhood, people would have a reminder of who it was that fouled up. Joe Higgins, a party to the lawsuit, and his wife Dorothy, didn't get the joke. "Around our house 'Charlie Hales' are considered dirty words and to see his name splayed across a city-owned building would evoke in us the same gut-churning response that any other vulgar graffiti would." In the end Hales settled the issue by naming it the Gabriel Park Community Center – perhaps underscoring that, yes, it is in the park.[21]

Political leaders called for "healing" and Mayor Katz told citizens "you have to learn to trust each other, and to trust your city."[22] But even as the appeals process was exhausted and construction began the attacks on the community center continued. As part of "value engineering," fill from the excavation was left on site and fashioned into earthworks. One neighbor complained the "mountain range of fill dirt" blocked views of the park, and called it a "model of plunder and pillage to SW's crown jewel of parks." A local political cartoonist immediately dubbed the mounds "Mount Hales."[23]

As digging continued and the winter rains began, silt laden water began to run off the site, into storm drains, and then into Vermont Creek, a tributary of Fanno Creek, the Tualatin River, and ultimately, the Willamette. Environmental activist Liz Callison wrote in *The Multnomah Village Post* saying, "every day a little more of Multnomah neighborhood goes down the drain... tons of fine clay silts move suspended in the water, clogging the gills of trout and littler fish..." Maplewood neighborhood activist Don Bain monitored the site, took photographs of turbid outfalls, posted regular and detailed bulletins via e-mail on pollution from the construction site, called reporters, and complained to officials at every level of government, but failed to get the construction site shut down. Contractors pressed on and the city eventually paid a $4,500 fine to the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality. Streams activist Jere Retzer, among others, proposed a winter time ban on construction on sensitive sites as consistent with state land use Goal 5. Bain and others organized to sue the city to stop the pollution. "We have photos of dirty water leaving the site, photos of dirty streams, and a Clean Water Act that says, 'Thou shall not pollute," Bain said. Eventually, the city arranged to pump the runoff into sanitary sewers for treatment, but the episode raised watershed issues to a new level of awareness.[24]

Later, Bain took the Parks Bureau and contractors to task for a new set of problems, including "fire protection, pedestrian safety, and safe driveway access." In September 1998 vandals broke into the construction site and spray-painted the unfinished walls of the center. But the words were political, not prankish: "Destroy your own neighborhood," they wrote. "Nobody wants this," said another. "Rape." "Swine." To add injury to insult, thieves, in a separate break-in, stole $30,000 in tools and equipment. That winter water pressure from beneath the building pushed a swimming pool out of its foundation. Bain and others blamed ground water and said they had warned the city this would happen. As bids came in over budget and problems mounted, the price tag for the project rose from $8.7 million to $11.3 million. When the facility opened, neighbors criticized the design – one said it looked like a factory – and others complained about the fee structure. An annual pass for a family of four would cost $693. "I'm ashamed of my community," said Anne Nelson, "that we would put up a pseudo-private facility and say it answers our community's need." There were still more complaints about parking. In response to this bitter controversy, the city would make changes in park planning processes several years later, but during the SWCP process, Gabriel Park was a wound that would not heal.[25]

The planning for the recreation facility overlapped with work on the community plan so fully that ill will generated on the one project seemed to reinforce mistrust on the other. An April 1, 1995 public forum to set priorities for the community center was sandwiched between SWCP workshops held March 30 and April 8. A year and a half later, with the community center issue locked in controversy and the discussion draft map drawing widespread condemnation, the hearing for a conditional use permit to build in Gabriel Park was held one day and the celebrated Wilson High School meeting on the SWCP the next. Many of those against putting the community center in Gabriel Park were also staunch opponents of the planning bureau's zoning proposals for Southwest. The parallel track of meetings, rather than exhausting the activists, seemed to sharpen their skills and deepen their sense of outrage. The two issues seemed to merge even more because the City Commissioner in charge of the Parks Bureau was the same as the one in charge of the Planning Bureau – Charlie Hales.[26]

The planning template

Even the earliest public discussions of the Southwest Community Plan seemed to foreshadow trouble. The newly assembled SWCP staff organized some early meetings to talk about what citizens should expect in the planning process. The tag line for the meetings was "Lessons Learned," a reference in part to the bruising experiences – for both citizens and planners – in the Albina and Outer Southeast community plans.[27] The advice offered by planners, consultants, elected officials and neighborhood leaders participating in panel discussions was, in

the light of hindsight, downright eerie, effectively predicting the coming fight over increased residential density, the friction between professional and lay planners, and the problems of gaining early participation.

Joe Uris, a "journalist and planning critic," urged his audience not to sacrifice the quality of their neighborhoods to the Metro-City push for increased density. He said the strategy ostensibly designed to cope with growth that planners described as inevitable was really a "self-fulfilling prophecy" that promoted growth for the benefit of development industry profits and increased government tax revenues. "One question I still have is: if we don't build it, will they come?" Jim Gardner, a Metro council member and former neighborhood association leader, told his listeners to resist a "broad brush" approach to zoning that "uses simplistic formulas to determine density." What was appropriate in one place might not be in another.[28]

At another meeting, Laura Campos, a long-time activist in the Corbett-Terwilliger-Lair Hill neighborhood, told citizens not to let planners push them into proposing things they don't really want. "I really believe the citizens have more vision than the experts," she said. Betsy Radigan, a veteran of North Portland planning battles, underscored the trouble that can erupt "if people perceive that they are being unfairly controlled." When one audience member wondered allowed about the ordinary citizen's competitive disadvantage in dealing with professional planners and paid consultants, Radigan advised, "there's always more of you than there is of them."[29]

Several members of that panel also advised citizens and planners to invest a lot of energy in getting people to participate at the front end of the planning. The reporter summarized their weary wisdom: "it seems no matter what you do... people still show up in the middle or end of the process and complain that they didn't know what was happening. And now they don't like it." In attendance that night were "about 25 Southwest residents, city planners and neighborhood association staff members," barely enough for a decent neighborhood association meeting, let alone a district-wide conversation of this import.[30]

Bureau of Planning staff proceeded in the normal fashion, nevertheless. They gathered and analyzed baseline information about the planning area: topographical maps, traffic counts, street classifications, transit service, historic districts, parks and public open space, and zoning maps with all of their many overlays and plan districts, base zoning and Comp Plan designations (the latter two were often not the same). They updated the land use inventory, checked new demographic data, reviewed school enrollments, and plotted development trends in Southwest since 1991. It was the professional basics.

But they also reached out to the community in a systematic way, meeting with business district and neighborhood associations, and interest groups like Friends of Terwilliger and the

Tryon Creek Watershed Council. They opened discussions with each of 17 neighborhood associations about what would be involved if they decided to do a neighborhood plan in conjunction with the community plan.[31] Their outreach coordinator established a computerized list of interested citizens. Staff developed a *Southwest Community Plan Citizen Handbook* to provide historical background on the district and explain the framework of planning in Portland. One hundred and seventy people came out to listen at two "kick-off" workshops in the Spring of 1995. They circulated a questionnaire asking for further comments. Staff asked for volunteers to serve on a Citizens Advisory Committee; they got 45 and Commissioner Hales picked 15 to serve. Finally, they drafted an elaborate "process document," reviewed it with the public at an open meeting, and passed it on to the Planning Commission for approval. All of these things, if not the "state of the art" in citizen participation were proper protocol for planning in Portland.[32]

SWCP project staff also established a Technical Advisory Committee, made up of representatives of eight or nine other city bureaus, the Portland Development Commission, the public school system, Metro, and the transit agency, Tri-Met, plus various other relevant agencies. They interviewed each member to determine what projects or programs they might have underway that would have an impact on the plan area. There were a number, starting with the Metro 2040 Plan, which set the framework for all planning efforts in the region. The city was also undertaking a full-scale rewrite of the Land Division Code, sometimes known as Title 34, and which would come into play heavily later on. There were major regional infrastructure issues with a Southwest impact, such as North-South light rail planning and the investigation of options for replacing the Sellwood Bridge across the Willamette. And there were several of intense local interest: the Capitol Highway Pedestrian Transportation Plan, the Hillsdale Specific Development Plan, and the South Portland Circulation Study, to investigate the feasibility of closing Front Avenue, an important highway connection, through the Lair Hill neighborhood. It was hard to plan in Portland without running into another plan.[33]

At every turn, the planners asked citizens to tell them what they wanted for their community and they begged them to get involved. But their initial engagements made it clear that planning for Southwest Portland could not be on a big blank canvas. It would be according to an elaborate, specific, and very restrictive planning template prescribed by state law, Metro policy, and city regulation. Sheila Frugoli, project leader for the SWCP, introduced the planning process and the citizen handbook at workshops on March 30 and April 8, 1995. The plan they produced, the handbook promised, would be "tailored to the unique qualities and issues of SW Portland," yet it would also be the "first to wholly comply with Metro's objectives."[34]

The planners' own brief description of Southwest Portland gave more than a few hints about why meeting both of those objectives simultaneously would be the challenge of the decade.

The 19.25 square-mile district, they wrote, is "characterized by steep hills, large swaths of natural vegetation and forest cover" and "numerous water courses." Elevations range from 25 feet above sea level at the Willamette River edge to 1,070 feet at Council Crest and much rolling terrain in between. Although there were "relatively few" neighborhood parks, Southwest had the city's largest share of land in restrictive e-zones, a low-density post-war suburban development pattern, "few major through streets" and a fragmented street grid, and commercial uses concentrated on auto-oriented strips. Total population in 1990 was nearly 59,000, but with the city's most rapid development in the first half of that decade it was surely higher than that by 1995. Southwest residents were well-educated, and, on the whole, more affluent than the average Portlander. Ninety-five percent were white. One in five adults held an advanced college degree.[35]

The residents liked their neighborhoods, but the planners didn't. More important, prevailing policy saw Southwest, not as an environment to be cherished, but as a problem to be solved. "The hills and winding unpaved roads, the forest edges, creeks, streams, and river provide a unique residential setting for many SW residents," the handbook allowed. "Some see it as rural in character, untamed and unstructured." But the planners knew it as "sprawl" resulting in "a feeling of isolation" for some residents, especially "the very old and very young," who are "totally dependent on others for transportation." Such sprawling landscapes with "no unique features or commonality," they continued, "diminish(ed) a sense of community or neighborhood" and had "no real sense of place." If Portland continued to grow in such a manner, they predicted, the result would be more cars, less transit, poorer air and water quality, longer commutes, worse congestion, higher energy use, and more rural land consumed. Socially, aesthetically, functionally, environmentally, and economically, development like what had occurred in Southwest was a disaster.[36]

There had to be a change, the planners believed, and municipal, regional, and statewide policy backed them up. The baseline for residential zoning was the State Metropolitan Housing Rule which required that all vacant land zoned for housing achieve a density of at least ten units per acre. In addition, the city's strategic plan, *Portland Future Focus*, set a goal of increasing the residential development potential citywide by ten percent, and the city's response to the Metro 2040 Plan was to set a citywide housing target which included at least 6,100 additional units for Southwest. Just as demanding, the State Transportation Planning Rule required municipalities to attempt to reverse the trend toward more cars and more miles traveled, and to promote the use of transit, bicycles, and walking. Following the rule in Portland meant a change in land use intensity under the heading of "transit supportive development," which required a minimum of eight units to the net acre for bus service and 15 units to the acre for light rail. In a community where much of the land was zoned at four or six units to the acre, and the most densely populated

neighborhoods had about seven *persons* to the acre, achieving such numbers would be daunting.[37]

To the devoted suburbanites of Southwest, the prescribed means for achieving those numbers would be downright menacing. In order to accommodate an estimated metropolitan population growth of 500,000 to 720,000 by the year 2040 about 38 percent of all new housing would need to be in multi-family configurations – not just townhouses, but apartment buildings, as well. Portland would attempt to put as much of its share as possible in the new central city developments of the Pearl District, the River District, North Macadam, and later, perhaps, downtown's West End, Rose Quarter, or Central East Side. Later, a new ordinance to allow "granny flats" and other accessory dwelling units would pass City Council to allow some increased density on a unit-by-unit basis. Most of the rest, however, would have to go in Metro's "design concept" areas – higher-density, mixed-use "Town Centers" and "Main Streets" with combined residential and employment densities averaging 40 persons to the acre. What's more, Metro had already decided where in Southwest they would go. Hillsdale, the "Barbur Triad" and Raleigh Hills would get "Town Centers" and Multnomah Village and Garden Home would become "Main Streets."[38]

There was not much response, but what there was seemed to be negative. The planners showed workshop attendees a lot of sketches of picturesque villages with trees and banners and cafes. Frugoli told a reporter, "I have only received one negative call about the illustrations so far," and more positive ones. But the same reporter wrote that "the input from residents suggests they are happy with single family homes in quiet neighborhoods. They also like the 'rural' characteristics of the area, like the unpaved, disconnected roads and large swaths of vegetation." Across Southwest, she wrote, "residents are resisting the ideas of more people and better street connections, even if it will lead to better bicycle and pedestrian connections and improved transit service in the future."[39]

The idea of street connectivity was just one of many elements in the City-Metro planning template. It said that a fragmented street pattern, like the one in Southwest Portland, made travel by all modes more difficult. It funneled heavy automobile traffic onto a small number of major streets. It discouraged bicycle and pedestrian travel by limiting the side streets and cut-throughs a person could take. It made it harder for people to get to the bus. Making Southwest work better transportation-wise meant connecting a lot of the dead ends. But the early indication was that no one was interested. A columnist for *The Multnomah Village Post* described the struggle of residents on SW 50th and Marigold to get their street paved by means of a Local Improvement District (to which they would make a significant mandatory contribution): "The city wanted connectivity, even though the terrain was not built for straight through streets. The majority of

residents wanted cul-de-sacs and neighborhood parks, but the City Commissioners voted against the LID residents, and street construction was completed late fall, 1994." Such residents, forced to accept one small piece of the strategy, were unlikely to swallow it whole.[40]

In the immediate aftermath of the "kick-off" workshops, a Hillsdale resident wrote to the paper to blast the heart of Portland growth management planning. "My parents moved here because it was a wonderful neighborhood, close to the city and all the city's conveniences, but with low density, lots of woods and a distinctly suburban feel. In 1990, I moved back to Hillsdale for these very same reasons." He continued:

> We are now facing pressure from developers and other commercial interests to take this from us by drastically increasing our neighborhood's density with zoning changes to allow and even encourage the development of apartments, condominiums, and tightly packed rowhouses. In a few years, the Hillsdale community, as we know it now, will no longer exist if these folks get their way.[41]

It was just one letter, so maybe easy to ignore. But there were many other signs, right from the beginning, that Southwest residents would not play by the Bureau of Planning rules. If this planning template was a coloring book, they weren't going to color inside those lines.

Except that to a great extent, they tried. Many citizens spent long hours in meetings with their neighborhood associations and tried to find a way to negotiate the distance between this powerful set of planning and growth management policies and their own visions for the places where they lived. By the beginning of 1996, eleven of Southwest's 17 recognized neighborhood associations had committed to do plans for their own neighborhoods. These were to be adopted by City Council along with the rest of the SWCP. Six other associations chose a more limited exercise of creating "vision statements" and "action charts." The opportunity, ostensibly, was to create "citizen driven" plans that would allow residents to express their vision for their own neighborhoods and to "write policies and objectives to identify unique features" therein. Such plans would include a local action agenda "for the neighborhood, private sector, and public agencies to pursue in partnership." And each association would have a city staff member to help them do the plan.[42]

The problem was the structure of policy prohibited them from exercising all but the most marginal kinds of discretion. "The content development of ... neighborhood and sub-area plans must be consistent with both the Statewide Planning Goals and Regulations and the city's Comprehensive Plan Goals and Policies," as well as with the entire structure of the emerging Metro 2040 Plan. If neighbors had a vision, it had to be consistent with the growth management vision of increased residential density and mixed use-transit-connected urban nodes. They had to meet the evolving Metro housing targets and satisfy the State Transportation Planning Rule. Not

only was it mandatory that their policies and action items be consistent with the state-region-city policy structure, it was decreed that "neighborhood plan-adopted policies cannot duplicate current citywide policies or those in the SWCP." Finally, all participating neighborhood associations were required to sign a letter of agreement "outlining the responsibilities of the association and the Bureau of Planning in the planning process." Such legal formalities seem to have been unnecessary, for neighborhood associations in the act of planning in Oregon were at the very bottom of a dense hierarchy of governments, agencies, laws, policies, and regulations. Plan? It's a wonder they could even breathe.[43]

The planning staff stepped up their efforts at citizen "outreach." They resolved to expand their contacts with business and commercial owners, including chain and franchise operations, especially in the designated Town Centers. They worked to keep in touch with those neighborhood associations that had decided not to do neighborhood plans. They expanded the list of social, fraternal, religious, and other interest organizations they would contact (including some potential allies such as Coalition for a Livable Future, the Audubon Society, STOP (Sensible Transportation Options for People), and the Bicycle Transportation Alliance). In the first year alone, staff held more than 100 meetings with community groups of all types. From May 1995 to May 1996 their mailing list grew from 350 to 1,064 names. Staff reported, with no hint of foreboding, that they expected to meet their statutory "benchmark" for citizen participation – the "active involvement of five percent" of people living or working in the plan area (2,950 people) – "during the fourth phase" of the plan process, the review of the discussion draft map and policies.[44]

In January 1996 the planners kicked the process into third gear. They sent a "mailer" to nearly 37,000 addresses in Southwest – residential and otherwise – with a summary of plan concepts, an invitation to one of five workshops, and a questionnaire. They also distributed more than 2,000 copies of a SWCP "Journal" – a 16-page tabloid publication with a thorough (if somewhat dry) explanation of the planning process, the Metro 2040 Plan concept, the rest of the planning framework, and two "map concepts." One showed a series of 18 existing nodes that would be zoned and regulated to develop into higher-density mixed-use "villages." The other showed three "Town Centers" and three "Main Streets." These would have even higher residential densities than the villages and a broader mix of stores and businesses. The "village" and "Town Center" concepts were each illustrated on full color zoning maps, the villages marked by dotted-line circles with a 300-yard radius and clusters of commercial and multi-family zoning. The Town Centers and Main Streets were larger irregular shaped districts defined by heavy dashed lines and more intense concentrations of high-density residential and commercial zoning. The former

distributed growth potential more widely, the latter concentrated it more narrowly, leaving the zoning for large sections of the community mostly unchanged.[45]

Once again, there were contradictory messages in the presentation. "The Journal" announced "we need to know what you think," and invited "citizens to participate in creating the land use map, policy framework, and strategies that will shape Southwest Portland's future." But the laborious exposition of policy "pieces already in place" – the Metro 2040 Plan, Transportation Planning Rule, and so forth – said just the opposite. Citizens were encouraged to "treat the map concepts as a starting point" and to look at the village and Town Center ideas not as "whole proposals" but "as pieces that may be kept or discarded." Throughout the document planners adhered to the language of "could" and "can" – as in "perhaps" or "maybe" – and avoided "would" or "will" in describing the village and Town Center concepts. But city policy and the regional plan were not so indefinite and Metro Town Centers would not easily be "discarded".[46]

About 500 Southwest residents showed up to the five workshops to hear the presentation, look at the sketches, read the journal, and pore over the maps. Newspaper editor Rick Seifert said it was a "wake-up call" for Southwest. Although people had understood the region was growing and planning was a necessity, few had understood the magnitude of what was being asked of the community. For the first time city officials put a number on the residential growth Southwest would need to accommodate – 6,100 additional units of housing for an estimated 15,500 new residents. Seifert recalled how the Hillsdale Town Center plan had foundered the year before on opposition to R2 zoning (approximately20 units per acre) on a small triangle of land near the busy intersection of Capitol Highway and Sunset Boulevard. But the Town Center map in the journal showed zoning for twice the density and over a much more extensive area. Overall, the scheme would allow nearly 1,300 new housing units in Hillsdale alone, with some buildings as high as four or five stories. If residents had rebelled against a little patch of apartments, how would they ever accept this? Even policy supporters, like developer Brigid Flanagan, were moved to call the proposal "drastic."[47]

David Lezak, who happened to be married to Flanagan, wrote to the newspaper to protest again. "Hillsdale neighbors who attended these workshops and thought the city was listening have pretty much wasted their time... the new Southwest Community Plan ignores the community consensus." Even surveys the planners had conducted showed little appetite for residential densities in the 15-30 units per acre range, Lezak said. He called on fellow citizens to consider again whether an additional 600,000 residents for Metro Portland was either desirable or inevitable. Isn't "the best way to preserve our own neighborhoods and everyone's quality of life to ask the city to turn back the throttle on the 'growth machine'?" The Planning Commission held follow-up meetings in February and heard some more of the same. Maybe the city should stop

giving incentives for companies to come to Portland and drive up the population, one citizen said. Several suggested the city was going about the planning backward, deciding how much growth Southwest should absorb before studying the area to determine how much growth was possible. "It's like buying a shoe," Ray Underwood said, "and then forcing your foot to fit it."[48]

Nearly 1,600 people filled out the questionnaire and sent it in. In April, the project staff published the results, along with a brief summary of comments by citizens from the workshops. It would have been impossible to misread the response except for the ambiguities and forced choices of the questionnaire itself. Ninety-two percent of the respondents agreed that preparing for growth should be a priority for the city, but there was no place for people to indicate they thought growth should be discouraged. Respondents favored the village concept over Town Centers by a margin of about 62-38 percent, but there was no box to check for "neither." A large majority opposed directing growth to "major streets" rather than to "centers" but an even larger majority favored directing growth to "major transit streets" in order to support Tri-Met service. A minority thought that increased street connectivity was needed. An even smaller minority wanted it if they were going to have to pay for it. Pedestrian and bicycle connections were okay, but not for cars. The questions that asked residents about their tolerance for increased housing density were clouded by qualifiers – "in order to set aside more land for parks and open space" – or vague language – "other housing types" as a euphemism for duplexes, rowhouses, and apartments.[49]

From the planners' point of view, there was no use in offering citizens choices that the structure of planning determined were off limits. Still, there seemed a certain willfulness in the way they misread the survey returns and other expressions of citizen opinion. A summary of issues raised by citizens at the workshops and Planning Commission hearings included funding for infrastructure, protection of environmentally sensitive land, stormwater management and erosion control, historic preservation, local control over design review, traffic calming, and "the potential of increased crime due to changes in neighborhood street patterns or housing density." That people favored combining the two map concepts only seemed to indicate that the really liked neither of them.[50]

A sampling of written comments on the surveys indicated some support for the program ("Everyone should be able to walk to the store from their homes" and "Design reviews should be an integral part of mixed-density housing") but mostly opposition ("Do not increase density – let city grow out – single-family homes, lawns, trees good"; "Accept auto transportation – public transport carries few people and is very costly"; and "STOP GROWTH, DON'T PLAN TO GROW.") The planners insisted that Southwest residents, based on their participation in a 1993 Visual Preference Survey, favored "pedestrian-oriented mixed-use development at transit stations and along commercial main streets," and other new urbanist design protocols. Another survey

indicated that 82 percent of Southwest residents supported infill development as an alternative to expansion of the Urban Growth Boundary. As subsequent events would demonstrate, however, citizens didn't consider these proposals "infill." They saw them as attempts to promote wholesale redevelopment through rezoning.[51]

Michael Harrison, the Chief Planner overseeing the SWCP project, was pleased to see that citizens were at last beginning to understand what the Metro 2040 Plan would require. The community faced a dilemma, he believed. If citizens were behind maintaining the UGB, controlling sprawl, and keeping the urban center strong – and many of them were – they would have to find a way to accept and manage higher densities – which many of them could not. This contradiction, between strong support for generalized regional policies for growth management and strong opposition to those same policies when they were expressed specifically and locally as increased zoning densities in a resident's immediate neighborhoods, would haunt the process from beginning to end.

The discussion draft map

With a compilation of citizen comments on the map concepts in hand, and individual neighborhood plans moving toward completion, Bureau staff turned to the task of preparing a discussion draft map. Under any circumstances, the challenge they faced was a difficult one. Their charge was to find a way to bridge the gap between the clearly expressed values of citizens who had spoken out so far and the restrictive template of Portland, Metro, and Oregon planning policy and law. They had promised to listen to what citizens had said and to incorporate their neighborhood plans as far as they could. But they were also mandated to meet housing targets, promote Town Center concepts, and develop "transit supportive" densities. Even if everything had gone right, negotiating a community consensus would have been a contentious process. But things did not go right. Far from it.

Some neighborhood associations had already begun to chafe at the limitations of the neighborhood planning process prescribed by the city. The Bureau had decided that proposing specific zoning for neighborhoods would be off-limits to citizens. This was not so much because zoning was a professional-technical matter, although Bureau planners believed as much, but more as an economy measure. Participation was expensive and citizen zoning was bound to be time-consuming.[52] But it was not surprising that citizens understood that planning without zoning in Portland was an empty exercise. In Hillsdale, where citizens had been planning for more than a year and a half, they incorporated rowhouse zoning in their draft plan, but resisted higher density housing in R1 and RH designations. In Hayhurst, they argued about what to do at the corner of SW 45th and Vermont – across from the notorious community center site. In

Multnomah, citizens who had been working for more than a year began to understand that a process without zoning would not help them defend against proximate threats to their neighborhood, and they simply started to lose patience.[53]

Nevertheless, planning staff were pushing the neighborhood associations to finish up, as well as to complete their responses to the map concepts in the journal. "This schedule will allow time for staff to fully analyze all the responses before offering a zoning pattern in the form of a 'discussion draft,'" Terry Moore wrote in the SWNI newsletter. As if to underscore the conflict, Leonard Gard, land use specialist for the neighborhood coalition, wrote a column in the same edition of the paper rehearsing the housing target numbers and warning citizens about the antipathy of the Bureau of Planning to any kind of downzoning. By June, Ashcreek/Crestwood, Hayhurst, Corbett-Terwilliger-Lair Hill, Homestead, Collins View, and Hillsdale had all completed first drafts of their plans.[54]

Meanwhile, Michael Harrison had been temporarily reassigned to finish up the Outer Southeast Community Plan and Sheila Frugoli and her staff was left to chart their own course. Frugoli, Ellen Wax, David Berniker, Jill Grenda, and Suzanne Carey huddled for three intensive day-long sessions to hash out the competing claims of the policy structure and citizen values. In response to the split in survey responses between the "village" and the "Town Center" concepts they attempted to prepare a map that blended the two. They were well aware of what residents would tolerate. After all, each of them had been working directly with the residents for a year or more. But they had also been under heavy pressure from within the bureaucracy to make sure that the plan would help meet the housing targets to protect the UGB. "When a debate would come up," one of the team members said, "we'd say 'let's push the envelope. Let's do R1.'"[55]

When their map was done they handed it over to Harrison for review and presumably a few finishing touches. Although he had not been present for an important part of the Southwest plan process, he was familiar with the protective attitude of those residents about their neighborhoods. He remembered that the most vociferous opposition to the 1980 Comprehensive Plan had come from Southwest Portland. More on his mind, however, were two immediately preceding plans, Outer Southeast and Albina. In Outer Southeast the potential impact of the emerging policy structure on real neighborhoods was obscured from citizens until very late in the process. When they understood how new zoning and other regulations would translate into the built form, they felt "betrayed." In Albina, where lower income families and African-Americans were in the majority, the density agenda was also met with resistance. The city upzoned anyway and the result during the 1990s was significant gentrification. At the end of the process Albina citizens predicted that Harrison would never get away with that kind of planning in Southwest,

where the residents were affluent, well-educated, and politically well-connected. Harrison took it as a challenge to treat Southwest the same as any other neighborhood.

If that was to be the case, all of the key policies would have to be inscribed much more boldly on the discussion draft map. So, zoning would have to encourage "transit supportive development" of 15 units per acre or more in transit corridors – not just high-speed, high-volume Barbur Boulevard and Beaverton-Hillsdale Highway, but also the meandering Capitol Highway, Vermont Street, and even the bucolic Boones Ferry Road. Still more, the Regional Transportation Plan designated Barbur Boulevard as a future route for light rail or "simulated light rail" transit – high-capacity buses in restricted rights of way. If that was the regional plan, the community plan ought to reflect it, Harrison believed, in which case "transit supportive" densities meant at least 15 units to the acre. The problem was that after you finished zoning everything within a quarter mile of a major transit street for R2.5 and everything within half a mile of a future transit station for even higher densities, there wasn't much left that hadn't been radically upzoned.

Harrison took the map to his boss, David Knowles, the planning director, and to Knowles' boss, City Commissioner Charlie Hales. He told them he knew it would be highly controversial. But it was consistent with prevailing policy and it would help meet the city's housing targets under the Metro 2040 Plan. The strategy was to put something on the table that would make citizens sit up and take notice. There could be no real discussion with the community until the community was paying attention. The map was "aggressive" but it would provide elected leadership an opening bargaining position, something from which to back off. Hales and Knowles both signed off the discussion draft map.[56]

Harrison's staff looked at the map and knew immediately that it went too far. One staffer described herself as "flabbergasted." Another described it as "too much." All knew that it was by no means faithful to the values that citizens had been expressing through nearly two years of the process. Frugoli was against publishing the map, but did not press the issue with her supervisor. Harrison showed the draft map to the Citizens Advisory Committee. Even though the members of the CAC tended to be more sympathetic to the policies in place, they, too, were stunned by the sweeping way in which those policies were applied to Southwest Portland. Rick Michaelson, a Planning Commission member who led the review of the Southwest Community Plan, threw the freshly-printed map into his briefcase and headed east on a business trip. "I called from Chicago and said 'you guys can't put this out.'" The map was "unresponsive" to what people had been saying. But Knowles told him it was too late to pull it back.[57]

After the fact, Harrison allowed that a "more interactive development" of the map would have been wiser – if they had more time. But the finished map didn't come as a total surprise to the community. Harrison reviewed it with the Crestwood/Ash Creek planning group. He met with

the Hillsdale Plan Steering Committee in mid-August and warned them that the Planning Commission had directed the planners to "be more aggressive about density and growth and to work closely with citizens groups. We are trying to do both." City policy-makers were now offering to plan for 70,000 new units – instead of the 50,000 that Metro had suggested – as a way to beat a proposal by the Home Builders Association to stretch the UGB by 14,000 acres. Earlier that same week he met with the Multnomah Neighborhood Association planning committee, explained the strategy, and showed them a mark-up copy of the map with "much of the central portion of Southwest Portland zoned ... for increased density, allowing rowhouse development."[58] Members of the committee expressed a range of concerns, such as about the impact of higher densities on the natural environment, the neighborhood's deficient infrastructure, especially streets, and on housing affordability. Was increased density really appropriate everywhere? Would they guarantee that infrastructure investments be concurrent with new development? Why was the lack of community parks not addressed? How would they protect streams from erosion and pollution?

Still, Martie Sucec recalled thinking that she was the only one in the meeting who didn't like what she was hearing: "He brought in this hand drawn map and it had all this brown on it. And I was angry. We live here," she said. "You don't live here. You're turning this place into a row of rowhouses. He just kind of ignored me. And nobody else was angry. Everyone just sat there really quietly. So I said him, as co-chair of the neighborhood association, I demand that you meet with us about this map. And he said, when it's published, we'll do that."

The planning staff kept repeating that the map was still a "discussion" document, not a "proposal," but the distinction was lost on the citizens of Southwest. In part, this may have been a result of rapidly improving mapping and printing technologies. With a fancy new GIS system the Bureau could produce maps with fine graphic quality, great detail, vivid yet subtle colors, and print them on sturdy, glossy paper stock. The result was a map that looked like a final version, not a draft, and not something still open to discussion. Michaelson said it was a "cultural" thing. "It should have been a bubble diagram." Other staffers thought that zoning in general was exactly the wrong medium to try to communicate with citizens about planning – they needed to talk about graphic images, not map abstractions. Still, the proposal was so sweeping that people would have understood the threat if it had been written on the back of a dinner napkin.[59]

Copies of the map were made available at the Bureau of Planning starting on September 21. Harrison went back to Multnomah to talk to the residents several days later and brought a stack of the maps with him. Several dozen residents packed into a meeting room at the Multnomah Arts Center to discuss the draft. They had a lot to say. Some thought rowhouses might be okay but were upset at the extent of the rezoning. One complained about the possibility

of an influx of renters. Another was dismayed that the community would have no input when a property owner decided to tear down a house and build rowhouses. Perhaps there could be some kind of variance process. Some people questioned whether there should be any growth at all. Why not redirect growth to other smaller cities in Oregon? In any case, the opposition was broad based and some people were visibly angry.[60]

Michael Roche, who became the self-described "bulldog" of the Multnomah resistance, was a veteran of Cambridge, Massachusetts urban renewal protests and a founding member of the Vietnam Veterans Against the War. He brought along his neighbor, whose designated role was to keep him from punching Harrison in the nose. They were a whole room apart, but Roche was bellowing so loud that it seemed like they were almost nose to nose. "He yelled at him, you're destroying this neighborhood," Sucec recalled. "You're wiping this neighborhood out." She walked back to Roche – "I think he thought when I approached him I was going to ask him to shut up – I said, what's your name? We need you."[61]

Citizen anger about the draft map was exacerbated by the fact that a lot of people simply didn't like Michael Harrison. He had worked in the Bureau of Planning since 1973 and, according to one professional observer, had been involved in many of the city's greatest planning successes and some of its worst failures during that time. His Masters thesis outlined a policy for downtown urban design control. He worked in neighborhood planning throughout its heyday. He worked the Comp Plan process and he saved the Central City Plan. Indeed, he was the progenitor of the infamous R2.5 zoning classification that became the symbol of citizen resistance in Southwest. Harrison displays an almost encyclopedic knowledge of Portland planning, its history, and its legal foundations. He can quote the Portland Comprehensive Plan like an evangelist quotes the Bible. Without question, he represents the institutional memory of Portland planning through its glory days to the present. Some suggest that had he possessed a more appealing personality or greater "people skills" he would have been Director of Planning long ago.[62]

Sucec simply remembers, when he attended their planning committee that August, how Harrison marked up the text of their draft neighborhood plan right in front of them. "He sat there through the whole meeting, gutting our plan. I sat next to him and watched him cut broad swaths of it out or write pithy little comments on the side." Roche just didn't like his attitude, and how he phrased so many comments in terms of what his audience "didn't understand." "His arrogance was incredible," Roche said, "and his sense of how stupid we were." Coming across as a condescending know-it-all, and being the champion of rowhouse density, made Harrison a central target in the conflict to come.

The intensity of the dislike for Harrison by some Southwest activists might be measured by things he is supposed to have said. After hearing complaints about the swaths of brown R2.5

zoning on the draft map he is supposed to have suggested to staff that they make it another color, as if to trivialize the original complaint. (On the published draft map R5 zones are shown in light brown, the R2.5 zones in a kind of burnt orange). On another occasion, Harrison is reported to have told staff that their role was not to help neighborhoods develop the kind of plans they want, but to help them develop the kind of plans we want. Harrison says he never said such a thing. "I think," he said, "I have been vilified." Whatever he may have said – and it is hard to know – that he was vilified is surely true.

Roche called newspaper editor Don Snedecor, who had missed the meeting, and the result was a story headlined "Community plan calls for rowhouse density throughout Multnomah." Roche is quoted in the piece saying that the city had "targeted" Multnomah for "mandated" rowhouse development. "In my opinion, the single family composition of the neighborhood is being destroyed under that planning proposal." He added, "what we face is increased land taxes, congestion and crime, and decreased livability." Roche introduced two more themes in that interview that would provide rhetorical leverage for the neighborhood forces for much of the fight against the draft map: that "wealthier neighborhoods are not being targeted," and that the R2.5 zoning constituted not an "infill" zone but a redevelopment zone. Frugoli insisted that the R2.5 zones would likely lead to new development only "on vacant lots or oversized lots and it will not create clearance of sound housing," those units "with 20 or more years of life." This was not what Roche saw, however, and it was not what citizens saw, when they read the map. They saw urban renewal by other means.[63]

What followed was, by several accounts, a spontaneous grassroots uprising against the draft map. Roche went home and drafted a leaflet headlined "Neighborhood Alert." It was illustrated with a picture of a bulldozer and urged people to write to city officials and to attend the upcoming public workshops. He ran off two thousand copies and started going door to door. When he called Sucec for help, he learned she and Rich Ray had already printed up their own leaflet which announced "You're being rezoned... for rowhouses." Casey Cowan in the Custer Park area of Multnomah did her own leaflet and Dave Folts produced another. It was only necessary, Sucec recalls, to show people the map and let them read the key to understand what was being proposed.

Sucec's leaflet pointed out that Multnomah was "already the most densely populated SW neighborhood," and that there was no requirement that rowhouses be owner-occupied. "They could, in fact, be turned into rentals, putting our community at serious risk." Moreover, the leaflet directly attacked the staff claim that R2.5 was an "infill" zone would not, in most cases, lead to redevelopment: "The city says it isn't likely that many of the existing homes would ever 'go away,' but the economics are against it. What developer wouldn't want to buy a home in Multnomah for

$195,000, then tear it down because he can put up to FOUR row houses on a 10,000 square foot lot and sell them all for $185,000 each?" Finally, the leaflet said, "this completely usurps our own neighborhood plan."[64]

The second of the five scheduled workshops was on a Monday night, September 30, 1996, at the Multnomah Arts Center in the heart of the village. Sucec, Roche, Cowan, Folts, and several others had been out much of the weekend trying to drum up a crowd. Still, Sucec was uncertain whether people would really turn out. She told herself, "If this doesn't bring out 75 people then it's because people really want this." When she arrived, people were waiting in line to sign in. The meeting was packed. More than 200 attended that night. The planners abandoned their format, scrapped the small group discussions, and allowed testimony from a stream of individuals. As with the other meetings, most of the response to the discussion draft map was harshly negative. There were two more meetings that week, and then a ten-day hiatus until the final meeting October 15 at Wilson High School. The opponents geared up to turn out an even bigger crowd, contacting other neighborhood association leaders by phone, and beginning to compile a list of citizens against the plan, their addresses and phone numbers.

On the night of the Wilson High School workshop, the weather seemed to reflect the rupture in the process. There was thunder, lightning, and heavy rain. Estimates of the crowd ranged from 400 to 500 people, but it may have been even more. Yet it wasn't the size of the crowd that was so memorable. It was the bitter, angry, and rambunctious mood of the people. Again, the workshop format was abandoned and individuals testified from a microphone. They spoke "shaking with anger, shocked, flabbergasted and mad." The crowd applauded after almost each person who spoke. People shouted from the audience, "down with the Planning Bureau," and "stop patronizing us!" As one reporter sketched the scene: "Four city planners, arms crossed and faces sober, stood before the cursed map with its colored zoning splotches. Another recorded comments on easel papers. Only once or twice did the planners answer the critics."

The issues were still the same. The plan neglected issues of infrastructure, transportation, and environmental impact. It distributed density unfairly. Some feared it would bring an influx of renters. Others said it threatened to price families and the elderly out of their homes. Some suggested it was built on dubious assumptions about people leaving their cars to take public transit. Many said it simply promised a type of residential environment they did not want.

"We know developers are knocking on doors asking you to sell houses, and the Southwest plan isn't even done yet," Multnomah Neighborhood Association planning chair, Maria Gregory, said.

"Where did this idea come from that density controls how willing people are to take the bus?" Earl Miner, a resident, asked.

"Your draft is unfair and unethical because it discriminates," Barbara Metzger, a Multnomah resident charged, pointing out that exclusive, hilly neighborhoods weren't threatened with rowhouse zoning. "Let every neighborhood, rich or poor, absorb its fair share of growth."

Lloyd Keefe, Portland Director of Planning in the 1950s and 1960s said "the worst thing this city can do is create more density. The denser it gets, the more population it loses."[65]

Even before the workshops, the city had started to back-pedal. Sheila Frugoli told a reporter the planners were expecting to make major revisions based on public comment. "The map is bold," she said. "We were told to put the max on and expect some movement and removal of intensity and density in the final draft." Others moved quickly to put distance between themselves and the draft map. Rick Michaelson, interviewed at the Wilson High School meeting said, "the Planning Commission played a very small part in this draft." David Knowles told the same reporter that the proposed zoning for Multnomah would be changed. "We have to," he said. "It's not a choice."[66]

The members of the planning team were battered. In fact, they had begun to feel "beaten down" months before and the pummeling they took at the workshops only made it worse. Later on, some regretted not having answered their critics at the meetings. They thought just standing there and taking all that abuse made them seem incompetent. But the fact was, they really couldn't defend the plan because, at a certain level, they didn't believe in it. Outreach coordinator, Terry Moore, whose performance as moderator of the events had drawn criticism and catcalls, summed up the workshops by saying, "we aren't finding many constructive comments." She hoped that citizens would start providing some answers to the planning problems at hand instead of just complaining. "We've had the monologue, now it's time for dialogue."[67]

This is exactly what neighborhood activists knew had to happen. *The Southwest Community Connection* reported that neighborhood association leaders were already "trying to redirect neighborhood anger into positive change." Sucec allowed that "it is always easier to fight a war than to propose a solution." In this case, metaphors fail, because even if opponents did try to propose some solutions, work on the plan continued to seem like a war at times. What was crucial is that Southwest residents who rejected the draft map shifted from public rage and shotgun arguments to disciplined political mobilization and careful construction of thoughtful counter proposals.

Revising the process

Despite the clarity and vehemence of the public denunciations of the draft map, the planners seemed to think that one of the ways they had failed was in educating the public. Perhaps, it seemed, some of them might change their minds if they just understood the facts

better. The planning team put out a series of answers to "frequently asked questions." No, they said, you wouldn't have to sell your house if it were rezoned for rowhouses. No, you wouldn't have to subdivide your lot. Yes, you could still build a single family unit there, remodel, expand or even rebuild your single family home. No, the zoning didn't control whether a unit was rented or owner-occupied. No, your property taxes wouldn't automatically go up, but they might go up over a long period of time if property values did. There was something vaguely condescending in the presentation, but the planners obviously thought it was important people know these things because they made sure it got in three different newspapers. The SWNI land use specialist wrote a long article instructing Southwest residents about why growth was naturally, politically, and legally inevitable; how city, region, state and even federal government had chosen to deal with growth; why the draft map was drawn the way it was; and some of the technicalities of Portland zoning practice. His readers may or may not have known any of these things already, but it likely didn't change many opinions about the desirability of broad-brush rowhouse rezoning.[68]

Following the uprising at Wilson High School, Southwest residents reiterated their opposition, sending off an avalanche of letters to the SWNI office, *The Oregonian*, the two community monthlies, Knowles, Hales, Mayor Vera Katz, Metro councilors, and the state Land Conservation and Development Commission. But as hundreds and hundreds of letters continued to express the popular rage against the draft map, the neighborhood association leadership began to develop more sophisticated arguments. Jere Retzer, president of the Crestwood Neighborhood Association, wrote an op-ed column for *The Oregonian* in which he began to use concepts and styles of thinking ordinarily employed by the planners in order to criticize the planners' plans. Residents of Crestwood, he wrote, supported policies "to reduce congestion, pollution, and vehicle miles traveled by directing growth to areas convenient to transit." They had specifically supported the idea of a West Portland Town Center. But the version they saw on the draft map was "a mass of apartment buildings" with employment locations "treated as a side-effect." Given the changing distribution of employment locations in the metro area – to Hillsboro, Beaverton, Gresham, and Vancouver – this wouldn't reduce vehicular use, Retzer argued, it would increase it. He called for the WPTC Citizens Advisory Committee to be "empowered to create a sound solution from the bottom up that includes employment, shopping and amenities such as parks, needed to create a town center where people want to live, work and play."

Retzer criticized the draft map for upzoning environmental conservation zones, specifically at locations above the headwaters of Woods Creek, "in the rush to meet arbitrary planning goals." He protested the Bureau of Planning decision not to let neighborhood associations propose zoning; when they relented, he said, "our inputs were largely ignored." Retzer also criticized the draft map because it ignored the work citizens had already done on the

Capitol Highway Plan. In framing the vision for that corridor, citizens said "the rural character of the roadway will link active urban villages, providing for a varied and exciting rhythm. Streetscape elements will reflect the history and values of the community." But the draft map "contrast(ed) starkly with this vision, anchoring the Taylor's Ferry end of the highway in blocks of new apartment buildings, flanking the way to Multnomah with an unrelenting sea of rowhouses." The problem wasn't just that Retzer didn't like rowhouses or apartments. It was that rowhouse and apartment zoning arrayed in these ways contradicted existing plans, violated existing policies, and elaborated the Metro "concept areas" in ways that failed to fulfill their explicit purposes. This was not, fundamentally, a citizen's argument. It was a planner's argument.[69]

As they began to refine their arguments, neighborhood leaders also crafted a unified political strategy. Within a month they had drafted a letter to Hales, signed by eleven neighborhood association presidents, outlining their demands for the process to move forward. They insisted that Hales scrap the draft map and start over with a "bottom up" and "citizen driven" approach. The "top down" and "staff-driven numerical approach" used before had led to a proposal that "ignore(d) such key constraints as terrain, infrastructure capacity, and lack of developable land." Experience in Hillsdale, Hayhurst, and Ash Creek/Crestwood, they said, already demonstrated it was possible to "provide for additional densities utilizing the knowledge and expertise of local residents." They insisted that a new plan include an "infrastructure investment plan" that identified funding sources, linked upzoning to new infrastructure, and scaled back allowed development if infrastructure dollars were not available. The increase in housing targets (from 6,100 to 7,500 units) was "unreasonable and unrealistic." Rather than attempt to impose a numerical goal derived from the top down, they urged, "work with Neighborhood Associations from the bottom up to arrive at a number of units which can reasonably and realistically be accommodated... based on existing conditions and neighborhood character rather than numbers."

The neighborhood association presidents repeated the argument that R2.5 was not an "infill" zone but a "redevelopment" zone that would lead to the "destruction of existing, well-maintained, and moderately priced single family stock; destabilization of neighborhoods through land speculation; and disinvestment in single family housing stock." Moreover, they called for the retention of dual zoning and Comp Plan maps as a means to regulate upzoning on an ongoing basis. One of the goals set by the Planning Commission was to eliminate discrepancies between base zoning and the Comp Plan to make development "as of right" rather than a matter of review. But the review process offered neighborhoods a measure of continuing influence over land use decisions. Their other demands were likewise specific. There needed to be design review in all high-density zones, not just the "a" overlay zones; they wanted rowhouse setbacks to be

consistent with adjacent properties; and they wanted a tree preservation ordinance which previously "the Bureau of Planning has refused to consider."[70]

The most immediate demand of the neighborhood leaders, however, was that the schedule for planning accommodate all of the deliberations that needed to occur. Mike Roche, emerging as the leading "bad cop" of the neighborhood forces, wrote a letter to *The Multnomah Village Post*, alerting citizens to the upcoming meeting with Hales, Knowles, planning staff, the SWCP CAC, and neighborhood association leaders. Although only one representative from each neighborhood association would be allowed to participate, he wrote:

> We, the Community, must attend this public meeting to make sure no deals are cut. The neighborhood chairs, duly elected, must set the agenda for this meeting – not Hales, the CAC, or the planning bureau. And we, the residents, must make sure our elected neighborhood representatives *demand,* not ask, that Commissioner Hales first commit to the withdrawal of the map and a six-month extension before anything else happens.[71]

The emotional edge Roche brought to the conflict always seemed to stimulate his opponents, but in this case the message had already been received. Even before the lights were out at Wilson High School, the city was planning its strategic retreat.

In the immediate aftermath, Knowles admitted "we clearly need to do a better job of listening and communicating, and helping neighborhoods communicate with us." Hales acknowledged that the draft map had been "too aggressive," and agreed that neighborhood associations need "a place at the table" when the zoning maps are drawn. He ran full-page ads in the community newspapers with "an open letter to the Southwest Community." While defending the city's record as "a leader in growth management" he said the draft map "overshoots the mark" and promised an "improved citizen involvement and planning process." The process going forward would "return the focus" to "striking a balance" between planning for growth and maintaining neighborhood livability. "Numbers on a zoning map," he wrote, "should not take precedence over the importance of livable neighborhoods." Hales also used the letter to announce that Deborah Stein, recently named Bureau of Planning deputy director, would take over supervision of the process. Michael Harrison, the letter did not mention, would be reassigned to other duties – one of which, apparently, was to take the fall for a blunder to which Hales had at least contributed. Finally, Hales said he would instruct the Bureau to work with the neighborhoods and promised they would "take the time to do the job right."[72]

On Saturday afternoon, November 2, more than 70 neighborhood leaders and other citizens met with Hales, Knowles, Stein, and the SWCP CAC to talk about what went wrong and what to do next. With a professional facilitator on duty, citizens demanded more control over zoning, stronger assurances about investment in infrastructure – streets, sewers, sidewalks,

schools, and transit – and a clearer explanation about how housing targets and allocations had been determined. Hales had already begun a series of "focus group" discussions or "brown bags" with a range of SWCP participants, although many of them could be considered friendlier to Hales than the average politically aroused Southwest citizen. Still, he heard more of the same. One of the friendliest groups, including CAC member Tim Crail, former SWNI vice president John Alland, and SWNI land use specialist Leonard Gard, told Hales that people were suspicious about the housing numbers and that even the staff seemed surprised by the draft map. The new process didn't have to start from scratch, but the map needed to be withdrawn. Then the neighborhoods should make zoning proposals, working not from a numerical goal imposed from above, but from the ground up, based on what local conditions will allow.[73]

By mid-November Hales had drafted a "Proposed Revised Planning Process" for public review. It included recommendations for improved communication with the public, clearer roles for all the participants including the much-maligned Citizens Advisory Committee, and a three-month extension of the project time line. More substantively, it promised to "ensure that policy and technical assumptions are clear and stay consistent throughout the planning process"; to "enable neighborhoods to participate in the creation of neighborhood zoning map proposals"; and to "ensure a more integrated approach to infrastructure and service planning." At the November SWNI board meeting neighborhood leaders pointed out that it said nothing about planning for schools, how to fund infrastructure, design review for rowhouses, tree preservation, slide prone areas, watershed issues, or any of the Town Centers.[74]

Hales held another meeting at the beginning of December to hear comments on the draft process revision and nearly 200 people showed up. This night, however, the focus was on the continued role of the Citizens Advisory Committee. A reporter for *The Oregonian* understood that many of the neighborhood activists didn't like the CAC, but she didn't understand why. It was not that the CAC was another "layer of bureaucracy they would have to deal with to get through to city staff planners." It was that the neighborhood cadres saw the SWCP CAC, like the one that had decided the Community Center issue, as responsible to Hales, who had selected them, and not to the community. Either their role will be "more sharply defined" or they would be eliminated, Hales said. "I agree it needs to be changed." Later that month, the CAC voted to stay in business and elected Barbara Linn as chair. Hales gave them the task of developing a community-wide vision statement and drafting policies but he promised he would not let them be a buffer between community and commissioner. He even agreed to a demand by Mike Roche to put in writing that he wouldn't let the CAC review neighborhood zoning maps and plans.[75]

Despite all of the impeccable public process design, the deal boiled down to four simple points, and they were carried forward in exactly these terms: Harrison was out; the draft map was

"off the table"; neighborhoods would get to do zoning; and from then on there would be "no surprises." Harrison would not be seen for the remainder of the project. But the neighborhood activists would use the remaining terms of the process revision against planning staff and commissioners any time it seemed necessary. You said *we* get to do the zoning. You said *no surprises*. And if the draft map was indeed "off the table," it still hovered in the memories of Southwest residents throughout the remainder of the process. After all, they thought, if the city didn't mean it, why did they draw it? Nevertheless, all were agreed on the way forward – all except for the planning staff itself. They argued with Hales that it was unnecessary to start over or hand zoning over to lay people. If they just did some concentrated work in Multnomah and a few other hot spots, they could get things cleaned up a lot more quickly. And they loathed the idea of being reduced to "clerks" and "scribes" for citizen planners.[76]

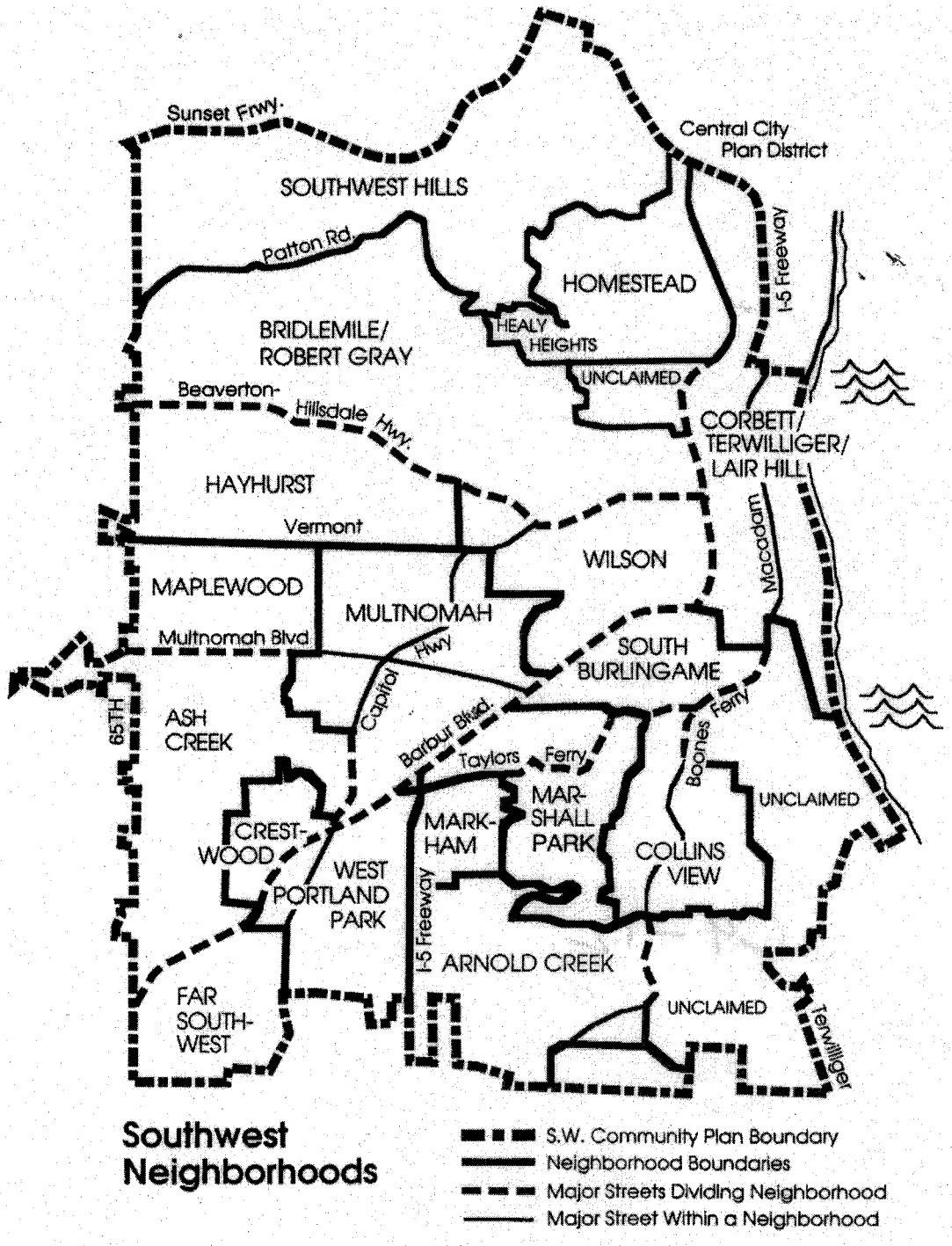


Figure 10.1 Somewhat dormant at the outset of the Southwest Community Plan, neighborhood associations sprung to life after the Discussion Draft Map. Portland Bureau of Planning

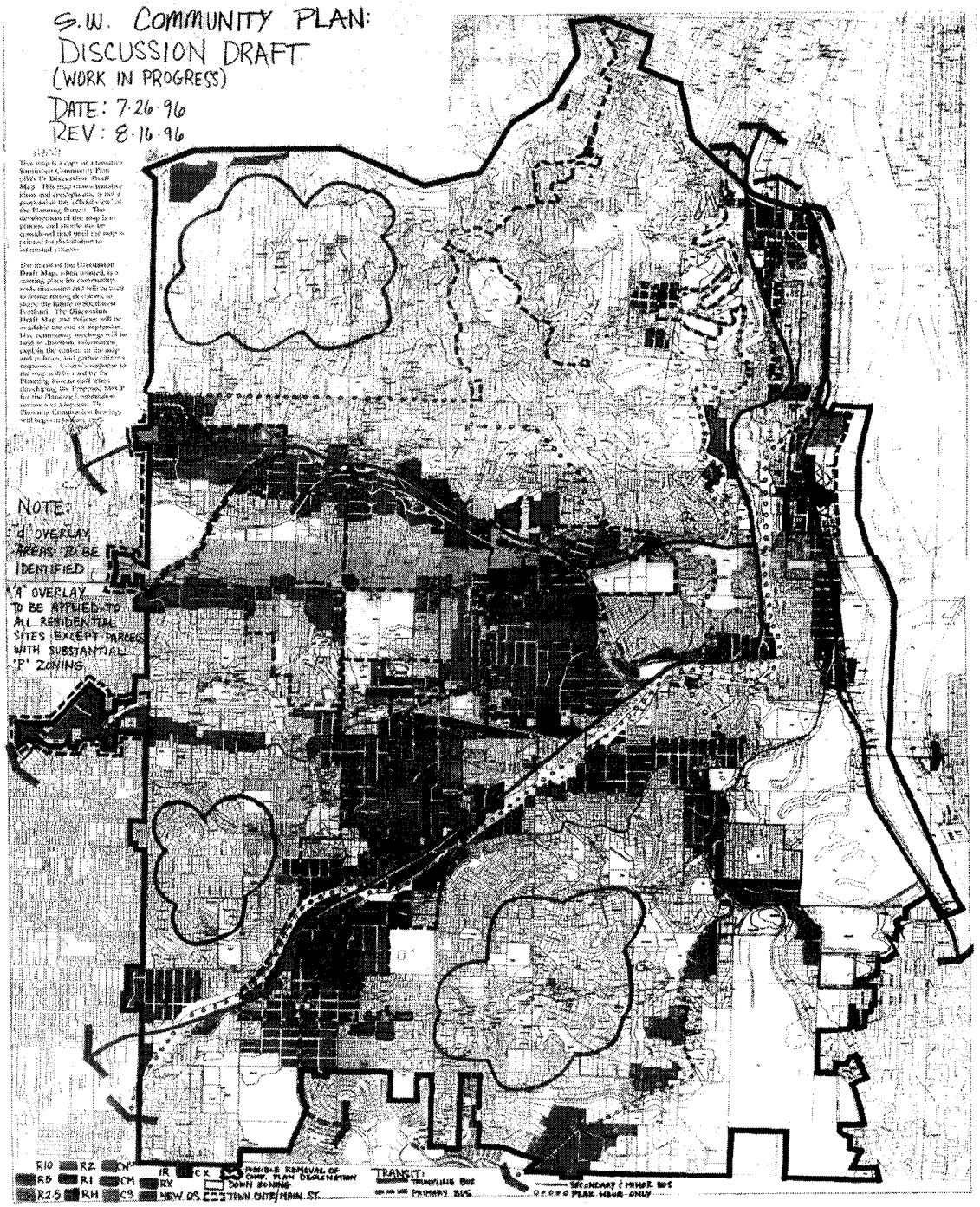
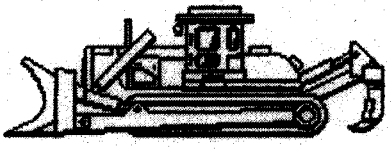


Figure 10.2 Planners put an "aggressive" proposal on the table to stimulate public discussion on the choices for Southwest. They succeeded. Portland Bureau of Planning

NEIGHBORHOOD ALERT!



MULTNOMAH COMMUNITY ALL ROWHOUSES

Portland city planners have designated the entire Multnomah Neighborhood for Rowhouse Development in their Southwest Community Plan! This means "16" Housing Units per acre will be MANDATED in our neighborhood!

Help stop this outrage and destruction of our neighborhood.

Please:

- Write and call the mayor and counselors to protest this.
- Call and write the Planning Commission to protest this.

ATTEND: Community Meetings at the Multnomah Community Center on MONDAY, September 30 at 7:30 p.m. and again on TUESDAY, October 8 at 7:00 p.m.

WE FACE:

- Increased congestion and crime in our neighborhood
- Increased taxes on our land
- A population increase of 15,000.
- Decreased livability

Figure 10.3 Citizens took to the streets with leaflets after the release of the Discussion Draft Map. Multnomah Neighborhood Association.

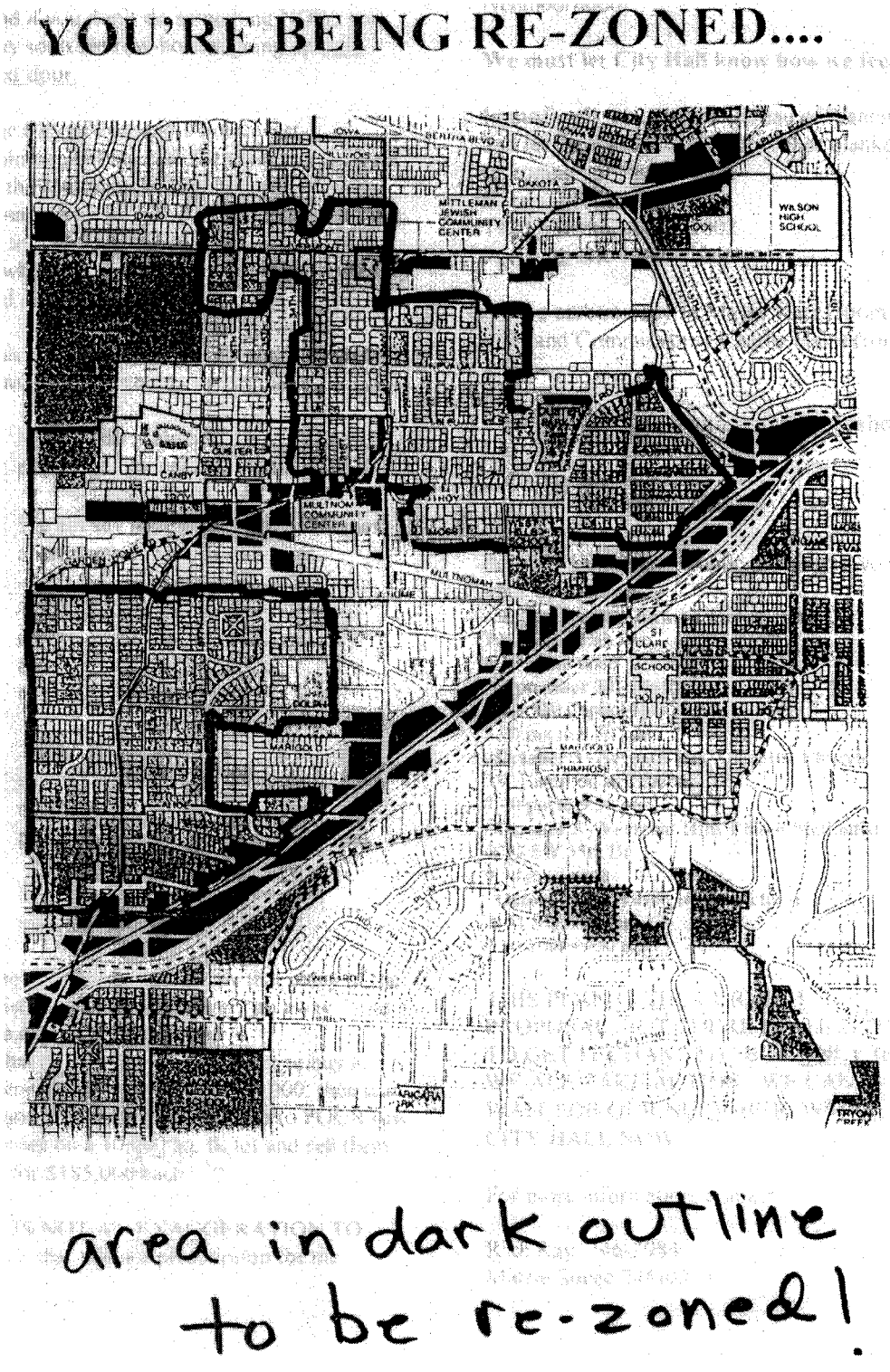


Figure 10.4 Another homemade leaflet distributed by opponents of Bureau of Planning rezoning proposals. Multnomah Neighborhood Association.

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Chapter 11. The Neighborhood Strikes Back

Opening the "tool box"

Setting up a dozen or more neighborhood associations to produce zoning maps would have been a difficult task under any circumstances. It was doubly difficult given the prevailing distrust in the community, fatigue and emotional strain among the staff, and waning patience by political leaders for a process that was increasingly expensive, both financially and politically. Part of this was simply in the technical difficulty of the task. The Portland code provided for 27 different zoning designations, including six single-family zones, six multi-family zones, and eight commercial zones, each with their own requirements, limitations, and appropriate uses. Plus there were 14 different overlay zones including several that played a major part in the Southwest plan such as the accessory dwelling unit overlay ("a") and environmental zones ("p" for protection and "c" for conservation). Each of those also had its various technical requirements. Nor was the proper application of each zone an obvious matter. Choosing the right commercial zone for a particular location, for example, was a matter of accounting for the likely market, existing or future access, visibility, image, and the potential retail mix and clustering. Choosing the wrong zone might allow inappropriate development or might inhibit any development at all. Designating a piece of land "mixed-use commercial" wouldn't necessarily bring mixed use development.[1]

If the lessons were difficult, the relationships between "teachers" and "students" were anything but cordial. The front-line staff were tired and battered and now being asked to give away to lay people what they considered to be their own professional and technical specialization. If land use planners didn't get to do the zoning, they asked themselves, what special role did a planner have in the process at all? At least one member of the team referred sarcastically to the "Tool Kit" as a "Master's Degree in a Box." There was, of course, a lot less knowledge about planning in the "Tool Kit" than in the typical two-year master of urban planning program. Still, staff doubted the ability of citizens to pick up these zoning tools and use them effectively, or at least not with the competence that they would have shown.

For their part, citizens read the materials and asked – sometimes within earshot of the professionals – "what's so hard about zoning?" Some of the neighborhoods decided that staff were technically superfluous, as well as politically intrusive, and invited them to stay away as they worked on their maps. City planners and neighborhood association members had gotten along alright before the draft map debacle. Afterward, the neighborhood planners became increasingly

irrelevant as citizens worked on zoning maps by themselves and carried the policy fight to the planners' superiors.

Citizen perspectives on the process to come covered a broad spectrum. A neighborhood veteran of the Outer Southeast Community Plan warned Southwest residents to beware of tricks and broken promises. "The planners don't work for you," Bruce Gilley said. "To them you're at best a stakeholder, at worst an opponent." In stark contrast, Julie O'Dell, active in the Hayhurst Neighborhood Association, said the new arrangements were a "generous power-sharing opportunity for citizens" with the potential to be a "national model" for neighborhood-based planning. Lee Perlman, a veteran observer of Portland planning, advised citizens to "work creatively" within the existing policy parameters and avoid either "knee jerk hostility" to or "blind trust" in the Bureau of Planning. He recalled a story of a Northwest Portland resident who greeted then-planning director Ernie Bonner during the first Comprehensive Plan process with thanks for his vigilance on behalf of his community's interests. "If that's how you're thinking," Bonner replied, "you're in trouble. It's my job to create a citywide plan. It's your job to advocate for your neighborhood, and if you don't do it, no one else will." After the discussion draft map, Southwest residents hardly needed such advice.[2]

The "Tool Box" was a dense but not all that daunting pile of paper and a handful of colored pencils. It contained, among other things, the "Zoning Tool Kit," a paper entitled "Criteria for an Adoptable Plan," "Minimum Comprehensive Plan Benchmarks by Neighborhood," a "Letter of Understanding Regarding Preparation and Submittal of Neighborhood Association Comprehensive Plan Map/ Zoning Proposals," a map of the Comp Plan already in force, base maps for each neighborhood, and a table indicating what color pencils corresponded with which zoning designations.[3]

When it was distributed to neighborhood associations in February, their first impulse was to attack it. The Multnomah Neighborhood Association "found it incomplete and inadequate to use for the completion of our work efforts" and promised planning director David Knowles "a comprehensive review of the tool kit methodology" shortly. The "Zoning Tool Kit" sent to Multnomah was missing a number of chapters, for one thing. For another, they didn't want to do their plan on those fuzzy old base map duplicates and demanded digital files of both the existing Comp Plan map and the "off-the-table" discussion draft map. There were other unnerving little glitches, some of them unexplainable even given the apparent haste with which the "Tool Box" was assembled. The pencil color for the infamous R2.5 rowhouse zoning was listed as "vermilion" – many shades away from the ochre normally used for this purpose. Citizens planners were also informed that the "rule of thumb" behind the Transportation Planning Rule was that transit riders are considered "willing to walk up to 15 minutes (or ¼ mile)" to catch their bus or train.

But even at a medium pace, most people can walk a quarter mile in five minutes or so. As the process wore on, citizens were frustrated not so much by any errors or omissions in the "Tool Box," but by the fact that zoning code itself didn't allow them to do things they wanted to do.[4]

The main problem with "The Tool Box" and the "Criteria for an Adoptable Plan" more specifically, was that it required neighborhood associations to adhere to all of the policies that had produced the discussion draft map in the first place, however "too-aggressively" they might have been applied. Plus, all participating neighborhood associations were required to sign the "Letter of Understanding" which, among other things, said:

> The neighborhood association must follow the prescribed targets and objectives (explained in the "tool box"). If the neighborhood association submits a map that ignores or falls short in fulfilling the objectives, the Bureau of Planning will alert the neighborhood at the mid-point assessment. If the objectives continue to be unmet, the Bureau of Planning may recommend to the Planning Commission an alternative map proposal.[5]

In other words, this was pretty much the same gun as before, except that now they were offered the opportunity to hold it to their own heads and promise to pull the trigger or have the Planning Commission do it for them.

It was all there in the stiffening armature of the "Adopted Policy Framework for the Southwest Community Plan." There were the overarching goals of holding the UGB, preserving farm and forest land, reducing vehicle miles traveled, planning land use and transportation in tandem, and promoting "livability." There were the City of Portland policies to capture at least 20 percent of population growth in the region "through infill and redevelopment without destroying the cohesiveness and character of existing neighborhoods;" to eliminate as far as possible the discrepancies between existing zoning and the Comprehensive Plan designations by upzoning; and to bring land use and transportation systems into alignment by increasing "housing potential," and therefore, density, within a quarter mile of "Neighborhood Focal Points/ Village Squares" and major transit streets, and within half a mile of light rail stations or high-capacity bus service that "emulated" light rail. It was also City policy to "focus development into clear, discreet (*sic*) nodes and centers that can foster the creation of a 'critical mass' of business activity."[6]

Citizen planners were also informed they would be bound by the "Metro 2040 Growth Concept" and the designation of the Hillsdale, Raleigh Hills, and West Portland "Town Centers," the Multnomah, Macadam, and Garden Home Road "Main Streets," and the Beaverton-Hillsdale Highway, Capitol Highway, Barbur Boulevard, and Boones Ferry Road "Transit Corridors" – all of which designations carried requirements to increase and concentrate density. All of which was in

service to the State Transportation Planning Rule which required localities to undertake broad action to promote alternative modes of travel and to reduce vehicle miles traveled. This, too, required increased density in proximity to transit, and more compact development.[7]

There were also city and region housing goals for Portland and Southwest. Under the Metro 2040 "Functional Plan" Portland had agreed to accommodate 70,704 new housing units and 158,500 new jobs. Within two years Portland would be required to show that updated zoning designations for "vacant, infill, and redevelopable sites" would produce total new housing capacity to meet the goal, even taking into consideration the historical tendency of developers to "underbuild" the zoning by about one-fifth. Southwest's share of that housing goal would be 6,500 to 7,500 units and this had to be "likely development," not merely "theoretical capacity" (more on this topic below). Compounding the challenge were city policies that set a goal of increasing the rate of owner-occupancy (to 57 percent) at the same time that half or more of all new units would be attached single-family or multi-family housing.[8]

Most daunting of all, perhaps, was the "adoptability checklist" in the same document. In addition to planning for "Town Centers" and "Main Streets," zoning for density along transit corridors, and meeting the housing targets, citizen planners were advised to adhere to a slew of other planning and policy conventions. Had they applied zoning designations, the checklist inquired, in "patterns covering multiple, contiguous parcels" to avoid "spot zoning?" Did they zone to maximize development opportunities on "oversized lots" and along transit corridors? When steep slopes, riparian areas, and other environmental factors precluded development, had they made it possible to "cluster" density elsewhere? Were downzonings in residential areas offset by increases in density elsewhere? Were the "Town Centers" and "Main Streets" "planned cooperatively with adjoining neighborhoods to ensure a coordinated approach?" This was a great deal to think about and do.[9]

The Housing Numbers Game

The "Criteria for an Adoptable Plan" emphasized that "no single goal or target drives the planning process; instead, all must be considered and addressed in ways that reflect the community values and citywide objectives." There is no doubt that they meant this. Bureau of Planning staff at all levels spoke often about balancing the inevitably contradictory goals of a range of policies involving economic development, land use, transportation, the environment, and more. Even the statewide land use goals were often in conflict with one another. But in this instance, the Bureau's declaration about "no single goal or target" driving the planning process was not strictly true, at least, not in practice. The "goal or target" that trumped all others at this point in the planning was the "likely development" of a stipulated number of new housing units.

All other purposes receded in importance relative to the goal of meeting that citywide number of 70,000 and holding the UGB. In this, the chasm between "community values and citywide objectives" became increasingly dramatic, and the SWCP process devolved into a numbers game.[10]

If this was the case it was largely because of the nature of growth management practice in Oregon in general, and, more specifically, the political urgency some felt in Portland to hold the UGB where it was. All of the crucial parameters were ones that could be – and were required to be – expressed in very specific quantitative terms. State law required that the UGB hold a 20-year supply of developable land. But exactly how much that was depended on calculations of anticipated growth rates and patterns of development. Such calculations needed to be specific but, at the same time, were inevitably speculative. The 20-year estimate of 500,000 additional residents of the four-county Portland metropolitan area (including Clark County, Washington across the Columbia River) was not out line with either historical growth rates or possible future growth rates factoring in Portland's popularity as a place to live and do business. Yet, there is nothing so unreliable as a growth trend extrapolated across a straight line. Economic or environmental changes at almost any scale could speed up growth or bring it to a halt. In any case, it *seemed* a solid projection.

The next two steps in the calculation took the numbers even further into the speculative realm. If there would be half a million people in twenty years, how many new houses would be needed? How much more land would be required? The first of these two steps was fairly straightforward. Household sizes have dropped steadily everywhere in the United States across the entire century and seem likely to settle somewhere in the vicinity of two people per housing unit (it can't go below one, for obvious reasons, and as long as some people keep living together, it isn't likely even to approach one person per household). So, half a million people would need about 250,000 units of housing. But the second step in the calculation offered a much wider range of possibilities. If new housing were developed at five units to the gross acre (as had been the pattern) they would use a lot more land – about 14,000 more acres – than if new homes were built at seven units to the gross acre. The definition of a twenty-year supply of developable land would also depend on how many of those projected new units would be built on vacant, infill and redevelopable sites within the UGB. There was a wide range of possibilities, one of which was to limit the increase in developable land within the UGB to zero.

One of Portland's most successful and longest running policies was to try to take as large a share of metropolitan growth as possible. This was at the heart of the Goldschmidt strategy of the 1970s. But over the years, the policy had become very specifically quantified. Under Portland's *Future Focus* plan, the City Council set the goal of capturing at least 20 percent of metropolitan

growth. That would keep downtown strong and neighborhoods healthy and protect rural lands at the same time. When this policy was combined with the requirement for a 20-year supply of developable land, Portland's share of 250,000 units of new housing was a simple 50,000 inside the city limits. But in 1996, as Metro studied possible expansion of the UGB, elected leaders in the City of Portland pushed for consideration of a "zero option." What would it take, they asked, to keep the growth boundary right where it was? How many units of housing beyond the 50,000 would Portland have to capture to make a 4,000 acre expansion of the UGB unnecessary? The answer came back from Metro: about 20,000, or a grand total of 70,704 to be built inside of Portland over the following 20 years. And if that happened, a lot of those units would have to be built in Southwest Portland.[11]

One impact of the policy decision at the City Council level was to up the ante on density just at the time Michael Harrison and his staff were buckling down to the task of preparing the discussion draft map. There is little doubt this put extra pressure on them to draw the map the way they did. It also seems likely that it increased the fury of the opposition in response. But it was not the objection to density alone that gave rise to the numbers game. It was the numbers themselves – confusing, contradictory, speculative, shifting – that provided an opening for Southwest activists to question, criticize, mock, and attack the proponents of density.

The confusion began with the discrepancy between an old city policy and the new one. The "community planning benchmark" adopted in 1994 stipulated that new planning citywide should result in a ten percent increase in housing capacity over the existing designations in the Comp Plan. For Southwest Portland this meant an increase of precisely 5,284 units. Bureau staff published a compilation of elaborate, neighborhood by neighborhood calculations, stipulating exactly how many additional units of housing needed to be accommodated. Arnold Creek needed to add zoning for 233 units. Ashcreek should add 423 units.[12] About two-years later, the Planning Commission adopted a goal for Southwest Portland of 6,500 to 7,500 new housing units. And, as part of the Metro 2040 "Functional Plan," Metro adopted a goal for Southwest of 6,512 units. The numbers were, unfortunately, apples and oranges. The community plan benchmarks were based on the "theoretical capacity" of zoned lands. The later city and Metro targets were "likely built" numbers based on zoning of vacant, infill, and redevelopment lands.

Perhaps the planners included the benchmark numbers out of some sort impulse toward full disclosure, or perhaps it was to show neighborhood associations roughly what individual targets they would need to meet. But as "theoretical capacity" numbers, the benchmarks were of limited usefulness, and mainly served to provide a point of leverage for citizens to argue against any of the higher numbers. Nor did it help that the planners explanations of the numbers seemed to include some errors of arithmetic. One passage from the "Criteria for an Adoptable Plan"

claimed it would take 10,000 new units of housing to accommodate 17,000 new residents at 2.1 persons per household and a three percent vacancy rate. The correct number would have been less than 8,400. Having so many different numbers bandied about made all the numbers more vulnerable to citizen attempts to discredit any number, and the changing policies, methodologies, and interpretations made it simple for activists to accuse the city of changing the rules in the middle of the game. "When neighborhoods challenged the basis of the city's numbers," Becky Miller, Hayhurst NA chair, wrote, "the convoluted explanation was enough to make us want to scream." They did scream – for clarity and consistency – but what they were really screaming against was density itself. "I would caution the city," Miller added, "not to come back at us at the end of this process... with its own zoning changes because we did not upzone enough."[13]

This is not to say that citizens weren't genuinely confused by the numbers. Early on, the neighbors paid a lot of attention to the community planning benchmark of a ten percent increase in zoned capacity. But the truly threatening requirement was the 6.500-7,500 unit housing target derived from the Metro 2040 Functional Plan. It was a larger number to begin with, and governed by the phrase "likely built" rather than "theoretical capacity", it was more apt to actually result in new housing units. If a neighborhood association proposed rezoning large swaths of already developed neighborhoods from R10 to R5 they could increase theoretical capacity by far more than ten percent. But it might not result in a single new unit, depending on the quality of the existing housing stock. "Likely built" units, however, would come from rezoning vacant lands for much higher densities, or from new zoning dense enough to prompt redevelopment of existing stock. In any case, the proliferation of numbers – 5,284; 5,600; 6,100; 6,500; 7,500; 8,400; 9,100; even 10,000 – underscored how difficult it was for the public to absorb the numbers, the concepts, and their evolution.[14]

> Terry Moore, outreach coordinator for the Bureau of Planning Staff tried to explain:
> A lot has happened since the Southwest Community Plan process began in August of 1994 – for example, Metro did not even have an adopted 2040 Regional Growth Concept at that time. And the business of calculating the likelihood of new housing units being built over the next 20 years has been evolving as more information about trends and about methodologies has been gathered and our technology improved.[15]

They promised to publish a technical memorandum to finally make it all clear. But this failed to mitigate the hostility and suspicion with which citizens regarded the planners.

There were at least three other points of contention over the numbers. First was the realization that the discussion draft map – "off the table" or not – provided for far more units of housing than required by any of the goals or benchmarks. Jim Peterson, a member of the Multnomah NA, took one look at the map and saw that it would accommodate at least triple the target numbers.

Peterson wrote to Hales and, under the Oregon Freedom of Information Act, demanded to see a copy of the staff or consultant report that quantified the impact of the zoning proposed on the discussion draft map. "When I calculate the maximum build-out," Peterson wrote, "I arrive at a conservative 20,000 units. I was told by planner Michael Harrison the number is 19,600." Just what was the number? Staff would claim they didn't know for sure, that the methodology was so uncertain it made sense not to publicize the numbers. But citizens were certain the planners knew – or should have known – and concluded they were dishonest or incompetent or both. Otherwise, why such a huge discrepancy between policy-driven housing targets and what the draft map proposed?[16]

A second, less significant, issue was whether neighborhood associations would get "credit" for new housing units that had been built in their neighborhoods since the beginning of the planning process. If the point of the exercise was to increase housing capacity, and that increased capacity had actually been fulfilled, shouldn't neighborhoods be seen as having met part of their responsibility? Finally, in March 1997, after much hectoring by the public, Bureau of Planning staff conceded that they had, and provided a compilation of residential building permits issued from September 1994 through October 1996. More than 500 units had been built in that short time, nearly half of them in multi-family configurations – at which rate Southwest would build out its 20-year housing capacity in less than twelve years.[17]

The most inflammatory issue, however, centered on an accusation that the Bureau of Planning was pursuing a second, ostensibly secret strategy for allowing more density in Southwest Portland – in fact, in all of Portland. Neighborhood activists obtained a copy of a memo written by the consulting firm of Palmer, Groth & Pietka, Inc. for the Bureau of Planning. The memo noted neighborhood opposition based on the public belief that there would be "significant change in neighborhood character over time if the proposed is approved." The author continued, "I am suggesting that there are alternative approaches to achieving the same results," including "an aggressive infill program" facilitated by "far greater flexibility" in the city's land division code. "If the city modified development standards, it is possible that the desired increase in density could be achieved without a changing in zoning." For plan opponents this memo was a kind of "smoking gun." It provided positive proof that the city was dealing with them in bad faith, that the city would try to carry out its schemes – one way or the other – no matter what the residents said or did. This was, indeed, powerful evidence, except for the fact that the city had already begun a revision of its land division code with an explicit goal of making infill development easier. The memo also pointed out what would soon become very clear: that Southwest Portland still had plenty of vacant land that would allow the city to meet it's up-side target of 7,500 units of new housing on "current zonings." Nevertheless, activists found something very sinister in the phrase "alternative approaches to achieving the same results," and they waved the memo as proof of the city's nefarious intent.[18]

Meanwhile, neighborhood forces attacked the density agenda from "inside" and "outside." Working from the inside, Don Bain, an activist in the Maplewood NA, developed a kind of conversion chart that allowed citizen planners to quickly calculate how many new units might be allowed by any given upzoning. For example, Bain's chart showed that for every full-sized R7 lot re-zoned to R2.5 you increased housing capacity by 1.81 units. Neighborhood association planners had to undertake such an exercise, Bain wrote to his comrades, because they had to know the density impact of proposed rezonings before they were submitted to the city. It didn't make any sense to present a neighborhood map that didn't meet the benchmarks if the Bureau of Planning was going to turn around a draw another map that did. Why go to all of this trouble if, in the end, the Planning Commission was only going to impose density on their neighborhoods? By the same reasoning, why present a neighborhood map that included capacity for more housing than was being asked?[19]

Throughout the process, neighborhood activists claimed that they, more than the Bureau staff, were adhering to the body of adopted policy in their recommendations. But at the same time, they continued to attack from the "outside," opposing the very idea of higher density housing. It was common for residents to talk about rowhouses in terms of "living like rats." There was a lot of talk about "jamming," "cramming," "ramming," and the like. The apotheosis of this tactic, perhaps, was Martie Sucec's satirical diatribe against the Bureau's "Dense-O-Matic" test – "I kid you not," she wrote, "that's what they call it":

> Just like the Veg-A-Matic slicing/dicing device of old TV advertising, the BOP will slice 'em, dice' em, and pack 'em in to rowhouses and high density apartment buildings with the new age all purpose Dense-O-Matic planning tool, for just the price of reckless infill and redevelopment, plus shipping, handling, and infrastructure (a.k.a. LID) tax. Watch for Dense-O-Matic -- it's coming soon to your neighborhood![20]

It was a masterful rhetorical jab. Humor is often the most dangerous verbal weapon. Ironically, the Dense-O-Matic test, devised for the Bureau by Metro, was functionally no different from the conversion chart that Bain had created. Everybody needed to know the impact of new zoning on density whether they were promoting it or resisting it. For the neighborhoods, accommodating some density was a tactic employed to implement a strategy of resisting all new density, if they could. "What continues to trouble my neighborhood," Sucec wrote in an e-mail to the Southwest discussion list, "is that whatever the process, the premise remains fatally flawed... Portland should not be taking 70,000+ units and we should insist that the City Council rescind this irresponsible position."[21]

From the city's perspective, the political losses were overwhelming the policy gains, and they continued to backtrack. On March 12, 1997, Deborah Stein wrote to neighborhood leaders to

underscore the city's desire to "return the focus of the planning effort to local and regional livability issues rather than achieving numerical goals." This was possible in part, she said, because of the "growing sense that the existing Comprehensive Plan provided sufficient development and redevelopment potential to achieve Metro's housing goals for the city." A "preliminary analysis" by staff showed that current zoning capacity would allow for between 5,100 and 6,500 units. Some rezoning would still be needed because housing capacity wasn't always in the right place to support the Metro 2040 concept areas of Town Centers, Main Streets, and Corridors, and that some opportunity existed to increase housing capacity in existing neighborhoods in ways that "do not change their character."[22]

Later that year the City Council did, indeed, back off the 70,000-unit target. Hales rationalized the retreat by saying Metro was planning to approve an expansion to the Urban Growth Boundary despite the city's gesture, so they were no longer obligated to maintain the higher target. The city would re-set its housing target at 50,000 units – what Metro had asked for in the first place. Residents were relieved, but still cautious. None of the concessions made by Hales or the Bureau restored for Southwest residents the underlying sense of trust Portlanders tend to have in their government. They barely acknowledged the departure of Harrison. They never believed Hales' assertion that the draft map was "off the table." Indeed, referring to the draft map in those terms was a surefire way to get a lecture about how the map remained the true representation of what the city had in mind for Southwest. Hales' promise of "no surprises" lived on as a cudgel activists used against the planners.

Stein's letter of March 12 made a more positive impression. Crestwood Neighborhood Association president, Jere Retzer, proclaimed that the message had "changed the whole landscape." Sucec described it as the first optimistic development since the conflict had started, "a turn in the tide." Still, she asked, "why didn't the planners do this years ago?" Surely, the explanation of planning director David Knowles was hard for residents to believe. Up to that point, he said, the Bureau had lacked the "technology" to calculate the numbers. Yet the draft map itself was a high-technology product. They could plot it but not calculate it? And technology or not, given the earlier thrust of the planning, these calculations were crucial. If a specific increase in housing capacity were really important, at least estimating the baseline – the existing Comp Plan – should have been the first place to start.[23]

Whatever euphoria had been stimulated by Stein's letter was short lived. In May, the planning staff issued detailed critiques of 17 of 18 neighborhood association plans at a "midpoint review." They did not go down well with residents. The Collins View neighborhood, they said, had failed to provide for a "greater range of housing for students" at Lewis and Clark College. The Southwest Hills Residential League had proposed their only upzoning on property that planners

felt was unlikely to be developed during the life of the plan. South Burlingame had proposed mixed-use zoning that was likely to discourage development. Multnomah got one of the sharpest rebukes. They failed to zone for enough additional density in the Multnomah Village Main Street and the West Portland Town Center; didn't offset down-zoning with increased density elsewhere; proposed new housing on parcels unlikely to be developed; and proposed highest density housing along heavily-traveled Barbur Boulevard – not "a realistic vision" in the view of the planners. Retzer complained that Stein's review failed to acknowledge that the Crestwood map provided for density in excess of city targets. One reporter described neighborhood leaders as "bewildered and resentful." In particular, they were unhappy at being criticized for not increasing density after Stein's memo "had told them they didn't have to."[24] The planners urged neighborhood associations not to see the reviews as "report cards" but as the beginning of a conversation between planners and citizens. Rick Coates, an activist in the Arnold Creek neighborhood, for one, said phooey. "The city created the rules, we followed the rules to their conclusion, and the city didn't like it. The city should just say what conclusions it wants to see, not play games with us."[25]

Increasingly, the neighborhood activists saw the Southwest Community Plan as a kind of city-run conspiracy to wreck their neighborhoods through re-zoning. The city's motives, as they saw them were various: to enrich their developer friends, impose their New Urbanist ideologies on a suburban community, or simply to preserve a growth boundary that was, for residents, increasingly abstract and meaningless. They considered it a conspiracy because there was something covert in the way it was carried out. They felt the true beliefs or intentions of the co-conspirators were never spoken. Their real relationships were not visible. Even the concessions the city made were seen as suspect: a draft map that was not really "off the table," a "numbers game" that was not really over. Citizen opponents of the plan believed in the conspiracy – that the city would do whatever it had to do in order to impose density on Southwest. But they also used the idea of conspiracy to great advantage. It helped motivate and mobilize their own forces. It gave the conflict an edge of hostility that was, by and large, productive. Certainly, they won more for being abrasive and questioning the good will of their opponents than they ever could have gained from being "civil." The atmosphere, one could say, was "poisoned." But grassroots opposition flourished in the toxicity.

Sandbox planning

By late 1996, as the Southwest Community Plan flared into controversy and conflict, the Multnomah Neighborhood Association emerged as the strongest and most militant of all the Southwest neighborhood associations. Thanks to the sharp wit of their president, Martie Sucec,

and the hot temper of Michael Roche, the chair of their land use committee, they also earned a reputation for being the nastiest neighborhood association around. They could be nasty when they thought circumstances required it, but they were also well-organized, resourceful, highly skilled, vigilant, and effective. Across the years of conflict over the SWCP, and before that, the Southwest Community Center, they also demonstrated great stamina. If waiting for the citizens to go away was part of the Bureau of Planning strategy – and some citizens thought it was – the members of the Multnomah Neighborhood Association were not predisposed to oblige. Their motivation was simple. While some neighborhoods had large swatches of their territory on the 1996 discussion draft map painted in the hated orangey-brown of R 2.5 zoning, it was easier in the case of Multnomah to describe the few, limited areas where single family zoning was proposed to remain. So, they mobilized, and their mobilization was all the more remarkable because the neighborhood association had only recently been a dry husk of an organization.

As city planners first took the community plan process to the grassroots in early 1995, neighborhood planning was apparently not on the agenda for the Multnomah Neighborhood Association. They focused on issues such as the location of their community policing office, fund-raising for playground equipment, sidewalks for Capitol Highway, and similar mundane chores of municipal housekeeping. They had heard presentations at their meetings by County Commissioners, crime prevention specialists, and even Congresswoman Elizabeth Furse. There were "land use disputes," but on a one-off basis as this developer or that proposed a cluster of rowhouses or a new subdivision. Preparation of a neighborhood plan was not mentioned. The neighborhood association leadership filed perfunctory dispatches to the *SWNI News* and the only noteworthy message was that it was getting harder and harder to find anyone who wanted to serve as an officer or committee chair. "All of these positions are important," they implored an oblivious public, "and in order for the Mult. Neighborhood to be heard, we need interested parties to come forth."[26]

Regularly scheduled elections were tabled in March for want of any candidates. Two-dozen people showed up at the following monthly meeting, but still no one stepped forward to stand for office. Don Snedecor, editor of the *Multnomah Village Post*, berated his readership for their apathy. "Don't you care about what happens to Multnomah?" he wrote in his column the next issue. Mary Mangarin-Kitchen had served half a year as president with no other officers. Now there was no one to take her place as she stepped down. "Government is not *them*," Snedecor railed. "It's *us*. Unless we decide not to show up. It's high time we stopped making someone else do all the work."[27] Cindy Groceman, chair of the MNA land use committee, told Snedecor to stuff his civic guilt trip. "Neighbors come together out of the desire to resolve issues

critical to their needs," Groceman wrote. "When the issue is critical," she concluded, people will show up.[28]

At the June meeting some volunteers finally appeared. Doug Reynolds, an engineer at Tektronix in Beaverton, and Engred Chai, a financial planner downtown, signed on as chair and vice chair respectively. Two others decided to share duties as chair of the land use committee. But the important position of secretary/treasurer remained vacant, as did the chairs for the environment committee and the crime and public safety committee.[29] If the neighborhood association had avoided total eclipse, it was still deeply in shadow. Work on the neighborhood plan – and attention to the community plan – continued to be a footnote in the proceedings of the organization. Instead, the focus seemed to be on creation of an informational kiosk to be placed in Multnomah Village. It would have a map of the village, a business directory, and information on the history of Multnomah. Maria Gregory, leader of the project, begged for public feedback on the concept and design, but it was hard to raise any interest. A notice for the September neighborhood association meeting seemed to groan: "Maria will lead yet another planning session for the information kiosk."[30]

By the Fall of 1995, however, it began to dawn on the neighborhood association that the community plan, and the accompanying neighborhood plan, might be important. Association leaders wrote in the *SWNI News* that "this plan will be used in shaping the Multnomah neighborhood well into the next century." It must be something that will "reflect the needs and wishes of the residents of the neighborhood," they said. But the city planners warned that city council would have the last word on policies, and they might not get what they ask for. "If you say you don't want any growth in your region," Sheila Frugoli told an association meeting, "that probably won't happen." They proceeded with self-described "baby steps," forming a steering committee, cautiously negotiating the Bureau's mandatory "letter of agreement," and making plans for an "outreach" survey. "Join us in creating the future," the leaders wrote, hopefully. "The fun and excitement is only beginning."[31]

Half a year later it seemed like it was still only beginning. The results of the survey seemed diffuse, inconclusive, and hard to weigh. The issues that would galvanize the public later were then still unformed. They distributed nearly 4,000 copies of the survey in copies of the *SWNI News* and *Multnomah Village Post*. One hundred eighty-nine came back filled out. The tabulation was unremarkable. Although nearly half of Multnomah residents were renters, four-fifths of the respondents were homeowners. They preferred single family housing to multiple housing. Their "vision" for the neighborhood was to keep it the way it was, maybe more walkable, with more of a village feel. Their fears included increased traffic, crowding, crime, and overall degradation of the quality of life. The neighborhood association hosted a public planning

workshop in February to help the steering committee understand better the "needs, wishes, and fears" of the residents. But when it was over there was still this task of actually writing a plan, and they found it no easy matter.[32]

As a small, self-appointed cadre of citizens, drafting plan language presented them with several obstacles. It was "difficult to write without input from others." They were on their own, with no broader public clamoring to be involved. It was "difficult to rationalize the different perspectives" on issues, and hard to decide between competing positions. It was "difficult to know where to begin and how to scale issues." And it was "difficult to structure." The last of these problems they dealt with simply by looking at other recent plans and appropriating them in outline form. So, there would be an introduction, with description of purpose, the planning process, and relationship to other plans. There would be a vision statement. There would be a description of existing conditions – demographics, geography, natural features, transportation, housing stock, development patterns, noteworthy problems – as in any plan. The meat of the document was a set of policy statements on land use, open space, transportation, public safety, "community and governmental relations," and other topics, with rationalizing narrative, objectives, and action items layered in a hierarchy below.[33]

Still, it had to be written, and by a committee, no less. Martie Sucec and Maria Gregory created a template for the section on "existing conditions." It was, basically, a set of prompts marking the beginning of each paragraph or section: "Multnomah Village is the soul of the Multnomah neighborhood..." it offered, as a suggested beginning of an introduction. "It is bounded by... (name streets/ landmarks)." "The village grew out of... (history)." All the volunteers had to do was fill in the blanks. The members of the committee divvied up these tasks and went home. Some of them did their homework. Some did not. But with great effort and struggle, together they produced a draft by June.[34] One or two of the volunteers produced near poetry. "Many mature fruit trees, remnants from the once-common orchards, remain productive, and the area is graced with a vigorous and mixed canopy of mature conifers and deciduous trees..." wrote one volunteer. He talked of "the sheltered slopes and open sky" of the neighborhood, and the presence of "the occasional hawk, pileated woodpecker, or heron." It is not clear if this volunteer coined the phrase "canopy of trees" but those words were to have a long life in the discussions of the Multnomah Neighborhood Association and beyond.[35]

Slowly, very slowly, the neighborhood plan steering committee seemed to gain momentum. New volunteers appeared, one by one, to join in the work. They were often motivated by some particular interest. Peter Mitchell was interested in providing low income housing, open space, and in managing growth. Scott Combs and Shelly Shultz had each worked on the Capitol Highway Improvement Plan. Bruce Stermer was interested in vacant school district property in

his immediate neighborhood that he thought would make a great new open space. The committee was assisted by David Berniker and Grant Scales, two relatively junior planners from the city. Their work produced a "plethora of paper," prompting one committee member to suggest they color code the different drafts as a way of keeping track. Still, the pieces of the draft started to come together. But, when the draft was finally presented to the city, only twelve citizen names were listed as contributors.[36]

Meanwhile, the neighborhood association went through another election crisis. Reynolds and Chai stepped down as officers, again leaving the organization leaderless, and threatening to throw it into "inactive" status with the Office of Neighborhood Associations. Rich Ray (Maria Gregory's husband) and Martie Sucec agreed to fill the void as equal co-chairs. Suddenly, there was a voice in the reports in the *SWNI News* – Sucec's:

> We offered to do this only if no one else would come forward; naturally, no one else did. Like almost everyone else, we would rather be kayaking or canoeing on the river, walking our dogs in Gabriel Park, planting our gardens, and all the other relaxing, revitalizing things the citizens of Portland do on balmy late-spring and early-summer evenings. But, like many others also, we are concerned about growing threats to the quality of life in our neighborhood, and we've been disturbed by the losses we see around us – losing land and open space to buildings, losing majestic 100-year-old trees to developers, losing peace of mind to increasing vandalism.[37]

This moment, as much as any other, perhaps, marked the beginning of Sucec's public career. It would be a long time before she would return to her civilian pursuits. For more than half a decade she would spend her spare time, and sometimes much of her working days, scrutinizing the activities of public officials, and trying to find the words to express the fears and hopes of her neighbors.

As the work of the Multnomah Neighborhood Plan steering committee moved forward, misgivings about its ultimate value and impact seeped in. At a meeting in late May, the members worried aloud that "the voice of the neighborhood committee would not be heard." Shelly Shultz suggested that the remedy was to make their plan stand out somehow, to make it unique. Maria Gregory agreed that the "squeaky wheel gets the grease." John King wondered whether the city would listen to them even still. For one thing, the gap between residents aspirations to maintain their peaceful single-family neighborhoods and the city's designs for density was already starting to show. For another, the members of the committee began to understand that a neighborhood plan without a zoning map was unlikely to have a real influence on policy or the development of the neighborhood.[38]

In June 1996 the neighborhood association submitted its draft plan to the Bureau of Planning for review. It was a distinctly raw document. But in its pages, one could read the outline of the emergent policy brief the Southwest opposition would later rally around. Pieces of the argument activists would make later were formed and laid out in neighborhood plans like this. More than that, it was possible to feel the undercurrent of emotion in the draft language – feelings about attachment to place and community and commitment to a way of life. Nearly all of it cut against the grain of state, Metro, and city policies on growth management. Multnomah, the citizen planners said, was already the most densely populated neighborhood in Southwest Portland (although hardly teeming at about seven persons per acre). They already had a high ratio of renters to homeowners. Multnomah, they suggested, was deficient in open space with "less than 100 acres" of a total of 926 in the neighborhood."[39] Their draft vision statement read in part:

> Multnomah Neighborhood is a place defined by conscientious decisions about the preservation of open space, limited and thoughtful residential and commercial development, small businesses and safe neighborhoods. It is our vision that the Multnomah Neighborhood will retain and improve upon its small town historic charms, parks, open spaces, greenways, pedestrian corridors, small-scale businesses with unique shopping opportunities and diversity of residences.[40]

Clearly, there was little emphasis on accommodating growth as the prevailing policy structure directed. They signed on to the agenda to promote transit, bicycling, and walking, and to reduce vehicle miles traveled, but not to the part of the program that stipulated increasing residential densities.

Their resistance was most clear in making open space a priority. More than 80 percent of residents responding to their surveys, they said, put open space as their number one issue. Even more than that, they argued that the need for open space was "strongly rooted in both our biology and our culture." Perhaps open space would have the same "critical survival value" for late 20th century city dwellers that it had for the predecessors of *homo sapiens* on the African savannah. The penalty for failing to preserve available open spaces, they said, was to make residents vulnerable to "crowding, noise, and congestion" which would be "manifest in discord and frustration," and lead to "unhealthy or risky personal behaviors and illness, anti-social behavior and violence."[41] Their policy objectives sought to limit further development in existing parks (reflecting opposition to the Southwest Community Center in Gabriel Park), expand Metro acquisition of land for new parks, preserve privately owned open spaces, protect stream corridors and habitat areas, and more. In particular, they trained their sights on "the only greenspace of any size left in the southern half" of the neighborhood – a 4.7-acre parcel on Dolph Court owned by the school district, a field with "abundant

grasses and wildflowers," natural springs flowing out of the hillsides, and wet, mossy slopes.[42] Metro should buy it and make it a park, the neighbors thought. Indeed, Metro might, because they had recently sold tens of millions of dollars in bonds to acquire new open space. But the difference in outlook between Metro and Multnomah was that Metro wanted open space *and* greater residential densities. In fact, open space acquisition was a means to make density more palatable. Multnomah wanted open space *instead* of greater residential densities.

Parts of the draft plan seemed downright tame, well within the planning conventions of the day in Portland. They aimed to "create safe, pleasant and convenient walking, bicycling and transit alternatives to the automobile throughout the Neighborhood." They talked of traffic calming, "connectivity," and improving transit and suggested ways to make pedestrians safe along Southwest's busiest highways.[43] They talked about "building on the existing sense of community" to make Multnomah a "safe and secure environment" for everyone. Their action items under "neighborhood livability and public safety" were the mundane stuff of neighborhood improvement everywhere: neighborhood cleanups, tree planting, better street lighting, neighborhood watch schemes, and better communication and coordination among voluntary organizations.[44] In a policy section entitled "governmental relations" they pleaded for access to public information, technical assistance, budgetary support for their proposals, "active partnerships and collaborations" with city, Metro, and state, and "meaningful community participation."[45]

In other cases, however, the draft Multnomah Neighborhood Plan challenged prevailing policy nearly head on. Their draft land use policies ignored the demand for density. Instead, they spoke, somewhat blandly, about the need to balance residential, commercial, and open space uses. They wanted to ensure that neighbors had an opportunity to "express their design values in neighborhood and community planning projects." They wanted all to "recognize the long-term impacts of short-term economic gains." If there was any doubt about what they were driving at, a brief preamble cleared it up. "A three story house rises in a neighborhood dominated by single story homes. On Capitol Highway, land is cleared and filled for row after row of rowhouses. Across the Neighborhood, natural landscapes are being altered or lost." What they described was not a vision but a specter.

While the city planners looked at vacant lots as possibilities for residential infill, the citizen planners enumerated the limitations on such possibilities and the alternative courses of action. The trend toward smaller lot sizes for new residential development may meet the need to increase density, they said, but "it also increases soil erosion and non-point pollution from higher levels (of) run-off, traffic congestion, and overuse of community infrastructure. It also decreases open space, air quality, large trees, natural habitat for birds and other small urban mammals."

The neighborhood had already experienced an increase in density over the previous ten years and the result had been increased traffic, pressure on parking, noise pollution, ground water contamination, and increased crime. Where vacant lots seemed appropriate for infill, builders should be required to build new homes of similar size and architecture to the existing homes around them. Vacant lots zoned for multiple units "need additional evaluation" of their potential impacts before they can be approved. Vacant lots adjacent to existing parks should be considered for incorporation into these parks rather than for new residential development. Vacant lots distant from existing parks should be considered for use as pocket parks, playgrounds, or community gardens. The subdivision and redevelopment of what the city planners considered "oversized" lots should be discouraged through maintenance of R10 and R20 zoning (four or two units to the acre) and the creation of Habitat Conservation Areas.[46]

This was not a recipe for increasing density or "housing capacity." Their section on housing policy was not as well elaborated, but it paralleled the section on land use in its resistance to new development, especially multi-family housing. They expressed a clear desire for any new housing to be mainly like the existing housing. To the extent that new housing would come in the form of apartments it should be away from the single family neighborhoods, preferably near the busy suburban strip of Barbur Boulevard, and away from Multnomah Village. When one of the authors included the objective "encourage the development of well-designed rowhouses," an editor inserted the question "What does 'well-designed' mean???" For some in Southwest a well-designed rowhouse was as much an oxymoron as bureaucratic efficiency.[47]

At the heart of the conflict, even in these early days of neighborhood planning, was the fact that residents experienced this built-up, suburban-style settlement as somehow fundamentally still rural. The introduction to the draft plan noted the origins of Multnomah in "dense woodlands converted to pastures that hosted dozens of dairies and a few small developments." The area had been urbanized in the preceding decades, they acknowledged. But they observed that "Multnomah's rural character is still prevalent from the presence of large lots, renovated cottages and farm houses, and remnants of the dairy industry such as Gabriel Park." Despite the advent of tract homes and apartment complexes, the hilly terrain, the presence of tall trees, fragments of farmland, and discontinuous street grid, made it possible to imagine the area as still rural, and the citizen planners insisted that it was.[48]

The language of the document was unusually evocative – at least for a plan. It spoke of a neighborhood "nestled in the reflection of the setting sun, under the protective mantle of Council Crest," and how "Multnomah's character is stamped by generations of people with tales to tell." They saw the neighborhood as suffused with historical meaning. "From the soft footprints of American Indians to the Oregon Electric Railway, from highways to light rail," they wrote,

"Multnomah's past and future (are) connected." The recitation of existing conditions in Gabriel Park was almost lyrical, with a long listing of tree species: cedar, fir, pine, Lombardy poplar, dogwood, apple, crabapple, maple, laurel, oak, birch, willow, and sycamore, and "lush ... pink rhododendrons." The description of the surrounding neighborhood seemed novelistic. "The sounds of power mowers, weed whackers, and often chain saws and chipper-shredders, drone in the otherwise quiet, somewhat sedate residential atmosphere." Some of the yards "resemble pastures still." In this way the citizen planners expressed their attachment and loyalty.[49]

But the process was a struggle, nevertheless. They estimated that the steering committee invested 7,000 working hours on the plan – or nearly 600 hours per person. The number seems impossibly high, but its assertion seems to have reflected their sense of exhaustion, at least. In one passage the author/editor announced "this chapter needs a lot of attention." They needed to know how to organize their plan, how to order their policies, attach objectives to action items, specify how action items would be implemented and by whom. Eventually they worked it out. The June draft included hopeful language about how the plan fit in with all the other plans in Portland and beyond. This was the only plan with specific directions about how Multnomah wanted to grow. It was one of the "building blocks" of the SWCP. Its policies would be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan and its projects and programs would be adopted by resolution. But it was hard to hold on to such hopes.[50]

The Bureau of Planning reviewed the draft and returned it in July with sweeping "suggestions" expressed in lines and lines of text neatly struck through with horizontal lines and new language inserted in bold face type. From the bureaucratic perspective, all the planners had done was to suggest ways the neighborhood association could make its plan consistent with existing state, Metro, and city policies; to make sure that action items could actually be implemented; to eliminate action items where projects or programs were already in place; and to make the text leaner and more direct overall. After all, the planners understood that a plan was a legal document in Oregon, with no room for superfluous political rhetoric, vague hopes, or unrealistic proposals. From the neighborhood perspective, the city planners had simply trashed their plan, which had been lovingly written and assembled with great effort. Just exactly what did the city expect from the neighborhood, the committee demanded of Berniker and Scales when the steering committee met in mid-August. The planners tried to reassure them but with little effect.[51]

Many of the "suggested" changes were to eliminate much of the most gratuitous rhetoric, or to make the narrative less long-winded. Others were in recognition of what could legally or practically be done. For example, rezoning a parcel for open space could only be meaningful if Metro or some other agency had already agreed to buy it. Otherwise, that would be a "taking." But many of the changes revealed the real gap between citizens and the city planners and the body of

policy they represented. "Limited and thoughtful" development became "carefully placed and designed" commercial and residential development. The planners did not want it "limited." "Build on the existing sense of community" was crossed out too. The citizens who had labored so hard to produce a plan for Multnomah were shocked to see whole sections on land use, housing, and zoning crossed out.[52] Agency representatives from throughout city government were asked by staff to review the neighborhood plans from their agency perspective – the Bureau of Buildings, the Bureau of Police, the Bureau of Parks and Recreation, and more. They gave patient and specific feedback, pointing out where citizen proposals were consistent with city policy or where they were at odds, sometimes accepting designation as "implementor" of an action item, other times deferring.[53] Despite all the criticism, the neighbors kept at it, incorporated some of the suggested changes, held on to other favored language, and produced another draft. It lacked a section on land use altogether, but added one on infrastructure. And it was decidedly less shaggy than previous versions. Perhaps the residents and the bureaucrats would have continued to negotiate their differences and come to agreement on a plan proposal. Perhaps not. But other events were about to intercede.

As the furor over the discussion draft map erupted, it began to dawn on the members of the Multnomah Neighborhood Association neighborhood plan steering committee that they had been, in effect, playing in a sandbox. The real action was to be in the Southwest Community Plan, and perhaps the neighborhood plans would be "building blocks" for nothing. Some speculated that neighborhood planning was just something to keep them busy and divert their energy. Maybe this was so. But the values, ideas, proposals, and language they developed while they were playing in that sandbox would persist throughout the rest of process. Their work had not been in vain.

The Multnomah Network

After the publication of the discussion draft map, everything changed. What had been a process of cautious and skeptical collaboration between citizens and planners, almost overnight, became an openly hostile conflict in which citizens assumed bad faith, if not on the part of the junior planners, certainly by their bureaucratic superiors, and their political directors, in turn. Neighborhood planning before the draft map had been a halting and difficult deliberation. Afterward, in Multnomah and other neighborhoods, it was a crash project with abundances of manpower, citizen expertise, and motivation. Before the draft map, the neighborhood associations had been little rotten boroughs occupied by a handful of earnest citizens. Afterward, they exploded almost as revolutionary tribunals, with ordinary people rising up in righteous vengeance against the evil perpetrated on them. And, although planning at the neighborhood

scale would continue to be a focus for months to come, the publication of the discussion draft map began to draw the attention of citizen participants to the more consequential work of the Southwest Community Plan itself.

As Cindy Groceman had predicted, people did show up to get involved in their neighborhood association – when the issue was critical. The street-level organizing that went into turning out crowds at the public workshops in September and October was quickly redirected at reinvigorating the neighborhood association. Suddenly, people who had been dormant got involved again. People who had never been involved appeared to take leading roles in the burgeoning movement. A few, who had no taste for the combat to come, receded to the background.[54] The process was repeated across Southwest. The long-term neighborhood activists who had demanded the city come to Southwest next, or those that had labored quietly on neighborhood plans, found themselves joined by a new cadre of citizens whose attitudes were yet to be tempered by participation Portland-style.

The Multnomah Neighborhood Association held a public workshop on their draft neighborhood plan just two weeks after the big meeting at Wilson High School. Throughout the Fall the dozen stalwarts had continued to work, trying to finish up by the previously imposed deadline. At the October 28 workshop 65 people showed up to participate in a page by page review of the draft. The policies, objectives, and action items of the original draft had already reflected the neighborhood's aspirations for protecting and expanding public green space, improving transit and pedestrian facilities, limiting new housing development, matching infrastructure investments with any new development, and preserving the historic character of Multnomah Village. The critique by the aroused post-draft map citizenry, however, pushed to sharpen and harden the language in the plan. In item after item, citizens suggested they replace the verb "encourage" and "other soft language" with stiffer terms like "mandate" and "require." One participant suggested they "replace 'ensure' with 'mandate... that any higher density be tied to infrastructure improvements' and know who is paying." Another wanted "mandatory, not voluntary, design review by NA" for new housing. Still another added, "neighborhood should review... with veto power," proposals for development in neighborhood parks. The neighborhood had passed the point where they would make any hand-shake deals. They wanted guarantees and they wanted them in writing.[55]

The new language also began to manifest the neighborhood's emerging counter-argument against they city's particular application of growth management policy. Multnomah, they emphasized, was already the most densely developed neighborhood in Southwest. It was "the last place in SW" to provide truly "affordable" housing. The neighborhood was already rapidly growing under current zoning and they lacked adequate infrastructure to handle existing, let

alone increased, housing densities. Multnomah, they said, already met the housing goals required by the Metro 2040 plan. "Get land use attorney," they concluded. "Chip in – go to court."[56]

As Commissioner Hales and the planning staff retreated and tried to regroup, the Multnomah Neighborhood Association huddled to make strategy and organize their opposition. At a meeting in mid-November they sketched a new organizational structure for the association; brainstormed a list of tasks they needed to undertake; and assigned each task to one of the committees. All but one of the committees was newly-created, and the organizational structure wasn't as straightforward as it appeared on paper. The Multnomah Neighborhood Plan Steering Committee persisted, with Maria Gregory still the chair, but Mark Helfand, a physician, was named "plan coordinator." But Gregory was also given responsibility for the seemingly redundant Options Committee, whose charge was to "develop a 'bottoms-up' re-zoning scheme" to "minimize density" in the neighborhood. And Chris Linn was appointed chair of an "Inventory Committee" that would develop baseline data to feed into the neighborhood plan process. Jan Breckon was named "phone tree and outreach coordinator" at the same time Laura Kringen was assigned the "Opposition Committee" – a panel with a clearly overlapping mission. Meanwhile, Molly Burns was named "committee coordinator" or "Super Chair," also somewhat redundant given Sucec's manifest skill as association chair. The method behind this madness was simple: give everyone something to do, spread leadership tasks around, and trust that everyone is united enough to work out any conflicts.[57]

The Multnomah Neighborhood Association did not wait for Hales to reach a final decision on his process revision, but dove into the work of creating a new neighborhood plan with zoning. They undertook a neighborhood-wide inventory of land use, housing patterns, vacant land, environmental zones (existing or potential), historic buildings, open space, trees, infrastructure, and more. They set out to learn more about the framework of land use regulation, focusing on mechanisms like the "a-overlay" zone, design review, historic districts, and the zoning code in general. Neighborhood association members were tasked to "watchdog" zoning amendments and building permit applications. Others were assigned to track the development of the Metro *Functional Plan* – the technical plan implementing the 2040 growth concept. They formed a "technical advisory group" and, while they sketched out the work of completing a neighborhood plan, they also focused their effort on developing a critique of growth management that attacked the city's version of those policies on their own terms.[58]

What they plotted was nothing less than an all-fronts war. One activist encapsulated the entire operation in a one-page diagram captioned "Strategic Plan – Multnomah." It categorized their efforts as "technical," "legal," "political," and "individual." The technical tasks involved completing the inventory, the plan, and the zoning map, as well as incorporating a "watershed

analysis" into the work. The legal tasks included researching case law and providing liaison between neighborhood association and attorney, as well as fund raising to pay for the lawyer. Individual tasks included "monkey wrench activism" such as filing Freedom of Information requests, unspecified "guerrilla tactics," and work with ORTEM, a conservative "taxpayers" organization. But the political strategy was by far the most extensive.

The outreach committee would work to drum up grassroots expressions of protest – letter writing efforts, e-mail and telephone campaigns, and recruiting people to speak out at Mayor Vera Katz' regular forum events – and the opposition committee, already renamed the "communications" committee, would organize to place their message more discretely. They listed all of the Southwest monthly newspapers, as well as the major metropolitan print and electronic media for attention. But more remarkably they saw *Sunset*, *Forbes*, the *Utne Reader*, and other national publications as potential media targets. Their outline strategy was basic but to the point: "develop media packet; ID talking points; ID key experts." They sketched an inside political strategy to match their outside media effort, too. The Mayor, members of the City Council, directors of the various bureaus, the Planning Commission, and especially the Bureau of Planning would all be targets for their messages. But they also aimed higher: the Multnomah County Council, the Metro Council, and even the state legislature. They intended to "determine allies; brief key staff; stay visible; (and) play agencies agst. ea. other."[59]

The Multnomah Neighborhood Association knew the answer to the question "is it better to be loved or feared?"[60] But what was really remarkable about the strategic plan was the total absence of any reference to what their goal or their message was. It was devoid of content, because the message and purpose was understood and agreed to by all: stop what they expected would be the destruction of their neighborhood.

While Commissioner Hales marched toward his orderly process revision, the Multnomah Neighborhood Association hustled to get ahead of the game. Chris Linn, an architect, organized volunteers to go house to house, "charting dwellings, roads, environmental and historical resources, and infrastructure blights." They divided the neighborhood into twelve quadrants and canvassed every street on foot noting each item. By the end of January, even before the specifics of the new process had been made clear, Multnomah was ready with its own homemade data base, albeit displayed on hard copy maps, but better and more up to date, they believed, than anything the city could have provided. More importantly, the inventory showed that Multnomah's 4,000 housing units were about evenly split between single-family and multi-family units, and that the neighborhood was built out to about 80 percent of its zoning capacity – a Metro threshold for *Functional Plan* compliance. "We thought so," Sucec reported, "and now we have current, accurate data to support that hunch."[61]

Maria Gregory convened the zoning committee for new visioning sessions, this time not desultory meetings with a handful of neighbors but energetic gatherings of 30 or 40. There were a lot of new people and they started over from the beginning. Each person was given up to three minutes to talk about what kind of neighborhood they wanted to create. With the exception of just a couple of people, the participants found a broad, almost immediate consensus. Most talked about the "canopy of trees" or the "green canopy." They identified the "diverse," "mixed," "eclectic," character of the neighborhood as a key value, as well as the strong sense of community they believed went with it. Many talked about protecting the "inner neighborhoods," those areas of contiguous single family housing away from main thoroughfares. Others emphasized the importance of the village as a well-functioning neighborhood business district that also had a citywide draw. Too much development could wreck it. Still others talked about affordable housing, transit service, and sensitive environmental lands.

Only one person's presentation followed the script laid down by prevailing policy. But the zoning committee did not take a stance against any and all further development. Indeed, many acknowledged they must "assume growth as a reality," and take "a fair share of growth." Rather, they focused their objections more narrowly. There might be rowhouses, but not mixed up with single family houses. There might be rowhouses, but not without design review with strong neighborhood participation. Development could come as infill, but not through "blanket zoning" that led to broad swath redevelopment. "The only way to get density in a healthy neighborhood," Jan Breckon said, "is to destabilize it. That is the intent of the blanket zoning." Martie Sucec said they should plan for "real units – not potential units." Mark Helfand argued "we've taken lots of capacity – we can take more – but on our terms." There might even be high density housing, Kimberly Stevens allowed, but "growth should be concentrated on Barbur – not Capitol Highway. There could be multi-family housing, Chris Uber said, but it was important to keep the current 50-50 mix between single and multi-family.[62]

Now they had values, and they had data, but they lacked a powerful way to analyze the data on the way to manifesting the values. When the Bureau of Planning issued its "Tool Box" it contained paper base maps and colored pencils for zoning. The members of the technical advisory group – a health policy analyst, a civil engineer, an architect, and other high-skilled professionals – looked at pencils and paper and told each other, "we've gotta move this thing from the 1920s into the 1990s; we've gotta get this digitized." They went to the city for digital base maps and got no satisfaction. They turned to Metro, which sold them a set of maps. One of the group also knew that Multnomah had been part of an aerial photographic survey and the photos had been converted into digital terrain maps, or DTMs. They asked Sheila Frugoli, the project manager for the Bureau of Planning, if the city had these maps. Frugoli, whose sympathies had been sorely

divided by the discussion draft map and related controversies, soon delivered a stack of computer disks to the committee. The newer maps had greater detail, and allowed the citizens to add their own information – gathered by Linn and the inventory committee – along precise x & y coordinates.

But they weren't done. Mark Helfand, chair of the technical advisory group, reached into his pocket and bought a copy of the program ArcInfo. Using their geographic data base and the analytical tools in the program they produced an analysis they referred to as "the red dot map." The program produced for each property a ratio of the value of the house and other improvements to the value of the underlying lot. Then they tested each parcel to estimate how many structures would be susceptible to redevelopment if a denser zoning designation was assumed. The result was a series of maps with red dots indicating properties likely to be redeveloped. The houses with the red dots came to be known as "scrapers" – structures with a value low enough relative to its lot that it would be economical to simply scrape the house off the lot and replace it with denser development. Although there were some factors left out of the analysis, like interest rates or prevailing conditions in the regional housing market, it was sophisticated enough to command attention.[63]

The technical planning work and the political campaign were intertwined. But parts of the effort were simple street-fighting. Jan Breckon, a Multnomah resident and a public school teacher, went to the October 15 workshop at Wilson High School and found herself speechless with anger. Martie Sucec kept saying that they needed people to help; Breckon called her repeatedly saying, "I'm a person, give me something to do." Sucec made her chair of the outreach committee. Every meeting afterward seemed to beg for a show of force. She started calling people on the neighborhood association database, maybe 150 in all, recruited a phone committee of 45 people, and called them to action any time they needed a crowd. They called the phone tree to solicit letters to the editor, letters to elected officials, and later, more than 300 letters to the planning commission in support of the neighborhood plan. In January she published the first edition of a newsletter called *The Networker* with committee-by-committee summaries of association activities. She bought two new rubber stamps, one that read "phone tree info" and the other "copy and distribute" to mark her handouts to members of her burgeoning committee.

The most visible success of the outreach committee – literally visible – was the yard signs. Breckon thought about getting some bumper stickers printed, but the fight was about their homes, their neighborhood environment, their place. Yard signs would mark that territory. She had never done anything like printing before, "but that has never stopped me," she said. Breckon went to a local sign printer for advice, and she went shopping for materials: ink, coated corrugated stock, silk screen – $455 of her own money. Another printer helped her cut the screen.

Kaye Synoground, a local artist, told Breckon to do just one color. Two colors were too complicated. But she looked at the design and told herself, "No, I gotta have two colors." She started printing them in the basement of a neighbor and soon discovered that you also needed thinner for the ink. Finally, at the beginning of February, the first 200 signs were ready.

They were free to anyone who wanted one, but they asked for a five dollar donation, and Breckon quickly got her money back and donated the rest to the association. Soon there were three, four, five, eight of the signs on every block in the neighborhood. "Save Our Neighborhood!" they implored in bright red script on a white background. In dark blue block letters, they advised: "RETHINK REZONING." Always organizing, they included a credit – Multnomah Neighborhood Association – and a phone number at the bottom – Sucec's. They printed another 200, and given the waterproof material, they lasted throughout the long wet Portland winter and spring and into the next fall without a sign of wear.

The signs struck a nerve with the bureaucracy. When planning director David Knowles came to Multnomah later that year, members of the neighborhood association thought he was visibly angry about the signs. They heard it second hand later on that Knowles thought the signs "unproductive." But they were productive – of an image of a neighborhood united in its opposition to the city's policies. It was unanimous. There were, after all, no yard signs that read "we want rowhouses!" After the yard signs, it became increasingly difficult to portray the leadership – aggressive and abrasive as they were – as somehow marginal or radical. They had a visible constituency of ordinary Portlanders. More than that, the yard signs drew on and manifest the feelings that Breckon encountered in her other work – deep affection for this place called Multnomah, and searing anger toward the city.[64]

In early April, Knowles visited the neighborhood for a walking tour, accompanied by Deborah Stein, who had taken over supervision of the Southwest Community Plan when Harrison was reassigned. The Bureau had been trying to calm citizen anger for months, and this was just one more measure. But the association had done far more work to develop the political purpose of the visit than Knowles had. They had been planning the tour for months, and the published itinerary ran beyond four single-spaced typewritten pages. For it was not just 20 stops on a circular route. It was an essay on what they valued about their neighborhood, what they understood was threatened by the city's previous plan, and what they would suggest instead. Certainly, what Knowles could see and what the residents saw were two different things. His agency had identified Multnomah as significantly underdeveloped. The neighbors saw it engraved with meaning, dense with cherished places, and marred by a catalogue of outrages by developers and planners.

Multnomah's "friendly small town roots" and its pedestrian character, they told Knowles and Stein, were threatened by the increase of traffic that development had brought. On evenings and weekends, cars filled the village, endangering pedestrians and straining parking. Quiet, residential SW Canby Street had become a high-speed cut-through. SW 35th Avenue, one of the few alternate routes between Beaverton-Hillsdale Highway and Barbur Boulevard, and a bus route, had also drawn heavy traffic despite being "identified as a local street." It was so bad that residents had fought for speed bumps to slow the traffic. "Now that approval has been granted," they noted bitterly, "there are no funds." Cars barreled down SW Capitol Highway and into the village, so menacing that one resident parked his car at the bottom of that hill and used his daughter's blow-dryer as a radar decoy.

They spoke persistently about the "forest canopy" and the "canopy of trees" and how the trees framed gateways into the neighborhood. They provided detailed descriptions of trees that had been wasted and trees that survived. There were "old growth conifers, (m)ature magnolias, camellias, rhododendron, vine maples, and a three-forked tree that is featured in *Ripley's Believe it or Not.*" There were several stately trees on Canby Street that residents had rallied to protect in the 1970s. The city's engineers had wanted to remove them in order to straighten the street, but neighborhood protests convinced them to curve the road "ever so slightly" instead. Near Gabriel Park, another 70s-era development had threatened the canopy but "neighborhood activism persisted and many large trees survived the chain saw." Trees were a central part of the neighborhood identity, an important part of residents' sense of being there. Every transgression against the trees was written and remembered. A developer had built a new house on an old lot: "The builder cut three majestic old-growth trees that should have been protected under the tree ordinance, but the builder found a loophole." In another case, a builder cut four old oak trees. "Two were diseased, but the others were not." And at SW 47th Avenue and Garden Home Road "12 cedars... were cut and the roots of 23 others were severed during construction – runoff into the creek is causing problems besides the blight of 'new construction.'" On SW Troy "they've mowed down the large trees and planted whips."

Likewise, the tour also let the residents point out to the city planners torts against the land and water and opportunities to preserve them from further harm. At SW Capitol Highway and Miles a set of rowhouses were built at the top of a steep hill. "Where does the stormwater runoff go?" they asked. On the other side of the neighborhood, SW Spring Garden Road didn't get its name from nothing, they said, and development there had exacerbated problems with runoff. Stormwater was just one of many reasons to be aggressive in the public purchase of available land for open space. Some of them were embedded in Oregon land use policy. There was a small block near the heart of the village that had "the potential of becoming a pocket park through either the

city's or Metro's open space acquisition program, under the State's Goal 5..." It could be a field of wildflowers near the "Main Street" of the village. Residential land was open space, too. Nearby on SW Canby a few half acre residential lots were lush enough to support "migrating neo-tropical birds traveling the Pacific Flyway." The large residential lots on the southeast corner of Gabriel Park should be preserved, not upzoned.

For Multnomah residents, the neighborhood was a rich case study of the good and the bad in housing and urban design. They decried "snout houses" – attached dwellings with forward thrusting garages – and other examples of "crammed in" housing. They mentioned "Kathy's house," an oasis of a 20,000 square foot lot, protected by laurel and harboring hummingbirds, and asked if the city officials really wanted to see such a house torn down and redeveloped at R2.5 density. They invited the planners to sit in the Village Coffee House across from a site designated for a four-story building planned by a local social service agency and try to understand how the project would "obliterate any hint of the neighborhood, skylight, a view of the trees." They wanted an historic district to prevent such a travesty, or at least a "Multnomah-specific design overlay." Mostly they recommended that existing housing be preserved, but they also offered examples of new development they liked. At SW Devon and 33rd Avenue there were three new detached single family houses on small lots; there were three others at SW 45th and Garden Home Road on a lot zoned R1. "Nice design" in this case meant not too big, not too tall, and not a continuous wall of building.

The stop at SW Texas Street and SW 28th Avenue seemed to roll all of their dread, anger, and desire into a single ball – antipathy to new development, fears about environmental damage, ire at the failure of bureaucrats and politicians to live up to their obligations, and grief over the loss of trees. The MNA travelogue script detailed the outrages in shorthand:

> Wetland infilled with 320 cubic yards of dirt years ago, the State Land Division ordered mitigation (see letter attached from October 1994) – still hasn't been done – wetlands should be zoned e-p; terrible water problems; new units built, neighbors intimidated by builder; LID[1] imposed on full lots, not frontage; assessments very high; slated removal of an ancient fur (sic) to provide for a sidewalk.

The tour was, in fact, an outline of the plan that was already in the making. But the tour with Knowles and Stein, and a subsequent tour with Mayor Katz, were also measurements of the distance between the city and the neighborhood in understanding, values, and policy. When Katz visited Multnomah that summer she is reported to have remarked that Capitol Highway through

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[1]A LID is a Local Improvement District, a special-purpose taxing district created to finance specific infrastructure improvements.

the village had the potential to be every bit as good as NW 23rd Avenue in the Northwest District. The problem was that Multnomah residents didn't want their village to be like NW 23rd. In fact, they would fight like hell to prevent it.[65]

The zoning committee met intensively, discussing each proposed change in zoning at length, and voting on each one. If the votes were closely split, they would talk some more until they had reached something approaching a consensus. For much of the neighborhood this was not so difficult. They wanted to leave the "inner neighborhoods" as they were. But in the critical areas – in Multnomah Village, along Barbur Boulevard, and adjacent to Gabriel Park – there were strategic choices to be made. What they decided, overall, was to allow limited development on available parcels in the village, downzone around the park, and direct the vast majority of their new "housing capacity" to the Barbur Boulevard corridor. If this was not a strategy that the city planning apparatus could approve, it was at least a strategy, and it followed a powerful and coherent set of "guiding values and principles":

- Retain the canopy of trees.
- Preserve and protect the unique character and livability of the inner neighborhoods. Neighborhood gateways are shown on the map with (a green circle).
- Preserve affordable housing and affordable home ownership.
- Preserve the existing mix of residential, commercial, single family and multi-family units. The neighborhood currently has a 50/ 50 mix of multi-family and single family units.
- Promote and increase green/ open space.
- Retain the historic nature of Multnomah Village by securing national historic designation.
- Respect environmentally sensitive areas and promote watershed planning.
- Retain the contiguous character of detached single family housing in the inner neighborhood.

The technical competence of the MNA was expressed flamboyantly in their proposed zoning map, digitally rendered, and reproduced on a high quality plotter at a grand 36 by 42 inches. It didn't have quite the sheen of the Bureau's discussion draft map, but it produced a credible image nonetheless.[66]

At the April 29, 1997 "mid-point review" the Bureau of Planning gave Multnomah a harsh critique of their proposed plan. Their light touch on zoning through the Multnomah Village "Main Street," the planners said, had failed to meet the city's objective of increasing housing and commercial activity in such areas. One staff member warned that the residents' cherished village, which not so long before had been run down and under-occupied might be so again without a

stronger local population base. Along the entire length of Capitol Highway, staff said, the neighborhood had maintained single family zoning to the detriment of producing "transit supportive" densities. Especially at the far southwest end of the corridor, this failure to upzone was in conflict with the concept for the West Portland Town Center. The idea of packing Barbur Boulevard with higher density housing was dismissed as unrealistic by the staff. One could derive a hypothetical housing capacity through such upzonings, but if the sites were unlikely to be developed as apartments such new capacity was an illusion. Bureau staff saw the Barbur Boulevard housing proposal for what it was – a ruse.[67] The neighborhood was, in turn, dismissive of the Bureau review:"... the BOP wants more intensity along Capitol Highway and Multnomah Boulevard, the neighborhood does not. The neighborhood wants a mix of commercial and residential zoning along our Barbur Boulevard boundary; the BOP wants large office buildings."[68]

The Bureau reviews were not all as bad as Multnomah's. Neighborhoods as different as Hayhurst and Corbett-Terwilliger-Lair Hill got fairly good "grades." But there was something about the exchange that re-ignited citizen anger. Stein and Wax insisted that the reviews weren't intended as "report cards." But that's what they seemed like. The paperwork neighborhood associations received followed the outline of the adoptability check-list of the "tool box." Next to each item or issue there were a set of boxes to check to indicate whether the neighborhood plan had met the standard ("yes" or "partially") or not ("no", "other"). It looked like a report card. Stein said the exercise was "intended to get the conversation going and to convey what we are thinking." Instead, it got people shouting again. Citizens had been given the opportunity to do their own zoning proposals. The city had softened its stance on housing targets. But when the first plans were turned in, the staff went right back to enforcing the policy framework – transit supportive densities, Town Centers and Main Streets, and the rest. David Gens, of West Portland Park said, "the check list is top down again. It isn't the compromise we were looking for."[69]

In some cases, neighborhood associations revised their plans in response to the Bureau reviews. Others developed detailed rebuttals. Jere Retzer from the Crestwood neighborhood wrote a seven page letter to Stein with a point by point response, complaining that the staff had failed to recognize Crestwood's proposal to zone for housing far in excess of the goals the Bureau itself had set.[70] Other neighborhoods – like Multnomah – stood their ground. They met with the Southwest Business Association to confer on acceptable proposals for Barbur, then approved their plan June 10, 1997 by a vote of the full neighborhood association, 15-0 with no abstentions.[71] All of the plans moved forward through final NA adoption, a June submission deadline, publication by the Bureau in September, and subsequent consideration by the Planning Commission.

Far more important, however, was that the experience of the mid-point review – and a renewed sense that the city was still manipulating them – prompted neighborhood association leaders to join forces, address common issues, and face the reality that their neighborhood plans were subordinate to the Southwest Community Plan. On May 5, 1997 neighborhood leaders held a "summit" meeting to talk about the plans. They reached some agreement on the need for design review for new rowhouse developments; questioned the drawing of boundaries for Town Centers and Main Streets; identified a demand that publicly owned open spaces and excess school properties wouldn't be sold off before their plans could be implemented; and focused on the connection between higher density development and the need for dependable city financing of infrastructure needed to accommodate such development. Mainly, though, they further understood the need to join forces and fight the city in a unified way. This "summit" meeting would evolve into The Summit Group, and play a prominent role for much of the remaining planning process.[72]

That fall, the plans the neighborhood associations had written were published by the Bureau of Planning – the neighbors' work in the Bureau's format – to facilitate review by city agencies, the public, and especially the Planning Commission. The only neighborhood association not to submit a plan was Multnomah.[2] Instead, they produced a document entitled *The Multnomah Neighborhood Report and Plan*. Although mildly named, the tone of the "Report and Plan" was aggressive and the language pointed, sometimes harsh. It included a sharpened version of the draft plan, vision, and policies residents had produced before the process exploded. Newcomers to the process were loath to discard what the old-timers had produced. But it added a comprehensive critique of Bureau of Planning actions in pursuit of state and Metro land use policies, arguing in some cases that city planners had mis-applied valid planning principles, in others that city policies were based on flawed premises, in still others that city policies ran directly counter to what residents said they wanted.

This critique was not without its own flaws. But it was both complex and canny. It wove together a large number of individual objections to city policy in a single, coherent presentation. At the same time, it combined specific, one might say technical, arguments against elements of the policy, with a broader attack on the professional proclivities of planners and bureaucratic management in general. A stringent sense of logic and a poetic language of place coexisted in the neighborhood association text. Sometimes they argued against city policy on the planners' own terms; other times they argued against planners' most embedded ideas and ways of thinking. The

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[2] Several neighborhood associations had not previously intended to submit a plan. Among those that had already indicated their intention to submit a plan, Multnomah Neighborhood Association was the only one that did not.

critique was politically astute. It positioned the neighborhood, not as the opponent of growth management, livability and environmental protection, but as its protector against a bought-off public bureaucracy run amok in the service of greedy developers.

The Multnomah Neighborhood Report and Plan aimed to dismember, piece by piece, the whole logic behind the city's version of growth management planning. The R 2.5 rowhouse zone, they insisted, was not an infill zone to allow a moderate increase in housing density on vacant lots and vastly under-developed properties. Rather, it was a "redevelopment" or "clearance" zone, which would lead to the razing of modest single family homes and their replacement, two for one, by larger and more expensive rowhouses. They dismissed the argument that rowhouses would provide affordable housing, suggesting instead that rowhouses meant gentrification, with lower priced single family housing swept out of the way, and long-term residents on fixed incomes displaced. They referenced in support, not only their own "red dot" map, but research by Metro, and even Bureau of Planning consultants. City policy was premeditated not negligent, they charged. Bureau of Planning proposals were "based on the assumptions that rezoning to R 2.5 would lead to the destruction of existing, well maintained, and moderately priced single family housing stock and would lead to disinvestment in single family stock."[73]

The document also targeted the interlocking ideas and policies underlying the "design types" – Town Centers, Main Streets, and transit corridors – that were the core of Metro's "growth concept." But the Multnomah critique was riven by an infuriating kind of tension. They attacked the underlying logic of growth management policy at the same time as they claimed their own proposals would satisfy its purposes. The strategy of growth management policy was to increase density and improve the pedestrian environment to allow a shift from automobile travel to transit use, which, in turn, would allow the increase in density and preservation of rural lands. The thrust of the Multnomah critique was to say they supported the aims of growth management but to question the extent to which increased residential and commercial densities were necessary to achieve them. Of course, opposition to density was the real core of their argument.

For example, they accepted the idea of a Main Street for Multnomah – in effect, it already was one – but they objected to the sheer size of the boundary proposed by the Bureau of Planning on the draft discussion map. It totaled eight million square feet – about 185 acres – for what they feared would be broad-scale redevelopment. This particular delineation of the main street area, they argued, was the result of the city's intentional misinterpretation of Metro intentions about the character of this design type in order to increase housing and employment densities. Such a designation "undermined the spirit, if not the letter, of the *Functional Plan* and *Main Street Handbook*," they charged. "In fact, the Bureau's purpose in drawing the boundary so large was to

coerce the neighborhood into upzoning parts of the inner neighborhood by arguing that they were 'within the Main Street area'".[74]

The neighbors quoted in their defense Metro planners correcting their Portland colleagues on Metro's actual intentions. "Please note that Main Streets are a linear designation..." one planner wrote "...not a broad district," as was shown in Bureau of Planning documents. John Fregonese, then Director of Growth Management Services for Metro, later a consultant working with New Urbanism leader Peter Calthorpe, wrote to David Knowles in early 1996 to say Bureau planners were mistaken in saying Town Centers and Main Streets might contain six-story buildings. "Six story buildings are more appropriate for Regional Centers..." he wrote, adding, "it would appear that the details about the densities and the design types embodied in the adopted *Growth Concept* have not been conveyed from the policy planning staff to the current planning staff now grappling with implementation for 2015."[75]

As a "linear designation" the Multnomah Main Street would extend no more than 180 feet on either side of the intersecting thoroughfares of Capitol Highway, Multnomah Boulevard, and Garden Home Road. In total area, the neighborhood's Main Street would be less than half the size of the city's – about three million square feet. Within this area the target densities of 39 persons per acre – residents plus employees – would be allowed. But outside the boundary would be designated as "inner neighborhoods" protected from such densities. This was what Metro meant by a Main Street, they argued, and Metro officials did not contradict them. The problem was that the kind of Main Street the Multnomah residents had in mind involved very little change and meeting the aims of growth management required nothing if not change.

One of the more involved arguments in the Multnomah critique focused on Bureau recommendations for substantial upzoning along the Capitol Highway transit corridor. The discussion draft map proposed R 2.5 zoning for a wide swath on either side of Capitol Highway throughout its traverse of Southwest Portland. This was, Bureau staff said, pursuant to the State Transportation Planning Rule. The rule instructed planners to consider "transit supportive densities" within one-quarter mile of transit corridors, and the Bureau's estimate of "transit supportive" was 15 units to the acre – rowhouse density. But the *Multnomah Neighborhood Plan and Report* contended that no upzoning at all was required along Capitol Highway in areas outside Town Centers and Main Streets. Because the bus routes in question traveled from a Regional Center – downtown Portland – to Main Streets and Town Centers they already met the stipulated "riders per acre" requirements as a result of serving those dense nodes. Thus the neighbors parried the demands of one rule by invoking a different one.

The argument, however, was marbled with subtle contradictions. They cited the Metro recommended density for "inner neighborhoods" at 9 to 11 units per acre – apparently because it

is less than the recommended density for transit corridors – without mentioning that their neighborhood comes nowhere near satisfying either benchmark. They emphasized the importance of the density of employment and retail activity and downplay the role of residential density in supporting transit, ignoring the fact that every transit trip has an origin as well as a destination. They further suggested that "walkability" is far more important than density in promoting transit ridership, forgetting that their own constituents have declared a preference against "connectivity" – one of the key elements in promoting "pedestrian friendly" environments. Besides, improving transit ridership depends on both increasing density and improving the pedestrian environment.

They also argued that achieving a modest increase in transit ridership would require a quadrupling of current densities, a charge that not only supports their opposition to density, but cuts right to the heart of the growth management strategy. "If housing density alone was used to support transit," they wrote, "an increase in ridership of one person per acre might increase the number of automobile drivers by 25 per acre." The problem is that such an assertion is based on the assumption that land use and urban design will never change the "modal split" – the proportion of people who travel by transit versus those who travel by car. Carried to its logical conclusions in one direction, the Multnomah critique leads to support for a growth management concept so diluted that it can bring about little change, which, indeed, is what the residents really wanted. In the other direction, the argument leads to a charge that the policy itself will never work.[76]

Still, the critique was rooted firmly enough in the concepts, language, and technical details of growth management policy to present a credible rebuttal to the arguments of Bureau staff. They argued most persuasively – and presciently – that the Bureau's proposed policies failed to strike a balance among competing purposes as expressed in Oregon's statewide land use goals. If housing capacity, farmland preservation, and transit ridership were important, so were open space, watershed protection, and water quality. Why did SWCP policies not support these goals? Mainly, however, *the Multnomah Neighborhood Report and Plan* simply said that the Bureau had gone too far. Rather than simply meet the goals that Metro had set in its 2040 Plan, Portland had attempted to exceed them, in policy and in practice. All of the opponents of Bureau policy in the SWCP used the discrepancy between Metro policy and Portland policy as a point of political leverage. But if it was true – as Metro leaders were anxious to say – that Metro did not force Portland to adopt this approach, there was also nothing that said Portland was precluded from taking this more aggressive course. The next peg in Multnomah's argument, however, was the most sobering. "These policies," they wrote, "undermined confidence in the process and weaken(ed) Portland's ability to maintain a consensus for 2040 Growth Concepts." Multnomah

Neighborhood Association was Exhibit A. Ostensible supporters of growth management, they had become its fiercest opponents.[77]

Their technical rational arguments took the planners head-on. But there was another powerful layer to the Multnomah response to Portland planners. At turns radical, Romantic, and poetic, one might term the sensibility "counter-cultural" or "alternative." Part of it was straight out of urban political economy. The vision of the city and Bureau, they charged, "emerge(d) from a single-minded concern for the economic rights of property owners who wish to increase the intensity of use on their land." Multnomah, on the other hand, was concerned with the preservation of community – "places in which the bonds between people and those between people and the natural world create a pattern of connectedness, responsibility, and mutual need."[78] In attending to neighborhood as a place of meaning, emotion, aesthetic value, connection, and commitment, rather than simply as a housing sub-market or a bundle of goods and services, the neighbors sought to counter a tendency by the planners to speak of their homes, yards, and streets as abstractions. The neighbors honored "use values" over "exchange values." But even here the "uses" they spoke of were ones of affection, connection, and identification.

The Multnomah neighbors also mounted a counter-attack on professional planning itself as embodied in the Bureau staff, its proposals and policies. They slammed the "tired conventional thinking" and "traditional ideas" of planners, never mind that the orthodoxy of The New Urbanism had emerged only recently. They charged the planners with a tendency to apply abstract concepts broadly to concrete circumstances, no matter what specific conditions might suggest. They talked about the value of "local knowledge" as an antidote to the homogenizing generalizations and abstractions of the planners. Indeed, they saw such knowledge as a protection against planning moves that might be just plain dumb. And they proposed an approach to planning that would not only be "bottom up," in the sense of being participatory, but also "ground up," by starting with an understanding of what exists on the ground rather than with a set of abstract policies. In general, the neighbors were not impressed with planners or their profession. They wrote:

> Urban planning is an inexact science. While planners must make judgments, most acknowledge that these decisions are based on many assumptions and on sparse or absent data. Even assumptions that hold true on an aggregate, region-wide level may apply imperfectly to small areas such as individual neighborhoods. By bringing local knowledge and new data into the planning process, neighborhood residents can increase the quality of decision-making about our future.[79]

Activists in the SWCP led by the Multnomah neighbors thus forged a rhetorical blade that would cut both ways. On the forehand they dissected planners' arguments on the technical rational

grounds of planning itself. On the backhand they slashed at the philosophical foundations of planning.

The arguments contained within *The Multnomah Neighborhood Report and Plan* were not watertight. There was a great deal to quarrel with. They implied that their neighborhood was at a kind of tipping point where further increases in the proportion of either multi-family units or renter-occupied units would cause destabilization, disinvestment, and deterioration of quality of life. But they presented no evidence to support this contention, and lived in a city where many healthy neighborhoods contained far fewer single family homeowners. Sometimes they ignored undeniable counter-arguments – for example, the fact that rowhouses are demonstrably more energy efficient when it comes to heating. Other times they elided the contradictions in their own case. Other flaws in their argument might be seen as mere matters of perspective. They described Multnomah as "dense and getting denser." The neighborhood was more dense than Southwest as a whole, but at 3.5 dwelling units per gross acre, Multnomah was hardly dense even compared to many other suburbs in the United States. And, while they were mainly correct in naming R 2.5 a "redevelopment" zone, they never offered a plausible rebuttal to the argument that small houses on large lots would be vulnerable to redevelopment in a hot housing market without rezoning. The result would be, not rowhouses, but "teardowns" and construction of much larger and more expensive "McMansions." Still, there was enough in the MNA critique that could not be rebutted or ignored, and the overall counter-attack was coherent enough that it could not be defended against.

Once developed, the "Multnomah Network" was available and vigilant in the face of any threat to the residents' sense of the neighborhood interest. They intervened in a dispute between Tri-Met and village shop-keepers over the location of a bus stop (the merchants complained that transit patients littered in front of their stores). They fought the sale of a strip of excess public property to an apartment house owner, then opposed its rezoning as a means of keeping it undeveloped. They monitored a proposal from the social services organization Neighborhood House to build a new facility and demanded it be limited in height and bulk. They fought against the location of cellular telephone monopoles in the neighborhood. And they lobbied for key development parcels in the neighborhood to include new housing. The conventional wisdom in Portland was that developers should consult with neighborhood associations sooner than later as a means to avoid conflict. But if they thought they could manipulate the Multnomah Neighborhood Association, they were mistaken.

The organizational activity in Multnomah was particularly important, not only because it was the bulls-eye on the rezoning target, but also because it had a kind of geopolitical centrality. It was the largest neighborhood with the largest number of adjacent neighborhoods. Crestwood,

Ash Creek, Maplewood, Hayhurst, Wilson (later reconfigured and renamed as Hillsdale), South Burlingame, Markham, and West Portland Park all shared a boundary with Multnomah. They shared an interest with Hayhurst and Maplewood over the fate of Gabriel Park and the Vermont Avenue-NW 45th intersection. They held in common a concern with Crestwood and Ash Creek over the future of the "Barbur Triad" at Barbur Boulevard, Capitol Highway, and Taylor's Ferry Road. The proposed Town Center in West Portland Park landed partly in their neighborhood, too, and the one in Hillsdale, nearby. On a whole range of key issues, Multnomah Neighborhood Association would be for other neighborhood associations either a key ally, or a vexing opponent.

The Multnomah response to the crisis of the discussion draft map was driven by strong and savvy political instincts. They assumed they were preparing for a battle, not a negotiation. In one communication, they described their institutional opponents as "untrustworthy at best." They worked to develop their core constituency in the most basic way – person to person, door to door. They reached out to their neighbors to assemble the resources – skills, knowledge, contacts, money – necessary to fight the battle. They searched for allies and worked consistently to cultivate alliances, with other neighborhood associations, within the bureaucracy, and with elected officials. The members of the "Multnomah Network" put a high value on information and worked hard to gather and analyze it, whether it was planning data for their own territory, or political intelligence on the actions and intentions of Hales, Knowles, and others.

Most of all, however, they organized to speak. They searched for effective ways to make themselves heard, from poetry to yard signs. They carefully strategized their arguments and looked for the holes in the arguments on the other side. Surely, they shared a common set of interests to begin with. But the members of the newly-enlarged neighborhood association also worked hard to identify common values and find new terms to express them. Nothing in this regard, however, was as important as *The Multnomah Neighborhood Report and Plan.* It presented in a single document the whole rationale of the opponents of the SWCP. The process of neighborhood planning gave the Bureau's critics in Multnomah a perfect opportunity to develop the language and argumentation that would carry their values, goals, and vision throughout the entire struggle over the community plan. It was never officially published, but the words of *The Multnomah Neighborhood Report and Plan* echoed throughout the process. Multnomah activists and others read from it like a drama script and it brought down the house.

Multnomah Neighborhood Association
Executive Board: Martie Sucec & Rich Ray, Co-chairs; Kaye Synoground, Vice Chair; [vacant], Sec/Treas; and Mike Roche, Land-use Chair

↑↓

Multnomah Neighborhood Executive Committee
Executive Board plus chairs and co-chairs from the SWCP committees

↑↓

Multnomah Neighborhood Plan Steering Committee
Chair, Maria Gregory

↑↓

Plan Coordinator	Committee Coordinator	Phone Tree & Outreach
Mark Helfand	Molly Burns	**Coordinator**
(h) 452-1652	(h) 977-2289	Jan Breckon
(w) 494-4277	(w) 813-4802	(h) 245-7835

↑↓

Inventory Committee	Zoning Map Committee	Opposition Committee
Chris Linn	Maria Gregory	Laura Kringen and Dave Folts
(h) 245-8082	(h) 246-3984	(h) 245-7108
(w) 226-1575	(w) 326-5041	(w) 671-2085 (LK)

↑↓

Historic Designation Committee	Technical Advisory Group	W. Portland Town Center CAC Representative
Kimberly Stevens	Chris Uber	Candy Wells
(h) 293-1642	(h) 293-6150	

This is the committee structure established for the Southwest Community Plan efforts on behalf of the Multnomah Neighborhood Association. If helping on one of these committees interests you, please call the chair(s); the neighborhood can use all the help it can get! Thanks to everyone.

Figure 11.1 The strategy of Multnomah Neighborhood Association leadership was to give everyone a job. Later they playfully referred to themselves at the Multnomah Bureaucracy. Multnomah Neighborhood Association.

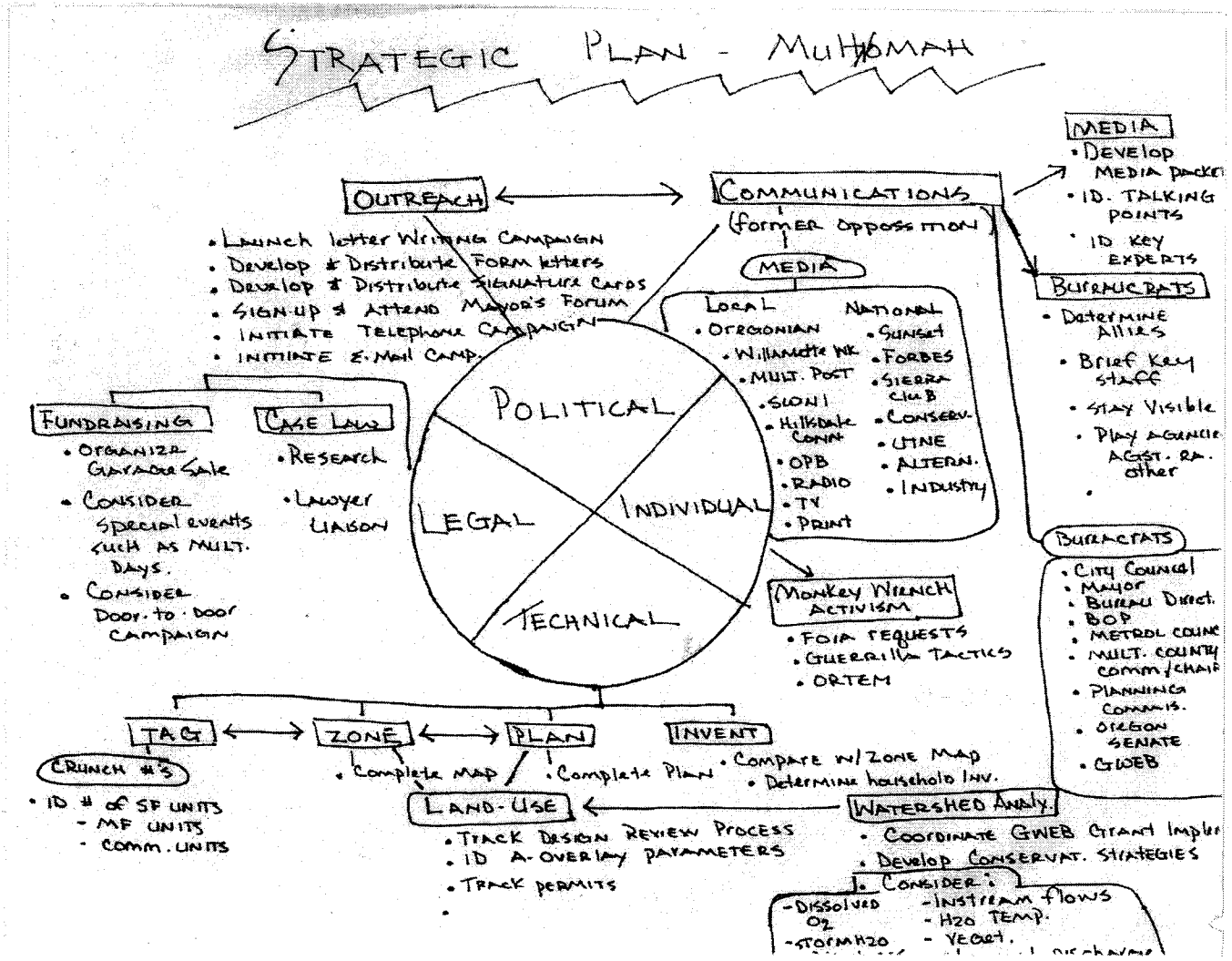

Figure 11.2 One of Multnomah's activists sketched out the organization's strategy on a single sheet of paper. Note the "monkey wrench" activism. Multnomah Neighborhood Association.

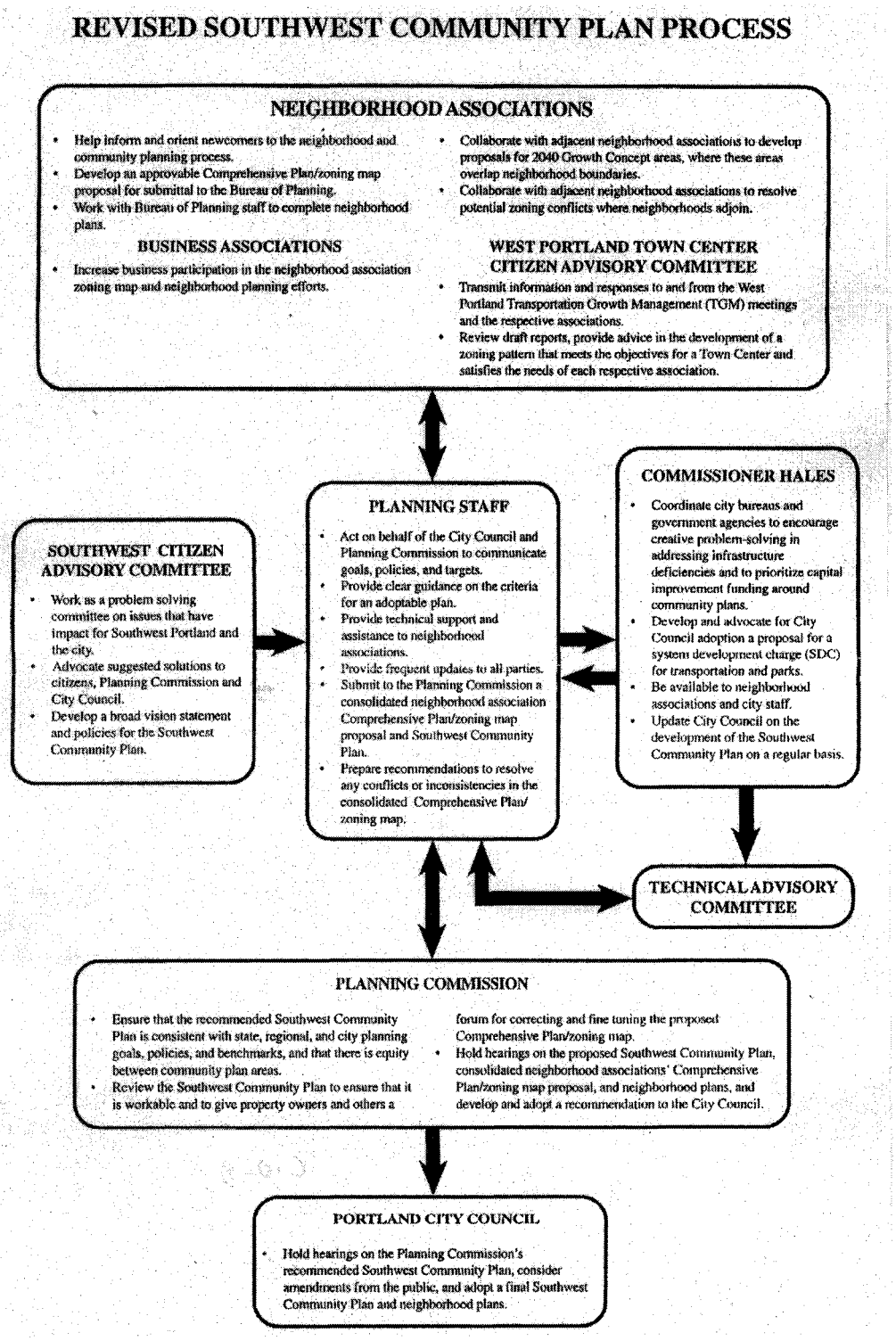

Figure 11.3 If residents were confused to begin with, this process revision chart by the Bureau of Planning could not have helped. Portland Bureau of Planning.

Figure 11.4 Many of Southwest's "inner neighborhoods" had a peaceful, bucolic feel. Photo by the author.

Figure 11.5 City officials couldn't dismiss activists as a noisy minority when hundreds of residents put anti-density signs on their lawns. Photo by the author.

Notes to Chapter 11

1. Bureau of Planning, City of Portland, *Zoning Toolkit: The Handbook for Evaluation and Updating Your Neighborhood's Comprehensive Plan and Zoning,* Draft, February 1997.

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Chapter 12. Who Represents Southwest Portland?

Throughout the long planning process, citizens, planners, and city officials engaged in a continuous struggle over who could legitimately represent the interests and aspirations of the residents of Southwest Portland. The site of this struggle shifted as the process went on. Citizens acquiesced in the pro forma participatory events of the early planning. They worked quietly through their neighborhood associations as means of direct participation. But when the process exploded into controversy, they not only mobilized for direct participation, they also organized to represent their community in ways the city tried to contest. Citizens attacked the legitimacy of a commissioner-appointed Citizen Advisory Committee; they demanded recognition for their own renegade coalition of neighborhood associations; they pushed for "dialogue groups" in which a few activists presented themselves as representatives of their entire coalition, if not all of Southwest; and only in the end did they revert to official channels of participation. Along the way, citizens in Southwest created new sites for representing their own views, giving new life to an old medium, newsprint, and making use of a brand new medium, the internet. The struggle was unceasing, not only in the contest over the legitimacy of people in their roles as individuals or as representatives of groups, but also in the evolution of the words and ideas they used.

The Citizens Advisory Committee

More than half a year into the Southwest Community Plan process, a Citizen Advisory Committee was appointed by Commissioner-in-charge Charlie Hales. Staff solicited applications and nominations, reviewed the candidates, and Hales made the final selections. Thumbnail biographies of the original members made a strong statement about the philosophy behind such a body. Its purpose was to represent Southwest in a kind of descriptive way, assembling a group of people who carried different kinds of relevant experience, had particular perspectives from profession, industry, or previous civic involvement, or were active in different parts of the Southwest community. So, there were members who could represent the "renter/apartment dweller" perspective or "the large institution perspective." Others could represent the "watershed perspective," the "community services" perspective, or the "bicyclist's perspective." The CAC included members from professions particularly relevant to the plan process – several architects, an urban designer, a housing developer, a land use planner, a real estate appraiser, and a landlord. Other members had particular kinds of expertise – in affordable housing, consensus-

building processes, organizational development, community participation, and the like. About half of the members were active in their respective neighborhood associations from around Southwest – from Crestwood, Corbett-Terwilliger-Lair Hill, Collins View, Hayhurst and elsewhere. But the CAC was intended to represent a much wider diversity of views than just the neighborhood association perspective.[1]

The Southwest coalition of neighborhoods (SWNI) formed a SWCP "task force" about the same time. Instead of community-wide representatives chosen on the basis of skills, knowledge, or diversity of perspective, the task force members were simply appointed, one per participating neighborhood association. One key difference was that the task force was a citizen-formed group and the CAC was a creature of the city. But given the early stage of the process, the lack of a clear charge from the Bureau, or any official relationship to the process, the task force soon lost steam. Several participants remember that it failed for lack of anyone to serve as chair. Others say it was poor attendance. But the SWNI SWCP Task Force soon ceased operations. "We would schedule monthly meetings and we'd be lucky to have four or five people show up," Tim Crail, an attorney, and member of both the task force and CAC, recalled. "People were meetinged out even then, although they didn't know it yet." There was fatigue, even in the beginning. But a more convincing reason why the SWNI task force evaporated may be simply that the CAC was getting all the attention from the city and none of the neighborhoods had seen a reason to band together yet.[2]

In the beginning, the members of the CAC simply struggled to understand what they were supposed to contribute to the planning process. "We spent at least the first months figuring out what we were doing," member Barbara Linn, an architect, said. Part of the problem was that their role was carefully circumscribed by the city. They were asked to discuss issues pertinent to the planning process, but they were not allowed to take votes, record them, or even to choose a chairperson. Their advice was forwarded on in the form of notes to staff and others. Otherwise, they had no work products. They did consult heavily on the review of the SWCP process document, and they did substantial work on editing the journal, the staff document intended to present to the public conceptual choices for a future development pattern for Southwest. And they helped plan the first round of public workshops and spent time listening to what their fellow citizens had to say and pushing for staff responses. For example, they asked staff to study Southwest infrastructure needs as a result of citizen comments at these meetings. Overall, however, it was clear that the city set the agenda for the CAC, not the members.[3]

Crucially, they were not offered a full opportunity to review the infamous draft map. Michael Harrison and the rest of the staff presented it to them at their early August meeting, but without any promise to incorporate changes CAC members might offer. Likewise, he resisted suggestions that staff incorporate changes requested by those neighborhood associations that had produced zoning maps. There might not be time to adjust the map and still get it to the printer in

time for distribution. Harrison, as much as anyone in the Bureau of Planning, was aware of how tight their project budgets were and how costly the participatory process could be.[4]

Long after the fact, members of the CAC would recall their horror at the draft map. They remembered how they told staff that the map was a betrayal of all the citizen input up until that point, that its publication would cause a huge public uproar, and it should not be released in its current form. But what could they do? They were not, as Tim Crail recalled, "set up to veto the map." The CAC would be – reviled is not too strong a word – for having been a part of a process that produced the heinous map. But the members say they felt as betrayed as anyone else. "We felt we had been tricked, lied to," John Alland, another CAC member, said. It was Harrison's fault "and the other planners were pretty much bushwhacked by it, too." They had all been to the workshops and listened to the comments of citizens and they knew the map did not respond to any of that. But they were blamed for it anyway.[5]

Minutes of the meeting indicate, however, that the initial reaction of the CAC to the draft map was both mixed and muted. Kay Durtschi noted one site where property on either side of an unimproved street had been upzoned. Was this a mistake? Lori Mastrantonio-Meuser asked if the planners envisioned any new amenities as a trade-off for increased density. Janet Martin said that new parks and open space would need to be offered if higher density was to be "sold" to residents. Gina Maloney suggested that the policy needed to be more explicit about investment in new infrastructure in areas to be upzoned from R7 and R5 to R2.5. Martin wondered aloud how they would explain why one area has taken so much new density while others have taken so little. And if all this density comes, they will need a good traffic calming element because it will surely bring increased automobile traffic. Mark Sieber said that the zoning pattern on the draft map for the Ashcreek and Crestwood neighborhoods was different from the one the neighborhood associations had proposed for themselves. Could staff consult with the neighborhood associations before they go to press? Yes, agreed Ted Savinar, staff should try to work with at least those neighborhoods that have created zoning proposals before they print the draft map.

Alland, on the other hand, seemed concerned that the map had, in some places, not been aggressive enough. If the intention was to "push the envelope" why was there no R2.5 or RH zoning in Maplewood and Hayhurst near Gabriel Park and the new Southwest Community Center? Why not allow greater height limits in Town Centers? Was staff considering multi-story development in the transit corridors? Would R2.5 allow four-story buildings? If Alland felt "betrayed" he did not give it away that night. The strongest warning, perhaps, came from Barbara Linn. She underscored the obvious fact that the map was a "complete departure" from the concept maps in the Journal, especially in an area between Multnomah and West Portland Park. The Journal didn't show this kind of development, she said, the neighborhood association planning committee hadn't discussed it, and the residents won't like it. Reactions from other

neighborhoods would seem mild compared to the one they would surely get from Multnomah. It was crucial, Linn said, to give the neighborhood a map and discuss it with them before going to press. But far from urging the map not be issued, Linn concluded by saying they would need to educate the neighborhood about the potential benefits of the higher-density zoning. It remained to be seen who would educate whom.[6]

Neighborhood activists, who had seen a citizen advisory committee recommend Gabriel Park as the site for the new Southwest Community Center now saw another such body fail to represent their views and interests and prevent the publication of the discussion draft map, and they resolved to disable the SWCP CAC. Plan opponents invariably described CAC members as "hand-picked"[7] by Commissioner Charlie Hales, and therefore beholden to his density and development agenda. CAC members were alternately offended and amused by such characterizations. Most were not political allies of Hales. Some did not know him personally. Many were critical of his handling of the Bureau and the project. "I'm not beholden to Charlie," Barbara Linn said. "I have my own opinions."[8]

The CAC met in the immediate aftermath of the release of the discussion draft map "to get a grip on recent developments." They were angry, like almost everyone else in Southwest, but for somewhat different reasons. They felt they had been had. "The CAC and the public have been manipulated, used, and deceived," John Alland said. "The city of Portland has created an adversarial position... What we thought was a partnership was a farce." Alland urged the group to boycott its own meetings until the CAC was given more authority. His colleagues agreed that more authority was exactly what they needed, and they demanded a meeting with Hales, all key Bureau staff, and neighborhood association representatives. They decided to set more focused agendas for their meetings, to take votes and record the results, and take a stronger role overall in setting the direction of the committee. But they were caught between a city administration that had never seen them as very relevant and the coalescing neighborhood opposition that saw them as illegitimate. Hales aide Jillian Detweiler told a reporter "the CAC is supposed to be an advisory to the Planning Bureau only. They have no legal role." Meanwhile, neighborhood activist Don Baack denounced the CAC to their faces as "a bunch of patsies."[9]

In the series of "process revision" meetings that followed, the battle over the role of the CAC was joined. At a meeting they hosted, the CAC was lambasted as "not representative of the neighborhood." Neighborhood association representatives complained there was a "gap between the neighborhoods and the CAC," with no coordination, no regular meetings between CAC and neighborhoods, meeting minutes not distributed nor written in plain language, and the committee "circumventing public meetings requirements." Most significantly, the CAC's opponents said "each neighborhood should have a seat on the CAC." Given that there were 17 or 18 neighborhood associations and already 19 members of the CAC, either they would have a

wholly unwieldy body of three dozen members or some of them would have to get off. It seemed this part of town wasn't big enough for both of them.[10]

Hales, nevertheless, proposed a major continuing role for the group. He agreed that they should designate a chair and "formalize" their advice to staff (i.e. take recorded votes). They should also advise on the neighborhood plan process, review and comment on neighborhood plans themselves with a concern for area-wide policies and goals, and take the lead on ironing out any conflicts between neighborhood associations on the way to preparing a consolidated neighborhood zoning map. Hales even suggested that they convene a "working group" to discuss the very sensitive topic of the methodologies behind the despised draft discussion map. Hales' new proposal envisioned that the CAC would collaborate with neighborhood associations at nearly every step. But the neighborhoods would never allow it.[11]

When they all met again a month later, neighborhood association activists insisted that the CAC not "have that level of authority" over the plan. They were "forming a renewed partnership between citizens and city government" and it was important not to let the CAC "intervene in that relationship." They didn't want CAC to mediate between neighborhoods when they had conflicts over zoning. "They don't have the expertise." And they didn't want CAC to mediate between neighborhoods and the Bureau. That would be "an extra layer in this process." They didn't want the CAC to be a "King's Council," either. If there were messages to be delivered to the "King" the neighborhood associations would do it themselves.[12] Rick Seifert wrote an editorial in The Southwest Connection likening the CAC to the appendix in the human body. It was a necessity at a time when citizens were difficult to engage, but a vestigial organ once citizen involvement became inflamed.[13]

The CAC met once again to consider their fate. Detweiler, delivering a different set of messages this time, offered an apology from Hales who was described as "anguished" over their loss of credibility. She said Hales would support whatever they decided to do. Perhaps they would want to "shed the shackles" of their association with the Commissioner and present themselves as an independent advocacy group in the mold of 1,000 Friends of Oregon. Whatever they wanted, as long as it meant they could regain credibility and ensure that staff time with CAC was well-used. But the members of the CAC didn't want distance from Hales so much as they wanted visible support. Barbara Linn complained that Hales had let the CAC be pummeled at the second "roundtable." If Hales wouldn't back them, there was no point in continuing.[14]

Others on the committee were just as angry. But they decided to stick with the process, anyway. Linn was elected chair and they resolved to take recorded votes. They re-cast their role as the "problem solving" committee, in the model of the City Club of Portland, taking on the thorniest issues, and producing advice in the form of "white papers." They also assigned themselves the tasks of defining a 20-year vision for Southwest Portland, and of refining the draft

policies as set out in the draft discussion map. Among the issues they decided to take on were housing affordability, community design guidelines, and tree preservation. Planning commissioner and Southwest activist Amanda Fritz wrote approvingly that she wanted to "hear from the diverse geographic, economic and social neighborhood interests represented in the CAC" and the "objective" views from "independent voices" they offered. But the predominant neighborhood view remained that Southwest needed a citizen body composed of representatives duly elected or appointed by each association. Without such a reform, the CAC would fight for legitimacy every step of the way.[15]

Before the draft map imbroglio, planning staff had enjoyed listening to the discussions of intelligent, well-informed, sympathetic citizens and attended the CAC meetings lavishly. Afterward, their interest waned, and by the end only Terry Moore, the citizen outreach coordinator, showed up to their lengthy sessions. But as the staff departed, neighborhood association members arrived, mainly, it seemed, to keep an eye on a body they considered untrustworthy. Sometimes four or five or six citizens would attend, many of them from the Multnomah Neighborhood Association. Their vigilance was vindicated, they felt, on more than one occasion.

At a mid-summer meeting later that year, John Alland proposed that the CAC recommend creation of a series of "plan districts" that in the short term would allow for resolution of inter-neighborhood conflicts and in the longer term help focus on geographic areas of concern. It would "be the next planning phase for Southwest" and an aid to continuing implementation. Even after the SWCP was adopted, some areas would need more work, Alland said. The plan districts would allow for focused study and concentrated citizen involvement. To critics from the neighborhood association, however, plan districts were just another target at which planners could aim high-density zoning. At one meeting, CAC member Sal Kahn turned to Jim Peterson, Multnomah NA freedom of information act specialist, and asked "what do you think of that as a neighborhood representative?" Peterson replied "I think it would make them go ballistic."[16] Martie Sucec, also at the meeting, followed up with a memo to David Knowles protesting Alland's attempt to do "plastic surgery on our neighborhoods" and demanding to know if Knowles had endorsed such an approach (as Kay Durtschi had reported during the discussion). Sucec forwarded a copy of the memo by e-mail to fellow neighborhood activists with the complaint that the plan district proposal was the CAC's "second major excursion into territory they said, and Charlie said, they'd keep out of."[17]

Despite such pressure, the CAC carried on. In September 1997 they approved a package of reports and recommendations outlining policies for promoting affordable housing retention and development; financing infrastructure development for transportation, stormwater, parks, and emergency services; application of design review to all R2.5 zones; and even a modified

proposal for plan districts. They prepared a lengthy report to the Planning Commission on their various findings, and practiced a presentation that they hoped to whittle down from an hour to 40 minutes. But when the Commission held hearings in mid-December 1997, the Citizen Advisory Committee was allotted a scant 20 minutes to talk. They met later that month, tired, dispirited, cynical and angry. Barbara Linn announced that Lois Kincaid had agreed to host a party – if anyone wanted to come. In the meantime, she had promised her family that she would step down as chair of the committee. They agreed that John Alland would lead the committee next, but that the CAC itself would not meet on a regular basis. They would continue on a nominal basis only, with the hope of exerting some influence later on in the process. "Participatory democracy," Alland announced. "It's like a 15-round fight. Whoever is standing at the end, wins."[18]

The Summit Group

After the discussion draft map was released, and even before the conflagration at Wilson High School, the coalescing of independent neighborhood associations into a more or less unified political force had already begun. Becky Miller, president of the Hayhurst Neighborhood Association, called a meeting of neighborhood association leaders and they met in the home of Patty Lee. An e-mail discussion about what specifically was wrong with the plan and the planning process laid the groundwork for a letter to Hales and Knowles, which Miller drafted, and which was discussed at a subsequent meeting. Soon Miller was driving around with a final version collecting the signatures of eleven association chairs.[19]

One might say that this nascent organization was extra-constitutional. All of the neighborhood associations involved were affiliated with the neighborhood coalition, Southwest Neighborhoods Inc., and some of them were strong supporters of the coalition as a vehicle for action on common issues. But the situation was so fluid and the notification and meeting procedures of SWNI were so relatively cumbersome that the neighborhood association chairs agreed to by-pass SWNI and act on their own. Their rump caucus of SWNI may not have had official legitimacy, but the people involved had talked to enough of their neighbors to know that they represented their views. Later on, they would take advantage of the ability to hold private strategy discussions, a practice to which some of their colleagues objected. But for the time being, they were just trying to keep up with events.[20]

The five-page single-spaced letter to Hales demonstrated how quickly the initial outpouring of rage and disgust had been transformed into a thorough and coherent critique of the plan and the process. They demanded that the "staff driven" and "top-down" process that had produced the draft map be scrapped in favor of a "bottom-up" and "citizen driven" approach, and that staff work with neighborhood associations to develop "specific, parcel-by-parcel zoning maps" that would respond to their needs. This would include an infrastructure plan, not only to

identify needed investments, but to identify the resources and mechanisms to finance them, to be adopted by ordinance like the other major parts of the plan, and to prohibit any upzoning until "a specific plan is in place." They wanted the Bureau to back off on housing capacity goals and to recognize R2.5, R2 and R1 zones as "redevelopment" zones not "infill." Likewise, they wanted design review applied to any parcels zoned in these categories, and they wanted a change in the "vacant lands provision" of the "a-overlay" zone – something which allowed any land in such an overlay zone to be developed as rowhouses if it had been vacant for at least five years. They insisted on a tree preservation ordinance (although they had yet to coin the phrase "canopy of trees") and they demanded that the SWCP deadline be extended.[21]

The response from Hales was a series of meetings to revise the process, starting with "brown bag" discussions, the early "roundtables" with CAC and NA leaders, and finally the big meeting in January. What these accomplished, in part, and surely unwittingly from Hales point of view, was to elevate the political status of neighborhood leaders and bring them closer together. They had already organized themselves to speak with a single voice. But their status as representatives of Southwest neighbors was reinforced through the simple matter of Hales' invitation to talk. It was a form of recognition, and it reinforced their initial impulse to band together. More than that, Hales invitations to the rebels was powerful evidence that he knew he would have to deal with these opponents in order to get a plan. On the flip side must have been a growing understanding that the CAC could do little to help him, especially as the neighborhood association representatives attacked them so vociferously.

The inevitable result of the process revision was to send everyone back to work on their own neighborhood plans and zoning maps, but the commonality of the issues they faced kept neighborhood association leaders in touch with one another. In March 1997 they met for the first of four "Neighborhood Summits." Julie O'Dell, who was active in the Hayhurst Neighborhood Association, organized the meetings with the help of other residents plus SWNI staffers Sylvia Bogert and Leonard Gard. The sessions were firmly-structured affairs with strong agendas, facilitation, and follow-up reporting. They came to agreement quickly on their first issue. They wanted to work together, but informally, to represent their common interests. "What affects one neighborhood affects us all," said the Multnomah representative. "If we don't stand together and speak loudly," the Crestwood representative said, "we won't get things." It was best to keep the organization informal, they agreed. And it wasn't necessary for the member neighborhood associations to agree on everything. They wouldn't expose their differences to those who might want to divide them. They would "focus on what unites us" and not "wash dirty linen at (the) Planning Commission."[22]

There were three more "Summits" that Spring during which neighborhood association leaders worked to identify issues of Southwest-wide concern. Given that they had already done so

in the letter they sent to Hales the previous November, it wasn't hard. But they continued to refine their thinking. They wanted to develop a clear expression of their opposition to the "a" overlay zone; a paper on a design review process for rowhouse zones; a proposal for a new mixed-use zone; policies on how town centers and transit streets would be designated; proposals for open space, infrastructure, and transportation; and a response to the Bureau of Planning "numbers" on residential density. As much as anything, however, the process of creating their zoning maps kept bringing the neighbors back to broader issues of policy. Bureau reviews of their works in progress at the "mid-point checkup" stung neighborhood association leaders. The "report card" for Arnold Creek was "grim." Crestwood was "incensed" at the Bureau's failure to acknowledge the concessions they had made. Bridlemile felt "confused and betrayed." If the housing capacity goals were no longer applicable and their goal was to plan for neighborhood livability, why was staff so critical of their proposals? It had been said previously "it's the zoning, stupid." But it wasn't.[23]

It was, they began to realize, just as much about the policies. Policy language had always been a part of the evolving documentation of the plan. Staff drafted policy statements as early as 1995. They were carried in the Journal and on the draft discussion map. It was the splotches of color on the zoning map that riveted the neighbors' attention, but it was the policies on the other side of the map that drove the zoning. Still, when the process was revised in January 1997, Hales gave the neighborhoods the zoning maps, and the CAC claimed the vision and policy-writing. Neighborhood associations scurried off to open their "Tool Kits" and the nascent Summit Group did not contest the matter. But the fact of the priority of policy over zoning – both logically and in Oregon law – kept jumping up to bite them.

In September 1997 the Bureau of Planning gave their formal response to the neighborhood proposals, a follow-up on the "report cards" of April. Neighborhood leaders read it as another rebuke and professed to be mystified by this continued opposition by staff. Jere Retzer called it a "grenade" lobbed by staff over their parapet, just to see how they would react.[24] The staff position was, in fact, reasonably transparent. Even if the "numbers" were no longer relevant, Deborah Stein said in her letter of transmittal, they still had to respond according to the body of "adopted state, regional and city policies," including "those that call for concentrating people around commercial hubs to make it easier to shop and work close to home, increasing housing choice and affordability, fostering vibrant and economically healthy town centers and main streets, and creating/ protecting greenspaces." It didn't matter whether the city's overall 20-year goal for housing was 50,000 units or 70,000 units, or whether current zoning did or didn't meet Southwest's fair share of that goal. The policies still applied and, Stein said, and "these policies reflect preferences expressed by Portland residents."[25]

Eventually, the neighbors "got it." The policies were primary, they understood, but they didn't agree with preferences attributed to nameless other Portlanders. Martie Sucec wrote to Barbara Linn in August 1997 to ask, quite pointedly, what the CAC was doing still working on the old Bureau-originated policies. As the Summit prepared to reconvene after a Summer recess they announced their demand for the SWCP policies to be totally redrafted. The policies from the back of the draft map "were rejected along with the map," O'Dell wrote, "and we don't want the SWCP Citizen Advisory Committee to evaluate our zoning map against those policies."[26] With a clear agenda and hearings before the Planning Commission coming up that Fall, the Summit Group got to work on new policies. They supported some "densification" but only when new infrastructure preceded new growth. They wanted flexibility for individual neighborhoods to determine their own density and neighborhood plans with "teeth." They were intent on preserving affordable housing and opposing the "a" overlay; insistent on design review for rowhouses; and adamant about a tree preservation ordinance. They were also absolutely certain about the need to present a united front. At a meeting in November, Don Baack told his colleagues that the city had never faced a situation like this before. In the past, the practice had been to pick off neighborhood opponents one by one. When they stood together it would be a different story. "Can you imagine," Baack chirped at one meeting, "what BOP's reaction to this document is going to be when we get it together?"[27]

A slew of subcommittees worked throughout the Fall and produced draft policies on the Metro "design types," housing, public safety, parks, and transportation, including separate language on pedestrian and bicycle modes. They produced an especially extensive draft on "Proposed Natural Environment and Stormwater Policies, Objectives, and Code Modifications," complete with a table of action items. They also drafted policies on specialized topics, such as bonuses for Floor Area Ratios (they should be discretionary, not an entitlement), limits on signage in Town Centers and Main Streets, economic development policy (previously unmentioned in neighborhood planning), the long-promised tree preservation and replacement ordinance, and new language on citizen involvement.[28]

In October and November the Planning Commission held informal sessions to hear from neighborhood associations on the rationales behind their zoning proposals. In late November they held a series of three public hearings on the plan as a whole. And then, at the intense urging of the Summit Group, they scheduled a special hearing on just the policies. Throughout this series of events the representatives of the Summit Group worked to organize their presentations, eliminate redundancies, and focus on their core messages. The added session on policy convened on the evening of December 16, 1997 in a hearing room in The Portland Building. Brigid Flanagan's card had been filed first and she was called to testify in order. But she paused on her way to the front of the room to confer with Julie O'Dell. After a brief whispered discussion all of

the scheduled Summit representatives – O'Dell and Flanagan, plus Anthony Boutard, Don Baack, Colleen Culbertson, Jere Retzer, Martie Sucec, Dixie Johnston, Wes Risher, and Mark Helfand – assembled at the testimony table together.

They had written their testimony together and they would give it together. But there was an added message that evening. The policy framework for the plan was so elaborate and the differences between Summit Group and the Bureau of Planning (not to mention the CAC) were so numerous that they needed more time to sort them out. O'Dell proposed that the timetable for completing the plan be extended four months to hold such discussions. Sucec agreed: "I think we really do need to continue these policy discussions a little further." Helfand delivered again his well-developed critique of the housing and urban development policies and closed, almost pleading, "we need to sit in a room and negotiate this."[29] The proposal was not a surprise. Rick Michaelson, Deborah Stein, and Ellen Wax had met with the Summit Group the previous week to discuss their testimony for the 16th and ended up talking about how to resolve all the various policy conflicts between staff and citizens. What they proposed was "a process to dialogue on the polices" in which they would carefully sort out those places where they each agreed in order to isolate those issues where they were irrevocably at odds. Those items would be forwarded to the Planning Commission, or City Council if necessary, for a final decision. Stein and Wax were against it, but Michaelson was decided. Some kind of "dialogue group" was necessary.[30]

The dialogue groups

The Planning Commission was supposed to have been nearly done with the Southwest Community Plan by December 1997. But they weren't. They weren't even close, and it was making them cranky. Michaelson estimated that final completion was "at least a year away." Other Planning Commission members had their own complaints. Steve Abel said the process so far had been "too neighborhood-based" with too little involvement by business and housing interests. Marcy McInelly said they had yet to deal with the crucial issue of infrastructure to accommodate new development. "How can we expect neighborhoods to feel comfortable with this?" But the biggest problem in their own view was that they had done the entire process backwards. They had started with a zoning map when they should have started by coming to some agreement on the broader vision for Southwest, and then moved on to agree on policies. More than three years into the process that still remained to be done. They were going to need more time.[31]

Michaelson went to Hales to ask for more time – and more money – and while Hales could not have been happy that the process would drag on, there was little he could do. "The expanded role of neighborhood associations in the planning process is something new," Hales announced, stretching the truth, and trying to cast the extension in the best possible light. "While it is taking a little longer than expected, I'd much rather have a good plan than a quick one."

Hales also signed off on the idea of "dialogue groups" to sort out the many conflicting impulses in policy formulation. Michaelson explained the process as a simple matter of finding out "where our policies are in agreement with neighborhood goals, where they're in conflict, and where we have to make some decisions." With a firm footing in vision and policy, maybe they could get to a plan they could agree on.[32]

Coming to agreement on how to run a series of dialogue groups would take some time in itself. When Don Baack and Rick Michaelson got together the first week of January 1998 to talk about the process, the idea of a formal dialogue to straighten out the policies had been perking for at least a month. Michaelson had talked about it with the Summit Group in December. The Planning Commission discussed the possibility later that week. Even some of the planners expressed some interest, although they were generally perceived to have been drawn into the dialogue groups against their better judgment.[33] Finally, near the end of January, Baack and Retzer met with Michaelson, Wax, and two other Bureau of Planning staffers to hammer out the details.

The concept was simple. Participants in the dialogue groups would review existing policy language and objectives, whether from the Bureau, the Summit, or the CAC, and attempt to sort the issues into three categories: areas where they agree; points on which they agree to disagree; and points not worth arguing over. The areas where their differences could be identified but not reconciled would be forwarded to Planning Commission, or even to City Council, to resolve. Participants would include members of the Planning Commission, staff from the Bureau of Planning, representatives of other interested Bureau's, and members of the community, from the Summit, the Citizen Advisory Committee, and others. The only "work product" from the dialogue groups would be their report to the Planning Commission. On the basis of those reports, as well as their own deliberations, the Planning Commission would adopt its own SWCP policies.[34]

There would be only three dialogue groups, however. There was not time or energy to tackle all the issues. But they could focus on the most contentious ones – transportation, stormwater and natural environment, and housing and land use. Bureau staff were entrusted with the task of assembling a working document, combining Bureau-generated policy language with Summit Group policy drafts, as well as texts from the CAC and the Tryon Creek Watershed Council. They organized the policies and objectives by themes – an approach that several Summit representatives complained was fragmented and drained their work of its inherent logic. The Bureau also arranged for members of their own staff not directly involved in the SWCP to serve as facilitators.

Bureau staff approached the meetings with extreme caution and a strong desire to somehow keep the discussions under control. At the beginning of each session they set out the ground rules, defining the purpose of the meetings, describing the roles of each of the different

participants, and enumerating what issues were "not on the table." Among the issues not open for discussion were zoning (proposed or existing), action charts, the neighborhood plans, any new amendments, specific problems in the topic area, the issue of growth in general, the SWCP process, and the purpose of the dialogue groups themselves. The facilitators urged participants to focus on the purpose, "respect other's viewpoints and their right to express them," make no interruptions, and keep to the agenda unless the group decided to amend it. Although citizen participants in the discussions generally adhered to these rules, they did chafe at times. Martie Sucec, sitting in as an observer at the housing and land use dialogue group heard this long preamble and whispered: "here we are, back in first grade." Liz Callison, a representative of the Tryon Creek Watershed Council in the stormwater and natural environment dialogue group, asked pointedly at their first meeting just who had decided what would be on or off the table? The Planning Commission, came the reply. But Callison wasn't happy. Before the third meeting, and after a snag in the distribution of meeting minutes, she resigned. "We don't like you setting the agenda," Callison told Ellen Ryker, the facilitator. "We will set our own agenda."[35]

Mainly the citizens did set the agenda, despite the ground rules. They also resisted the efforts of the Planning Commission, and especially the Bureau staff, to denigrate the status of their talks. From the perspective of the Planning Commission, the purpose of the sessions was simply to better understand the differences between competing policies so the commissioners could make the best choices. At the start of the first session on housing and land use, Rick Michaelson underscored the point by saying neither he nor his colleague, Marcy McInelly, were in any position to negotiate these issues to a conclusion. They would make a report to the other planning commissioners but they wouldn't be cutting a deal. McInelly then asked, almost rhetorically, how she would know whether or not she was hearing from all the neighborhoods that might be affected. She was looking for a way, she said, to "justify" this form of participation. There were, after all, only a handful of Southwest residents at the table purporting to speak on behalf of the community at large. Cathey Briggs, the facilitator, offered that "this was not intended to be a representative meeting in that every one of the neighborhoods is represented." But Summit leaders were quick to contradict. Michael Roche, sitting in as an observer, told the group that as the chairman of the land use committee of SWNI he had "full authority" to speak for his Southwest-wide organization. "The neighborhoods *are* representative here," he said. More than an hour later, as the meeting wrapped up, the issue flared again. Mike Saba, a Bureau of Planning expert on housing, suggested it was important to remember that the meeting was "not an official action leading to a product," partly because the participants could only be considered to represent their own views, not those of the general public in Southwest Portland. As people departed, Roche, whose un-Portlandish ferocity had become legend, berated Saba on the subject of who represented whom.[36]

But even if the purpose of the dialogue groups was advisory and informational for the Planning Commission, the Summit Group members approached the encounter like wary contract attorneys. It often seemed like they were looking for an unseen loophole that might be inserted in the text by an untrusted adversary. The stormwater and natural environment group weighed the relative merits of "encourage" versus "assist" and more than one of the groups spent time assaying the value of "enhance" versus that of "improve." They pushed continually to expand the scope and rigor of what the language covered. It seemed not to matter that these policy issues might not get ironed out until the Planning Commission, or even the City Council, could deal with them. The citizens were coming to understand that policy language had power and that it was important to say exactly what they meant. Two of the groups deputized "wordsmithing" subcommittees to work out areas where some kind of consensus might be available, and sometimes they found it, other times merely resigned themselves to pinpointing the difference, but always in language that said as specifically as possible what they wanted.

The dialogue group on transportation was clearly the least contentious, perhaps because the city and community positions weren't so directly opposed as in the other groups. Don Baack described the first meeting as "cordial" – despite the fact that he felt it necessary at the beginning to take notes independently from Terry Moore.[37] The participants seemed more comfortable with the ground rules than the members of the other groups, happily consigning difficult issues to the "flashpoint" list for further consideration by the Planning Commission, and sending matters where some form of consensus seemed with reach to be dealt with by a "wordsmithing" subcommittee. But they were not without a clear agenda.

Summit representatives emphasized the idea that Southwest Portland was different from the rest of the city and therefore needed different treatment. It didn't have a clear grid pattern like most of the rest of the city. The irregular grid that existed was fractured by the hilly topography. Some streets were interrupted by flights of stairs, dead-ends at cliffs or steep hills, or the Interstate highway. Many streets were paved only with gravel and lacked storm sewers, gutters, and sidewalks. The major thoroughfares tended to be narrow and congested. Transit service was limited and hard to use because the pedestrian environment was harsh and poorly connected. Overall, citizens felt the system was inadequate to meet the demands of existing development let alone future growth. Yet, as inadequate as the road system was, it also had meaning for residents. They saw these old country roads cum suburban arterials as giving their community its shape and image and felt the link they maintained with the area's agricultural past. The transportation system needed a thorough upgrade, but not at the cost of the "rural feel" that was important to so many residents.[38]

The issue of preserving the "historic" character of the Southwest Portland road system turned out not to be a real sticking point. Planner Jeanne Harrison's comments demonstrated she

understood the Summit intention to preserve the physical traces of roads that served an historic purpose of allowing farm goods to be brought to market. Michaelson agreed it would be a good thing if "even a hundred years from now" people could see that certain streets had been routes to the old ferry crossings. They didn't want to lose that layer of history. When the dialogue group was done, the policy language had been broadened to say that development standards should "honor neighborhood *character*" rather than *"history,"* but the reference to "history" survived below in the objectives.[39]

The policy questions involving the treatment of Southwest's many unimproved roads were not so easily dispatched. It would be possible for Southwest roads to be different, Harrison allowed. Paths instead of sidewalks, swales instead of gutters, narrower pavements, and streets without curbs might all be possible. In fact, she said, PDOT was working on "alternative" – not to say "sub" or "non" – standards for Southwest streets. But the city would not agree to assume maintenance responsibilities for gravel roads. Nor was this a simple technical matter. Standards for streets and the means for paying for improvements touched on issues of water quality, erosion control, access to transit, pedestrian safety and comfort, the potential financial burden of improvements on homeowners, and the central issue of the SWCP itself, accommodating growth. They discussed the issue at length, and then placed it in the pile with the other "unresolved issues."

The Summit demand that improvements in the transportation system should come before new development, or at least simultaneously with it, was more difficult for staff and Planning Commission members to swallow. The idea of concurrency is an established and respected element of planning ideology. But in this case citizens were using the term a bit differently, and the word felt like a weapon. There was also plenty of evidence that automobile congestion was becoming a problem in Southwest. The city's objection to the concurrency proposal was that it might require making new higher-density zoning contingent on new investments in infrastructure. That is, the current zoning would stay in place as long as there was no money for new roads, sewers, and storm drains. Such a provision was likely to frustrate their desire to accommodate higher density development. Should we be zoning for our goals, Michaelson asked rhetorically, or should we zone for what the existing infrastructure can support? The dialogue groups spent little time on the issue before Michaelson set it aside as "unresolved."[40]

Not all of the conflicts were between the Summit Group and the city. An important difference divided the Summit from some of its own constituents. The leadership recognized the need to promote "connectivity" in the transportation system. But they also admitted that some residents weren't in favor. Residents who lived on unimproved streets with no outlet didn't want "connectivity" if it meant an increase in through traffic by their house. Other residents who

already lived on through streets, on the other hand, had an interest in seeing other streets connected. It would even out the burden of neighborhood traffic. The citizen policy-makers, meanwhile, understood that connectivity – for pedestrian and bike ways as well as streets – was crucial to meeting goals of improved transit service and pedestrian movement, as well as easing automobile congestion. They sided with the planners and forwarded a consensus recommendation to "create new street connections and off-street walkways and bikeways."[41]

They also resisted pressure from some of their allies to include language that would be considered strongly pro-automobile and cut directly against the long-prevailing thrust of city policy. Don Bain and the Maplewood Neighborhood Association had proposed a series of policies to segregate bike lanes from auto travel lanes, keep stopped buses out of the way of cars, and generally "facilitate vehicular traffic flow on major streets and keep auto traffic off local streets as the highest priority." Jeanne Harrison, of course, pointed out that to "upgrade corridors, arterials, and collectors to accommodate demand for vehicular use" was exactly opposite of what the city had long been trying to accomplish. At first, the issue was placed on the list of "flashpoints," but when the dialogue group made its report the proposal was not supported but "included... as a courtesy to the Maplewood Neighborhood Association."[42]

The pedestrian agenda was treated more kindly in large part because Don Baack, leader of the Southwest Trails group, was a member of the Summit Group delegation. Planners for the city were eager to have pedestrian trails recognized – as both recreational facilities and contributions to "connectivity." But Baack also pushed for reforms in the city's Capital Improvement Process to allow citizens more effective participation in the allocation of public capital money, and for an allowance to be made for citizens to work as volunteers on trails development projects – as the Southwest Trails group had done – but with support from the city capital budget. The first part, planners said, was a city-wide issue and shouldn't be dealt with in the SWCP. The second part, Harrison told them, was "a totally new way of allocating funds," and "at this point PDOT couldn't agree to the idea." The end result was ambiguous. The group agreed on a new objective to "increase the ownership of citizens by empowering them in decision making and volunteer actions," but flagged as an unresolved conflict the idea of "having the city pay for materials and supplies for use by volunteers on transportation-related improvements within the public right-of-way."[43]

The stormwater and natural environment dialogue group was distinctly more contentious than the group on transportation, and it should have been. There was great inherent friction between the thrust of the plan and the limits placed on it by any demands to protect Southwest's vulnerable watershed. If they wanted to deal more aggressively with stormwater they would likely have to approach the development and density agenda significantly less aggressively, which the Bureau staff did not want to do. But all the rooftops and pavement that came with more building

only made the problem worse, keeping water from being absorbed in the soil, and speeding runoff down Southwest's hilly slopes. Protection of the environment and limiting development – as policy matters and political strategy – went hand in hand for the Summit Group.

Still, the dialogue group held together well, despite a few flare-ups. One member, Liz Callison, abandoned the group in protest after the facilitators failed (by all accounts, inadvertently) to get the minutes of a previous meeting e-mailed to participants outside of the Portland Building. Mostly, however, the group proceeded on a fairly even keel. This was, in part, because the citizen contingent included more than just the Summit Group, represented by Jere Retzer. Mark Sieber, a member of the SWCP CAC, was there and generally supportive of Retzer. Members of the Tryon Creek Watershed Council and other environmental groups took part, too. It was much harder for staff to challenge the legitimacy of this broader group. The process also seemed to benefit from the steady and bureaucratic demeanor of Retzer who, as much as anyone, set the tone and the agenda for the group. Citizens in the room also had an ally from inside City Hall. The Bureau of Environmental Services, an agency once preoccupied with putting stormwater in pipes had been awakening to the responsibilities of environmental stewardship. Finally, members of the Bureau of Planning SWCP team couldn't help but be sympathetic, or at least conflicted. They believed in the theories behind the density agenda, but they considered themselves environmentalists, too.

The citizen approach was the same as in the transportation group: to push consistently for policy language that would be more precise, more encompassing, and more rigorous. At the first meeting, the first policy on the table – written by the Bureau – drew a bracing critique. "Manage stormwater in a manner that avoids, minimizes or mitigates adverse impacts on Southwest Portland's streams and natural environment," it read. Sallie Edmonds, a member of the Bureau of Planning "coordinating team," observed that the sentence focused on stormwater, not really on the environment. Retzer complained that the policy didn't provide a measure of performance. What level of impact was acceptable? Nor did the policy address the relationships between adverse impacts and development. Dawn Uchiyama, representing the Tryon Creek Watershed Council, said the policy didn't specify whether they should repair damage already done or simply prevent future damage. Liz Callison said that the phrase "in a manner that" suggested a single approach to stormwater issues when multiple approaches would be needed. What might have seemed straightforward enough was actually like Swiss cheese: flaccid and full of holes.[44]

They did not merely criticize, however. They brought their own new language to the table, terms with far more reach than what the planning staff had offered to begin with. They saw it necessary to "integrate" efforts to manage stormwater and protect the environment with the development process. Rather than "avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse impacts" from

stormwater, as the Bureau of Planning put it, they wanted to "improve" water quality and "protect and enhance" environmental values. Nor were they just interested in managing the conveyance of stormwater to protect property and ensure public safety. They were interested in "wildlife and aquatic habitat" as well as "scenic, educational, and recreational" values.

The Bureau was talking mainly about what needed to be done to accommodate the level of development that city and Metro policies seemed to require. Citizens were talking about the environment itself and their language showed they understood the issue. They set as objectives, not only the reduction of "volume, velocity and pollutant load" of stormwater, as the Bureau had done, but also the enhancement of "dry season flows, with particular attention to headwaters areas." They specified "headwaters, upland forests and wildlife corridors" as areas requiring special attention. And they called for "improved planning" and "codes and enforcement" in addition to "community stewardship and interbureau cooperation" as the Bureau team had suggested. Each step of the way, something was added, a new concern identified, a new action called for. Near the end of the first session, after a long discussion of Bureau of Planning, Bureau of Environmental Services, and Summit Group policies, Ellen Wax was moved to admit that maybe the other two policies were better than theirs.[45]

The Summit, with help from the Bureau of Environmental Services, injected a thoroughgoing language of improvement into the body of policies and objectives. They talked about "enhancement," of course, the sickly sibling in this family of terms, but agreed later on to use the healthier "improve." But they also prescribed the "revitalization" and "restoration" of streams and the need to "reverse impacts" of past development. Mark Sieber reiterated the intent with a clarification: we need to fix any problems that already exist before we can even think about new development. This was, if anything, a step beyond the Summit demand issued in the other groups that new infrastructure to handle density, traffic, or stormwater be put in place concurrently with new development. Michaelson double-checked to understand exactly what the group was saying. Did they want to "maintain" the quality of water and the integrity of streams? Did they want to "improve" it? Or did they merely want to "allow acceptable degradation." A "net improvement" was necessary said Retzer, and there was little disagreement.[46]

It is worthy of note that part of the leverage for demanding improvement was offered by the federal Clean Water Act. Some of Southwest Portland's streams were on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's list of "water quality-limited" streams. In order to get Fanno Creek and Tryon Creek off the 303(d) list there would have to be, as Retzer said, a "net improvement." And it wasn't just Jere Retzer or the Summit Group saying it. It was the United States government saying it. The same would hold true later on when fish native to those same streams were placed on the list of endangered species.[47]

But if improvement was the goal, and not just "acceptable degradation," what would be the impact on other goals in the Southwest Community Plan? What were the trade-offs? Rick Michaelson, as well as the Bureau staff, held that new development at higher densities could somehow be balanced with the demand to protect streams and water quality. In fact, the Bureau's draft language talked about the "benefits" of development in relation to watershed health. Michaelson frequently made the argument that new higher-density development was needed in order to help pay for the kind of stormwater management infrastructure or "technology" that would make that development possible. The city could establish whatever combination of goals it wanted, he said, for development as well as watershed protection. But the higher they set the goals, the more it would cost to achieve them. But the citizen contingent argued, with some support from the Bureau of Environmental Services, that there was some definable limit to development given their environmental goals. There was some kind of finite "carrying capacity" in Southwest that no amount of infrastructure and no development pattern could expand.

The watershed problems were exacerbated not so much by density as by impervious surfaces, Michaelson and his colleague, Amanda Fritz, suggested. Fritz, herself a neighborhood and watershed activist as well as Planning Commissioner, argued that clustering new homes and other development could minimize the creation of new impervious surfaces and, therefore, limit new runoff. But Amin Wahab, from the Bureau of Environmental Services, was forced to point out that any new development, however it was designed, was bound to create new impervious surfaces, and thus increase the volume and velocity of runoff. Retzer, in turn, argued that there was a "hard connection" between density and impervious surfaces that clustering techniques could not mitigate. The concept that clustering might reduce the amount of new impervious surfaces was reasonable, Retzer allowed. But the historical experience, he said, was that higher density zoning generally led to greater areas of new impervious surface anyway. Even with clustering, it was likely that homes built at 15 units per acre would cover more surface area that homes built at 4 units per acre.

The bottom line on the Summit's policy prescription "integrate protection of the environment, stormwater management and development..." was that the density of any new development had to be limited. Yes, they should create "regional stormwater facilities" where feasible. Of course they should adopt new drainage technologies. Downspout disconnection was a popular item. The merits of absorbent swales over expeditious gutters was a topic of conversation. They should use clustering for new development. But they also had to avoid building in environmentally sensitive headwaters and stream corridors – which would require some re-mapping of those areas, a task the Bureau of Planning did not want to undertake. And finally, they just had to build less. As Wahab from the Bureau of Environmental Services suggested, if you want to protect riparian corridors you have to regulate building in those corridors. If you want to

protect water quality in general, you have to limit building generally. Michaelson summed up the quandary most succinctly. The city had endorsed two conflicting policies: all streams should be "high quality" and Southwest will have increased development. They wanted to restore fish runs to local streams and protect endangered species. But they also wanted to capture more of the region's development in Southwest. It would not be easy to find the balancing point.

Although Planning Commission members and Bureau staff insisted that the dialogue groups were not negotiations, there was a certain dynamic in the discussions that belied these stipulations. Bureau staff, including the facilitators, tended to push for some kind of point by point agreement – if it was at all possible. Items forwarded to the whole Planning Commission as agreements would remain open to the interpretation of the commissioners and, therefore, be less binding on them. Members of the citizen contingent were also willing to let consensus language go forward, but not until it was as strong and as clear as they could manage. If not, they preferred to identify those issues as "flashpoints" and forward them to the Planning Commission as disagreements. The disagreements would be far more difficult to misinterpret than the matters of consensus.

But there was an extraordinary amount of agreement on language for policies and objectives in the stormwater and environment group. The group had used a "wordsmithing" subcommittee earlier in their work. But as they wrapped things up they turned to individual editors to attempt to incorporate all the strands of potential agreement into a seeming consensus document. Retzer took much of the initiative on this score, and on the eve of their last meeting, revised the entire package, being careful to note exactly where his language was in accord with the summary produced by Ellen Ryker, the group facilitator. "I agree with Ellen," was Retzer's prefix for comment after comment.[48] The package they forwarded to Planning Commission was not finally adopted by the group itself, but with consensus language neatly sorted from continuing issues for disagreement, it served the same purpose.[49] The language was far different from the one the Bureau drafted. In fact the policy on "Natural Environment, Parks and Open Spaces" published with the draft discussion map didn't even mention the word "stormwater," although it did refer to creeks and watersheds. The new language added a raft of new concepts and a firmness and specificity that was missing in the Bureau's previous iterations. Most importantly, a lot of this new language would be adopted by the Planning Commission in a policy renamed, simply, "Watershed."[50]

If the stormwater group was difficult, the group on housing and land use was nearly impossible. Housing and land use was at the core of the conflict over the Southwest Community Plan – how many more units of housing, how dense, where, and to what effect? Housing and land use was at the crux of all the confusion and mistrust between neighborhood activists and planners over housing targets, zoning capacity, and mixed use areas. Perhaps most importantly, housing

and land use was the area in which the neighborhoods and the city disagreed most fundamentally with each other. In the stormwater group, citizens and planners alike placed a high value on the environment. Their work was about writing their agreement in stronger and more precise ways – albeit with some goading by the Summit Group representatives. But in the housing and land use group, citizens and planners had to overcome clearly opposed values and beliefs. The neighborhood activists saw the program of compact urban centers and increased residential density as a direct threat to their suburban way of life. There were some who accepted the philosophy behind the design types and others who saw it as dubious planning orthodoxy. But most of the neighborhood activists agreed that the planners were trying to apply the Town Center and Main Street concepts in a way that was counter to Metro policy and would destroy Southwest neighborhoods. The planners, on the other hand, believed deeply in this program. They saw it as a key element in a process of making good cities and protecting the environment. As a result, the housing and land use dialogue group talked the most, consumed the most time, used the most paper, and produced the least agreement.

The disagreements between the two sides – with Michaelson and his Planning Commission colleagues trying to understand the chasm – ranged from broad philosophical matters to narrow issues of technical language. The participants stumbled on the very first item in the very first meeting. The opening policy statement offered by the Bureau said the plan should "provide a variety of housing choices at a range of prices and rents..." Don Bain, speaking for the Summit Group, pounced immediately. Just what did this word mean? "Provide." What are we really trying to say, Bain asked? Will the city provide subsidies? Will it *provide* infrastructure? Or will it merely provide *opportunities* through zoning and regulation? "I liked the sentiment," Helfand said in agreement, but "I couldn't figure out what the language was trying to say." John Liljegren, also part of the Summit contingent, suggested that "provide" might even mean the city would build housing itself.[51]

Theirs was not, however, a nit-picking strategy. They had an agenda shaped by their fundamental disagreements with the city and they stuck to it. Bureau staff had said over and over again that the draft map was "off the table." They had, likewise, reiterated Stein's message of March 1997 that the existing Comp Plan held enough capacity to meet Southwest's share of the city's overall housing goals. It was no longer "about the numbers" they insisted. But the Summit Group continued to argue just those numbers. Yes, Michaelson confirmed, the housing capacity goals were, indeed, met by the existing zoning. Now it was mainly a matter of getting density in the right places. Bureau staff talked no more about numbers and talked about "placemaking" instead. The Summit, however, wouldn't let the numbers go for the simple reason that if the goal of creating capacity for 6,500 to 7,500 units had already been met, they wanted to keep the number from going any higher. What had been a minimum should also be the maximum. The

floor should be the ceiling. Southwest had done its part, and they would do no more than that. At the end of the first session, during "non-participant" comments, Mike Roche asked "why are we going through all of this" if we have already met the target? [52]

At the meeting three days later Bain began by asking "how much is enough? How do we know when we're there?" The Summit Group would push for some kind of provision that progress toward achieving the goals of the plan be monitored and the plan be adjusted depending on how slow or fast that progress was. Certainly, Bain said, they should have some way to measure whether or not the housing capacity goals (among many others) were being met. He pointed out that the goal in the Outer Southeast Plan had been to increase housing capacity by ten percent but the actual increase had been more like 29 percent. Under those circumstances, Liljegren added, was it still necessary for Southwest to meet the established goal, "or are we going to cram in the 6,500 no matter what?"[53]

The Summit's intuition about the continuing relevance of the numbers was right on the mark. Ellen Wax said she didn't want to talk about the numbers. It wouldn't bring success to belabor the numbers. Besides, she didn't agree with "the assumption that 6,500 units is a lot of units," in which case it was inappropriate to keep talking about "cramming in" housing units. It was true that the staff had stopped thinking about the numbers. But the absence of a numerical target didn't mean they were free from the responsibility to implement city, Metro, and state policies. They were still required to zone to create the dense, pedestrian friendly, compact, mixed-use urban centers that would, in their theory, promote transit use, conserve land, and help reduce vehicle miles traveled. What the Summit Group came to realize was that achieving those goals might require capacity for more than 6,500 or 7,500 units of housing. As the planners pursued their statutory mandates, the residents clung to the idea that they had already taken all the density they were obliged to take.[54]

At several points, Helfand asked that the Bureau explain the motives behind their positions. At another, he and Liljegren practically dared them to put what they considered the real Bureau objectives – density through redevelopment – into policy language. If they need to get 6,500 to 7,500 units, Liljegren said, "we're going to have to tear something down and put up something else in its place." Given the amount of undeveloped land available, that was just inevitable. There will be proportionately fewer single family houses, in that case, and more rowhouses and apartments. "We ought to be clear that's what's going to happen." Planner Barbara Sack responded, "not necessarily." You could get additional units through smaller-lot single family zoning. "That's a dodge," Helfand objected. To suggest that the housing target would be met in R5 and R3 zones, "is a distraction." He didn't like it "when we have policies that sound good," but "what they really mean is something else." If the intent of the plan is to replace single family units with multi-family units "we should say it." [55]

There were many such testy moments. Helfand, at one point, attempted to explain their position that new density was unfairly distributed despite having "fair rules, fairly applied." It made sense, at one level, to put new density in areas that were relatively flat, in transit corridors, or in existing mixed-use and commercial areas. But that didn't mean the impact would be fair. Indeed, he said, the impact of increased density was falling on the most vulnerable in Southwest: people with lower incomes and less mobility, often older residents. Ellen Wax interrupted with what she called a "process whine." People were supposed to be explaining the rationales behind their policy preferences, not making assertions that she didn't get a chance to refute. Helfand was clearly irritated. "These are our fundamental disagreements," he said. And it wasn't just him and Bain and Liljegren. It was also 500 people at Wilson High School. "This is how they felt." They had been trying for a long time to understand the motivation behind the Bureau's policies and they still couldn't get an answer.

"I don't think the Bureau of Planning considers putting more density into a neighborhood a bad thing," planner Barbara Sack offered. You get a lot of good things with higher densities – better retail services, better transit, a real sense of urban vitality. "That kind of patronizing remark," Helfand shot back, "is what really gets us going." You don't have to tell me about density, he said. He lived in the second most dense neighborhood in Southwest. And besides, it is not about whether there will be greater density. It is about where and how. Michaelson stepped in to calm things down. They had all gotten so stuck in their positions, he said, that they lost sight of the fact that the differences between them were matters of degree. Planning Commissioner Marcy McInelly exclaimed in exasperation, "this is supposed to be helping me."[56]

The Summit Group pounded on the issue of the definition of the Metro 2040 mixed use areas or "design types." The Main Streets, in particular, ought to be "linear" areas, holding a block on either side of a major thoroughfare or commercial district, avoiding the "inner neighborhoods." They shouldn't be used to promote redevelopment of single family houses, as the Summit Group charged they were. There should be monitoring of their development against clear benchmarks for housing and employment density. And neighborhoods ought to play a strong role in the definition of their boundaries. Most of all, they should be defined as Metro defined them. Michaelson pointed out that even Metro didn't know exactly what they meant by Town Centers and Main Streets. It would help more, he said, if the Summit described what they thought these areas ought to "look like." Maybe it was not so much that Metro was unclear, Helfand replied, as they were backing off a potential conflict between city and regional governments. In any case, he said, a Main Street should have buildings no taller than 30 feet.

The Summit representatives tried consistently to turn Bureau arguments inside out. Bureau staff attempted to present R2.5 zoning as a tactic for providing new affordable homeownership opportunities and promoting socio-economic diversity within the neighborhood.

The Summit delegation insisted that rowhouse development was having exactly the opposite effect throughout Southwest. The new homes were large and luxurious and no more accessible to middle-income buyers than detached single family homes. This argument required them to compare existing single family homes to new attached homes rather than new singles to new rowhouses. But that was okay. That was exactly the tradeoff new rowhouse zoning presented. And redeveloping "scrapers" to be replaced with upper-end rowhouses wasn't going to do anything for diversity, either. Helfand, in particular, had a knack for finding a simple phrase to sum up their critique. "It's not an attempt to keep it from being mixed," he said. "It's an attempt to keep it mixed."

On the subject of diversity itself, however, they took the opposite tack. Portland ought to have diverse neighborhoods. Southwest ought to have diverse neighborhoods as well. But it was not necessarily a good thing for there to be diversity within each neighborhood. More homogeneous neighborhoods, even where all the lots and homes were large and the homes overwhelmingly owner-occupied, could be a good thing. If they didn't exist, people might head for the suburbs instead. Just because he liked the diversity of Multnomah, Helfand said, didn't mean every other neighborhood had to be the same. If the tension between their populist-seeming argument in favor of single-family zoning and their defense of socio-economic homogeneity within neighborhoods bothered them, they didn't let it show. Rowhouses were a "gentrification strategy" and the "scrapers" were home to the old and the vulnerable.[57]

Their most important argument – and perhaps the most dubious empirically – was about "redevelopment" and "destabilizing neighborhoods." It was important, they held, that minimum ratios of owner-occupied to renter-occupied housing be maintained. In Multnomah, for example, the ratio hovered at about 50-50. The same went for the ratio between multi-family and single-family. If those ratios moved toward more renters and more multi-family units, the "livability" of the neighborhood would be in jeopardy. Planners from the Bureau didn't believe this to be the case, of course. They didn't even consider rowhouses a multi-family zone (each had a driveway, a separate entrance, and, under Portland regulations, a separate ownership). And there was little evidence from within Portland to suggest that even a mixed-income neighborhood with only 20 percent homeownership couldn't be stable and healthy. Nevertheless, that was the Summit argument.

There was an additional piece to the argument about zoning and destabilization, and Helfand spun the explanation better than anyone else. Many of the homeowners in Southwest were of long tenure, he said. They bought their houses long ago when prices were relatively cheap. Now, typically, they were retired and living on fixed incomes. As long as the zoning stayed the same, they could live there as long as they wanted to. If the zoning changed they would face increasing pressures – through rising prices and property taxes – to sell their homes for

redevelopment. They might decide to stay, but their neighbors might sell. An apartment house would go up next door; the trees would get taken down; the new building would cast shadows on their property. One day they would wake up and realize, "this isn't a beautiful place anymore." Helfand finished and Wax sighed loudly in exasperation.[58]

The fundamental Summit Group charge was that the R2.5 zoning applied to "inner neighborhoods" was effectively a redevelopment zone and they repeated it in the dialogue groups. They said the zoning categories for apartments – RH, R1 and R2 – would likewise prompt developers to acquire existing houses, demolish them, and replace them with much higher density residential stock. During the debate, Summit representatives suggested that even R3 zoning – a small-lot detached single family zone not yet part of the city code – would also promote redevelopment. Michaelson and members of the staff countered that freezing the current zoning wouldn't necessarily prevent redevelopment. Developers could still replace "scrapers" with much larger and more expensive homes, and given the market, probably would. The Summit Group shrugged off the rebuttal. Whatever threat of redevelopment existed, upzoning greatly increased it. In the end, the Bureau of Planning staff acknowledged that R2.5 zoning might, in the case of a particularly hot housing market, cause some redevelopment. But they refused to agree that redevelopment could be equated with destabilization.[59]

There would be no convergence in the housing and land use dialogue group as there had been in the other two. The final summary of their deliberations was a litany of broad agreements briefly summarized sandwiched around impacted disagreements painfully elaborated. They agreed that growth should be focused in Town Centers and Main Streets but not about how big those areas should be, who should draw the boundaries, or how implementation of the strategy should be monitored. They agreed that socio-economic diversity was a good thing, but they disagreed about how it should be distributed, and about whether it was necessary to create particular housing types for specific household types. They agreed the plan should promote affordable housing, but not about how much, how or where. They agreed that the plan should employ "planning principles" rather than "numbers" to guide zoning decisions but "there is disagreement over what constitutes sound planning principles."[60]

On many issues, they simply disagreed. The Bureau wanted to zone for a 20-year plan. The Summit wanted zoning adjusted before 20 years had passed as the plan missed, met, or exceeded certain "benchmarks." The Summit wanted to draw a link between the proportion of single family detached housing and neighborhood livability and stability. The Bureau rejected such an idea. The Summit wanted to focus redevelopment on "opportunity sites" like the former Copeland Lumber Yard property in Multnomah. Staff said zoning such property residential, or requiring housing, might be considered a downzoning, causing problems for the owner. And all of this was before they even got to the policy and objectives.[61]

Participants grew weary and time ran short. They never got to a specific discussion of policy language. They disagreed on many of the objectives they did discuss, and they left many other draft objectives without consideration. The final summary, unlike in the other groups, included a long list of terms for which one side or the other had requested a definition. What did the city mean by "affordability," "diversity," "equity," "infill?" What did the Summit mean by "undue burden," "adversely impact," or "sprawling redevelopment?" There was little resolution. But it would be a mistake to conclude that there had been no communication. As unsuccessful as the group on housing and land use had been in helping the participants frame consensus language, it had nevertheless allowed the Summit Group to define and elaborate its position in a public forum and develop its arguments. Little of their language would show up immediately in the evolving policy document, but like in the other groups, they had made their points, and they would persist.[62]

Community press

The years of the Southwest Community Plan were marked by a flowering of community journalism in Southwest Portland. The big metro daily paper – *The Oregonian* – like the rest of Portland had an above-average interest in planning stories, but they wrote about the plan mainly at moments of crisis or at major milestones. But three community papers – one of them underwritten by the Office of Neighborhood Involvement, the other two independent businesses – provided detailed, blow-by-blow, coverage of the events of the plan process. Their reporting was typically professional, enterprising, analytical, and thoughtful. At the very least, each of them provided information and opinion about the planning process nearly every month for seven and a half years.

The oldest of the three was the *Southwest Neighborhood News*, the official organ of the city-funded coalition of neighborhood associations, Southwest Neighborhoods Inc. They had published regularly since the creation of the coalition in 1980, printing monthly reports from neighborhood associations on their activities and disseminating information from the city on a wide range of topics. Thus it provided a means for neighborhood associations to communicate with their neighbors (please "get involved" they persistently pleaded). But, perhaps more importantly, the paper gave the city the ability to communicate directly with citizens. "SWNI connects citizens and the city bureaus," Sylvia Bogert wrote in 1998, reintroducing the paper to the community:

> In this issue we feature information from the Bureau of Planning on the Southwest Community Plan, Bureau of Environmental Services' Willamette River Redesign Project, Portland City Council's Blueprint 2000 project, Portland's Sustainable Lifestyle Campaign or the Eco Team Program, the city's celebration

> plans to rededicate City Hall and the Neighborhoods USA Conference coming to Portland in May. In this issue you will find a complete breakdown of crime statistics for 1997 and a listing of free crime prevention services offered to Southwest residents. For local community events, volunteer opportunities, and school announcements, don't miss our community news pages.[63]

The Southwest Neighborhood News was not very exciting. Paid for by local tax dollars, it avoided controversy as much as it could and struck a pose of conscientious neutrality. It printed neighborhood association reports pretty much as the authors submitted them. It reported straightforwardly on city initiatives and lacked the flair – literary or graphic – of its commercial competitors. Yet it was, in some sense, the newspaper of record in Southwest.[64]

In December 1992 Southwest Portland got a second community newspaper when a young political science graduate of Portland State University named Donald Snedecor founded *The Multnomah Village Post*. Snedecor bounced around a bit as a young man, but while studying at PSU he took a course from a "crotchety old liberal" named Marco Haggard and for the first time understood the connection between journalism and politics. He was, in a sense, bitten by a rare bug that leads people to start newspapers. A few years later he decided that Multnomah Village – "this Winesburg, Ohio sort of community" – was exactly the place to do it. He asked business people in the community if they would support a local paper, and when the discouragement wasn't overwhelming, he produced his first edition. Snedecor resisted early pressure to trade editorial coverage for advertising placements – a practice that is the bane of neighborhood newspapers – and developed *The Multnomah Village Post* as a kind of old fashioned feisty, populist newspaper. When war broke out over the Southwest Community Plan, Snedecor and his associates were there to cover it, and not infrequently to give aid and comfort to the insurgents.[65]

In July of 1994, a career reporter, editor, and journalism teacher named Rick Seifert started another monthly called *The Hillsdale Connection*. Seifert was a Hillsdale resident and had become involved in the "Hillsdale Vision Group," a citizen association that had formed in an effort to respond somehow to the rapid change its members saw overtaking their neighborhood. As Seifert became more deeply involved he realized that successful community planning would require a public forum in which citizens could learn about and discuss issues of common interest. The problem was, as he saw it, there was no community in Southwest Portland. There were a lot of people who happened to live in the same series of neighborhoods, but it didn't constitute a community. How, he asked, could there be a community without communication? So, Seifert did what he did best. He went to newspapering.

When the events of the Southwest Community Plan begun to unfold, there was a small cadre of professional journalists ready to cover it. Neighborhood associations that once had

difficulty raising a quorum for their meetings now had a press corps. Some of the reporters were of the "cub" variety. Joan Rutkowski of *the Connection* and Kathleen Eugster of *the Post* were each in their first newspaper jobs, and Snedecor himself was an intrepid novice. But Lee Perlman, who often wrote for Snedecor, had been covering planning issues at the grass roots level for at least 30 years and Seifert had been in the business for nearly that long. It was an extraordinary complement of talent to be focused on the affairs of this quiet and somewhat isolated part of Portland. But at some level this merely reflected the level of education and sophistication of the population at large.[66]

Over the years of the Southwest Community Plan, not only did *Connection, Post* and *News* cover every significant step of the process (and some not so significant steps) but they also wrote a comprehensive array stories about planning-related issues, from the long-running furor over siting the Southwest Community Center, to the intermittent fight over monopoles for cellular telephone relays, to the interminable discussion over the location of a new Hillsdale library. There were stories about landslides, erosion, surreptitious tree-cutting, street paving, community ivy pulls, sidewalk improvements, endangered fish, adult entertainment stores, utility line undergrounding, speed bumps and, of course, rowhouses. Reporters and editors seemed to see no limit to the interest of their readers in any story that discussed changes to the physical environment of Southwest Portland. As the SWCP process seemed to get bogged down, both of the commercial papers eased off on the coverage of what they considered mere "process." But both covered it right to the end.

Partly because of their monthly publication cycles, but certainly due in part to the fundamental sophistication of the journalists, all three papers had a fair amount of what people in the newspaper business call "enterprise" journalism. Even the *Southwest Neighborhood News* would take a topic they thought was important and develop a "package" of stories for publication in a single edition. Seifert's *Connection,* however, was by far the most committed to enterprise. He saw it as one of the responsibilities of a newspaper editor to set an agenda for public education and debate based on his own professional judgments about what was important. Such topics ended up on the front of *The Connection*, announced by snappy graphics, and followed inside by main story, sidebars, and perhaps commentary. Over the years Seifert and staff wrote in depth about the role of neighborhood associations, crisis and innovation in public education, restaurant safety, drinking water quality, local history, Southwest artists, community policing, and more. Perhaps most notably, Seifert pushed his readers to think beyond their immediate antipathy to the Bureau of Planning's density agenda to consider what might be done to make specific parts of Southwest more livable. *The Connection* ran many stories about the Hillsdale Town Center plan, a package about the future of another small business node called Garden Home, and several major packages about Barbur Boulevard. At the end of his tenure as editor, Seifert wrote that his

instigating about the need to improve Barbur Boulevard – a pedestrian no-man's land of speeding traffic, parking lots, drive-ins, and tawdry strip malls – might have been one of his most important accomplishments.[67]

Both Seifert and Snedecor took very seriously the role of community journalism in the constitution of grass roots democracy. They hectored people to get involved, to vote, to make a difference. They each wrote a monthly column in which they frequently assessed the health of the local body politic and dispensed advice towards its improvement. They stood for honesty, full disclosure, open meetings, freedom of information, the marketplace of ideas – all of the philosophical boilerplate of American journalism. Snedecor, no doubt in homage to old time newspapermen whom he admired, adopted a blunt and aggressive style. Seifert, in contrast, was reserved and thoughtful, invoking Tocqueville and talking about decentralizing government, social capital, and the foundations of democratic community.

Both editors begged repeatedly for their readers to write letters. Seifert would often drop a note to the Southwest Portland e-mail list to solicit letters and, if necessary, bait a few writers. What did they think of the city's new Local Improvement District formula? Didn't anyone have anything to say about the annual capital improvements budgeting process? Most of the time, however, there were plenty of letters to the editor and plenty of passion. The opponents of the city's density plans for Southwest resorted to the letters columns in both papers as often as necessary. Representatives of the city, likewise, used that space to communicate back to the community. It was, as they intended, a good old community forum, a fundamental site of democratic discussion.

Meanwhile, the metro daily, *The Oregonian,* and the hip-cynical arts and politics rag, *Willamette Week,* gave very short shrift to Southwest Portland and its plan process. One of the latter paper's few articles on the subject focused on the question of whether Portland's commitment to neighborhood associations had gone too far with too much power being given to cranky, affluent, "NIMBYs."[68] Coverage from *The Oregonian* was so spotty that Snedecor was sure he saw items from his monthly picked up by the daily. Were it not for the three community papers it is hard to know where citizens would have gotten their information about planning. It is hard to know where they would have found a truly public place to express their views about what was being proposed for their neighborhoods. Just as in the emergence of Thompson's English working class,[69] *The Southwest Community Connection, Multnomah Village Post* and *Southwest Neighborhood News* created, not just an outlet for democratic discourse, but established a public space that had previously not existed.

SWPDX-L – the e-mail list

The inflammation of the SWCP process in the fall of 1996 coincided with the first widespread diffusion of electronic mail technology among the middle class folks of Southwest Portland and it proved to be very handy in facilitating communication among a large and decentralized cadre of neighborhood leaders and activists. During the initial controversy over the discussion draft map, those involved in opposition to the plan announced meetings, posted alerts, passed on information, and held ad hoc discussions – all with ordinary e-mail technology. Individuals wishing to send a message to their comrades simply clicked the "reply to all" icon or button in their e-mail program and composed an item to an ever-growing list of recipients. The following April, when neighborhood leaders realized the planning process would be a long siege, Jere Retzer engaged a local internet service provider to host a formal e-mail list-serve, and swpdx-l was born.[70]

Over the course of several years the e-mail list became both more and less than the contemporary telephone party line of Southwest activists. It was, at first, a kind of community bulletin board providing notices of meetings, reports on meetings, alerts about planning documents just published, and Planning Bureau or Planning Commission actions taken. But it quickly became a site for wide-ranging community discussion and often vociferous debate of topics central to the Southwest Community Plan, tangential to it, and sometimes totally irrelevant to the plan. They talked about the plan process, the behavior of planners and elected officials, zoning issues, stormwater and its management, housing design, the relationships between land use, urban design, and transit, and other topics directly related to the SWCP. They also talked about the broader context of planning in Portland, about Metro and proposals to abolish it, the Urban Growth Boundary, new construction on light rail transit extensions, the 2040 Plan, and planning-related politics like the defeat of a slate of pro-Metro officials in the nearby city of Milwaukie. But, since there was no moderator and no effective limits on subject matter, they also devoted significant time and energy to discussions of topics like gun control, property rights, pornography, and somewhat later, the Bush-Gore recount.

For all of that, citizens did serious work on the e-mail list. They published independent reporting on issues of concern. They penetrated the technical discourses of planners and experts. They engaged in critiques of policy, local political economy, and the structure of decision-making in the planning process. They also debated standards of political conversation and rules for civility in the unfamiliar discursive space of electronic mail. More broadly speaking, they gave power to their values by naming them, and they created new worlds in discourse. Ironically, the character of the list seemed to drive out the original communication, coordination, and strategizing function that e-mail had served in the early days of the uprising. It was constructed as a public list, meaning that anyone could ask to be added to it. As a result, there flourished at times

an "off-list" list or back channel on which the key neighborhood leaders could discuss political strategy frankly, confidentially, and without tipping their hand to their putative opponents in the Bureau of Planning.

A number of the participants on the list used it as a place to publish their own reportage on contemporary planning topics. The most prolific of these was Don Bain, who lived across the street from Gabriel Park and closely monitored the impacts of construction on the Southwest Community Center – especially the stormwater runoff that polluted Southwest's spawning streams. On many occasions, Bain's dispatches were straightforward matter-of-fact descriptions of how much rain was falling, where it flowed, how muddy it was, and what damage it might be doing. At other times, his postings, had the opinionated edge of the muckraker's screed:

> Today, Portland Parks' attempt to alleviate muddying of a tributary of Fanno Creek by Southwest Community Center (SWCC) had the reverse effect. Previously, muddy waters containing fine silt at the SWCC construction site were pumped and overflowed from temporary ponds into storm drains that emptied into the northern tributary of Vermont Creek. Repeated instances of this has the neighbors up in arms for violations of the Clean Water Act, construction mismanagement, poor erosion control planning and ineffective measures to prevent siltation of an EPA-designated water quality-limited watershed. Overflow of dirty water into the stream continues today.[71]

Bain's output was prodigious. Over an 18-month period from late 1997 to early 1999, Bain posted more than 600 separate messages, frequently lengthy and with deep detail. But he was by no means the only practitioner of this art. Jere Retzer often reported on storm water issues and related bureaucratic intrigue. Amanda Fritz, the Planning Commission member, but also a neighborhood activist, posted reports on her water quality monitoring activities. And Julie O'Dell, a Hayhurst resident and planning student, detailed a story of official betrayal in "the Death of a Zone."[72]

This reporting made a significant contribution to the work of citizen planners in Southwest. Even though the "circulation" of the list was small – never more than a hundred people – the items posted were nonetheless very public. Messages could be and were forwarded to politicians, bureaucrats, and journalists around Portland. By describing and explaining what happened, these e-mail reporters created a record of issues, problems, and alleged abuses by officials and others. But just as important, they created a different reality than the one portrayed by city officials or in *The Oregonian*. If it could be shown that the world was different than we expected, perhaps we would have to act differently as well.

What was also remarkable about the traffic on the list was the extent to which supposed lay people engaged, adapted, and appropriated expert technical discourses. Technical specialization and the master of terms, concepts and protocols of such specializations are

supposed to be a source of power of the experts. But when literate, intelligent, and well-educated people (who may also be experts in their own fields) decide to enter these discourses, they often take that power back. Jere Retzer, as noted above, wrote often about stormwater, explaining scientific concepts in ways that all of his readers could grasp:

> Uncontrolled storm water runoff is destroying our creeks and woods. The excessive velocity of this runoff through the creeks scours out the creek beds, tearing away habitat and creating silt downstream, which clogs the gravel and destroys fish habitat. The incised stream beds and undercut banks cause bank failures, causing mudslides, widening the stream and taking out the surrounding vegetated buffer. If this continues you eventually wind up with something that looks very much like the Los Angeles river.[73]

Retzer was, himself, an expert. His field was computing. But having mastered one specialization, he could master another. He knew enough about the scientific, legal, and regulatory issues involved in stormwater management that he could also use the mystifying powers of that expert discourse when he needed to. He wrote a rhetorically muscular letter to Mayor Vera Katz demanding that she get right with the law on stormwater:

> An independent measurement today by Amanda Fritz found turbidity in Vermont Creek at 645 NTU, as compared to less than 20 NTU before the construction. Other measurements over the last thirty days have ranged repeatedly to nearly 300 NTU. This elevated turbidity is many times the DEQ allowed standard. You are clearly in violation of the U.S. Clean Water Act and Oregon Statutes in your continued pollution of Vermont Creek, a tributary of the Tualatin River, which are listed as water quality-limited streams under section 303d of the Clean Water Act.[74]

The ability of the citizens of Southwest Portland to penetrate, master, and wield seemingly obscure scientific and bureaucratic discourses was demonstrated over and over again, throughout the SWCP process, but especially on the list.

The e-mail list also carried an extraordinary volume of sophisticated, well-informed, politically-pitched, and often contentious debate and critique on policies central to the issues of planning in Southwest and Portland in general. Sometimes they talked about issues as far and wide as school-funding formulas and the use of bark dust as a ground cover. But much of their energy was focused on the core policies of Portland's growth management regime: the urban growth boundary, aggressive fixed rail transit development, and increasing residential densities. Given the origins of the list in oppositional planning, it wasn't surprising that much of this talk was against these policies. Martie Sucec (as quoted in a post by Don Bain) attacked one of the cornerstones of Portland policy – that changing land use patterns would shift people from cars to transit: "The 'philosophy' is that if you densify neighborhoods, you will get people out of their

cars... by packing in rowhouses, folks will take the bus. Well, regression analysis shows that you'll get 20 out of 100 on the buses, but that still puts the automobiles of 80 other (people) on the clotted roads." Why then, Bain asked, was the city pretending this increase in vehicle miles would never occur, and failing to provide new infrastructure to handle it?[75]

Melvin Zucker, a transportation policy consultant, meanwhile, attacked the regional strategy of investing heavily in fixed rail transit. At the time the west side MAX line was opened he wrote, "the cost, according to Tri-Met's own data, assuming they meet (ridership) projections, to take a car off the road between Hillsboro and PDX CBD (downtown Portland) is $75 ONE WAY, $150 per day, $33,000 per working day year per person." Anyone posting a message on the list that reflected the prevailing orthodoxy of the planning establishment could expect to receive a quick and scathing reply from Zucker, if not others. "The free market, applied to suburban and semi-rural real estate," one list visitor wrote, "tends to create sprawl. Sprawl leads to greater reliance on fossil fuels, larger expenses in roads, bridges, schools, communication and power grids, water and sewer development, and yes, even trash collection infrastructure." Zucker replied, "you can't prove a word of that," and commenced an extended dissertation on how development had "leap-frogged" the Urban Growth Boundary, the efficiency of auto-oriented suburbs, and related topics.[76] There were few other places in Portland that one could hear such heretical talk. But the e-mail list in Southwest gave people a place to practice it.

Sometimes the critique was targeted more at political economy than policy. Some writers on the list rooted their attacks in an assumption that the policies were not simply wrong or wouldn't work but were motivated by powerful though obscure political and economic interests who used public policy for their own ends. They noted how growth management policies supported the interests of builders and developers to achieve higher densities, and as a result, greater profits through the intensification of the use of urban land. Some alleged even more specific formations, such as an alliance among utility companies, light rail manufacturers, and big general contractors behind the light rail program. But Martie Sucec captured the essence of the argument writing:

> ... the truth is the city government stinks... they've been cutting deals for years, and until the booming growth, few of their details registered on our radar screens – not true for some of you, but true for me and others, and I'm embarrassed and chagrin(ed) to have to say – but now their greed and irresponsibility and lack of character has slopped over into our neighborhoods an d our parks and our waterways... we've had it, and change will come one way or another.[77]

When Frank Dufay, a deputy city auditor, suggested on the list that even developers deserved a "seat at the table" Sucec replied, "I think developers, builders, businesses, bankers, etc. all have a place at the table... but here, Frank, they own the table."[78]

People on the list, especially those who were actively involved in the planning process, often focused on a critique of the process itself, how the structure of the discussion kept people and ideas either in or out. Issues of fairness, access to information, representation, and democratic process in general were all well-aired. For many it was clear that the "fix" was in, with staff managing pro forma participation and the Planning Commission stacked with pro-development types. Some list participants, however, offered unusually thoughtful critiques of very specific elements of the process. On one occasion Amanda Fritz offered:

> I think technical advisory committees are an inefficient and anti-collaborative way of discussion an issue, and they often don't produce the community consensus I believe is an essential goal of the planning process. Often, in city policy updates, there is a Citizens Advisory Committee and a Technical Advisory Committee. What I've seen happen, often, is the citizens come up with what they want to see, and the TAC responds with, "no, we can't do that, you're ignoring facts x, y, and z." Then the two groups trade proposals and counter proposals forever. It would be much better, in my opinion, to get everyone in one room, with equal standing, and figure out an answer everyone can live with.[79]

Whatever the specific issue, the main issue was always the same: what should be the rules of the game? Who should participate in what ways in what venues with what outcomes? The contest is both a struggle for advantage or position and a search for fairness. Citizens may have their claims denied on any particular matter, and a defeat is a defeat. But by continuing the dialogue they exert continuing pressure on those who set the rules, and on occasion they will succeed. Indeed, the rules of discourse on the list was a recurrent topic of discourse on the list. Perhaps typical of e-mail, messages were often tartly worded, and replies were quickly written and sent with the click of a mouse. Some argued that some level of civility, of neighborly kindness, was required for debate to survive; others considered such demands an attempt to stifle divergent opinions. And they argued the issue over and over again.

It is difficult to gauge the impact of the list. Ardent opponents of the "Portland way of planning" tended to dominate the conversation. But it was not clear that their opinions were taking root beyond the sixty or seventy members of the list. With a few exceptions, the consensus behind growth management seemed to hold at the ballot box. Still, the discussions on the Southwest Portland e-mail list gave power to alternative values by naming them and speaking them. They helped make worlds, discursively, that did not otherwise exist in any sort of visible public place. But the e-mail list was not an easy place to be. The traffic in messages could be overwhelming, two dozen separate e-mails on a slow day, sixty or more when the conversation

was hot. And the conversation was dominated by a relatively few people. In one 18 month period only twelve people accounted for more than 80 percent of all the messages. Many members were "lurkers," afraid to speak up, or disinterested in getting embroiled in some nasty exchange. The membership churned. There were always new people joining, but just as surely, people dropping off, exhausted, offended, or bored. Still, the e-mail list was an important location in Portland where names were given, arguments made, and power of a sort exerted.

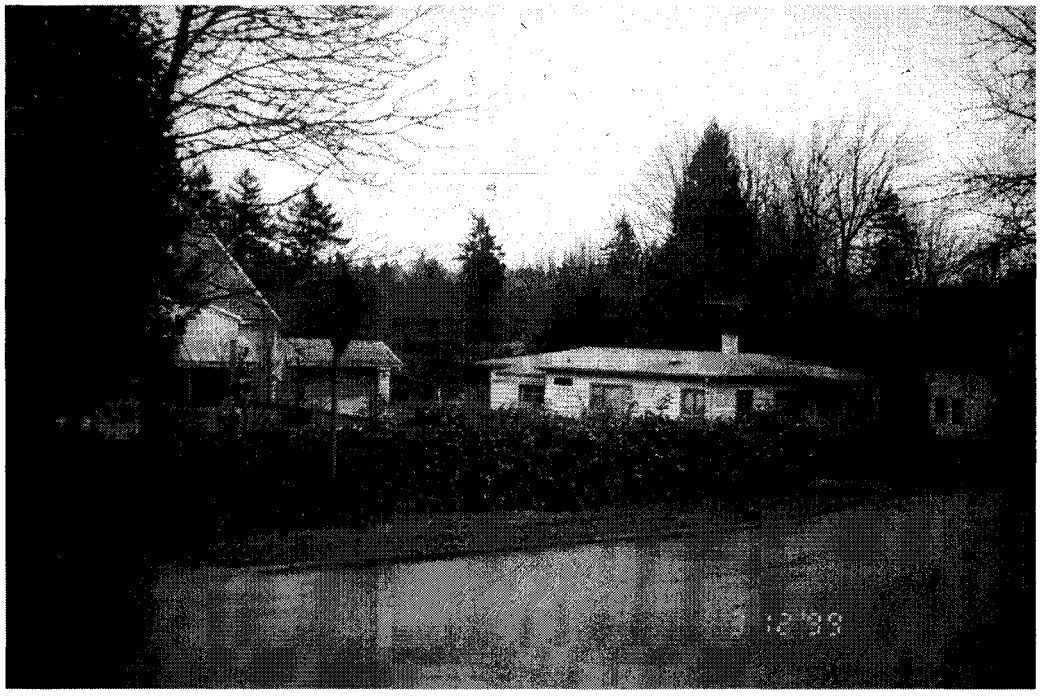

Figure 12.1 Neighborhood activists called these small homes on big lots "scrapers" to highlight their potential for redevelopment. Photo by the author.

Figure 12.2 Multnomah Neighborhood activists produced a "red dot" map, showing all the homes where the land-value: structure-value ratio indicated a property might be ripe for redevelopment. Photo by the author.

Figure 12.3 Handsome as they were, these rowhouses on Capitol Highway in Multnomah were anathema to many residents. Photo by the author.

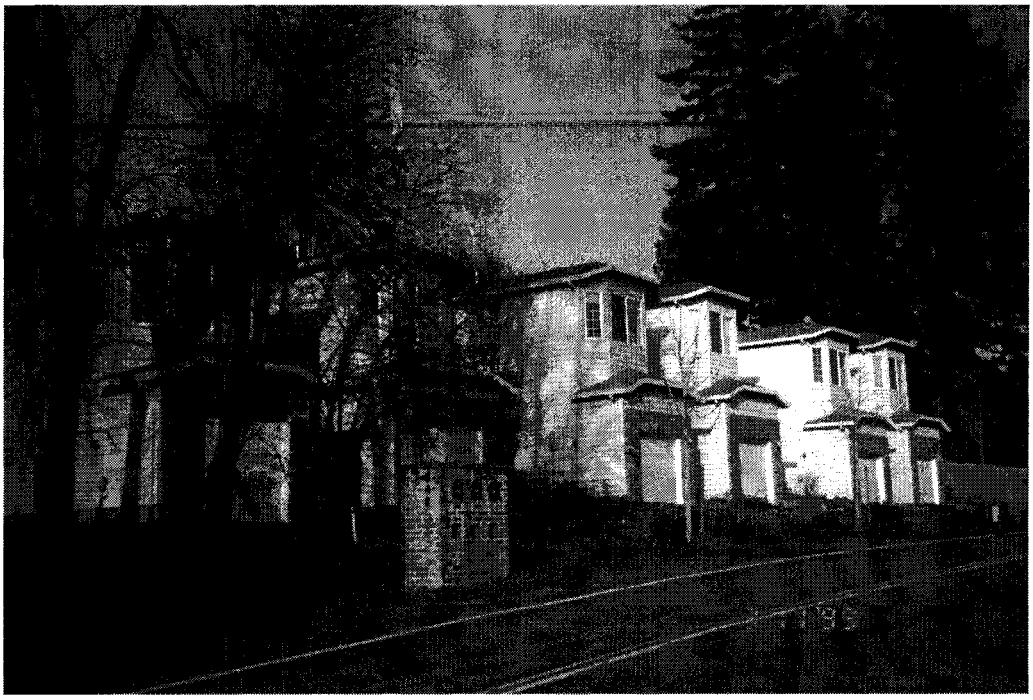

Figure 12.4 Townhouses with protruding front garages earned the sobriquet "snouthouses" and prompted City Council action to regulate design. Photo by the author

Notes for Chapter 12.

[1] Portland Bureau of Planning, "Southwest Community Plan Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) Members," February 13, 1995.

[2] Interview with Tim Crail, March 4, 1998.

[3] Barbara Horton Linn, "Summary of SWCP CAC Process to Date," memorandum to Sheila Frugoli, Project Leader, Southwest Community Plan, January 2, 1997. Interview with Barbara Linn, March 27, 1998 at Portland State University. Interview with John Alland, March 19, 1998. Crail interview.

[4] Harrison had been deputized to rescue the Central City Plan, which had bogged down in the participatory process in the mid-1980s, and he had seen the budgets for each successive Community Plan element shrink. Interview with Michael Harrison, January 29, 1999; Hovey, Bradshaw. 1993. "Towards a Democratic Planning." Paper presented to the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning conference, Philadelphia, PA.

[5] Interviews with Crail and Alland.

[6] City of Portland, Bureau of Planning, "Southwest Community Plan Citizens Advisory Committee – Meeting Notes August 8, 1996," 7 pp. Notes taken by Terry Moore, published August 12, 1996.

[7] See for example, Martie Sucec, "Strong leadership should get everyone involved," *Southwest Community Connection*, March 1997, p. 3.

[8] Linn interview.

[9] Liz Callison, "Community advisory committee regroups at emergency sessions." *The Multnomah Village Post*, November 1996, p. 10. "Citizens Advisory Committee SW Community Plan," *Southwest Neighborhood News*, November 1996, p. 3.

[10] Jeanne McKeever and Trudy Cooper, "Meeting of the SW Community Plan Citizen Advisory Committee with SW Neighborhoods and Commissioner Charlie Hales," November 2, 1996, pp. 2-3. Meeting notes produced by the facilitators.

[11] Office of Commissioner Charlie Hales, Portland Bureau of Planning, "Proposed Revised Planning Process – Southwest Community Plan," November 1996. pp. 4-7.

[12] City of Portland, Bureau of Planning, "Southwest Community Plan Process Revision; Second CAC Roundtable Meeting," December 3, 1996, St. Luke Lutheran Church, pp. 1, 3-4.

[13] The Active Voice, "The appendix of Southwest planning," *The Southwest Connection*, January 1997, p. 2.

[14] Corinne Weber, personal notes from SWCP Citizen Advisory Committee meeting, December 12, 1996 in e-mail from Beck Miller, December 13, 1996, to Martie Sucec and forwarded to others. 4 pp.

[15] "SWCP Citizens Advisory Committee Votes to Stay Involved," *Southwest Neighborhood News*, January 1997, p. 3. "SWCP Citizens Advisory Committee gets new role," *Southwest Neighborhood News*, February 1997, p. 3. Amanda Fritz, "Advisory committee needed for objective opinion," and Susan King, "The most involved should guide representation," *Southwest Community Connection*, February 1997, p. 4.

[16] Terry Moore, "Meeting Notes," Southwest Community Plan Citizens Advisory Committee, August 28, 1997, via e-mail from Suzanne Carey, September 8, 1997.

[17] Martie Sucec, "More deep doo-doo from the CAC..." August 29, 1997, e-mail message to Patty Lee, Becky Miller, Wes Risher, Judy Henderson, Don Baack, Jay Mower, Julie O'Dell, Anthony Boutard, Alan Shearin, Don Bain, Molly Burns, Jan Breckon, Mark Helfand, Laura Kringen, Candy Wells, Kirky Doblie, and others, with attached memorandum "What's up with the SWCP?" to David Knowles from Martie Sucec, August 28, 1997.

[18] SWCP Citizen Advisory Committee, December 11, 1997. Author's own notes from in person observation.

[19] Personal correspondence from Martie Sucec to the author, December 21, 2001.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Letter to Charlie Hales and David Knowles, November 18, 1996, signed by Alan Shearin, Rich Adelmann, Jere Retzer, Mary Taylor, Rich Ray, Martie Sucec, Patty Lee, Dave and Dixie Johnston, Wes Risher, and Judy Henderson.

[22] "Neighborhood Summit" rough minutes, March 18, 1997, 8 pp.; Julie O'Dell, "Neighborhood Summit No. 1 Agenda," 3 pp.; "Neighborhood Summit Summary," March 18, 1997, 6 pp. All courtesy of Julie O'Dell.

[23] "SW Neighborhood Summit," May 5, 1997, rough minutes, 4 pp.; "Agenda: Last Summit" June 2, 1997, 1 p. Courtesy of Julie O'Dell.

[24] Rick Seifert, "End Game: Neighborhood Activists on full alert as planning hist critical point," *Southwest Community Connection*, October 1997 , p. 7.

[25] City of Portland, Bureau of Planning, "Response to Southwest Portland Neighborhood Map Proposal – Introduction," September 1997. Attached letter by Deborah Stein dated September 12, 1997.

[26] Julie O'Dell, "Dear Neighborhood Leaders," September 1, 1997, courtesy of Julie O'Dell.

[27] "Neighborhood Leadership Summit – Agenda," October 2, 1997, 4 pp. Jan Breckon, "Today's Summit," e-mail message containing minutes of November 22, 1997 "Summit Group" meeting, 6 pp. courtesy Julie O'Dell. Also, notes by the author from November 13, 1997 meeting of "Summit Group" NA chairs.

[28] Drafts of all these policies were posted on the Crestwood Neighborhood Association home page in November 1997.

[29] Author's own notes, "Planning Commission Hearing on SWCP Policy Statements," December 16, 1997.

[30] Don Baack, "12/8 Minutes Draft," via e-mail December 12, 1997.

[31] Lee Perlman, "Commissioners want additional time to complete southwest plan," *The Multnomah Village Post*, January 1998, p. 10. Leonard Gard, "Planning Commission comments on SWCP," *The Southwest Neighborhood News*," January 1998, p. 3.

[32] Rick Seifert, "SW planning effort extended; Groups formed to resolve differences," *Southwest Community Connection,* February 1998, p. 7. Lee Perlman, "Proposed new timeline calls for plan completion in September," *The Multnomah Village Post*, February 1998, p. 4. Terry Moore, "Southwest Community Plan timeline extended again," *The Southwest Neighborhood News*, February 1998, p. 1.

[33] Jere Retzer reported to the Southwest Portland e-mail list and others that he and Ellen Wax had discussed the possibility of some kind of process to "bring together the community on the stormwater and environment policy so we can try to get consensus on all the inputs that were made to the Planning Commission." Jere Retzer, "SWCP Stormwater update," swpdx-l, December 19, 1997, 1:42 a.m.

[34] Don Baack, "Minutes of 1/27 mtg on Dialogue Group Process," swpdx-l, February 3, 1998, 11:09 p.m. Leonard Gard, "Steps planned to wind up SWCP," *The Southwest Neighborhood News*, March 1998, p. 1. Terry Moore, "Planning Commission establishes Dialogue Groups, Schedule." *The Southwest Neighborhood News*, March 1998, p. 3. Rick Seifert, "City planners and activists huddle to seek common ground on SW Plan," *The Southwest Community Connection*, March 1998, p. 10.

[35] Bureau of Planning, "Stormwater and Natural Environment Dialogue Group," Meeting Notes, February 12, 1998. Author's notes, "The Stormwater and Natural Environment Dialogue Group," February 26, 1998.

[36] Author's notes, "The Housing and Land Use Dialogue Group," February 17, 1998 and Bureau of Planning, "Housing and Land Use Dialogue Group Meeting Notes," February 17, 1998.

[37] Don Baack, "Transportation Dialog Gp 2/9/98 Minutes," February 11, 1998, posted on the SWPDX-L e-mail list and more widely distributed by e-mail.

[38] Ibid.

[39] City of Portland, Bureau of Planning, "Transportation Dialogue Group Meeting Notes – February 13, 1998, by Terry Moore. Posted to SWPDX-L on March 23, 1998. City of Portland, Bureau of Planning, "Revisions to Transportation Policies and Objectives Suggested by Transportation Dialogue Group," posted to SWPDX-L February 26, 1998.

[40] City of Portland Bureau of Planning, "Proposed Southwest Community Plan Proposed Transportation Policy Summary of Dialogue Group Tentative Decisions 3/23/98." Posted to SWPDX-L March 23, 1998.

[41] City of Portland, Bureau of Planning, "Transportation Dialogue Group Meeting Notes – February 9, 1998, by Terry Moore. Posted to SWPDX-L on March 23, 1998. City of Portland, Bureau of Planning, "Revisions to Transportation Policies and Objectives Suggested by Transportation Dialogue Group," posted to SWPDX-L February 26, 1998.

[42] City of Portland, Bureau of Planning, "Transportation Dialogue Group Meeting Notes – February 20, 1998, by Terry Moore. Posted to SWPDX-L on March 23, 1998. City of Portland Bureau of Planning, "Proposed Southwest Community Plan Proposed Transportation Policy Summary of Dialogue Group Tentative Decisions 3/23/98." Posted to SWPDX-L March 23, 1998.

[43] Bureau of Planning, "Proposed Transportation Policy Summary of Dialogue Group Tentative Decisions 3/23/98."

[44] City of Portland, Bureau of Planning, "Stormwater and Natural Environment Dialogue Group Meeting Notes – February 12, 1998." Posted to SWPDX-L February 19, 1998.

[45] City of Portland, Bureau of Planning, "Stormwater and Natural Environment Policy," posted to SWPDX-L February 11, 1998. Also in the Bureau's working document on policies.

[46] "Meeting Notes – February 12, 1998" and "Stormwater and Natural Environment Policy." Also, Author's notes "Stormwater Dialog Group," February 26, 1998, The Portland Building.

[47] Author's notes, February 26, 1998.

[48] Jere W. Retzer, e-mail to members of the Stormwater and Natural Environment Dialogue Group, March 1, 1998. Also posted on SWPDX-L.

[49] City of Portland, Bureau of Planning, "Proposed Southwest Community Plan: Proposed Stormwater and Natural Environment Policy, Summary of Dialogue Group Tentative Decisions." March 23, 1998. Posted to SWPDX-L.

[50] City of Portland, Bureau of Planning, "Proposed Southwest Community Plan: Planning Commission Tentative Policy Document," May 1998, pp. 27-28.

[51] Author's notes, "The Housing and Land Use Dialogue Group," February 17, 1998, The Portland Building, and City of Portland, Bureau of Planning, "Housing and Land Use Dialogue Group Meeting Notes – February 17, 1998," by Terry Moore, February 18, 1998.

[52] Author's notes, February 17, 1998, and author's notes, "Housing Dialog Group," February 20, 1998,

Portland Building, Hearing Room A.

[53] Author's notes, February 20, 1998.

[54] Ibid.

[55] Author's notes, February 17, 1998.

[56] Author's notes, February 20, 1998.

[57] Author's notes, February 17, 20, and 24, 1998.

[58] Author's notes, February 20, 1998.

[59] City of Portland, Bureau of Planning, "Proposed Southwest Community Plan, Summary of Housing and Land Use Dialogue Group Tentative Decisions, 3/5/98." Posted to SWPDX-L March 23, 1998.

[60] Ibid.

[61] Ibid.

[62] "Housing and Land Use Tentative Decisions," and "Planning Commission Tentative Policy Document," May 1998, pp. 9-14, 19-20.

[63] Sylvia Bogert, "Neighborhood News 101", *Southwest Neighborhood News*, April 1998, p. 1.

[65] Interview with Don Snedecor, February 27, 1998

[66] Interview with Rick Seifert, December 11, 1998.

[67] Author's notes from "Meet the Community Press," public forum on community journalism, featuring Sylvia Bogert, *Southwest Neighborhood News*, Donald Snedecor, *Multnomah Village Post*, and Rick Seifert, *Southwest Community Connection*, at Multnomah Community Center, February 11, 1999.

[68] Young, Bob and Ruth Rowland. 1998. "NIMBY (Not in My Back Yard): Are a bunch of neighborhood activists threatening the city?" *Willamette Week*. February 18, 1998, 24:16:1

[69] E.P. Thompson. 1963, 1966. *The Making of the English Working Class*. New York: Vintage.

[70] This section of this chapter is based on "A political culture interpretation of the Southwest Community Plan e-mail list," Bradshaw Hovey, presented at the annual conference of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning, Pasadena, CA, November 1998.

[71] Don Bain, "Oops! Pumping Muddys Another SW Stream," January 6, 1998 to multiple e-mail recipients.

[72] The Southwest Portland e-mail list was "owned" by Jere Retzer, which means he arranged for the hosting of the list by a series of internet service providers including teleport.com, egroups.com, and yahoo.com. Over the years literally tens of thousands of individual messages were posted.

[73] Jere Retzer, "Re: More Propaganda," November 21, 1997 to swpdx-l@teleport .com.

[74] Jere Retzer, "SW Community Center Erosion Problems," letter to Mayor Vera Katz, copied to multiple recipients including swpdx-l@teleport .com.

[75] Don Bain, "Re: Auto-oriented suburbs," incorporating a previous post from Martie Sucec, January 5, 1998 on swpdx-l@teleport .com.

[76] Melvin Zucker, "Re: South/ North Light Rail – Reply," May 7, 1998 and "Re: INSEPDX: Density," March 18, 1998, swpdx-l@teleport .com.

[77] Martie Sucec, "Re: Isn't it ironic – don't you think," January 20, 1998 to swpdx-l@teleport .com.

[78] Martie Sucec, "Re: Service Efforts and Accomplishments – Reply – Reply," January 27, 1998 to swpdx-l@teleport .com.

[79] Amanda Fritz, "Re: Commissioners and conflicts," July 22, 1998 to swpdx-l@teleport .com.

Chapter 13. The Two Million Dollar Plan

In April 1998, the Bureau of Planning published a poster-style chronology of the Southwest Community Plan process with the hopeful heading "Plan Closes in on Journey's End." It organized text descriptions of the steps in the process – past, present, and future – along a winding trail of foot prints – bare ones like you might leave in wet sand on a beach. It was cute, probably too cute, describing the traumatic experience of the planning process as a kind of casual meandering. In fact, the piece refused to acknowledge any unpleasantness going all the way back to the inauguration of the process. "Sept.-Dec. 1996," it read, with an arrow pointing to the pinky toe of one of the footprints. "Discussion Draft SWCP policies and map published. Public invited to 5 meetings to comment..." The bland narrative treated the trauma as if it had never happened. But the main purpose of the timeline was to orient citizens to upcoming events as the plan process was brought to a conclusion: consideration of the "proposed" plan by the Planning Commission that summer and the forwarding of a "recommended" plan to the City Council in fall of 1998. Anticipation of the adoption of the SWCP was, to say the least, premature.[1]

In May of 1998, as the Planning Commission heard the results of the "dialogue groups" and discussed tentative plan policies, Bureau of Planning staff published a veritable encyclopedia of proposed amendments to the plan. These included proposed amendments to neighborhood plans, to "action items" in the community plan, and amendments to the implementing mechanisms of the plan, including plan districts, overlay zones, and the zoning code itself. But the thickest volume in this little library, and the most important, contained proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan zoning map. This stack of books, four inches tall, contained amendments proposed by neighborhood associations, by individual property owners, and by various agencies of city or regional government. The most contentious ones, by far, however, were from the Bureau of Planning itself.[2] There were, altogether, more than 1,500 pages describing about 900 individual amendments, and the Planning Commission would need to act on them all.[3]

The problem was that the stack of amendments represented the distance between Bureau staff and neighborhood activists on the substance of the plan. The major issues were the same as they had been all along. The neighborhoods resisted pressure to upzone for higher residential densities and pushed to downzone to protect environmentally sensitive lands. They demanded that infrastructure, especially for stormwater management, be installed concurrently with any upzoning (as opposed to when development actually happened). They demanded that both

Barbur Boulevard and the West Portland Town Center be pulled out of the plan and set aside for closer consideration later. The folks from Multnomah insisted that any zoning changes in Southwest be held in abeyance until it became clear what new rules the federal government would impose as a result of the listing of the Lower Columbia River steelhead as an endangered species. If not, they might sue. Many said it was imperative that all the rezonings be put off until the Planning Commission had passed judgment on Southwest Community Plan policies.[4]

There was a raft of smaller controversies, though just as sticky. Hillsdale residents were at odds with staff on a proposal to upzone a dairy farm known as the Raz Pasture. Several neighborhoods differed with staff on zoning at the corner of SW Vermont and 45th – where the Southwest Community Center was then under construction. The state Transportation Planning Rule, which required that planners "consider" upzoning within a quarter mile of transit corridors, was still causing the neighborhoods heartburn. And conflicts were breaking out all over the map between individual property owners who wanted their property upzoned and neighborhood associations who wanted the zoning to stay the way it was or go down.[5]

Hearings before the Planning Commission in June were every bit as bitter as the initial blow-up at Wilson High School had been nearly two years before. But it wasn't just because the residents didn't like the plan. It was because they had been screaming and yelling all that time about why they didn't like the plan and what they wanted instead, yet, to them, the plan seemed unchanged. They thought no one was listening. Some suggested that this version of the plan was even worse than the one represented in the Draft Discussion Map. "The difficulty is that now it's all in words," Martie Sucec wrote, "and all over the place, badly organized and an enormous challenge to read, let alone organize personally into some intelligent comprehension." This would make it harder to convey to their neighbors just how bad this version was. At least the map was graphic.[6]

On top of that, they suspected that the upcoming review process had been designed to minimize their involvement. They had only a few weeks to look at the voluminous documentation and prepare their comments. Many considered the five volume set of amendments confusing and poorly organized. Worse than that, it was hard to get copies: there were two to each neighborhood association, and after that one had to go downtown to pick up extras. If the Bureau of Planning had really wanted them to study the amendments, one activist said, they would have posted them on a website with a searchable data base.[7] Finally, there was only one hearing scheduled (although the Planning Commission added a second when it became clear one would be insufficient).[8] "It is totally unbelievable," Jere Retzer complained on the e-mail list, "after all the promises that were made to us last winter that the Planning Commission would try to slip this

one by on a single, quick, barely-publicized post-Memorial day session. I cannot believe this was simple incompetence."[9]

Nevertheless, the Summit Group was well-prepared when the hearings took place. They submitted a letter signed by 14 Southwest neighborhood association presidents (among others) outlining five major points of disagreement on the plan, including the repeated request that adoption of policies precede action on zoning. They renewed their calls to extract the West Portland Town Center and Barbur Boulevard zoning from the planning and deal with them separately later. They objected to the Bureau proposal that infrastructure requirements and financing be treated as a "city-wide issue" (which it was in a sense, but which missed the point that the issue was of special importance in Southwest). And they argued that it made sense to wait on zoning to see what new obligations the steelhead listing would place on them.[10]

Other presentations were even more thorough. Jere Retzer submitted a letter to the Planning Commission detailing disagreements with various city bureaus on three major code amendments and 27 separate action items from the section on watersheds. He urged they push ahead on creation of a "headwaters plan district," imposition of a permit requirement for stormwater disposal, and a requirement that development on any property in an environmental overlay zone "demonstrate no net negative impact on any creek or waterbody." The Bureau of Planning, Bureau of Environmental Services, and others had reasons why the code amendments and action items shouldn't be adopted, but Retzer, who had served on the watershed dialogue group, had reasons why they should, enumerated in 13 pages. "Our dreams for the future, as documented in the SWCP," Retzer wrote, "feature streams that are no longer listed as water quality limited and (have) healthy native fish. I hope that together we can make this dream a reality."[11]

One of the most galling things for the neighborhoods was that the majority of the amendments had come from Bureau of Planning staff. Of 294 proposed amendments to the zoning map 155 were submitted by Bureau of Planning. The rest were submitted by property owners, public and private, with a smattering of proposals from interested individuals and only a handful from neighborhood associations. Of course, the neighborhood associations didn't have to make amendments. The starting point for this exercise was their own consolidated zoning map. In a number of cases, Bureau staff submitted amendments to neighborhood association proposals to zone private property as open space. In other cases, they opposed neighborhood association efforts to tuck housing density into sites the staff considered inappropriate. But in the preponderance of their 155 amendments, staff moved to amend the neighborhood proposals to reflect the zoning of the existing Comprehensive Plan or to conform to adopted city policies. In other cases both Bureau and neighborhood association recommended upzoning, but with the

Bureau recommendation usually a notch higher, e.g. R2 instead of R2.5 or R2.5 instead of R5. In some cases, neighborhood association recommendations were for housing while the Bureau sought commercial designations.[12]

In the Multnomah Main Street area alone, the Bureau submitted 25 amendments, all of which called for higher densities. In many cases, the Bureau recommended R2.5, R2 or R1 when the neighborhood asked for R10, R7, or R5. In a number of other cases the neighborhood wanted higher density residential – R5 or R2.5 – and the bureau sought commercial zones. One amendment – against the neighborhood association proposal to down zone a parcel adjacent to Gabriel Park – carried nearly all of the policy language that drove the barrage of Bureau map amendments. Downzoning would "reduce the development potential" of the property and "lower property values for owners." "Downzoning would reduce the potential number of households within walking distance of the park." "R2 could reduce automobile trips to and from the park." And since it was near the heart of the village they needed to follow the policy direction to "focus development within one quarter mile of neighborhood focal points."[13]

Some of the other amendments came in pairs, one request by staff, and one by the property owner, both seeking the higher-density designation. This was a powerful alignment – when policy and owner intentions overlapped. Staff and property owners also collaborated to deliver some jabs in the text of the amendment request. Lloyd and Patricia Ostby, who owned a property at 3675 SW Troy Street in Multnomah Village wrote simply: "the neighborhood proposed zone change from R1 to R2 was done without our knowledge or consent. We are definitely opposed to the R2 zone change."[14] If it couldn't be CS commercial zoning they wanted to keep the apartment house designation. Another property owner was even more vociferous:

> I was informed at the neighborhood office that the neighborhood association was to have notified any owner that was being considered for a down zone. I have never been contacted by the neighborhood association and I am very angry that I was notified only after my property showed up on a map proposing this downzone. Who would dream that in this day of the Metro 2040 plan that I would have to argue and fight to keep two perfectly located R2 and R2.5 Comprehensive Plan zoned vacant lots from being rezoned this way? Is Multnomah exempt from the 2040 plan?[15]

Some of the other conflicts were more simple. Multnomah, as well as other neighborhood associations, had a tendency to propose OS zoning – open space – for chunks of private property. Such a rezoning, staff reminded, would prevent the property from ever being developed, depriving the owner of any economic value whatsoever, and therefore constitute a "taking."

When the Planning Commission opened hearings in June the crowds were large and demonstrative, "an atmosphere more reminiscent of a pep rally," than a policy debate. Most of the

five dozen speakers at the second hearing supported the adoption of the neighborhood zoning maps and "denounced amendments submitted by the Bureau of Planning staff calling for greater zoning density. All such speakers were cheered by the audience." George Marshall's voice trembled with anger as he addressed the commission.[16] Staff had recommended to upzone property in his Crestwood neighborhood from R7 to R5 against the urging of the neighborhood association and contrary to environmental conditions on the site and the traffic nearby. Plus, they did so with "no explanation, no indication we've been heard, no acknowledgement of our existence." How could they even think about upzoning this property without the infrastructure needed to handle stormwater? "My mind boggles that a planner could think this was a good idea. Any sane person can see this will be a disaster. It's serving density greed, not quality of life. It's not the vision of the neighborhood we deserve." Don Baack insisted that the neighborhood association maps met all of the city's housing density goals. "The map we submitted is the best plan there is." Martie Sucec turned around and addressed the crowd instead of the commission. "The Bureau of Planning is in the same place it was two years ago," she railed. "This is your property, your community. You have to write to City Council to (demand it) honor Charlie Hales' commitment. Take back your government, take back your neighborhood!"[17]

With these words ringing in their ears, the Planning Commission sat down together to decide the rest of the plan. They met weekly for a full month in the middle of summer. Their deliberations typically stretched beyond five hours at a sitting. The books of amendments were well-bound to tolerate the persistent page-flipping that ensued as they considered item after item, and if the bindings failed the pages were already three-hole-punched to go into looseleaf notebooks. This was part of the problem. The commission went through their books dutifully to consider each amendment individually. A small proportion were set aside to a consent agenda, but most were marked for Planning Commission discussion. Most of the amendments were for small areas, a block, a corner, a few lots, even single house lots, and each one presented a different set of circumstances. For each amendment they had to consider the slope of the site, the size and shape of the lot, the existing use, the base zone, the Comprehensive Plan zoning designation (which was often different than the base zoning), adjacent uses, orientation to the street, proximity to transit service, assessments of potential development, environmental limitations, and more. It was a mind-numbing enterprise.[18]

Each amendment in the book consumed two facing pages, and included on the first one an amendment number, the name of the person or organization requesting the amendment, the address of the property and a semi-legible map of the vicinity. It also showed the current Comp Plan designation, the base zoning, any overlay zones, the neighborhood association's proposal for the property, the requested amendment, and the tentative staff recommendation. On the second

page was a statement of the reasons for the requested amendment, the staff's tentative recommendation, and a "staff discussion." It was a lot to analyze. More than that, it required the commissioners on each individual amendment to balance the desires of owners, the visions of the neighborhoods, the advice of professional planners, the claims of citywide policy, and the uncertain effectiveness of any particular zoning classification to achieve the end result they wanted. Still, they plodded through the agenda, amendment by amendment.

At the second of these five meetings, Rick Michaelson, who continued to chair work on the SWCP even though he was no longer president of the Planning Commission, warned his colleagues that there were 125 more amendments to be considered. A week later he announced that there were 183 amendments left. Maybe it just seemed like the job got bigger the more they worked on it. Initially, three work sessions had been scheduled, but they added two more. If they wanted the City Council to act on the plan before the end of the calendar year, they had to finish no later than August 11, and it was dawning on everyone that they might not be able to do so. Nevertheless, they plowed through the map amendments, asking staff advice, debating among themselves, and casting votes, one parcel at a time. In many instances they took the advice of staff. But in a fair number of cases they adopted the neighborhood association's proposal. Other times they crafted their own compromises, still one at a time.[19]

They came by few of the decisions easily. They jumped around from area to area, discussing one issue, then setting it aside in favor of another area where agreement was easier to reach, then returning later to discuss the first issue again.[20] One of the neighborhood leaders described the process as one of "collective subjectivity," because of their lack of explicit or measurable criteria for making decisions. Certainly, it would have been easier had they taken citizens' advice to pass the policies first.[21]

The general characterization of this struggle as between a planning staff bent on upzoning and neighborhood associations demanding lower residential densities is handy enough. But the situation was a lot messier than that. Sometimes the neighborhood association proposals violated the most basic orthodoxies of zoning practice – downzonings that created non-conforming uses or threatened to reduce property values, or spot zonings, and other proposals that disrupted consistent patterns of zoning. On the other hand, staff sometimes ignored the common sense of a situation in order to implement the policies for housing and transit supportive densities. On one parcel in Hillsdale Town Center they recommended attached residential (R2) despite the listing of the site in the Bureau of Planning's own *Landslide Potential Atlas*.[22] In some cases, however, it was up to staff to push for amendments to correct mistakes neighborhood associations made in attempting to meet their housing targets. In many cases, they zoned property for high-density residential that wasn't appropriate for it and staff were left to argue for commercial zoning,

instead.[23] Remarkably, the Commissioners were able to work their way through most of the amendments before their time expired. But there was so much more to the plan than the zoning map.

They had discussed the policies at length, but not adopted them. They had seen the neighborhood plans and action items but not acted on them. But mainly there were the "tools." If the problem in the beginning was that Planning Commission and its staff weren't listening to the neighborhoods it was no longer. The problem now was that the city lacked the appropriate regulatory mechanisms to make the public's aspirations real. In a sense, they were caught halfway through the process by which an idea, a word or a phrase, or a popular exhortation becomes a legal and administrative and therefore material fact of life. Or, to put it another way, the planning process had generated goals for which there was no established implementing device.

They wanted a small-lot single family zone to serve as an alternative to the despised R2.5 rowhouse zoning. They even called it R3 – single family houses on 30 by 100-foot lots. Unfortunately, it had not yet been developed or added to the zoning code. In zoning commercial areas, they had some tools, but they remained uncertain about how to apply them. General commercial (CG) tended to produce suburban strip-type development. But it was hard to know if the "storefront commercial" (CS), "neighborhood commercial" (CN), or especially the mixed-use commercial and residential (CM) classifications would produce anything at all. Developers didn't like them, although as they gained experience, they liked the CS better than the others. For all of the Metro-designated Main Streets, Town Centers, and whatnot, there were plan districts, which theoretically gave them finer control over development, but they were complicated to create and very time consuming. And then there was the issue of stormwater.

If evidence was needed that the Planning Commission was now listening closely to the demands of the neighborhood associations, not to mention the footsteps of the Endangered Species Act, it was in the fact that the debates over housing density had largely subsided and discussions about what to do about stormwater had taken their place. The threat itself was clear enough. Storm runoff caused flooding, erosion, landslides, and pollution of salmon and steelhead streams. But there was no consensus yet on what to do. Some, like Michaelson, argued that the stormwater problems in Southwest could best be handled with major investments in stormwater management infrastructure which, in turn, could only be paid for when higher-density redevelopment took place.[24] The neighbors, not surprisingly, preferred to protect fish by downzoning in stream corridors, headwaters, and other sensitive areas. There was help on the way. Portland's Bureau of Environmental Services (BES) was in the process of creating a new stormwater manual to regulate the issue, and Portland Metro was developing region-wide

guidelines for protecting streams – an item known as Title 3. But none of these things would be ready immediately.

The emerging plan contained clear policies for watershed management and protection, but staff and Planning Commission agreed, the existing regulatory structure would not be able to implement those policies. Amanda Fritz pushed for interim standards to be incorporated in the SWCP. But the issue was not an easy one. Development standards would do nothing to correct the problems that had already been created. Should they promote redevelopment, as Michaelson suggested, as a way to engineer and finance solutions? Was it possible to redevelop at higher densities with less impervious surface area? Did limiting impervious surfaces even solve the problem? The Bureau of Planning lacked staff qualified to review development plans for stormwater impacts. Could they empower BES to enforce new standards? How would they make the transition from interim standards to the new stormwater manual? Unfortunately, they did not have time to answer these questions.[25]

On August 4 – the fourth of five sessions on the SWCP – Michaelson told the commission that they weren't going to be able to finish work on the plan by their deadline of August 11. Deborah Stein presented an alternative approach to completing their work. If they finished the map amendments that day, set aside work on the West Portland Town Center and Barbur Boulevard, and recapped their discussions on plan districts, overlays, and zoning code changes, they could finalize decisions on community plan action items and stormwater regulations on the 11th. For the remainder of the year the Planning Commission could meet in subcommittees to work on all the pieces of the plan that weren't finished. This would be in addition to their work on an overall revision of the city's Land Division Code (Title 34) and the implementation of Metro's Title 3 (streams protection).[26]

The problem with Stein's proposal was the Commissioners were tired. They were part-time volunteers and they all had other jobs. Steve Naito suggested that if they knew they weren't going to be able to finish the plan by the 11th anyway, they should knock off early that day, and skip the next meeting altogether. But most of the other commissioners expressed a willingness to go on, despite their weariness, and make every decision a deliberative one. Rick Holt suggested they could shortcut the process by adopting the neighborhood proposal as one package. He said he trusted their judgments more than the Commission's own decisions since they had worked on their plans for several years. Amanda Fritz said she liked that idea, except it would be unfair to the neighborhoods whose amendments they had already voted up or down. The only fair way to do it would be to rescind all the previous votes and adopt the neighborhood map in total. Even after that, Marcy McInelly said, they would still need to map all the changes, stand back and take

a look, and see if it all made sense together. They agreed to Stein's proposal for the process going forward, but they would be unable to stick with it.[27]

At the following meeting, Steve Abel, the incoming Planning Commission president, proposed they suspend the plan indefinitely. They had simply run out of time and energy. They would come back to it at some point in the future, not abandoning the work they had already done, but taking advantage of staff work on new zoning and planning tools, completion of the stormwater manual, implementation of Title 3, and revision of Title 34. Abel's proposal took a few moments for the Commissioners to digest. Some parts of the plan were not controversial and could be completed. Many property owners had been waiting for years to get zoning changes. It was unfair to make them wait any more. The neighborhood associations, too, had labored so long and hard without anything to show for it. Some of the members said they were comfortable with the decisions they had already made. These could be sent forward to the City Council and so could neighborhood plans and action items. The result of a suspension would be a loss of credibility for the Planning Commission, and a loss of community involvement.

But the reasons to delay were heavier than the reasons to go forward. They had a lot of other work to do that was important to the whole city. They didn't yet have the zoning tools to do the SWCP right. If the plan was to be a "quality" product they could not rush it through to completion, and it would be bad to send City Council a plan that was incomplete. Staff had other things to do, as well, and all of the hearing times for the Planning Commission were booked well into the following year. Most fundamentally, Planning Commissioners were fed up with the SWCP and burned out, too. Abel said he knew that this change in schedule would be controversial, and that many would be disappointed, but the Planning Commission needed to "move forward." Naito seconded the motion to suspend the planning and all but Amanda Fritz agreed.[28]

The post mortems on the plan were immediate and wide-ranging. Most of the given reasons for the failure were valid: the size and complexity of the plan, the limits of volunteer attention and energy, the lack of implementing mechanisms, and the demands of the calendar. But there were other explanations at the neighborhood level. First of all, the Planning Bureau wasn't required to submit all of those amendments. Indeed, the Summit Group had asked that they withdraw all but the most essential. Second, and more fundamentally for some, the break-down simply demonstrated the city's commitment to planning principles that the residents hoped had been discredited. "What I see," wrote Don Bain on the Summit off-list list, "is a city that has not altered its goals or objectives one iota but is strategically diverse and flexible."[29] They had tried to use the SWCP as a "strategic venue" for achieving the overall goals. But if they couldn't

get what they wanted through the community plan, they had other places to do it and other strategies to try.

Others blamed the aggressive and hostile language and behavior frequently employed by the plan opponents. Leonard Gard, the SWNI land use specialist, reported Michaelson's view that "the incivility of some people toward the Planning Commission and BoP intimidated commissioners and BoP staff and contributed to the failure in cooperation." Planning Director Knowles complained to a reporter, "for four years we have been treated like the enemy in this process." When Planning Commissioners got the same treatment as the staff they lost enthusiasm for moving forward, he suggested. Amanda Fritz urged all citizens – and by implication the fiercest opponents of the plan – to share responsibility for the failure. The "atmosphere of resentment and antagonism" that had beset the process so far would also doom it in the future if not rectified. "People find it hard to keep working when they are being told they are doing a bad job, that they are bad people, and worse." But some were having none of the "civility" argument. "The adversarial nature of the relationship between Southwest neighborhood activists and BoP did not take place in a vacuum," Don Snedecor editorialized. "Neighbors were rightfully angered when staff, which had assisted on a weekly basis on a number of neighborhood plan steering committees, suddenly changed (tack) and position." If everyone had been "well-mannered and respectful," he asked, would they have gotten a SWCP? Perhaps not. But, for Portland, at least, the prevailing level of hostility was untenable.[30]

Most of the initial public reactions on all sides seemed to be that work on the Southwest Community Plan would resume at some point in the foreseeable future, when Bureau and Commission workload permitted, and once some of the underlying regulatory issues were worked out. Mayor Katz was explicit about her support for finishing the plan. So was Steve Abel, president of the Planning Commission. But there were indications of deep reservations on both sides. At a post-suspension meeting, Michaelson warned neighborhood activists that the plan would resume "only if the community sends a clear message to the City Council and the Planning Commission that it wants the work to resume."[31] Few if any of the Commissioners were ready to take up the work again, especially in an atmosphere of unresolved conflict. Some members of the City Council were, likewise, unwilling to invest more money in a process that might go nowhere.[32]

Some in the neighborhood camp, meanwhile, questioned whether finishing the SWCP would get them what they wanted or not. Julie O'Dell pushed for the Summit Group to "get a commitment from City Council on a budget and timeline as soon as possible. Once we have those commitments in hand, we can decide what the scope and parameters of a plan should be at this point and the process for accomplishing it." Don Bain replied "This is backwards. When we haven't decided what the 'it' will be, how we will get from here to there with 'it' or what

prerequisites are required, you want us to commit to a timeline and a needed budget (for whom to do what?)???" The problem, from Bain's perspective, was it was hard to know whether finishing a SWCP was where the neighbors ought to put their energy. With a rewrite of the Land Division Code (Title 34), a new city-wide housing policy, a new stormwater manual, a major infrastructure study, and a proposed affordable housing code all moving forward, the city might do by other means everything the Summit intended to prevent through the SWCP.[33]

Despite questions and misgivings on both sides, there were many reasons for the city as well as the neighborhoods to go back and finish the plan. The City of Portland, for one thing, was obligated by Metro policy to bring base zoning into line with Comprehensive Plan designations, one way or another. They were also required by the state to complete a regular update of their Comprehensive Plan. The city couldn't just walk away from the SWCP and the neighbors knew it.[34] Nor could the neighborhoods. At a minimum they faced the possibility that individual property owners would take the hiatus in planning as an opportunity to request parcels be upzoned to existing Comp Plan designations, which would be granted as of right. Large chunks of Crestwood, Ashcreek, Arnold Creek, Hayhurst, Bridlemile, Hillsdale, and Multnomah – including many environmentally sensitive areas – were vulnerable to zoning for higher density under this provision of the code.[35] Beyond that, there was pressure from individual owners who wanted rezonings in order to put their property to use. They had been held in limbo during the planning, and continued to wait after the suspension.[36]

Perhaps even more reason to go back to the plan – for both sides – was the sense that it all would have been a waste of their time – of their lives – not to finish. Members of the staff had spent thousands of hours on the plan. Some neighborhood leaders spent nearly as much.[37] Planning Commissioners Fritz and Michaelson had invested their time and energy unceasingly on the project. "Failure to proceed on even parts of a plan," Fritz wrote in a letter to the editor, "would be a huge waste of time, money and effort for all parties – the citizens, the city staff, the taxpayers, and the Planning Commissioners. And it will have been a waste unless we learn from the mistakes that have been made."[38] Others suggested this was the wrong way to look at it. It didn't matter any more how much time had been spent in the past. Those were "sunk costs" in investment parlance. What mattered most was how best to invest the hours they still had left to spend.[39] Still, there was an almost palpable attachment to the plan. People just couldn't let go. Besides, Portland had almost never left a planning process unfinished, no matter how difficult.

Almost immediately after the suspension, the Summit Group reconvened to consider its options.[40] But just as quickly, the leadership of Southwest Neighborhoods Inc., (SWNI) which had overlapped with the Summit, moved to reassert control over the neighborhood side. Patty Lee, the SWNI chair, decided it was time to reconstitute the SWCP Task Force, which had existed

for a while in the beginning of the process. She convened the executive committee to approve her recommendation, announced the formation of the Task Force, and later got approval from the full SWNI board of directors. Lee had stolen a march. Some of the Summit activists were not at all convinced that it was time to return to more regular channels. But it was harder to argue against SWNI, which was composed entirely of representatives the neighborhoods chose for themselves, than it had been to argue against Charlie Hales' "hand-picked" Citizens Advisory Committee. Nor were arguments about the ability to take quick action very convincing now that there was a project with no known schedule. Besides, the Summit Group had drawn criticism for their confrontational style and sometimes covert decision-making. There was something high-handed in Chairman Lee's initiative, but the Summit activists had no leverage to oppose it. [41]

The SWNI Southwest Community Plan Task Force convened for the first time in late September 1998 with one representative from each neighborhood association invited to attend and Celeste Lewis, an architect from Hillsdale, appointed by Patty Lee to serve as chair. She had no easy job. The members were battle-hardened and cynical, and at the same time remained zealous and idealistic. The debates were free-wheeling, complex, and repetitive. There was grumbling at first over the constitution of the Task Force itself. Some members said they still needed the Summit to act quickly and bargain effectively. Judy Henderson from Marshall Park said it was wrong for Patty Lee to write to the city to tell them SWNI wanted to revive the SWCP. Bill Chapman from Markham agreed. That hadn't been decided yet.[42]

Plus, there was resistance to Lewis, herself, serving as chair. After the first meeting, Don Bain wrote a note to a short list of Southwest leaders expressing "reservations" about Lewis continuing as chair. "She has not been there with us during our many meetings and so has no history with the content of where we are and how got there," Bain wrote. "Fresh ideas" might be an asset but it was more important that the chair know the group and be "widely trusted." Her style, he thought, was not conducive to consensus building and she seemed not to be thinking about the "political positioning and strategy that will be crucial to get what we want." Bain had questions about her connections and credibility with the city, too. "It is also important that the leader not have any conflicts of interest," he added, "e.g. development property that would be affected, permit applications before BoP, etc." It certainly did not help her cause in these quarters that Lewis had been involved with the Hillsdale Town Center Plan, which some activists viewed as an exercise in accommodation to the Bureau. Perhaps, Bain suggested, Bob Baldwin, Jere Retzer, or Mike Roche might be willing to serve instead.[43]

At the second meeting of the Task Force, the coup fizzled. Corinne Weber, of Hayhurst, suggested that serving as chair would be a hardship for Lewis, and that given her job as an architect, maybe it was not appropriate for her to serve. Weber suggested Sucec as a replacement,

but Lewis brushed off the conflict of interest implication. She designed home renovations, mostly kitchens and bathrooms, and had never considered her job to be a conflict of interest with anything. But it was a measure of the suspicion of the activists that some of them may have considered an architect, by definition, to be "on the other side." Other members of the Task Force leaped to Lewis's defense. Jere Retzer prompted Lewis to talk about her motivations and goals regarding the Task Force: she said she took building a consensus as a challenge; she respected the neighborhoods, the Bureau, and the Planning Commission alike; and she wanted to get a plan for Southwest.[44]

Maybe, Bain offered, back-tracking, their misgivings could be addressed by having more than one person at the top. Someone suggested that Lewis's role could be "isolated as facilitator." Alan Shearin, from Arnold Creek, pointed out that it was not even up to the Task Force to choose a chair. Both the members of the Task Force and the chair had been appointed by the SWNI chair and approved unanimously by the board of directors of SWNI. Patty Lee had selected Celeste Lewis and that was it. Still, Sucec moved that they revisit the issue after checking the coalition by-laws and talking with Patty Lee. Nevertheless, Lewis recalls that it was December before the Task Force held a meeting and her leadership was not at issue.[45]

Lewis hoped that after all the conflict that had gone before they could begin to engage some "norming" about political behavior. But, as the paradigm has it, "forming and storming" had to come first.[46] The Task Force spent large chunks of its first four or five meetings talking about how they would operate. Although it was eventually agreed that their meetings would be open, as required by law, the pros and cons of holding "executive sessions" were discussed. Don Baack suggested early in the process it was important to keep their political strategy to themselves. Later he changed his mind. John Alland argued for the power that came from openness. Dave Johnston noted that the members had often criticized the city for its "closed door" decision-making. Bain agreed in general but said it was necessary on occasion to conceal a bargaining position the Task Force might adopt. Helfand recommended that the Task Force meetings be open except for "war" sessions. There were discussions, too, about the minutes, how they should be distributed, how they should be vetted, as well as who should participate in formal votes. The Task Force included chairs of the standing SWNI committees as well as one representative from each neighborhood association. But each of the committee chairs was also from a neighborhood association, meaning that some NAs would get two votes. The continuing impulse to hold close counsel reflected their deep suspicion of the city, and their clenched-jaw approach to matters of procedure had similar origins.[47]

Part of Lewis's initial task was to make sure the members of the Task Group understood how the political environment had changed since the Planning Commission quit. Lewis met with

Rick Michaelson, who laid down the law. The commission was not open to making major changes in the work they had already done. There was no support for starting over. There was especially no support for any elaborate presentation to the commission. They needed to decide which parts of the SWCP they really wanted, and which ones they would be willing to leave out.[48] Four months into the process Lewis reminded the Task Force that the Planning Commission would not even begin to reconsider policy decisions already made until at least three commissioners requested to do so. What they needed from the Task Force, Michaelson told Lewis, was a consensus package that they could vote up or down.[49]

Lewis got help in delivering this news after the formation of a "contact group" in December. Helfand, Retzer, and Mark Sieber joined Lewis in a meeting just before Christmas with Michaelson, Planning Commission President Steve Abel, and Knowles. The commission didn't want more testimony; they wanted to start making decisions. Bureau staff would provide information only; the commission was in charge now. The Task Force should send any and all proposals for policy changes within the next few weeks. The Planning Commission, they made clear, had little patience left for the Southwest Community Plan.[50]

Under such conditions it was easier for Lewis to get the Task Force to hear her main advice: prioritize. They needed to acknowledge that they were not going to get everything they wanted in the plan. There would not be an opportunity to rewrite everything they thought was still a problem. They would have to choose, as some said, "Which hills you will die on." Lewis urged them to undertake a process of "policy triage" that sorted out "things we can live with," from "things we could live with (with) minor modifications," from "things we cannot live with in the present form," or things that were left out of the plan and needed to be put in.[51] This was asked of Task Force members working on policy-area sub-committees, and it was asked of Task Force members going back to consult with their neighborhood associations on their individual plans and zoning maps. This was a huge shift. In the long preceding period when suspicion of the Bureau had been rampant, neighborhoods had used a kitchen-sink approach to negotiations. Demand everything. Concede nothing. As Michaelson noted later, this just confused the Planning Commission to the point that they didn't know what the neighborhoods really wanted. Once the tactical demands were out of the way, they could really bargain.[52]

Even still, there was some continuing question about whether the moment was right to push for a plan. Some suggested that they needed to wait until the contents of the Title 34 Land Division Code rewrite were known. Its provisions for lot sizes, bonus lots, and more could alter the practical impact of any zoning designation they sought to apply. Many had long been convinced, anyway, that Title 34 was the city's way to circumvent citizen resistance to upzoning. After it was announced that David Knowles would be leaving Bureau of Planning in April 1999,

some of the members of the Task Force argued that it might also make sense to wait until there was new, and perhaps more sympathetic, leadership there. But Lewis pushed them forward. "If you waited for everything to be finalized," she wrote to the Task Force, "you would never have a plan."[53]

One more thing was clear. The process could not be as nasty and confrontational as it had been before the Planning Commission suspended its work. "The challenge," Lewis told a reporter, "will be to work together in a cooperative spirit that does not sacrifice our integrity or the integrity and dignity of any participant, community member or that of the city as a whole." She had no time to waste in her life for an effort that would not bear fruit. If the Task Force produced "a process filled with more anger and disrespect than action, more rhetoric than creative solutions," Lewis would quit.[54]

"Our leader Celeste is trying to take (a) large bunch of independent thinkers and bring us to consensus," Don Baack wrote to the Task Force, forwarding the minutes from the previous meeting. "These notes show how difficult this process is. Please have patience as we continue on this task. Consensus does not come easily or quickly."[55] So they got down to work. As a first principle, they agreed that the Task Force would have no authority over the zoning proposed by individual neighborhood associations. The Task Force would develop the policy language for the plan, but neighborhood maps were up to each neighborhood. In fact, the Task Force reached "consensus" on the issue at its very first meeting. But like many of the issues it took up, the Task Force discussed it repeatedly over the course of months, and in the repeating it became, in a sense, law.[56]

They seldom came to consensus easily, as Baack observed. Wide ranging discussions consumed large chunks of Task Force time. Sometimes they conducted what was essentially the same debate several meetings in a row. When the agenda demanded, or when they were simply talked out, Lewis (and her successors as chair, as well) would summarize the discussion and suggest what the consensus was, and if there were no objections, they would proceed. What required little discussion and no prompting was the suggestion by Lewis that they break into "focus groups" to work on policy language as the first step to getting a plan. They volunteered by policy topic and got to work hammering out the language.[57]

For all of the laborious discussion, all of the focus group meetings, the sticking points in the plan had boiled down to a relative few. First, the neighborhoods of Multnomah, Hayhurst, and Maplewood insisted, contrary to adopted city policy, that property around Gabriel Park not be zoned for higher-density housing. City policy was based on the principle that concentrating housing around parks made a limited resource accessible to more users. The neighborhoods objected on the grounds that higher density development threatened sensitive environments in

the park. But the Task Force understood that elected leaders – not just staff – felt strongly about the policy. Much later a staffer would reflect the Mayor's "pet peeve" about citizens who try to make public parks their "private preserve." In anticipation, the Task Force framed the argument more narrowly, not opposing the policy in general, but framing an exception for "natural area parks or environmental areas."[58]

Second, the Task Force sought policy language that clearly reflected their concerns about housing redevelopment in Southwest. Even in places where R2.5 zoning was not imposed, they felt there was a danger that pressure in the housing market would lead to the replacement of the typical Southwest ranch or bungalow with taller, bigger, denser, albeit still single-family, housing. They asked that "preservation of viable existing housing stock" be part of the strategy for expanding home-ownership opportunities. And they wanted "infill" housing to "reflect the scale, character and general design of housing currently in place in the area." Later, Mark Sieber noted, "We see the new McMansions, and we don't want that to be a rolling trend. The tools we now have don't preserve neighborhood quality."[59]

Third, the Task Force and the city were divided over how to respond to the special problems of watershed and stormwater management in a hilly and rainy Southwest Portland. Neighborhood policy mavens like Jere Retzer were convinced that the forthcoming Stormwater Manual would be insufficient to deal with threats to water quality and habitat in Southwest streams and proposed a "watershed plan district" in addition to the provisions of the manual. Beyond that, the Task Force insisted that infrastructure to support the level of development allowed under any zoning be in place at the time any upzoning went into effect. Requirements for "concurrency" are a familiar item in the planning regulatory tool box, but in this case residents were asking for a very big hammer. On top of this, some of the Task Force members argued that the burden for paying for new infrastructure must either be carried by developers, or be spread broadly across the city, not carried by homeowners via the LID (Local Infrastructure District) process. City planners countered that the proposed concurrency requirement would amount to a moratorium on development, something which local governments in Oregon could use only is tightly prescribed circumstances. Staff would offer some other suggestions about how to achieve the same ends, but not immediately to the satisfaction of the neighborhoods.[60]

Finally, there was the West Portland Town Center (WPTC). In the immediate aftermath of the Planning Commission's suspension of work in 1998, David Knowles announced he would apply to Metro to remove the "Town Center" designation, but he never did.[61] The commissioners had already decided they would have to defer work on this highly contentious proposal until after adoption of a SWCP. They could work on it separately at a later date. But for now, it was too controversial, and not in any simple way. At one level, the conflict was simply between the West

Portland Park Neighborhood Association, which wanted the Town Center designation, and the Multnomah, Crestwood, and Ashcreek Neighborhood Associations that didn't. The interests of both sides were clear. West Portland Park needed the promise of new, more intensive development as a way to improve the mish-mash of commercial uses and untie the tangle of street and highway connections at the north end of their neighborhood. But the adjacent neighborhoods wanted no part of the higher density housing and increased traffic that would come with the Town Center. They were happy with the way the were. West Portland Park needed change. The others needed continuity.[62]

Yet there was no obvious way to split the difference. It was not possible, Amanda Fritz argued, for West Portland Park to put forward an approvable neighborhood plan and zoning map without the WPTC. Without upzoning in the Town Center area, supported by the financial benefits of Metro designation, it would be impossible to offset the downzoning they proposed in environmentally sensitive areas in the rest of the neighborhood. "If so," Fritz said, "the SWCP could be jeopardized." West Portland Park would be presenting a plan with a net loss of housing units. That was against the rules. Opponents of the Town Center, on the other hand, didn't like playing by the city and Metro rules in the first place.[63]

Some of the WPTC opponents were against the Metro "design type" designations in general – Town Centers, Main Streets, and the rest. They saw them as one of the key mechanisms of the whole policy of growth management through urban density. Which they were. If the city's "agenda" was to be resisted, Town Centers more than anything else needed to be resisted. At the very least, the definition and application of the design types needed to be narrowed, constrained, and tailored to the specific circumstances in each case. The West Portland Park leadership, namely Planning Commissioner Fritz, was likewise committed to the Town Center both as a specific remedy for problems in that neighborhood, and also as a general principle of planning in Portland. The whole conflict turned ugly as WPTC opponents demanded that Fritz recuse herself from any Planning Commission deliberations on the issue and Fritz denied a conflict and continued to rule on the WPTC. It was, she said, a regional, not a neighborhood issue, and therefore her right and duty to participate.[64]

As the Task Force worked to sort out its own views in a range of policy areas, their aspirations hardened. They wanted a plan. They wanted a whole plan, not part of a plan. They wanted policies and a map and community action items, and neighborhood plans. But as this desire took shape their ostensible partners in the Planning Commission had second thoughts. There wasn't enough time or money to do neighborhood plans, Knowles told them. There wasn't even time and money to do a map. Even worse, the Planning Commission might stick with its own policies, send them on to City Council and let the neighborhood fight them there. The members of

the Task Force were enraged. Even Lewis stepped up to accuse the Planning Commission of failing to fulfill their official obligation to carry forward a plan. The neighbors did not accept the blame some assigned to them for the initial failures to finish a plan. They blamed the Planning Commission and staff. If there was no plan, it was not their fault, and it remained the Planning Commission's duty to follow through. But in some sense the Planning Commission did hold the community responsible and they refused to reward them. Hales, who was publicly encouraging about a completed SWCP, asked the Task Force contact group pointedly in private: why should I help you finish the plan? You won't like it anyway.[65]

Change, however, was in the air. Long-time City Commissioner Gretchen Kafoury had retired from the Council and was replaced by Dan Saltzman, elected the previous November. Mayor Katz took the change in personnel as an opportunity to reshuffle Commissioner portfolios. In January 1999 she "flagged" the Bureau of Planning to say she was reevaluating its direction, especially in light of recent work to separate day-to-day regulatory matters from long-range planning. In May she took it back from Hales. This meant that all of the key personalities that had been involved in the Draft "Disaster" Map – Hales, his staff liaison Jillian Detweiler, Knowles, as well all of the Bureau staffers who worked on the SWCP, Harrison, Wax, everybody – were now out of the picture. It was now Katz, her aide Betsy Ames, Deborah Stein, now interim director, and Marie Johnson on the team – an enormous opportunity for a fresh start, especially given Katz' explicit desire to finish the Southwest Community Plan.[66]

Stein and Johnson visited the May meeting of the SWNI Task Force – Celeste Lewis' last as chair before stepping down for maternity leave – and pitched an idea for how to move forward. It did not appear possible to work the policies through the Planning Commission, she said. They were not ready for more serious work on the plan. The minutes of the meeting reported that Stein referred to the Commission as "dysfunctional." It might be possible, however, to get policies approved by City Council by putting forward Planning Commission policies, which had been tentatively adopted the previous year, in tandem with Task Force policies, which were also well-developed by then. Another round of "dialogue groups" would work to resolve any negotiable differences between the two sets of policies and highlight the key differences between them. Then the City Council could decide. The members of the Task Force were encouraged. This might work.[67]

Stein and Ames reviewed the idea with Katz, then "shopped" the proposal to other members of the Council. With sufficient support to approve new money for additional work, they took the new approach to the Planning Commission. Stein's original idea was that a zoning map would move forward at the same time as the policies. But the Planning Commission insisted that they do the policies first and then see what other elements of the plan seemed manageable to

produce. This was not a problem from the City Council perspective, either. It made it easier to find the money – some this year, some the next – and it assured that they would get a success under their collective belts before moving on to the demonstrably more difficult zoning map. The members of the Task Force were not so understanding, and discussions about how to force the process consumed much of their Fall agenda.[68]

If anyone had hoped that the process might go smoothly with a new approach and with a new team in the Bureau of Planning, they were to be disappointed. The suspicion engendered in neighborhood activists by the draft map fiasco, the mid-point reviews, and then the onslaught of amendments, did not evaporate overnight. It lingered, and some of the most active of the activists were the most suspicious. Stein had asked what "unheard voices" the Task Force members thought might need to be brought into the process to protect it from a participation challenge later on. It was a gentle way of suggesting that citizen involvement on the plan might have become a bit too closely held over the years. Their immediate reaction was muted. But at a subsequent meeting, without Stein, their reaction was defensive. They had always worked hard to get people involved and to keep them informed, Dixie Johnson said. They had gone out of their way, Martie Sucec added, to involve business groups, churches, and others in the process. Mark Sieber said no one had ever suggested they didn't do a good job in promoting participation. Bringing new people into the process at this point, several suggested, was just an attempt to get the Task Force "off track and to kill the plan." [69]

Some of the members understood that what Stein was suggesting was for their own good. Mark Sieber said he would try to get neighborhood associations who had dropped out of the process involved again. Don Baack said they needed a "no-torpedo" policy. If they let people stand on the outside of the process, they risked having them "torpedo" the results at the end. Indeed, West Portland Park, at odds with the leadership of the Task Force over the Town Center, became increasingly estranged from their fellow neighborhood Associations, and might have been in a position to launch a "torpedo" against the plan. Maybe, Jere Retzer offered hopefully, Stein was just doing a "sound check" on inclusiveness. She was, but also carrying out a request from the political leadership to test again the representativeness of the citizen leadership. The probe was not well-tolerated, and some members continued to argue against "injecting new issues and people" into the process.[70]

There were other "torpedoes" in the treacherous waters. Last minute staff rebuttals to Task Force positions could wreck their plan, some suggested. If staff were backing the Planning Commission's tentative policies, Michael Roche suggested, it might be better to take the plan to City Council and "duke it out." Having plenty of staff support, Don Bain had suggested at an earlier meeting, was not necessarily a good thing. All the more opportunity for the new process

"to go south" on them. And then there was the problem of the "moving targets" of the Title 34 rewrite. In the fog of metaphors of battle, Task Force leadership tried to keep the "troops" calm. The proposed process would allow for an early airing of differences in policy, Sieber reassured them. Openness would protect them from the "torpedoes." As for staff, it was their job to represent the viewpoint of the city and its established policy. Besides, Mark Helfand added, a lot of the money for staff would be spent on the purely administrative and logistical aspects of planning, not making trouble for the neighborhoods.[71]

In September, the Planning Commission, with little discussion and only a few minor amendments, adopted their tentative policies from the previous year, setting the stage for dialogue groups to resolve policy conflicts. Only John Alland from the neighborhoods attended, and the event was little noticed.[72] Jere Retzer, however, took the opportunity to blast the Planning Commission for rescinding interim stormwater management measures they had adopted earlier. The decision "moves us in the wrong direction," he wrote. His e-mail message set off an unusually bitter exchange with Planning Commissioner Amanda Fritz. The action was mainly procedural, she pointed out, rescinding a measure that was outdated anyway (for example, it referred to the stormwater manual in the future tense at a time when it had already been adopted). Besides, Fritz said, the Planning Commission was committed to stronger protections and had a task group working on a better, more refined approach to the problem than was included in the interim measure. More than that, Fritz objected to Retzer questioning the motives of the commissioners – especially herself, whom Retzer knew as a staunch watershed activist. "I'm not sure why you're doubting the motivation of people who have stated and voted on multiple occasions that additional protects are needed for SW watersheds," Fritz wrote. It was, perhaps, a simple sign of the level of distrust that remained in the process.[73]

Although City Council and Planning Commission seemed set on a process in which plan policies and zoning map would be taken up one after the other rather than together, Southwest activists continued to resist. For a time, the party line seemed to be that separation of map from policies would put land use regulation in Southwest in legal peril. If a situation arose in which the existing zoning designation ran contrary to newly adopted policies a "Baker conflict" might arise. *Baker v. City of Milwaukie*[74] was the legal decision that reinforced the requirement for zoning to be consistent with policy. The danger this posed to Southwest neighborhood interests was minimal. During the period between adoption of policies and adoption of a map someone might get approval for a development more dense that they would be able to get later. But mainly *Baker* was the best argument they had for demanding the map now. And what if there was never a new map?[75]

The Task Force approached the construction of new dialogue groups with similar suspicion. It wasn't so unusual that the members wanted it spelled out in advance what role Bureau of Planning would play. It was the way the question was broached: would they be representing Planning Commission positions? Their own views? Or would they simply provide procedural support? Whose side would they be on? In meetings that Fall the Task Force discussed at length whether the process would be covered by open meetings law. They wanted the meetings open, but not so open that other new parties might demand a seat at the table along with the Task Force. Stein followed through on instructions to insert "unheard voices" into the conversation, and the Task Force debated just who those other voices might be. Of crucial importance was the facilitator. Michael Roche warned his colleagues to take care they not be "set up." They should demand control over that selection. Many wanted to know what would be the text or texts they would parse. Some held that the Task Force policies should be the "default" document. At the very least the Task Force and Planning Commission versions should stand on equal ground. Finally, they debated what the product of the dialogue groups should be and who should make it. They could not trust the Bureau staff to create a Task Force document that would have the same credibility and sophistication as the one they crated for the Planning commission.[76]

But even well-earned suspicion would have to run its course. As the work continued, Mark Helfand recalled, there were occasions when Marie Johnson would offer, quite innocently, to translate some newly-negotiated understanding or agreement into text. On more than one such occasion Task Force members were to suggest that someone else might be better for the job. But Helfand would say, no, let her do it, and she would perform the task faithfully. A year before, and certainly with other members of the staff, relying on a member of the Bureau of Planning, in a sense, to speak for the neighborhood, would have been unimaginable.[77]

Some greater level of trust among the parties was required, if for no other reason than the political comfort of those City Council members voting to spend the money. Mayor Katz proposed an additional allocation for the SWCP including $123,000 for the 1999-2000 fiscal year, with another quarter of a million set aside for the following year. The Task Force worked hard to calm the fears of City Commissioners that the plan could still blow up again. Yet they pressed their procedural demands at the same time. Mark Sieber, as Task Force chair, and Patty Lee, as SWNI president, wrote to Katz suggesting that the Bureau make some choices among their several hundred plan amendments, withdrawing many, and organizing the ones they wanted to sustain by the key principles they served. This would build confidence in the dialogue process and reduce the size and complexity of the task of completing a zoning map. More than that, it was only fair. The Task Force had already undertaken a similar process of prioritizing policy and map issues. So should the Bureau.[78]

In front of the City Council the tone shifted toward the conciliatory. "I share Council's concern that we not waste city money and resources," Helfand told them. "I want this process to be a victory for Mayor Katz and the City Council." Sieber promised: "if there are outbursts, it will be by individuals... I hope the ground rules are sufficiently clear that when people step outside them they will be isolated, and not drag the process down with them." Katz declared, "I think at this point there's an element of trust." But Commissioner Dan Saltzman was less sure. "Do we have evidence there's a commitment to finish the plan? We're not going to spend eight hour sessions and have the whole thing implode in our faces?" Charlie Hales, unburdened of responsibility for the Bureau of Planning, took his own shots. The first phase of this work, he pointed out, would produce "not one square foot of rezoning." Besides, there were other, more cooperative neighborhoods that were begging for planning money. Commissioner Jim Francesconi agreed they needed to get on with the mapping, but first, he said, "we need to heal the wound here."[79]

When the dialogue groups finally convened in January 2000, there was no explosion. It would have been difficult by then to create one. The parties to the dialogue had signed on to a carefully-crafted memorandum of understanding that addressed most issues of concern on each side. The facilitator would be selected by consensus of a joint committee of Task Force, Bureau of Planning, and City Council staff. Minutes would be produced by SWNI land use specialist Leonard Gard. The Task Force would choose its own representatives; the Bureau of Planning would organize the participation of city staff relevant to each policy topic; and Betsy Ames would represent Mayor Katz and Marshall Runkel would sit in for Commissioner Erik Sten. Additional "citizen representatives," people who had not been extensively involved in the Task Force, would be added by mutual agreement of the other participants. All records would be public, and both sides promised to share information on their proposals and the rationales behind them. Most significantly, the goals of the dialogue groups were exceedingly modest. They didn't have to negotiate agreement on anything. Rather, their task was to resolve any "misunderstandings" or "minor disagreements," and merely identify issues on which they agreed or had "irresolvable disagreements." It would be up to City Council to resolve the fundamental policy issues, but hopefully with good information on the arguments of each side.[80]

As a result, the dialogue groups proceeded more as a process of mutual learning than of negotiation. Representatives of city bureaus explained the significances of standard terminology in law and regulation. It was important for policy language to be consistent from one part of the Comprehensive Plan to the other, Jeanne Harrison, planner in the Portland Department of Transportation, pointed out. If there is a slight difference in language, the courts will assume there was a difference in meaning and intent, as well. While the Task Force talked about "physical

systems," what they meant was expressed in state law by the term "public facilities." Task Force representatives, in turn, explained how the city system of street classifications failed to capture how any given street was actually used or how adequate it was for the purpose. They offered their views on the topic of unpaved streets. Gravel roads could be bad because they washed silt into creeks. But bringing them up to city standards could be just as bad because impervious pavement and gutters whisked stormwater into those same overloaded creeks. Both sides found room to accommodate the other on the details of language. Staff suggested how a particular objective might be "tweaked" to incorporate the intent of both Task Force and Planning Commission. The sessions were peaceful, almost uneventful. Most importantly, they produced what they were supposed to produce: a clear statement of areas of agreement and points of conflict between Planning Commission and Task Force.[81]

After the dialogue groups, all parties were on a fast-track to City Council, which had set May 17 as the date to begin hearing testimony on the outstanding issues. The Task Force went back to preparing its policy proposals for City Council. The Planning Council adopted policies would, by law, be the base document, the original motion, in a sense. The Task Force language would be presented as amendments. As they pushed on with their work, some of the edge seemed off the process. The discussions were a lot less contentious, distinctly more technical. The bitterness faded. Marie Johnson worked along with the Task Force, attending every meeting, working very hard to keep the leaders up to date and to avoid any of the "surprises" that had angered the residents so in the past. Betsy Ames and Marshall Runkel led a special session to give citizens advice on how to make an effective presentation to the City Council. This left the Task Force to organize its own presentations, divvying up responsibility for each of the major policy areas, and choreographing their show. Yet, while the atmosphere had sweetened somewhat, the Task Force members maintained their concentration until the end, refining their clauses like the devoted wordsmiths they were.[82]

The City Council spent three sessions in May and June working on the SWCP policies. They took the outstanding issues one at a time, with joint presentations on the key differences in language by Stein and Johnson for the Bureau of Planning with the leaders on each topic from the Task Force, organized by Sieber, now the outgoing chair, and Jere Retzer, incoming. Other citizens took turns to testify, including many from the Task Force, but far from the long, angry diatribes that had characterized previous venting sessions, witnesses commented on discrete issues, and spoke to the members of the Council as if they were people in a position to make a decision, which, of course, they were. "I thought it was a virtual love fest," Jere Retzer noted afterward. Still, Amanda Fritz said she was "disappointed that several of those who testified felt it

necessary to continue to perpetuate the unpleasantness and personalized attacks that have been the hallmark of the SWCP."[83]

Plus, the City Council seemed inclined to give the residents most any language they asked for, or at least to negotiate a mutually acceptable compromise. Task Force amendments on citizen involvement, parks, public safety and economic development were approved in full or nearly so. Even Retzer's sweeping work on watershed policies gained full approval with the Council further backing Southwest as "the first area of the city to have integrated watershed management planning as part of the city's Endangered Species Act response." Most of the Task Force "vision" language was incorporated, too. The West Portland Town Center was left in, but with a very prominent asterisk indicating that much work was left to be done on what a Town Center would mean there and along Barbur Boulevard.[84]

The City Council adopted a carefully crafted compromise on housing policy, clearly very acceptable to the Task Force. Language referring to numerical housing targets – the initial *casus belli* of the SWCP – was gone, replaced by a more general reference to expected growth. Support for zoning, subdivision and design tools to promote infill development compatible with existing housing was incorporated. So were clauses about housing patterns around environmentally sensitive parks, and the need to "encourage institutions to appropriately house students and minimize negative impacts." Neighbors near Lewis and Clark College and Cascade Community College had been alarmed by plans for student housing expansion.[85] On transportation policy, the Task Force proposed 24 separate amendments. Twenty of those were placed on the consent agenda for approval. Of the others, three were approved with modifications that preserved their main intent. Only proposed policy language that called for "increasing throughput" of arterials and maintaining "throughput" on neighborhood collectors was deleted.[86]

Even on the contentious topics of infrastructure and Metro "design types" the Task Force mostly got its way. They had intentionally omitted amendments to the policy section on Land Use and Urban Form as "a protest based on our legitimate concerns as to the scope, timing and application of Metro Design Types for Town Centers, Main Streets and Corridors." Likewise, they put in its place a section on Public Facilities as a "heads up" to the City Council about the depth of citizen concerns about the public infrastructure necessary to cope with increased development.[87] Yet, when it came time to decide, City Council did pass a version of their Public Facilities policy and instructed staff to consider community concerns in revising the Planning Commission version of the Land Use and Urban Form policy. Much of the intent and some of the language from the old Summit Group policies found its way into the adopted version, including a clause in the policy itself: "Outside of the mixed-use areas, allow infill housing opportunities which increase neighborhood diversity, stability and homeownership while limiting redevelopment."[88]

It was left to Don Bain to "speak out about the half empty part of the glass." They still needed to get neighborhood plans passed for neighborhoods that wanted them. The policies provided "nothing toward any remedy of SW's many dirt roads." Providing "infrastructure first" still required the "remedy of long-outstanding deficiencies." Despite the compromise for Southwest, the citywide policy on high-density housing near parks remained unchanged. Likewise, the citywide housing policy still called for 50 percent of all new units to be in multi-family structures. While some concluded "the numbers are dead," with regard to housing capacity, Bain said, "let us not forget that the city has not withdrawn their growth commitment (numbers) made to Metro." Creation of the zoning map would really tell the tale about what was won or lost.[89]

After the package was adopted, Mayor Katz invited all those involved to come to her office and enjoy a slice of cake. Retzer, now chair of the Task Force, urged everyone to go and take part in the "celebration." The delight of the party was a sheet cake "whose icing depicted a neighborhood map of Southwest Portland," a reporter wrote. "Ironically, and somehow appropriately, staffers dropped the cake while transporting it to the City Hall meeting room, and had to hastily reconstruct the map." It was a good story – too good to ask for a correction, Marie Johnson recalled – but not exactly true. It was actually the bakery that had dropped it and did the repairs. Staff, at least this time, were not at fault. Now, with step one complete and step two to go, there were hopes that no one would have to sing "McArthur Park" over the Southwest Community Plan.[90]

Nothing, however, was easy in the Southwest Community Plan. Soon after the policies were adopted, Patty Lee, the SWNI chair, appointed Jere Retzer to lead the SWNI Land Use Committee in addition to the Task Force. "We all owe Mike Roche a tremendous thank you for his leadership of the committee through many important milestones and complex issues," Retzer wrote. The reality was that Roche's bulldog style, never popular with people on the city side of the issue, was also wearing thin with his colleagues in the neighborhood. But the quandary was whether Roche would be more trouble inside SWNI leadership or out. He had attempted to take Multnomah out of the SWCP process entirely earlier that year, and he would raise hell later on about the mapping process. When City Council was so clear about the necessity to keep debate cool, Roche's tendency toward red-faced tirades was a distinct liability.[91]

Retzer would initially cause plenty of trouble for himself. He reported by e-mail about an initial meeting between SWNI representatives and Bureau of Planning staff Stein and Johnson. His note was mainly about the importance to be attached to statements of "desired neighborhood character" as a means to advise decision makers on the application of the concepts of Town Centers and Main Streets, and for neighborhoods in general. But he also summarized the

Bureau's proposed approach to the mapping work. It would, "integrate decisions made by the Planning Commission on the map, quasi-judicial land use decisions that have occurred since, our newly adopted plan policies, and ongoing work on the e-zones as well as ESA (Endangered Species Act response)." Of course, he added, "it also involves the neighborhoods and SWNI fully in the process," and gives the general public its shot, too. But, after the haze of August had cleared, what people finally read in the note was the simple phrase "it integrates decisions made by the Planning Commission on the map."[92]

"This will NOT be acceptable to Multnomah," Martie Sucec replied, "and doubtless Crestwood, Maplewood, and other neighborhoods!!!" It was one thing to let the Planning Commission policies serve as foil to the neighborhoods. It was quite another to make Planning Commission decisions from 1998 the basis for the mapping exercise to come. "I think this may be a hill Multnomah will definitely, and perhaps defiantly, die on," Sucec concluded. Retzer didn't get it. They needed some kind of baseline from which to begin, and Multnomah had been happy with "the vast majority of decisions" the Planning Commission had previously made. "So, what is the problem?" The problem, Sucec shot back, was that while they agreed with the majority of decisions the Planning Commission had made, "the decisions we disagree with are the critical decisions... I think the neighborhoods should be involved in developing the baseline." Don Bain piled on. Maplewood had the same kind of fundamental differences with the previous Planning Commission decisions. On a "conceptual level," Bain added, it made no sense to start with a map based on decisions rooted in plan policies that had been superseded, if not "repudiated." Wasn't the map supposed to follow the policies? It would be a "grave tactical error," besides, to set a baseline map that they would then be forced to dismantle. "The burden of proof that any flawed tentative decisions should be eliminated or changed will be thrown back on the public and the NAs," Bain added. The burden of proof should be on the city, and that meant using the neighborhood map as the baseline.[93]

Sucec and Bain both called for swift action to counter what seemed a Bureau of Planning maneuver to recapture the Southwest Community Plan. Retzer had to extinguish the flames he had ignited himself. The Bureau wasn't "solidifying a position," nor "entrenching" one. They just made a proposal. The Task Force wasn't being caught off guard. They were on vacation. There was a meeting scheduled and they should go hear what Stein and Johnson have to say. "If people walk into the room ready for a fight, then we might as well hang it up," Retzer advised. It was time to show some patience, and some of the good faith that the city had in the previous round.[94]

In fact, the neighborhood forces *had* overreacted. It would have been a bad idea for them to allow the process to start with the Planning Commission's two-year old tentative decisions. But that wasn't the Bureau's proposal. Staff were moving forward based on instructions to "respect

the work that has gone into previous map discussions," including the Planning Commission. But that also included the adopted SWCP policies, to which the neighborhoods had contributed pervasively, plus emerging work on mapping environmental resources, as well as the update of the Portland Comprehensive Plan, then ongoing, and the zoning changes sought by individual property owners and granted by "quasi-judicial" process. The Task Force met in September to discuss their priorities for the coming mapping process. Not surprisingly they agreed that the "neighborhood consolidated map" should be the "proposed map." But they quickly understood it was going to be more complicated than that. There were, at least conceptually, four or five "layers" to this map. Even the neighborhood map by itself, they realized, would be inadequate as a "baseline" by itself. It could be their map, plus the other things, they conceded.[95]

Bureau staff made an extensive presentation about the process to come, including guiding principles, and a detailed timetable. The SWNI Land Use Committee, whose work overlapped increasingly with that of the Task Force, discussed the principles and timetable at great length. They continued to be cautious. One of the principles staff suggested was to "use fair and effective criteria for evaluating Comprehensive Plan/ zoning map proposals, that reflect the unique characteristics of Southwest neighborhoods." Perhaps they thought this was a concession, but the neighbors saw in it a loophole. "The criteria should be based upon the adopted SWCP policies with additional criteria, if any," they amended, "agreed to in advance in writing." The neighborhood forces remained vigilant, but for some, at least, it was becoming clear that the once-distrusted Bureau of Planning staff were bending over backward to live up to the promises of a "collaborative" process with "no surprises."[96]

Stein and Johnson also announced that there would be no neighborhood plans. Given the political environment around the SWCP, and the city's budget situation in general, it was the best they could do to get the zoning map. Neighborhood associations would be invited to submit their statements of "desired neighborhood character," and these would serve as guidance to decision makers down the road, even if the language contained therein was only "aspirational." Many of the neighbors were disappointed. "People have put in thousands of man hours from neighborhoods all over Southwest Portland, without pay, for the good of the city," David Redlich, president of the Homestead Neighborhood Association told a reporter. "They had hoped these documents would see the force of law. Now they are being buried." Yet, disappointed as they were, the neighborhood activists knew that the city had its priorities straight. The neighborhood plans would have been nice. But the zoning map carried the legal power they needed to protect their part of Portland.[97]

Still, they hadn't exactly agreed on how to create the baseline map. Stein and Johnson met again with the Task Force in November to discuss a revised proposal. They had heard what

the citizens said and adjusted the process accordingly. While Bureau staff would still provide the labor for creating a "working draft map," they had "front-loaded the consultations with the community," with discussions beginning as early as December. The neighborhoods would draw the boundaries for the Barbur Boulevard/ West Portland Town Center "envelope," to be stashed away for later planning. They would also write their "desired character" statements. The Bureau would pull together their "early thinking" on the map, and then "we'll spread maps out on a table and work collaboratively." This approach blurred the distinction between the consolidated neighborhood map and all the other inputs. But it got the neighbors involved early. There were questions: would there be enough time to consult with neighborhood associations? Don Bain wanted to know. What if there were surprises in the map, a "Trojan horse?" Helfand asked. What if bureaus disagree? Sucec followed. Wasn't this just picking up where they had left off before, Corinne Weber asked, responding to a pile of Bureau of Planning amendments?

Well, Stein said, we're not bringing back all of the old amendments. We're taking a fresh look at them, and we're not starting where we left off. This was what the citizens had been waiting to hear for two and a half years. They did not wait to accept the offer. It would be a way to improve the neighborhood map, Helfand suggested. Sucec seconded: it was a "leap of faith" for the neighborhood forces, but a way to strengthen their proposal. Hearing no objections, Retzer said, they would recommend support for Stein's proposal. "I'm very encouraged," Retzer told a reporter:

> We needed a process that incorporates the neighborhoods' views and at the same time meets the city's needs. We'll have an opportunity to address differences early in the process. No one is under any illusions that we'll be in 100 percent agreement with any bureau on everything, but the key is to ensure that neighborhoods have a full voice in formulating the map throughout the process.

Gone, now, Retzer said was the "undercurrent of a hidden game plan and distrust we had a few years ago." Sucec was also hopeful, but added, "we'll see what happens when it gets to hearings."[98]

The following day was Tuesday, November 7, 2000. Oregon voters would give a slim plurality of votes to Al Gore for President, but a clear majority for something called Measure 7, an amendment to the state constitution providing compensation to any property owner deprived of the value of that property through government regulation. Although some predicted that Measure 7 would never take effect, speculation on its impact on Oregon's planning system was pervasive. A study commissioned by 1000 Friends of Oregon estimated that rezonings included in the Southwest Community Plan alone would expose the city to $8.2 million in claims.[99] All of the unanswered questions about Measure 7 only created confusion among the activists involved in the plan itself. Amanda Fritz predicted that City Council would be willing to approve only

upzonings with no possibility for tradeoffs from one site to another. Martie Sucec said if there are no downzonings, we don't want any upzonings either. But they could not just walk away from the process, Bob Baldwin, himself a planner, argued. They would only learn what Measure 7 would mean over time. In the meantime, they had to move forward.[100]

The unanticipated consequence of Measure 7 was that suddenly, all of those angry, organized citizens in Southwest Portland didn't look so dangerous to the people in Portland city government anymore. After all, they were working, however contentiously at times, to create a zoning map. The proponents of Measure 7 seemed after nothing less than to dismantle zoning itself. In addition to the new demands placed on the city by the Endangered Species Act listing of the steelhead, Measure 7 seemed to call for peace with anyone who supported government regulation in principle. It was simple, Mark Helfand said afterward, "they wanted to prick them more than they wanted to prick us." Without Measure 7, he believed, the city would never have been so cooperative.[101]

The most militant of the Southwest activists took one more shot at derailing the plan. Now on the outside looking in, Michael Roche got the ear of newsman Lee Perlman and blasted the Task Force leadership for violating open meetings laws and shutting citizens out of the process. "I'm not criticizing Marie Johnson or her Bureau," Roche said. "My concern is that we've got a small group of people making decisions as to whether and how we go ahead with this process." The technical issue was the failure of the Task Force to adopt the new mapping process at a meeting the time and place of which had been announced in advance. But the threat he outlined was simply that the process would produce "a product that will be blown out of the water when we get to the Planning Commission," by citizens who hadn't been involved. Perhaps the wish was father to the thought.

Don Bain followed up on the story in *The Multnomah Village Post* with an e-mail note to a long list of Southwest activists "wondering if anyone knows who the 'few selected neighborhood representatives' are who 'will work in a highly collaborative process'" on the new SWCP map. "I can tell you that nobody from Maplewood or Hayhurst has participated in this way. Did you get such an invitation?" Retzer replied, "Thanks, Don, but you are jumping the gun." Bureau staff were a little behind schedule, but the Task Force was continuing to operate as it had before, with a handful of Southwest leaders keeping in touch with their constituencies and making decisions accordingly. There was no cause for alarm. Roche's last storm blew over.[102]

At the next Task Force meeting, Marie Johnson presented the Bureau of Planning's proposal for sorting out the map. The City Council, she reported, wanted the Southwest Community Plan done as soon as possible. To achieve that goal they needed an approach that supported ongoing city work on the Endangered Species Act response, initiatives by the Bureau of

Environmental Services to control stormwater and related pollution, and the update of the map of environmental zones. At the same time, the approach needed to be manageable for both the Planning Commission and the City Council. The mapping process needed to be logical and streamlined. It had to reduce the areas of dispute to a very few. The problem with the SWCP in the past, Johnson said, allowing herself a rare moment of retrospection, was that it was hard to reconcile the city and Metro demands for a growth management plan with the neighborhood's demands to protect the environment and invest in infrastructure. Now the city had changed course. The new e-zone map was still in draft form. But there was a map analysis of environmental resources they could work from until it was done. This would drive the mapping.[103]

The regulatory map of Southwest Portland already included "p" and "c" zones – "p" for protection and "c" for conservation – that showed up in dark green and light green. The new map would include some of the light green areas cross-hatched to indicate they were to be considered for upgrading from "c" to "p" with concomitantly stiffer restrictions. In addition, however, there were areas colored on the map in brown, red, and orange to indicate the relative significance of environmental resource values to be considered. Finally, there were areas shaded gray, where the environmental resource was of uncertain significance but close enough to a stream so that land use practices might have an impact. The greens, brown, red, orange, and gray formed thick fingers of color on the environmental resource map, spreading out from Fanno Creek, Vermont Creek, Tryon Creek and all their tiny tributaries. Any piece of property that touched one of these areas, even the gray, Johnson announced, would stay at its current zoning, and if there was discrepancy between the base zone and the Comprehensive Plan designation the latter would be reduced to the former. On properties where there was no environmental resource the reverse would happen: the base zone would be raised to match the current Comp Plan designation. With one logical decision rule hundreds of disputes were instantly settled.[104]

There were no whoops of joy, at least not immediately. Rather, there was time for the proposal to sink in and a round of probing questions. Aren't the resource areas actually bigger than the final e-zones will be? asked Victor Von Salza of the Bridlemile neighborhood. Yes, Johnson answered. Doesn't that mean the areas to be kept at current zoning will be even larger than they would be if they used the final e-zones? Von Salza followed. Looks like, Johnson replied. Don Bain said that his neighborhood association would have to go over the map to see if it was correct. Corinne Weber asked what had happened to all the previous amendments. Johnson said her proposed rule would make most of them unnecessary. Weber said her neighborhood would need a map to look at, too. Two or three more members had other pressing concerns. So far, so good, Susan King of Hayhurst allowed. But she couldn't help wondering when

the "other shoe" – Title 34 – was going to drop. Finally Nancy Hand of Arnold Creek gave it up: I need some smelling salts, she said. This is good news. Even Martie Sucec said she was impressed, although the mapmaker had missed a spot up near the north fork of Vermont Creek. There were, Mark Helfand concluded, a few issues not addressed by the decision rule, like affordable housing and the targeting of low-income areas for high density housing. They were, after five years of fighting, a very tough bunch. But that night they knew they would get a map they could live with.[105]

The rest was details. But the neighborhood activists never stopped paying attention to the details. Like a good football team with a two touchdown lead they kept both hands on the ball and ran straight ahead. There were still a lot of issues to decide. Planners and neighbors worked together to perfect the maps. There were no dialogue groups, no protracted negotiations, just decisions. The neighborhood plans, although not adopted, would be published, the Bureau conceded. And the Bureau staff hosted a pair of open houses in April to explain the maps. Johnson continued to give the Task Force detailed advance information about the Bureau's plans for the process. No surprises. Staff prepared a discussion guide for the Planning Commission. Neighborhood activists strategized about how to make their presentation as painless as possible for the Commissioners they had tormented in 1998. After the votes were cast, Retzer declared victory:

> The SWCP was begun nearly seven years ago and has had a turbulent history. The map adopted this afternoon was based upon zoning maps proposed by the neighborhoods over three years ago, updated to address environmental issues identified since the ESA listing. There were only sixty-some amendments... due to a high level of support and agreement between neighborhoods and the Bureau of Planning... Suffice it to say, we won some and lost some, and we may want to discuss a few of the ones we lost with the City Council.[106]

There was one final step in the process. Staff spent the next three months translating the work of the neighborhoods and the decisions of the Planning Commission into the formal documents that are plans in Portland, and citizens prepared to make one last argument.

On November 14, 2001 – nearly seven and a half years after the Southwest Community Plan was inaugurated – City Council met to rule on 19 still unresolved zoning issues. There was little public testimony. That had been taken at a hearing a few weeks before. The big issues on the agenda were relatively small and steeped in the complexities of the Portland zoning code, technical adjustments that would have real impact, but were well within the bounds of the working agreement they had hammered out. Mayor Vera Katz opened the session with a vow: "We are going to finish this today." They would not vote, she said. "Hopefully there will be a

consensus on these items. If not, we'll take a vote." But there were few votes and hearing no objections from her colleagues, she declared each of the 19 items decided.

One of the later-evolving issues was whether the Hillsdale Town Center would be expanded to include a synagogue, Jewish community center and school, an apartment complex, and a strip of businesses along Capitol Highway. Charlie Hales, the black beast of the tale, pointed out that the inclusion of the new territory in the plan district wouldn't change any zoning but would prohibit drive through uses, require design review, and would promote a pedestrian orientation overall. There was no reason why they shouldn't do it. Martie Sucec rose in support of Hales. "I'm in full agreement with Commissioner Hales' analysis," she said. "Let the record show..." Hales quipped. "That's one," Katz added.

There were still a handful of issues dear to Multnomah hearts to be decided, mostly small lot-by-lot adjustments in allowed residential density. The neighbors argued, variously, that higher density zoning is inconsistent with existing development, would constitute "spot-zoning," or is ill-advised because of lack of infrastructure. The Commissioners seemed happy to give them what they wanted and took pains to pretend that the wounds opened during this whole process had been healed. Katz addressed Sucec by her first name, but with a tone of affection that could hardly be faked. "Come down here, Martie, I want to talk to you," she said, and Sucec went to the testimony table to consult.

There was good humor all around. A staffer from the Office of Planning Development Review popped in and said, "I just got a call that there was a design review emergency at City Council." The issue was whether the application of a "design overlay" in Multnomah Village would allow them to control the height of buildings there. The answer was not crystal clear. Hales told Sucec that design review may not get Multnomah residents the results they are looking for. Sucec asked in jest, "will you give me a note for my neighborhood?" Commissioner Dan Saltzman said this had better not restrict the plans of Loaves and Fishes, a food charity, to develop in the village. "We're not that devious," Sucec retorted. "We usually make frontal assaults." Council voted to impose the "d" overlay anyway.

Finally, there were two small lots on SW 31st between Capitol Highway and Multnomah Boulevard, right in the village. The property is surrounded by apartments. The Comp Plan designation is R1. But there is a little piece of the Tryon Creek headwaters left in the back yard. It is an environmental resource on Johnson's map. It is a drainage problem for the owners, who would like to redevelop the property. The Planning Commission voted to leave it at single-family density. But Katz asked, "what is to be gained by this two lots of R5?" Hales said, "I don't know if it ought to be R1 or R2.5 but it ought to be a multi-family zone if we're going to have a decent streetscape in ten years from now." This little piece of the watershed was by now too small, and

too isolated, to matter all that much. Still, Sucec and her colleagues mourned the loss of one more bit of the natural Southwest.[107]

The simplest way to "score" the Southwest Community Plan is to say that the residents won and the city and its planners lost. It took all the time, energy, intelligence, education, and perseverance that the citizens could muster, but they turned back what they considered to be an attack on their neighborhoods. The final plan policies and the zoning map were far different from what the Bureau of Planning had proposed in mid-1996. Yet, of course, the impact of the Southwest Community Plan was far more complicated than that, even in terms of the zoning map that was the focus of so much attention. Clearly, those who sought some protection from redevelopment and urban densities promoted by broad-scale upzoning were mainly successful. Those who sought to protect the Southwest watershed also achieved a result that was far better than it would have been under previous scenarios, even if simply recognizing riparian resources as a rationale for holding down zoning was only the first step toward more sophisticated watershed planning. Even still, there was likely a net gain in housing capacity because of the tradeoff between down-designating in environmental resource areas and upzoning elsewhere. Yet, for the staunchest proponents of growth management in Portland, the two million dollar plan was hardly worth it. Without more significant gains in density within developed areas like Southwest, there will be no alternative but to stretch the Urban Growth Boundary farther into the countryside.

The accounting of victories and defeats, however, must also include the changes – made and not made – in the system of planning itself. On the credit side of the ledger was the growth in understanding of watershed issues, the creation of alternative standards for "skinny streets" to minimize the negative impact of stormwater, adoption of a new tree preservation ordinance to protect the "canopy of trees," and a more explicit role for neighborhood associations in nominating members to Citizen Advisory Committees. Debits included the failure, so far, to create that new "X" zone, or R3, or some standard for single-family infill on small lots. Portland has yet to create new ways it needs to fund infrastructure improvements in areas like Southwest. The Barbur Boulevard and West Portland Town Center areas still need to be addressed. And more generically, they have yet to devise the mechanisms they need to promote good design in mixed use areas all around Portland. It is becoming a Portland truism that zoning can't make good things happen, it can only stop bad things from happening.

The Southwest Community Plan also changed the politics of planning in Portland, from the very smallest scale upward. The conflict that erupted in 1996 and took so long to burn itself out was caused by a fundamental role conflict on the part of the planning staff. They were asked to pretend to serve the citizens who came out to participate. But their actual assignment, and at

least for the first SWCP staff, their true allegiance was to the faithful application of existing planning policies. When it emerged that citizens didn't support the policies, a battle was inevitable. It remains to be seen whether the insight will be incorporated into local planning practice, but it remains true that it always matters who a planner works for.

Elected officials and those who work under them were likely to portray the outcome of the plan as a victory regardless of the specific pluses and minuses of the zoning map and policies. They would say that, in the end, trust was restored between citizens and their government. For that, they said, finishing the plan was well worth it. This is a vast oversimplification. There were very many citizens involved who, if they ever trusted city government, will never trust it again. Surely, there must have been many who never trusted it in the first place. Otherwise, how could there have been so much talk about the city's "agenda," as if it were some obscure and sinister program, when the city's agenda was visible everywhere for anyone to see? Yet, there was a very positive change at the denouement of this tale. It wasn't so much an increase in the level of trust as it was a shift in the relationship between wary parties. City officials came to appreciate both the level of both commitment and savvy that these citizens offered to the improvement of Portland. Ornery as they might be, they were an asset to the community. They needed to be taken seriously. Citizens, meanwhile, came to understand that whatever claims to political legitimacy they themselves might make, members of a City Council, a Planning Commission, and even the bureaucrats who worked for them also had a claim rooted in popular electoral democracy. Activists like Liz Callison and Martie Sucec who ran unsuccessfully for office understood this too well.

At a broader scale, the impacts of the Southwest Community Plan are harder to judge. There were, after all, a lot of other things happening in planning and development in Portland during this period. Housing boomed. High-density neighborhoods near downtown sprang out of almost nothing. Plans were finished or started for Sellwood-Moreland, Hollywood-Sandy, the River District, and St. Johns. One light rail line opened, another started construction, and a streetcar was installed. The UGB began to bite. And while Measure 7 gained a statewide majority, it trailed in Metro and especially in Multnomah County. Some would say that the Southwest Community Plan made it permissible to oppose growth management. Yet the regime retains substantial political strength. Maybe a rowhouse zone is not the answer, but certainly neither is allowing the region to revert to a conventional American pattern of sprawl. Almost certainly, however, Portland will continue to look for the answers in planning. The citizens of Southwest attempted to overturn established policy through the exercise of direct democracy. They did create changes in the system, ones that could rightly be called "structural," but ultimately they were drawn back into planning as a formal, legal, and bureaucratic discourse. This was not a

defeat. Rather, it was a particular manifestation of the continuing relationship between structure and agency, between what people do and say and the way things are.

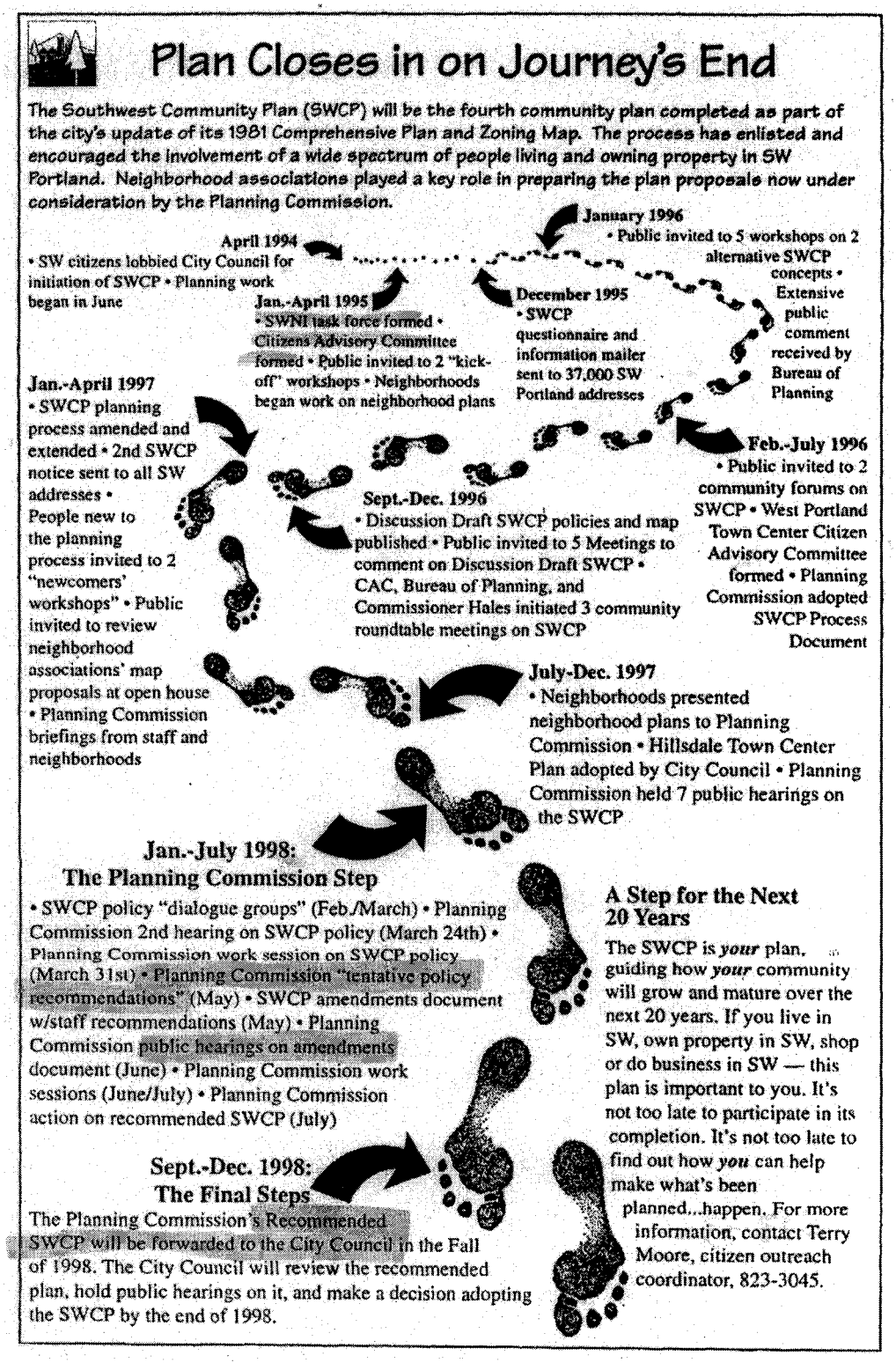

Figure 13.1 This diagram implied the remainder of the plan process would be a day at the beach. It was more like a long march. Portland Bureau of Planning.

Figure 13.2 The Resource Significance Map – and its use – turned the SWCP around by protecting all designated lands – even with marginal or unknown environmental significance – from upzoning. Conversely, its application required the "upzoning" of property outside of areas of significance to Comprehensive Plan designations. Portland Bureau of Planning.

Notes to Chapter 13.

[1] Terry Moore, "Plan closes in on Journey's End," The Southwest Community Connection," April 1998, p. 3. Moore was citizen outreach coordinator for the Bureau of Planning.

[2] Bureau of Planning, City of Portland, *Proposed Comprehensive Plan/ Zoning Map Amendment Requests Document,* May 1998, 738 pp.; *Proposed Southwest Community Plan Action Items Amendment Requests Document,* May 1998, 399 pp.; *Proposed Neighborhood Plan Amendment Requests Document,* May 1998, 351 pp.; *Proposed Plan Districts, Overlay Zones, and Zoning Code Amendment Requests Document,* May 1998, 128 pp.; *Planning Commission Tentative Policy Document,* May 1998, 39 pp.

[3] The total number of amendments was something of a moving target and estimates varied. Rick Seifert, for example, rounded up to a thousand. The most reliable estimate, perhaps, came after the fact from Marie Johnson, the Bureau of Planning staffer who helped compile the amendment books. This is reported in Lee Perlman, "'Medics' go to work on Southwest Plan," The Multnomah Village Post, December 1998, p. 11.

[4] Rick Seifert, "Community leaders, planners still divided over SW Plan," *The Southwest Community Connection,* July 1998, cover and p. 7; Lee Perlman, "Planning commission wraps up public comment with final hearing," *The Multnomah Village Post,* July 1998, pp. 1, 5.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Martie Sucec, "SW Community Plan," on swpdx-l@teleport.com, June 7, 1998.

[7] Don Bain, "SW Community Plan," on swpdx-l@teleport.com,June 11, 1998.

[8] Amanda Fritz, "SWCP Process," on swpdx-l@teleport.com, June 10, 1998.

[9] Jere Retzer, "SW Community Plan," on swpdx-l@teleport.com, June 11, 1998.

[10] Summit Group Letter to City Council and Planning Commission, June 21, 1998, on the Summit Group website www.teleport.com signed by Patty Lee, Ashcreek; Martie Sucec, Multnomah; Mary L. Taylor, Maplewood; Wes McMullen, Crestwood; Susan E. King, Hayhurst; Jere Retzer, Crestwood Headwaters Group; Wesley C. Risher, Hillsdale; Liz Callison, Tryon Resource Management Partnership; Rick Coates, Arnold Creek; Robert Leeb, Englewood; Dixie and Dave Johnston, Collins View; C. Richard Adelman, Bridlemile; Eileen Lipscomb; Judy Henderson, Marhsall Park; Russell Walton, Far Southwest; Gary Lienhard, South Burlingame; Knute Eie; William R. Chapman, Markham. Three neighborhoods that typically went their own way were Corbett-Terwilliger-Lair Hill, West Portland Park, and Southwest Hills Residential League.

[11] Jere Retzer, "LONG Summary of SWCP Watershed 1 of 2," June 15, 1998, posted on swpdx-l@teleport.com.

[12] Bureau of Planning, City of Portland, *Proposed Comprehensive Plan/ Zoning Map Amendment Requests Document,* May 1998, pp. 455-526.

[13] Ibid. pp. 458-459.

[14] Ibid. pp. 514-515.

[15] Ibid. pp. 488-489.

[16] Portland City Planning Commission, audio tapes of hearing on the Southwest Community Plan, June 30, 1998.

[17] Lee Perlman, "Planning commission wraps up public comment with final hearing," *MVP*, July 1998, p. 1.

[18] Bureau of Planning, "Proposed Comprehensive Plan/ Zoning Map Amendment Requests Document," May 1998.

[19] Portland Planning Commission, "Summary Minutes," July 14, July 21, July 28, August 4, and August 11, 1998, by Susan Gregory, Planning Commission Secretary. These notes were distributed by electronic mail, including on the swpdx-l@teleport.com.

[20] This is reflected in the minutes of the work sessions in the order in which votes were taken on the amendments, akin to saying the alphabet "E, F, G, K, L, X, N, A, Z."

[21] Don Bain, "SW Community Plan," June 7, 1998, on swpdx-l@teleport.com.

[22] PPC, "Summary Minutes," July 21, 1998; BOP, Proposed Comprehensive Plan/ Zoning Map Amendment Requests Document, May 1998, pp. 340-341.

[23] See, for example, staff arguments against the Bridlemile NA proposal for a chunk of R2.5 zoning along Beaverton-Hillsdale Highway. A site with an electric utility substation on it, and without adequate street frontage despite its proximity to a main thoroughfare was not appropriate for rowhouses, they said. BOP, Proposed Comprehensive Plan/ Zoning Map Amendment Requests Document, May 1998, pp. 640-641. PPC, "Summary Minutes," August 4, 1998.

[24] Interviews with Rick Michaelson, November 15, 2001 and March 9, 1998.

[25] PPC, "Summary Minutes," July 21, 1998.

[26] PPC, "Summary Minutes," August 4, 1998.

[27] Ibid.

[28] PPC, "Summary Minutes," August 11, 1998.

[29] Don Bain, "Re: Title 34 and 33/ SWCP leadership," November 11, 1998, to swpdx-l@teleport.com and other recipients.

[30] Leonard Gard, "SW Community Plan – Suspended," *Southwest Neighborhood News*, September 1998, p. 1.; Rick Seifert, "Overwhelmed Planning Commission halts work on SW Plan: Neighborhood leaders want work revived, ponder options," *Southwest Community Connection*, September 1998, p. 7; Amanda Fritz, "Accepting responsibility for SW Plan's fate," *Southwest Community Connection*, September 1998, Letters, p. 4; Donald W. Snedecor, "Breakdown of community plan had little to do with civility," *The Multnomah Village Post,* September 1998, From the Editor's Desk, p. 2.

[31] Leonard Gard, "SW Community Plan – Suspended," *SW Neighborhood News*, September 1998, p. 1.

[32] Interviews with Michaelson, November 15, 2001, Deborah Stein, November 16, 2001, and Betsy Ames, November 15, 2001. Also, Mark Sieber, "No TF Meeting Tonight. Council Actions," December 6, 1999, e-mail to members of SWCP Task Force sought to mute internal controversy in the run-up to a decision on funding the plan by a hesitant City Council.

[33] Don Bain, "Re: SWCP Quick Take," August 18, 1998, via e-mail to 32 Southwest neighborhood leaders, courtesy of the author. Also, Don Bain, "Re: Title 34 and 33/ SWCP leadership," November 11, 1998, to

swpdx-l@teleport.com and other recipients. And, Don Bain, "SWCP RED ALERT!!!" August 12, 1998, to 32 Southwest neighborhood leaders, courtesy of the author.

[34] The regional and state requirements were made clear to Southwest neighborhood leaders by Don Bain in an e-mail to the off-list list, August 12, 1998.

[35] City of Portland, Bureau of Planning, *Proposed Southwest Community Plan Map and Reference Maps*, May 23, 2001.

[36] Rick Seifert, "Delay puts property owners on hold," *Southwest Community Connection*, November 1998, p. 11.

[37] At one point, Martie Sucec totaled the time invested in the plan by members of the Multnomah Neighborhood Association, applied a modest hourly rate, and estimated a total contribution of volunteer time in excess of a million dollars.

[38] Amanda Fritz, "Accepting responsibility," *The Connection,* September 1998, p. 4.

[39] Don Bain, "SWCP RED ALERT!!!" August 12, 1998, e-mail to 32 Southwest neighborhood leaders, courtesy of the author.

[40] Don Bain, for example, outlined a full a full approach to finishing the plan in an e-mail note to selected Southwest neighborhood leaders, "SWCP Quick Take," August 14, 1998; he discussed the fragmentation of organization, perspective, and interest faced by a prospective citizen-led effort to finish the plan in a note to Mark Helfand, "meetings & SWCP," August 18, 1998; and in response to a longer string in the off-list list, "Re: Re: SWCP Leadership," Bain pointed out "The summit does not fall under the Public Meeting Law." All correspondence courtesy of the author.

[41] Interview with Martie Sucec, November 17, 2001, and personal communication to the author from Amanda Fritz, October 1, 1998 via e-mail. Fritz suggested it was at least a little ironic that Patty Lee could execute such a "top down" decision "without a general outcry." Perhaps this indicates the weakened position of some of the most aggressive opponents.

[42] Southwest Neighborhoods Inc. "SWNI Task Force Minutes," September 24, 1998. As corrected.

[43] Don Bain, "SWCP Task Force Leadership," October 13, 1998, e-mail to Bob Baldwin, Jere Retzer, George Marshall, Jim Squires, Liz Callison, Knut Eie, Mark Helfand, Susan King, Julie O'Dell, Martie Sucec, Mary Taylor. Courtesy of the author. Bain's overture caused a stir when Baldwin replied to the full SWPDX-L discussion list to decline the nomination and endorse Lewis for the job. Don Bain, "Re: Re: SWCP Task Force Leadership," October 15, 1998, to Bob Baldwin, cc: the swpdx-l@teleport.com and Celeste Lewis, and "Re: Re: SWCP Task Force Leadership," October 15, 1998, to Bob Baldwin, cc: Jere Retzer, et al.

[44] Southwest Neighborhoods Inc., "Minutes: SWNI Southwest Community Plan Task Force," October 15, 1998, submitted by Sylvia Bogert, executive director, SWNI.

[45] SWNI, "TF Minutes," October 15, 1998; Interview with Celeste Lewis, November 17, 2001.

[46] Interview with Celeste Lewis, November 17, 2001.

[47] Southwest Neighborhoods Inc., "SWNI Task Force Minutes," December 7, 1998, as distributed via swpdx@telelists.com, e-mail discussion list, December 29, 1998.

[48] SWNI, "TF Minutes," October 15, 1998.

[49] SWNI, "TF Minutes," December 7, 1998.

[50] Southwest Neighborhoods Inc., "SWNI Task Force Minutes," January 4, 1999, as distributed via swpdx@telelists.com discussion list, January 12, 1999.

[51] Celeste Lewis, November 9, 1998, e-mail to SWNI SWCP Task Force membership and swpdx-l@teleport.com discussion list.

[52] Interviews with Michaelson and Lewis.

[53] SWNI, "TF Minutes," November 2, 1998; "TF Minutes," November 30, 1998; Celeste Lewis, November 9, 1998.

[54] Rick Seifert, "Community task force named to guide stalled Southwest Plan: Mayor lends her support." *Southwest Community Connection*, October 1998, p. 12.

[55] Southwest Neighborhoods Incorporated, "SWNI Task Force Minutes," meeting of February 1, 1999, sent by Don Baack by e-mail February 24, 1999.

[56] SWNI, "TF Minutes," September 24, 1998.

[57] Southwest Neighborhoods Inc., "SWNI Task Force Minutes," for meeting of November 2, 1998, with corrections, sent by Jere Retzer via e-mail to many recipients, December 3, 1998.

[58] SWNI "TF Minutes," February 1, 1999. Also a quote by Betsy Ames in a newspaper story, maybe 2000. Jere Retzer, "SWCP Task Force Policy Committee Minutes," March 11 and 15, 1999, distributed by electronic mail.

[59] Retzer, "TF Policy Minutes," March 11, 15, 1999. Also, Lee Perlman, "Most participants satisfied with results of Community Plan review," *Multnomah Village Post*, February 2000.

[60] City of Portland, Bureau of Planning, Al Burns memorandum to Marie Johnson, "The Southwest Citizen Task Force's Draft Vision, Policies, and Objectives for Southwest Community Plan, August 3, 1999, circulated by Jere Retzer, September 12, 1999, under cover of "Burns Memo on SWCP Task Force Policies," via swpdx@telelists.com; also Jere Retzer, "Comments on the Burns Memo," September 12, 1999, also via swpdx@telelists.com. Interview with Retzer, November 15, 2001. Joan Rutkowski, "City forming focus group to evaluate Southwest watershed." *Southwest Community Connection*, October 1-15, 1999, p. 6.

[61]

[62] Interviews with Sucec, and Amanda Fritz, November 14, 2001. See also Lee Perlman, "West Portland, Gabriel Park among final pieces as task force works to finish puzzle," *Multnomah Village Post,* March 1999, p. 4, and Perlman, "Proposal would forward plan to Council without a map." *Multnomah Village Post*, May 1999, p. 8.

[63] Southwest Neighborhoods Inc., "SWNI Task Force Minutes," January 4, 1999, as distributed via swpdx@telelists.com discussion list, January 12, 1999.

[64] Fritz, Sucec interviews, 2001. Southwest Neighborhoods Inc., "SWNI Task Force Minutes," June 7, June 28, 1999 and January 3, 2000. Celeste Lewis, "WPTC mtg. Agenda, 7/19/99 and minutes from last meeting," via swpdx@telelists.com, showing West Portland Park representatives failed to attend a meeting about the West Portland Town Center. Mark Sieber, "No TF Meeting Tonight. Council Actions." December 6, 1999 via e-mail to Task Force members and others.

[65] Lewis, Helfand interviews, 2001. Southwest Neighborhoods Inc., "SWNI Task Force Minutes," September 13, 1999. Lee Perlman, "Planning commission backs away, $1.5 million plan in limbo," *Multnomah Village Post,* June 1999, p. 7; Perlman, *MVP*, May 1999. Janet Christ, "Southwest plan process shows signs of life," April 23, 1999, from www.oregonlive.com; Joan Rutkowski, "Southwest plan moves forward; activists want zoning map on agenda," *Southwest Community Connection*, December 1-15, 1999, p. 7.

[66] Southwest Neighborhoods Inc., "SWNI Task Force Minutes," May 24, 1999; Joan Rutkowski, "Proposal could put SW Plan before City Council," *Southwest Community Connection*, June 16-30, 1999, and Lee Perlman, "Stein proposal could swiftly move plan to City Council," *Multnomah Village Post*, July 1999, p. 3. Interviews with Lewis, Stein, Marie Johnson, November 14, 2002, and Mark Sieber, November 16, 2001, and others reflect this as a clear turning point in the process.

[67] Interviews with Stein and Betsy Ames, November 15, 2001. SWNI TF Minutes, May 24, 1999. See also, Celeste Lewis, "ciao bellas," to swpdx@telelists.com, October, 2, 1999.

[68] Interviews with Stein and Ames. Lee Perlman, "Latest option would cost $250,000 and take a full year," *Multnomah Village Post*, September 1999, p. 6.

[69] Southwest Neighborhoods Inc., "SWNI Task Force Minutes," June 7, July 26, 1999.

[70] SWNI, "TF Minutes," June 7, July 26, 1999. Also, Southwest Neighborhoods Inc., "SWNI Task Force Minutes," August 2, 1999.

[71] SWNI, "TF Minutes," August 30, 1999, August 2, 1999, May 24, 1999.

[72] Marie Johnson, "SW Community Plan actions by Planning Commission," September 22, 1999. Johnson wrote a brief summary of the actions and distributed it by e-mail. This copy was forwarded by Don Baack to his Southwest Trails e-mailing list, September 24, 1999.

[73] Amanda Fritz, "Re: Planning Commission on SW Community Plan Policies – LONG," September 28, 1999, in reply to message by Jere Retzer, "Re: Planning Commission on SW Community Plan Policies," September 23, 1999. All on swpdx@telelists.com e-mail discussion list.

[74] For an explanation of the *Baker* case see Sullivan, Edward J. 1994. "The Legal Evolution of the Oregon Planning System." In Carl Abbott, Deborah Howe, Sy Adler, eds. *Planning the Oregon Way: A Twenty Year Evaluation.* Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, p. 51.

[75] Lee Perlman, "Will two planning processes and $250,000 lead to City Council?" *Multnomah Village Post*, October 1999, p. 1.

[76] Southwest Neighborhoods Inc. Southwest Community Plan Task Force, "Minutes," August 30, September 13, September 27, October 4, 1999; Mark Helfand, "SWNI Motion," October 25, 1999, to Jere Retzer, Patty Lee, and Mark Sieber via e-mail. Perlman, *MVP,* October 1999, p. 1. Interview with Mark Helfand, November 17, 2001.

[77] Helfand interview.

[78] Mark Sieber and Patty Lee, Southwest Neighborhoods Inc., to Mayor Vera Katz, "Re: Southwest Community Plan," December 7, 1999, copied to many others via e-mail, December 9, 1999.

[79] Lee Perlman, "City Council agrees to partially and conditionally fund plan," *The Multnomah Village Post*, December 1999, p. 6.

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Chapter 14. The Meaning of Portland

It should be clear, even through the examination of this particular slice of Portland planning history, that citizens, as well as public officials, have power and that their exertions have caused important changes in the structure of planning and the urban development process in that city. The change across three decades has been enormous. Exertions by politicians, planners, and citizens have been similarly great. It should require no leap of logic to see that the two realities are connected. It is true, too, of course, that some things about the structure of planning in Portland have been sustained, even strengthened, in the face of opposition. But whether the thrust has been for change or maintenance the basis of the effort has been meaning and language.

Some readers may be inclined to hear my argument as one that counterposes meaning and language to structure, as if to say that structure does not matter because we can talk it way. This is just the opposite of what I have tried to say. In the passages that follow I want to draw the connections between meaning and language, the practices that organize those meanings, and the organizational and institutional basis of the social structure of city making in Portland. In this framework, language is the constituent element of structure, not its antithesis. Social relations, political processes, economic arrangements, the whole life of the city, are organized by the motivating force of meaning in language. And if it is not these ordered relations that we refer to when we talk about structure, what is structure?

The word is the command

At the most fundamental level, we see that the words we use have power. The knowledge they embody is a form of power, of course. But as Kenneth Burke instructed, language also forms attitudes and projects motives that shape what we do. Words describe necessary courses of action. They construct categories of this or that, good or bad. They express prescriptions and prohibitions. When used in discussions of city planning and policy making their power lies in their ability to prescribe the kind of city we want to live in. Language allows us to say what is good or bad about cities, to explain how cities work, and therefore to stipulate what we must do. Citizens in Portland, professional planners, as well as neighborhood activists, environmentalists, politicians, developers and others have used such words to great effect over the years. Burke invited us to imagine a child holding a block of wood and declaring: "boat!" The word, he says, is

the command, and such commands can be found throughout the story of the Portland way of planning.[1]

Some of the key debates in Portland over neighborhood renewal and revitalization, about the character of downtown and its role in the life of the city, about cars and buses, highways and parking, boiled down to a few key terms that carried meanings, judgments, intentions, and recommendations with an impact seemingly massively out of proportion to their weight of a few syllables. The urban renewal planners of the early 1960s pored over maps of Northwest District designating structures variously as "obsolete," "dilapidated," and "warranting clearance." They wrote their summaries accordingly and tabulated their cost estimates in the very same categories. Just what criteria they were following is invisible in the record. Perhaps houses without driveways and garages, needing substantial repairs and replacement of mechanical systems, or simply with an old feeling, were self-evidently "obsolete." The secret to deploying such a vocabulary was to treat its terms absolutely as matters of fact, without any hint of irony, with no acknowledgement of the embarrassing coincidence that the concentration of homes in such condition just happened to rest in the path of the hospital's anticipated expansion. Those words, more than diesel-powered bulldozers, threatened those homes.

Neighborhood activists replied in their own vocabulary, not so much rebutting the claims inherent in the planners' words as staking out a whole new perspective on these old homes on narrow lots under old trees. Such houses had "character," meaning they had histories and distinctive physical characteristics, unlike new housing being constructed on the edge of town, or any new housing that might be built to replace these structures. They were "affordable," which was the flip side of "obsolete" and "dilapidated." If they needed paint, repairs, investment, they nevertheless were well-suited for sheltering the lives of the students, hippies, old folks, and others of limited means who inhabited the neighborhood. They also were worthy of "rehabilitation," a clear recommendation that many new residents of the neighborhood acted upon. As with many such terms, the language of "affordable" old homes made an implicit claim for social equity and against economic privilege. Such terms had the power to hold back the bulldozers.

Planners two generations later offered a more specific, technical-seeming term for housing stigmatized as "obsolete." Some homes in Southwest Portland, they judged, had an "economic lifespan" of less than 20 years. This assessment was based on the location of the homes, the age of the structures, and the ratio of structure value to land value. Small houses on large lots were likely to be replaced with larger new homes. But such lots might also be upzoned for rowhouses or apartments. As with their predecessors, the planners presented these judgments as objective facts. But it was not the facts that were in dispute. It was the recommendation. Neighborhood activists responded by undressing the power motive behind the economic calculus. Developers, they charged, called such homes "scrapers." They could be purchased, held, occupied

at inflated rents, allowed to deteriorate, and then, when the market was right, simply *scraped* off the earth and replaced with denser, more profitable products. In a single word the residents captured a sense of the economic expediency of the practice and pricked their neighbors' sense of pride in their modest homes. Terms like "scraper" helped galvanize opposition to upzoning proposals and attempted to shame the planners at the same time.

A similar genealogy of terms and concepts about appropriate densities for residential environments can be traced from Northwest to Southwest. The planners in Northwest who marked individual houses as "obsolete" also characterized the entire neighborhood as "congested." As applied in that case, the term "congested" was even more vague than some of the others. Congestion had been a favored concept by planners since the beginning of modern planning. But the legendary congestion on Mulberry Street on the Lower East Side of 19th century Manhattan was not the same congestion as a Northwest District pocked by vacant lots and cars parked in paved yards, nor the same as the congestion on Interstate 5 running through Portland. What the planners described as congestion in Northwest the residents called "vitality." They likewise praised the "diversity" of people, housing, shopping, and environments. Cars cruising by, bicyclists weaving through traffic, people parading up and down NW 21st and 23rd Avenues – if that was congestion they wanted more of it. It was, for them, the hallmark of a good urban neighborhood.

By the time of the Southwest Plan the table of terms had turned. Now the planners were talking about "density" and "vitality" and residents were talking about "congestion." Neighborhood activists denounced a zoning proposal aimed at "packing in" the maximum number of homes so that they might "live like rats." They called the rowhouses already constructed in their neighborhood "snouthouses" in honor of the ghastly garagescape they presented to the street. They scoffed at the planners' claim that rowhouses would be more affordable. They knew that such homes were selling for more than their own. Southwest Portland was often characterized as affluent, but the neighborhoods targeted in the Discussion Draft Map had incomes closer to the regional median. Tagging rowhouse residents as "yuppies" mobilized their own claim for equity and against economic privilege. The Bureau proposal would destroy affordable housing, not create it, they argued.

One precious moment that epitomized the difference of perspectives came during a neighborhood tour by Mayor Vera Katz after the initial uproar over the Southwest Community Plan. Capitol Highway through Multnomah Village, she noted, had the potential to be every bit as good as NW 23rd Avenue in her own neighborhood. She was trying to mollify the inhabitants. Instead, they were further annoyed. What she didn't understand was that folks in Southwest were familiar with NW 23rd Avenue and had no desire to emulate its high-priced shops and restaurants, its impossible parking, and its through-put of transients, tourists, and gawkers. Even

some Northwest residents were by then losing patience with what they described as an "urban theme park." Southwest residents wanted a small-town feel, not a big city ambience.

Dozens of such terms have constituted the discourses of planning for citizens and professionals. The value of "mixed-use" development, the idea that streets can be "pedestrian-friendly," the concept of "eyes on the street" and "defensible space," the call for "balanced transportation," and on to more technical terms such as "transit oriented development" and "transit supportive densities" all encapsulate an assertion about what is and what should be. These terms and many others are the structure of planning at a molecular level. They animate the practices of citizens, planners, political leaders, developers and others engaged in the process of making cities, the "social production of space."[2] These terms also frame debate over the future of cities.

The vocabularies of planners and citizens at the local level borrow from and reinforce in turn the changing vocabularies of planning as it is discussed in national policy, professional practice at large, and in the academy. The ideas and terminologies of Jane Jacobs at one end of this history, and those of Peter Calthorpe and other promoters of the "New Urbanism" at the other, have provided a stock of cultural material from which citizens and planners alike have drawn. Having been adopted in local practice, these same terms take on greater solidity and staying power in the broader arena. Even as they are heavily contested they sometimes gain strength. Once appropriated, these terms exert control over those who use them as well as those who oppose them.[3]

The master term in Portland planning might be "livability." It came first from the lips of Gov. Tom McCall to describe what Oregonians loved about their place – the beauty, the connection with nature, the easy-going city life. It called upon Oregonians to protect their ocean beaches and valley farms and to block the "grasping wastrels" of the land.[4] "Livability" was adopted by successive regimes, Goldschmidt and his followers, to describe what they were attempting to achieve with policies of central city development, close-in neighborhood revitalization, transit development, and subsequently the urban growth boundary. "Livability" was the economic development strategy of the city and state. Attract the labor force and jobs would follow rather than vice versa. Like the best of such terms its contents were ill-defined, seldom unpacked, yet remaining on the surface seemingly unambiguous. Invocation of "livability" infuriated the rebels of Southwest Portland. What was "livable," they asked, about the growth that was targeted for their neighborhoods? They denounced as a lie "livability" that brought them rowhouses and blocky apartment buildings and more traffic. But in doing so, they missed out on a great rhetorical resource, turned down the opportunity to "flip" the term to their own benefit.

Our vocabularies are equipment for the production of ideology, for the construction of a particular reality. They are also sentries, to use Cocks[5] metaphor, on the border line between the

permitted and the impermissible. The strongest terms are the ones that appear cool and neutral. They attract little attention and exert the most leverage. Over time such terms take on such weight that they appear as if solid. They are assumed as given and natural, a matter of common sense, as the most truly hegemonic cultural orders are, and do the most to set the limits of action.[6] The most potent actions, however, take these terms as the object of struggle. The opponents of any dominant order are wise to focus their attention against these guardians of the taken for granted, the sentries of common sense. Only by supplanting these terms, or turning them to their own new purposes, is it really possible to overturn that dominant order. Money, votes, jobs, even guns will follow, not lead, this insurrection of the word.

Constructing discursive space

Contesting the terms of a dominant order can make little difference if the conditions for discourse cannot be created or secured. There are no ready-made places for the conduct of what Barber called "strong democratic talk," nor are there any natural protocols for it.[7] The citizens of Portland, however, have been very adept at constructing the kind of discursive spaces necessary to conduct their public conversation about the character of the city. This is crucial, since any complaint is merely a discontent until its name is uttered in a public setting. Once that happens, it can become an issue for debate and action. Indeed, until there is some place in which to gather, some way to come together, some means to communicate, there is, effectively, no public at all. As Dewey wrote, the primary problem of the public is to find ways to constitute itself and discuss its own issues in a democratic way.[8]

The people who participated in creating the Portland way of planning did not start from scratch, of course. The Oregon progressive tradition and American political culture in general provided some forms to follow. Portland municipal principle and practice also made certain opportunities for such discourse, most notably the public hearing before the City Council. In the days when that body was predictably a collection of five older white men, the constraints on that discourse were fairly narrow. So, when the future of Northwest Portland came on the agenda in 1969 a careful approach by neighborhood activists was required. It was remarkable how deftly the leadership of the fledgling NWDA worked within and against the cultural forms presented. They worked beforehand with sympathetic members of the Council to test their arguments and to arrange advance support for a neighborhood plan. They adopted the logic of planning and used it against the planners. They set a calm tone that distinguished them from some more obstreperous members of the public, making a kind of "good cop, bad cop" contrast. Yet they also turned some new ground in offering a general critique of the urban renewal approach, which at that point still retained some favor among the Commissioners. It was a masterful performance and they won the day.

Meeting on their own, working to build their own organization and produce a plan, they adopted other forms, the simplest of which was the committee meeting. Such a form is mundane, it is true. Yet it is also true that some of the most potent elements of culture are also mundane. To a great extent, the life of the NWDA, even the process of planning in general, was, and still is, made up of committee meetings. They had a Housing Committee, a Land Use and Zoning Committee, a Traffic Committee, and even a Social Services Committee, that met monthly throughout 1971. They had a Planning Committee to oversee all of these, and a three-member Coordinating Committee to act as an executive. Why did they organize in such a way? Perhaps because that was what they knew from previous governmental experiences, from their work in companies, professional firms, agencies. But by adopting this common form they also made it possible for dozens of people to participate, to talk through the community vision for Northwest in a more detailed way, and to claim some sort of democratic legitimacy.

When it was time to take the planning to a broader constituency, the NWDA and Planning Commission staff who worked with them devised a protocol for "house meetings." Rather than hold several large scale meetings that might attract a hundred or two hundred people each, they decided to hold a much larger number of much smaller meetings. Over the course of July and August 1971 they conducted 50 such meetings all around the neighborhood. Each was attended by six or eight or perhaps 15 people – much less intimidating for many citizens than a larger meeting, much easier to manage for the organizers. The meetings gave the organizers a chance to explain what the plan was about and to defuse some of the opposition that grows out of lack of knowledge and suspicion. It also gave the participants a chance to explain their views about the neighborhood in their own words in an unthreatening setting. It's not clear how directly the results of the meetings were incorporated into the plan; individual meeting reports are still archived, but a summary or overall analysis is not to be found among the records of the plan. Yet there's no clear indication that the plan was contrary to the voices at these meetings, and it seems the meetings did create small quiet places for democratic talk.

Likewise, neighborhood activists organized their own public hearings on their draft plan in the same way the Planning Commission would do later. The results were fairly predictable. There would be significant opposition from the business and industrial interests on the northeast corner of the neighborhood. But there would be even greater support from residents and shop owners along Northwest's commercial strips. The planning committee would acknowledge the testimony and make changes if necessary. But it would be a mistake to confuse the public hearings for a deliberative process. The function of the hearings was to legitimate decisions already made, not reach new ones. The participants would recite well-rehearsed arguments and phrases. They would invoke key words and commands. But few, if any, minds would be changed. The public hearing is another familiar form. It is a true discursive space, whoever may be the

host. Its sketchy reputation comes mainly from the erroneous expectation that it be deliberative rather than performative.

Building a neighborhood association was a key element in the work of constructing lasting discursive space in Northwest District. Like these other forms, organizational or corporate action is part of our cultural software.[9] It was almost a matter of course that the citizens would organize and incorporate themselves. What was distinctive about the NWDA and other neighborhood associations of that era was the set of terms their organization worked to mobilize on an ongoing basis. They supported construction and renovation of retail space without parking; they opposed office development; they supported housing rehabilitation; they obstructed highway plans; they planted trees. In short, they followed their plan, and worked to enact the rhetoric of urban "vitality," "diversity," and "density." They also had "foreign relations." Like any new country or labor union, they needed recognition, and the City and the hospital were obliged to give it. It was almost impossible to dispute that the association existed and was a legitimate representative of the neighborhood.[10]

Once established, the neighborhood association became a formal place for public discussion, a place to bring a complaint or raise an issue. It became the neighborhood's advocate in government and to the wider city. It was not long before city officials would make no move affecting the neighborhood before consulting with the NWDA. To the extent it had staff and budget it became a vehicle to achieve the ends of the residents. In these things, it also has continuity. The Northwest District Association has existed without interruption since 1969. The neighborhood association, and all the discursive practices it supports, is nothing if not structural. They are a more or less permanent part of the civic architecture of Portland, and they were created from the ground up.

Supporters of neighborhood participation knew that the movement would need institutional supports if it were to survive in the long run. Neighborhood associations had been a prominent part of civic life for only a handful of years when elected leaders like Goldschmidt and Lloyd Anderson threw their support behind an effort to create an official framework for participation at the neighborhood level. Ogden Beeman, from Northwest, chaired the committee that deliberated on how to accomplish this. Mary Pedersen, also a Northwest resident, wrote the original proposal for an Office of Neighborhood Associations. Once created, the new agency supported the rapid growth of neighborhood associations across Portland from two dozen or so to nearly a hundred. It created an intermediate tier of organization and support – a series of area "coalitions" that had city-funded staff and regular communications with the individual associations. Today, few areas of the city are not represented by some kind of neighborhood association.

The Office of Neighborhood Associations, however, did not exist merely to serve the needs of neighborhood associations. It institutionalized the relationship between such groups and the formal mechanisms of city policy-making and administration. One of the motivations for officials to support creation of such an entity was their sure knowledge that it would overwhelm city government to deal with neighborhood associations one by one in the midst of the small political crises that typically brought them to City Hall. If they were going to deal with neighborhood associations at all, they would have to regularize the way they did so. Pedersen, who ran ONA in its early years, was one of the first to complain that the neighborhood association movement had been captured in the bureaucracy. Witt[11] would also report that the main function of ONA and its coalitions was to manage conflict rather than support participation. Yet the involvement of neighborhood associations in all sorts of issues has become so pervasive it is not quite clear who has co-opted whom.

In recent years, some have charged that neighborhood associations have too much power in Portland. They say they bring a parochial and fragmentary perspective to policy-making and give too much emphasis to homeowner issues to the neglect of broader environmental or social justice concerns. Many progressives were chagrined to find that neighborhood associations were being used to forward conservative goals. Reforms in the late 1990s offered a place in the structure for non-territorial associations of ethnicity and identity groupings and changed the name of the agency to the Office of Neighborhood Involvement. Even more recently, one City Commissioner pushed for a system by which NA coalition staff would have to compete for contracts to serve the associations in their area. The proposal was shot down, demonstrating the entrenched power of the associations themselves.

The dilemma of institutionalization is inescapable. Without institutional foundations, any movement may wither. Given institutional support, any movement may ossify. What remains clear, however, is that in Portland there is an established time, place and protocol for discussing issues of concern to residents. There is also a structure for aggregating those concerns to the city-wide level when necessary. As such issues move from the semi-formal purview of neighborhood associations to the more formal arena of Planning Commission and City Council, there is a fair amount of clarity about who is making decisions, how they will be made, and what the citizen's opportunities to participate will be. Further, these are organs of communication as well as forms of deliberation. This is to say that there is always some kind of clearly defined "space" for these discussions to take place. There is always a public place for a grievance to go.

The role of neighborhood associations in the Southwest Community Plan demonstrated just how deeply entrenched in Portland political life this structure has become. When the planning process began, planners took it as a matter of course that they work through the established neighborhood associations. When citizens recognized the emerging plan as a threat,

they used the framework of neighborhood associations to help organize their opposition. In the Multnomah neighborhood, what had been a nearly moribund association blossomed like a cactus flower after a sudden rain. One year they struggled to find people to serve as officers. The next year they had an active association with an organization chart that filled a full page. Because of the overall structure in Portland they did not have to demand recognition or create the protocols by which they would participate. In fact, the planners had been begging for them to participate for several years. What was remarkable about the role of neighborhood associations in Southwest was not that they mobilized; it was that they did so within the ONA structure even as they opposed the city on its plan. For better or for worse, the neighborhood associations were structured discursive space.

Citizens in Portland have also constructed other kinds of discursive space, including community newspapers oriented to local issues, and e-mail discussion lists addressed to concerns of planning and the urban environment. The newspapers, of course, have a longer history. *The Neighbor*, a weekly paper that served Northwest and other close-in neighborhoods, emerged in the early 1970s, which was also the era of the "underground" newspaper. *The Neighbor* followed a number of other sporadic efforts to create a place where news and opinion about the neighborhood might be made public. Much later, it was followed by the *Northwest Examiner* which continues publishing today.

Southwest Neighborhoods Incorporated, the Southwest coalition of neighborhood associations, has published a monthly newspaper since its own creation in 1978. The choice to produce one paper for the entire district rather than 16 or 17 different newsletters for each of the neighborhood associations was a crucial decision to construct a broader forum for information and discussion. In the early 1990s, *The Multnomah Village Post* and *The Southwest Community Connection* (originally *the Hillsdale Connection*) were established. These grassroots newspapers gave events and issues in the neighborhoods much more coverage than they ever could have received in the metro dailies, even in zoned sections. Their coverage was guaranteed to be more sympathetic to the neighborhood's own positions. They provided a way to draw attention to issues that neighborhood leaders wanted to promote. And they created a place for people to express their views and read the views of others. In this last regard, they also created a "place" or "space" for democratic talk. These organs became part of the landscape of local politics, indispensable for political candidates, activist groups, and anyone who wanted to speak to the public. Moreover, the people who produced them were absolutely conscious and explicit about the civic and political role they wanted to play.

Community newspapers had been improved and made easier by technology, first the use of photo offset printing, later by the application of computers to the work of typesetting and layout. The emergence of the local e-mail discussion list, even more, was made possible through

technology. The Southwest Community Plan process coincided with the emergence of the widespread use of electronic mail and it hardly required a brainstorm for activists to adapt it to their needs. Throughout the period, a list serve, sometimes with nearly 100 participants, provided a 24-hour a day opportunity to talk about the SWCP, and planning and Portland politics in general. It was, in effect, a permanent community meeting. Unlike other public meetings in Portland, this "meeting" had no time limits on any speaker, and many participants took full advantage, posting voluminous screeds on a wide array of topics. The debate was often contentious, even nasty, as "speakers" faced their computer screens rather than other people. The list serve was a contest for survival of the glibbest, and "lurkers" and others dropped off the list as they tired of the constant and repetitive quarrelling.

Yet participants on the list accomplished some important rhetorical work. Some of the posts were the equivalent of journalism, providing information unavailable elsewhere, drawing attention to neglected issues. Participants also practiced arguments for broader use elsewhere, using the cut and thrust of debate to test their logic and language. Some of the participants also worked hard to undercut the prevailing regime, sometimes through argumentation, but often simply through disparagement. It was the kind of rhetorical attack that would have had great impact – and would have drawn fierce opposition – if it had been made in a larger forum. Like any other discursive space, the SWPDX-L was not some sort of zipless democratic zone, but a form with distortions all its own, dominated by the intellectually most capable and personally most powerful.

Still, the "public" list serve was not always the venue of choice for discussions among Southwest activists. Since no limits were placed on who could subscribe, the discussions were monitored by Bureau of Planning staff, offices of the City Commissioners, and others outside of Southwest. When key activists needed to discuss strategic choices among neighborhood leaders or share politically sensitive information or simply let their hair down, they retreated to a private list serve available only to selected participants.

The discursive "space" created in the form of public hearings, planning workshops, neighborhood associations and coalitions of associations, community newspapers, and e-mail list serves is not, in the end, distinctly spatial. Physical places are often involved. Technologies, high and low, are also sometimes involved. The "space" for discussion is created by language-borne concepts of community, democracy, debate, logic, conflict, and consensus. It is created by terminologies that define rules for appropriate behavior, argumentation, and outcomes. The inclination to meet and talk is grounded in many different cultures. But it is elaborated in specific ways in specific locales. Creating new forms of discursive space is an act of design, using places, technologies, protocols, story lines, values, and terms in new combinations to meet new ends.

These new forms live in shared language, and therefore persist, assuming the qualities of what we think of as structural.

Rationality and democracy

Friedmann[12] wrote about the Enlightenment's "dual legacy of reason and democracy," about the tension between rationality and self-governance. The tension is by no means irresolvable, and the possibilities for the use of reason in service to democracy and vice versa are well-demonstrated. Nevertheless, the tension persists. On the ground in Portland the tension can be felt in the interactions of elected policy-makers, professional planners, and active citizens. But the tensions are not simple. They can be felt in the ongoing relationship between established policy and current planning activity; in the contest between rationality based in the professions and reason grounded in the polity at large; and in the disputes over the relative legitimacy of the status of office holders, bureaucrats, and citizens as participants in a public process and as representatives of others.

In Portland, the duality defined by the terms reason and democracy translates into the tension between two powerful traditions: strong planning policy, on one hand, and robust citizen participation in planning, on the other. This is not a tension between two self-contained quantities. Rather it is a tension between one thing that arises from the other, and which mucst return to it. The citizens of the Northwest District created a plan. They gathered information, they analyzed it, they constructed alternatives, and compared them, just like planners. They talked out a vision for their neighborhood, crafted a strategy for the neighborhood's redevelopment, and detailed a set of principles for carrying out the strategy and making the vision real. Rationality and democracy came together in participatory planning. But that wasn't the end of the process.

One of the primary elements of that plan was a set of policies that defined what they wanted to achieve and how to do it. Within the evolving framework of Oregon planning law, those policies were translated into ordinance, became law themselves. As part of a body of law, comprising their plan and other neighborhood plans, they contributed to the construction of a very elaborate ensemble of policies to govern development of the city. This was mediated by a citywide process to create Portland's first comprehensive plan and carried forward in regional planning conducted by Portland Metro. A powerful bureaucracy to implement these policies – at state, regional and municipal levels – was also created in the process. But neighborhood plans like the one from Northwest District were part of what created this powerful structure. Like the public meetings that helped define the statewide land use goals, the Northwest District plan helped define Portland planning policy. Policy, in this sense, is a little bit like frozen participation.

Part of what was frozen in policy was a commitment to active citizen participation in planning processes. This was the demand at the beginning of the "neighborhood revolution." It

was a driving force behind the Goldschmidt campaigns. It was replicated throughout planning processes for neighborhoods and downtown. It was enshrined in the statewide land use Goal 1, institutionalized in the Office of Neighborhood Associations, and engraved in practice, precedent, and policy throughout city government. Citizen participation in planning was a policy, a set of forms, an array of techniques, and most of all a deeply embedded expectation within the framework of Portland political culture.[13]

The controversy that arose in the Southwest Community Plan, and to a degree in the Albina and Outer Southeast plans that preceded it, was in part about divergent points of view on the character of the good city, especially in terms of density. It was also partly about the tension between fear of change and the necessity for change. But it was in large part about the collision between a community invited, promised, and expecting to participate in shaping a vision for the future of their part of Portland and a cadre of planning bureaucrats instructed to apply a pre-existing policy template to Southwest Portland. The people then living in Southwest couldn't shape that vision or make that plan because the broad outlines and many of the details of the plan had already been stipulated in adopted policy. In one sense, the people participating then were told they had to bow to the policy created through the participation of all those who had come before. In theoretical terms, the agency of Southwest citizens ran head-on into the structure of planning policy created by citizens of Portland over a quarter century.

What neither elected officials nor planning bureaucrats anticipated was the power and tenacity of the citizens who took part in the Southwest Community Plan. The initial explosion of citizen anger at the Wilson High School meeting in 1996 looked much like the kind of rebellion that erupts but then dissipates as people are distracted to other pursuits. What happened, instead, was citizens dug in for a long fight. They organized through their neighborhood associations, educated themselves about the planning process, then mobilized a critique of the policy framework that drew on available cultural material and created some new. They almost never missed an opportunity to describe the situation in their own terms or to dispute the terms used by their adversaries. The result was not only that they won most of the specific battles over changes to zoning, but they caused several significant shifts in overall policy. Some of these concessions were defensive on the part of the City, such as the decision to plan for more discrete geographies and in places where the planners were welcomed. But some of them were more positive, such as the shift from accommodating new density to protecting the environment as criteria for good plans. By the time the Southwest Community Plan was complete, city planners were thinking about their mission very differently than when they started.

Another important axis of tension in the complicated relations between rationality and democracy involved competing claims to legitimacy from representatives of various sorts versus citizens participating directly in planning and policy making. One of the most unusual features of

this tension was the relative advantage individual citizen participants have in establishing their legitimacy. Although they appear to speak only for themselves, they gain leverage from several usually unspoken assumptions. First, although they stand alone, it is clear to their listeners that there may be others who share their views. Richard Nixon was not the only one to invoke the power of the "silent majority." Second, when they testify on issues in their own neighborhood they implicitly claim to speak about things they know and care more about than people from some other part of the city. They're stakeholders, and as such they claim a privilege that even formal representatives cannot assume. Finally, they prey on the disrepute in which elected officials tend to be held in an era of degraded politics. The fact that a member of the Portland City Council may have received votes from tens of thousands of citizens seems relatively insignificant in relation to the moral claim made by the lone citizen speaking out on her own behalf.

In contrast, pity the poor planning bureaucrat. Many of the professional planners who worked on the Southwest Community Plan were explicit about their role in representing both the prevailing body of policy and a concept of the broader public interest. They considered it their job to implement those policies that public debate and official action had previously established. Those policies, they believed, had a stronger claim to their loyalty than the seemingly more transient impulses generated by some citizens in a single planning process. Similarly, they sometimes spoke of their obligation to represent the interests of all of the residents of the city – past, present, and future – not just active citizens here and now. These were claims, however, that the planners most times dared not make. When they did, the counter-fire from citizens was fierce. In contrast, the professionals who worked on the Northwest District Plan had no body of policy to represent, which provide them with great freedom. They worked along with citizens to create new policies and hitched their claim to represent the larger public interest to the only public available – those Northwest residents working on the plan.

Planners in Portland, as well as elsewhere, also make claims to represent special knowledge and skill in decision making. When the Southwest Community Plan process began, citizens were allowed to dabble in discussions about their visions for their neighborhoods. But the tough technical work involving data collection and analysis, alternatives generation and evaluation, and especially mapping and zoning, was reserved for the professionals. After the Discussion Draft Map conflagration, however, the political leaders of the Bureau of Planning removed that prerogative from staff. The planners were deeply demoralized. But citizen activists continued to expand their own knowledge of technical planning issues and to organize the professional skills of their members to contest the plan. Again, the professionals in Northwest carried less baggage. Their own philosophical commitment was to democratize and demystify planning knowledge. Besides, they considered themselves working for the neighborhood and its desires, not the city and its policies.

Perhaps the most persistent source of tension in the politics of Portland planning has been between officially sanctioned representatives – elected officials and their appointees – and the quasi-representative claims of neighborhood associations and other groups. One of the first questions City Commissioners raised at the inception of the Northwest District Plan was who really represented the neighborhood? A quarter century later, the same question was posed to the activists in Southwest. The Northwest District Association in 1969 was an ad hoc assembly of certainly fewer than a hundred active members. The neighborhood associations that fought so hard against the Southwest Plan were no bigger. Their officers, typically, had been elected at meetings at which a few dozen people, at most, cast ballots. How could they claim to represent neighborhoods with populations of two or five or ten thousand people? But the citizens' answer to the question "how do we know you represent the whole neighborhood?" was, in effect, another question: "How do you know we don't?" Elected officials usually didn't want to find out. Nor were they inclined to press the case when voices from the neighborhood went uncontradicted. On occasions when Planning Commission members or planning staff let slip a comment about neighborhood associations officers being "not representative" the activists responded in fury and officials backed off.

This tension was compounded by the common practice of City Commissioners to create appointed citizen advisory committees. Such committees had been created for dozens of different planning efforts, including both the Downtown Plan and the Central City Plan, as well as the previous community plan updates. But when disputes arose, first over the siting of the Southwest Community Center, and later over the SWCP itself, Citizen Advisory Committees became the target for activist opposition. The members of such bodies were not representatives of the community, the activists charged. They were representatives of the elected official that appointed them. In some contexts that might give those committees some measure of legitimacy. It did in the Central City Plan. But in Southwest where citizens were opposed to the overall thrust of the plan, they insisted that the only true representatives would be ones chosen by the neighborhood, not by the Commissioner. The Southwest Community Plan Citizen Advisory Committee was ultimately hounded out of existence. More than that, the policies adopted as part of the plan stipulated neighborhood associations would have more say in the constitution of such bodies in the future.

Southwest activists rallied instead to their own "Summit Group" of neighborhood associations as the ostensibly true representative body of the district. The Summit Group was, in essence, a rump caucus of the existing neighborhood association coalition, Southwest Neighborhoods Inc. It was created to by-pass Office of Neighborhood Associations procedures and rules and to create some distance between the neighborhood associations and the city. But comprising as it did most of the neighborhood associations in Southwest it retained the substance

of its claim to be representative. That citizens used the Summit as a forum for discussions and strategic decision-making that were not quite fully public made some neighbors and many city officials uncomfortable. But the formation manifested enough power so that folks from "downtown" were hesitant to challenge them.

Rationality and democracy are both ideas, but the ideas encompass a range of cultural forms and practices with specific meanings, rules, and logics. The work of neighborhood planning, not surprisingly, always worked to elevate the status of neighborhood associations and their claims to be representative. Citizens, speaking alone or in groups, claimed a moral high ground in debates over the future of the city. The status of elected officials continued to recede. Meanwhile, the work of representing established policy over current planning severely undermined the status of professionals in the public mind. The work of Southwest activists, in particular, reinforced the status of neighborhood associations and challenged the status of mechanisms like citizen advisory committee. Through working, planning, talking, some practices have been built up and some have been worn away.

City, regime, and legend

If "all that is solid melts into air,"[14] it might also be suggested that things in the air and other etherea, like words, may also become solid. This is another way of saying that language has structural power. What I am offering here is an imagination of how the rhetorical action, and the organization of meaning and language into discrete practices and organizational forms coheres into a real city, a sturdy and adaptable regime, and a powerful legend that both presses and limits further action.

Portland is a vastly different city today than it was in 1969. Many different acts of policy, planning, design, development, and construction have changed both the physical and the social character of the city. Yet it is crucial to recount how these acts stemmed from rhetorical actions on the part of citizens who envisioned a different future for their city. Discourses about the central role of downtown in the economic and social life of Portland led the work toward revitalization of that core. Public talk about the need to protect pedestrian spaces from the automobile, to celebrate public spaces with public art, and to protect the diversity of downtown and neighborhood spaces and social ecologies drove an array of planning and regulatory projects that transformed the city. A dense and lively discourse about the value of older neighborhoods, their housing stock, and their social environments led the redevelopment of the same. A distinctly contrarian ensemble of terms and concepts about "balanced transportation" inspired opposition to new urban freeways, brought a parking cap to downtown, spurred new investments in transit, and even made possible the removal of an existing freeway from Portland's Willamette River waterfront.

Many will look to an analysis of interests, the alignment of power blocs, or the machinations of political entrepreneurs to explain these events, and they wouldn't be totally wrong. Yet the definition of the meaning of interests, the motivations of power blocs, and the entire context within which political entrepreneurs work are all provided by these discourses, these terms, these words. But if rhetorical action led to these physical developments, the concrete realities of city form also speak back in turn to the inhabitants of the city. Tara Clapp has suggested we think about these things as "installed rhetoric."[15] Indeed, the busy shopping strips of Northwest, Hawthorne, Belmont, and Broadway tell a story about sound policy and creative entrepreneurship. The bustling downtown with its inviting public spaces and transit infrastructure tells a similar story of pivotal battles, wise choices, and good policies. Places like Pioneer Courthouse Square and Tom McCall Park along the Willamette remind every user of the public ethos that inspired them and the struggles that created them. The tales of planning glory in the fight to remove the Harbor Freeway or to stop Mt. Hood and I-505 seem to haunt contemporary actors. Striving to live up to the legacy, they propose bold and expensive moves like capping the I-405 inner loop or burying the east bank I-5. Developers play to the civic reputation by proposing to create additional Park Blocks in the downtown. Everywhere, at every public square, every piece of public art, every park, every revitalized neighborhood, the past instructs the present: "Do it like this."

The political formations that have sustained these practices of planning are ordinary enough. Business people play an important role in the politics of the city. They take care that property values in the central city are supported. But there have been many other elements to the "regime" – the informal structure of decision making – in Portland.[16] The neighborhood associations are part of this. Professional planners, architects, and designers are often active in politics. Environmental organizations play an important role, most notably 1,000 Friends of Oregon, but many others, too. The public institutions of city, Development Commission, Tri-Met and Metro are important repositories of power in Portland. The Democratic Party, never a machine, also plays a role. But they also play by different rules. Elections are non-partisan. The tone of politics is not as foul as elsewhere. Perhaps they have begun to approach Elkin's ideal of the "commercial republic." Politics is geared toward providing a good quality of life as well as a high standard of living. And the interests of individual business people is seldom confused with the broader economic well-being of the community, the "commercial public interest."[17]

So finely honed are the stories of how Portland came to be what it is that we might consider these "tales of planning glory" more like the "legend" of Portland. The legend exists in the solid material of the city, the downtown, the light rail trains, and the neighborhoods. It also exists in the words and phrases they use to describe what they want in their city, or how they make decisions together. It exists in the continuing political formations, the interest groups,

bureaucracies, and activists. All of these things: meaning, words, practices, organizations, and institutions, and the physical city are all as if laminated into a sturdy and flexible unit. And the legend, as much as anything else, is what keeps it going. Civic leaders will often wring their hands and decry the lack of vision among their contemporaries. McCall and Goldschmidt had vision, they will say, but no one today. Perhaps their vision is obstructed by all that has been achieved. Yet the legend, nourished by the stories they tell, retains great power and continues.

A celebrated Stan Freeberg commercial from the late 1960s posed the momentous question, "how do they make a pitted prune?" The equally solemn answer was "they do it." I began with a question about Portland and how they had been able to combine strong planning with strong citizen participation to create a better city. The pitted prune makers presumably started with pitted plums. Some observers are inclined to draw the same conclusions about Portland. They had a highly educated middle class population; few minorities and little racial conflict; a beautiful natural environment surrounding their city; and a Progressive political culture unsullied by Eastern-style machines. But, I think the answer to the question "how did Portland do it?" is more like the answer to the question about the pitted prunes. They did it.

They did it in particular ways, of course, and so "they did it" doesn't answer the question of "how." To say "they did it" is only to emphasize that what happened in the construction of the Portland way of planning over the course of three decades was not the product of determining economic, demographic, or other social trends or forces. It was an act of agency. Or rather, it was the product of continuing and repetitive acts of agency on the part of thousands of the inhabitants of Portland. This is also to say it was a process of construction – of making structure – through the resources that language provides.

This is what makes the Portland regime so sturdy and adaptable. It is built from the ground up in the meanings of place, community, democracy, and planning. It is expressed in vocabularies that describe the good city, appropriate civic conduct, the rights of citizens, and legitimate knowledge in planning. It is mobilized in discrete practices of public deliberation, policy-making, planning, and regulation. It is perpetuated through organizations, public and private, that carry out these practices over time, like machines that produce the underlying meanings of the regime going forward. And it is installed in the city, providing a constant reminder of what the regime has created and what it stands for. Yet what permeates the entire structure, and what is at the root of all the attempts to change it, is what the people have to say.

Whither Portland?

Where is Portland headed? Will it be possible for this trail-blazing community to sustain a commitment to both strong land use and urban design regulation and to democratic planning? Obviously, only time will tell. But I think the answer is yes. For the immediate future the pressure

is off. The economic boom of the 1990s has subsided and with it the overheated demand for housing. Metro, meanwhile, has moved to implement a major expansion of the urban growth boundary – about 18,000 acres – necessitated, in part, by the political outcries heard when the UGB first began to pinch. It would be a mistake, however, to equate a loosening of the boundary with abandonment of the same. Meanwhile, Measure 7, which caused so much consternation, was declared unconstitutional before it ever went into effect.

The impact of the Endangered Species Act, however, seems likely to be more lasting. As Rick Michaelson put it, we are all going to be environmental planners around here for a while. This seems like a fair prediction. It's not just the ESA, either, pushing Portland in that direction. Many of the issues facing cities around the globe – energy, water quality, global warming – seem likely to reinforce the environmental turn in Portland planning. Among the likely policy responses will be to maintain the urban growth boundary and to continue promoting redevelopment at higher densities in the least environmentally sensitive locations as a way of protecting those areas that are most sensitive. Far from diverting Portland from the path it has followed for thirty years, oncoming realities would seem to reinforce their direction. Certainly, they are far ahead of many communities in their commitment to transit, compact development, and urban sustainability.

Even as an economic development strategy, Portland's planning policies have been fruitful. The "quality of life" approach appears to have worked well. The long-term shift from industries of extraction and manufacturing to industries of high technology and high-end services got a big push from the fact that well-educated and high-skilled workers wanted to live in Portland. Some communities try to lure capital to meet the needs of idle labor. Portland attracted high-quality labor and the jobs followed. That's an oversimplification, of course. But there's no reason now to abandon that approach. As maverick economist Richard Florida has demonstrated so vividly, attracting the "creative class" is one of the keys to continuing prosperity. Portland is well positioned to take advantage.[18]

As the Southwest Community Plan showed, however, there are limits to even the best-intended policies. Portland's political leadership seems to have gotten the message that strong policies can't always be applied uniformly in all places. Robert Shibley provided a more general warning along these lines in his critique of the "complete new urbanism."[19] Places are different, communities are different, and local circumstances and values will vary. Ostensibly a total and self-contained formula for city-making, the New Urbanism needs to find a way to incorporate local knowledge and local culture. The same thing goes for Portland's planning policies. Bureaucratic practice requires that officials treat all people equally. But appropriate placemaking practice demands that people and places be treated on their own terms. Vera Katz, for one, seems to have learned this. Her obvious and genuine affection for Martie Sucec in the waning days of the

SWCP (and since then) reflected, among other things, Katz' understanding that a city cannot possibly pay people to care for places in the way that citizens like Sucec care for places for free. Without the care of such citizens, moreover, the sustainability of cities in general is in question.[20]

Some of the steps Portland has taken in recent years have not been in the direction of either flexible policy application or citizen participation. The separation between the newly-created Bureau of Development Services and the Bureau of Planning was part of an effort to streamline the permitting process for developers. So was, to some extent, the rewrite of Title 34. These things are not necessarily bad – although citizens complained loudly – for they deal with the very real issue that uncertainties in the building process add to the costs of development and make housing that much more expensive. They cut into developer profits, too, of course, but the impact on housing affordability is real nevertheless. What we should not lose sight of in this picture, however, is that citizen participation continues to be a bedrock value in Portland planning. It's not just that participation is State Land Use Goal 1. It's that an expectation of open, early, and meaningful participation is deeply embedded in local culture, not to mention increasingly in our national culture.

It is time, however, for Portland to go back to reconnect with those traditions. Carl Abbott called almost a decade ago for a renewal of the links between planning policies and the popular will.[21] The State Land Use Goals which have been so powerful in Oregon, and especially in Portland, were created through a thorough-going public consultation in 1974. Many of the values expressed in those goals have been sustained over the years. Popular commitment to them may have deepened in many cases. All the same, there needs to be an explicit democratic reaffirmation of those goals. The political establishment needs to make the foundations of the Portland way of planning vulnerable again to the democratic process. They have to permit some reevaluation and some readjustment of that framework. If they do, the values underlying planning in Portland can become new again. If they do not, they will become brittle and increasingly susceptible to attack.

That said, I think the practice of city making as a collective process, sometimes democratic, sometimes more bureaucratic, located at the border line between policy and planning, has only been strengthened by recent events. What planners and citizens alike complained about in the Southwest Community Plan was the lack of "tools" for implementing their vision and goals. Out of that conflict, however, were produced or promised a number of new tools for managing the urban process. When the participants struggled to find an "x" zone for single family infill, it was as if they were talking about "the thing with no name." When it became R3 (although so far, not enacted) it was as if a new word had been coined. Indeed, as Rick Michaelson pointed out, the discourse of zoning has a striking symbolic content. How else could a debate about CM versus CS zoning spark such continuing controversy? The names of zones and the titles of policies become structuring words, the same as any other. But the point is that within

this discourse Portlanders have a chance of creating the new terms and values they need to make the city they want. Southwest residents were drawn back into that discourse, in some cases against their wills. But it was both restrictive and permissive by turns, and it provides a process by which a democratic vision of the city can be produced.

As such, Portland is in good shape. Controlling the urban development process in a market society is a daunting task. Often, it seems the best we can do is to regulate against the most negative impacts of a process driven by a the demand for increasing return on investment. Many times, we can't even do that. Portland, however, now has a strong tradition of planning for "livability," which means for "use values," however muddled a concept that may be. It includes highly developed organizational and institutional structures in support of such a practice, as well as an extensive vocabulary pitched toward the same ends. The policies thus produced may be changed to meet changing values and circumstances. The idea of policy itself, however, is likely to persist. That is, the community may collectively decide to promote some different form of urbanism, but they are unlikely to change their minds about making such decisions in ways that are collective and democratic rather than individual and market-based.

Implications for scholars, practitioners, citizens

These Portland cases have a variety of implications for scholars, planning practitioners, and active citizens. For scholars, the Portland experience reflects on issues of values in space, the constitution of urban regimes, the problem of collective action, and considerations of class, power, and "structuration." For practitioners, there are lessons about conflicts or confusion about their roles in the planning process, the generally problematic nature of participation, the dangers of the conflict between policy and planning, and the limits to the planner's role as expert. For citizens, there is some advice.

Lefebvre's concept of urban space as dividing somehow clearly between "social space" and "abstract space" has gained extraordinary currency among urban scholars.[22] Habermas, it should be noted, had a similar, though mostly aspatial, concept of a division between the "lifeworld" and the "system."[23] As discussed much earlier, these terms, while capturing an important tendency, have an unfortunate crudeness. The translation of Lefebvre's dichotomy into terms of values – "use values" and "exchange values" – provided some relief by recognizing the diversity of values in two categories.[24] But in the context of practical case studies of participatory public planning we can see that values in space don't quite play out that way. Individuals attach a variety of values – social, sentimental, economic, and otherwise – to property and places. In terms of the Lefebvrean model, these values may seem contradictory. But outside of that framework they are merely plural. It seems far more fruitful to understand that the attachment of values to space is a practice fundamentally based in language. The terms of value we apply to

land, buildings, and places may serve interests of capital accumulation or the production of community or some mixture of the two. Indeed, the practice of planning is often about the mutual accommodation of values in these two categories. They may retain some usefulness as rhetorical weapons in political battle, but their remaining analytical value is in question. More important is the understanding that the entire range of values in urban space is produced through cultural means, in language.

The concept of "urban regimes" as capital-centered social formations enjoyed a similar vogue in scholarly circles. The Portland experience aligns poorly with the expectations of a theory of property-oriented regimes operating in urban space. First of all, what happens in Portland planning relies very heavily on the formal powers of government, rather than the informal relationships necessary to produce governance, as Stone suggested. The disciplined adherence of bureaucrats to protocol and policy, and the orientation of public officials to formal public processes means that the public sector often does have the wherewithal to produce positive government. Second, to the extent that forces outside of government contribute to the Portland regime, they organize in ways, as Gottdiener predicted, that cut across the use value/ exchange value divide. In Portland, sophisticated development interests have aligned themselves with the combined environmental and "quality of life" interests represented in 1,000 Friends of Oregon and the neighborhood movement. Meanwhile, downtown property interests have made common cause with a liberal establishment to produce a central city environment that is one of the most "livable" in North America. These alliances are subject to change, and the successful negotiation of the differing values each partner brings to the table is not assured. At the very least, however, the Portland experience suggests the possibility of a variety of regime formations adhering neither to Stone's classical model nor DeLeon's anti-regime. Only Elkin has seriously outlined this possibility in his portrayal of the "commercial public interest." It is worth additional consideration.[25]

Along these same lines, the struggle of citizens based in neighborhood associations to influence planning and policy in Portland also speaks to their ability to solve the problem of collective action. The history of the Northwest District Association, and other neighborhood associations emerging at that time, is one in which neighborhood activists not only influenced public policy, but also rose to assume positions of leadership in local politics and government. Thirty years later, the Summit Group, and subsequently the SWNI Task Force for the Southwest Community Plan, demonstrated that neighborhood-based forces could forge a common program and strategy. The energy expended in that effort speaks to both the difficulty and the promise of that enterprise. Given their ultimate success, it is hard to dismiss the possibility that such coordinated action might not be organized on a city-wide basis. Indeed, neighborhood activists from all corners of Portland joined in common cause to influence the deliberations on the Title 34

rewrite (although they were unhappy with the results). There is no particular reason why that should be the end of it. In fact, when they can elaborate their common interests in terms of common values and common vocabulary, their success seems more likely than not.

Many will be inclined to dismiss Portland's achievements in general, as well as the success of neighborhood-based activists, as a simple product of their solid standing in the middle class. It is clear that well educated, professionally oriented, and modestly affluent people such as those who inhabited Northwest District and Southwest Portland possess important resources for political struggle that poor and minority residents usually lack. Yet, it is important to remember that the people of both the neighborhoods studied here were extraordinary only in their commitments to place and community. They did not constitute anything remotely resembling an elite. Beyond that, the skills they brought to bear in their work are not unavailable to people of other socio-economic strata. They, too, exist in a world of language. Nor is it necessary for them to operate at the level of sophistication that Northwest and Southwest residents did in order to make an impact. What is crucial for people of all strata is to believe that their exertions can make a difference, for the most disabling deficiency is for them to believe that they have no chance. Further, to suggest that poor or working class people cannot learn as much as Portland's middle class activists did is to believe that their deficiencies are innate rather than circumstantial.

Most of all, the Portland experience illustrates that many of our common understandings of power are inadequate. Following the stories of these citizens, step by step, their conscious, intentional exertions of power are clear to see. This is not to say that they always achieve their specific aims or are never frustrated. But they do win sometimes, and mostly all they have done is talk. Nor have they simply expressed themselves in some sort of permissive environment. The people involved in the meanings, terms, practices, and institutions against which they direct their efforts also generate and use power. The character of this thing we call power, I would suggest, is the same on either side of the battle. The tactics may be different between those working to maintain a dominant order and those trying to undermine it. But the techniques are the same, and they revolve around the mobilization of meaning. Over and over again, neighborhood activists found their own power by organizing to speak, and by mounting a critique of the prevailing policies of the regime. Any wrestler knows that being on the bottom has its own tactical advantages and being on top presents some vulnerabilities. If those supporting the dominant position have plentiful resources, so do those opposing it.

Finally, we have seen clearly in these stories how structures have been transformed. The citizens themselves seldom appreciate it because they are focused on the present battle, whatever it may be. But over longer spans of time, in an historical frame, we can see how much has changed. Across three decades an expansive regime was constructed, elaborating a coherent set of meanings, values, practices, and organizations as it went. The residents of Northwest District

were crucial contributors to the raising of its framework. The citizens of Southwest Portland challenged a structure that we must consider is still unfinished. Their work made some important alterations in the design, but the stress they put on the structure also tested it, and in an odd way, buttressed this edifice of Portland planning.

The implications of these stories for planning practitioners are less profound, perhaps. This is mainly because these lessons should not be news to planners, only familiar warnings that bear repeating. First, it is crucial for planners never to forget, and never to be confused about, who they work for. That this should happen more than occasionally might not be surprising. The American Institute of Certified Planners code of ethics calls upon planners to serve, simultaneously, their clients, their employers, and citizens involved in planning processes, as well as the "public interest." The role conflict that emerged in the Southwest Community Plan was an example of that confusion. Planners presented themselves as ready and willing to assist citizens in achieving their own ends, but their real commitment was to the body of planning policy that the Bureau of Planning promoted. They could not do both, and therefore, they could not help but disappoint. The same did not hold true in the Northwest District Plan. In that case the planners were, by inclination and instruction, working for the neighborhood association. But this was only because the Bureau of Planning was as yet too little developed to hold staff to its own allegiance. A few years later, such guerrilla service would no longer be possible. Today, the question is how the needs of citizens for technical advice and assistance will be served. In Seattle, Minneapolis, and elsewhere, the solution has been to allow neighborhood organizations to hire their own planners. Portland seems unlikely to go that route, despite the trials of the SWCP.

Second, from the point of view of the professional planner, citizen participation remains a cantankerous craft. Some of the early analyses of participatory practice seemed fixated on determining whether participation was really democratic or not, whether it was really effective or not, whether it really worked or didn't work. Yet citizen participation in planning has never been an ideal to be fulfilled or a hypothesis to be tested. It is a democratic practice to be improved. Planners need to study the range of techniques by which opinion can be gathered, deliberations structured, review solicited, or consensus negotiated. But they also need to accept that participatory planning will almost always be difficult and time-consuming, often conflictual, and sometimes disastrous. Success or failure, moreover, often depends on external factors. In the two cases examined here one might reasonably conclude that participatory practice was superior in the case in which participation broke down. Virtue in the design and execution of participatory process is no guarantee of success.

This brings us to a third major implication to be drawn from the Portland experience. No public planning process, no matter how well conceived or carried out, can overcome the kind of fundamental contradiction that existed in the case of the Southwest Community Plan (and to a

less pronounced degree in the Outer Southeast and Albina community plans). Where the framework of regulatory policy is so extensive as to prohibit the expression of a real community vision through planning, fierce conflict is the only possible result. Indeed, to make policy so inflexible is to put policy at risk.

Finally, the role of planner as generalized expert, if it ever made sense in the planning process, is now obsolete. The planner's self-presentation as professional to the citizen as lay person can only breed resentment and hostility. The professional can offer a fair amount of technical knowledge about the legal and regulatory context of land use planning, or whatever the topic at hand may be, and some knowledge and skill in the construction and facilitation of participatory process. But the range and quality of professional expertise possessed by middle class participants such as we have found in Portland can be far superior to what the planners can bring to bear. Staff in the Northwest District Plan came to the table with a commitment to democratize and demystify planning knowledge. Likewise, they valued both the local knowledge of the participants and their various professional skills. The planners in the Southwest Community Plan, in contrast, clung to their position as technical experts in land use. The citizens they worked with, however, were teachers, lawyers, computer specialists, writers, engineers, physicians, architects, and planners. Planning is a humbling profession. But when the planner works with publics such as this, humility is doubly important.

For citizens, the most important implication of this work, however, is that it is fundamental to speak. If there is to be any hope for a democratic practice of city-making (or a city-based practice of democracy) then it is necessary for citizens to speak up. This is why all of the deterministic treatments of urban politics – one might say fatalistic – are so damaging. They discourage that fundamental act of speaking up. But of course, that's not enough. It is crucial to speak up in a way that is thoroughly public. The subterranean discontents of any citizens will come to little until they surface in a public space. The pre-political sites of water cooler, corner tavern, back fence, front porch, and the telephone are important in this process. But only when people speak up at public hearings, planning workshops, political campaigns, and published prints, will private discontent become public issues susceptible to public resolution.[26]

Of course, this is still not enough. It is important to speak in an organized and concerted way. This means several things. It is obviously more powerful to speak collectively than to do so as an individual. The claim to represent a larger number is powerful in almost any culture. When residents presented themselves as speaking for an entire neighborhood their words had special weight. Those listening might have questioned how strong this claim to represent others was. But they were never so much in doubt that they wanted to poll the "silent majority." It was likely they were less informed, thoughtful, and moderate than the people before them. Speaking collectively in an effective way means doing it over time. Citizens who believe they can show up to put in their

"two cents" and go away are sadly mistaken. When they coined the phrase, "eighty-five percent of life is just showing up," this is part of what they meant. Persistence is required.

Yet it is still not enough to speak collectively and persistently. Citizens must choose their terms carefully and stick with them. They need to select stories that carry their meaning and values and tell them over and over again. And as they move forward, they need to develop and refine their arguments in relation to changing circumstances. It is all about creating a party line and propagating it. While structures may be susceptible to change through the deployment of language, that deployment must be clear, consistent, and nothing if not repetitive. What is structural about a system of planning repeats the same messages day in and day out. What is structural about an urban political regime does the same thing. Any new contender must match the prevailing structure, blow for blow.

Finally, it is crucial for citizens to make meanings formal. Participants in both the Northwest District Plan and the Southwest Community Plan understood this very well, for they addressed themselves with great gusto to the work of translating gross political impulses into formal language of vision, goals, and policies. Citizen planners often express weariness with the tedious work of "wordsmithing," yet they persevere anyway, because they know that the formal expression of their values carries a kind of power that offhand expressions do not. Obviously, this applies to the making of any law, but it also is true of forms that fall short of legal status.

This is all they have done. Of course, it is a great deal. The citizens of Portland have created an elaborate way of planning over the past three decades. It is an imposing structure of meaning, language, practices and institutions. But it all began with their courage to speak.

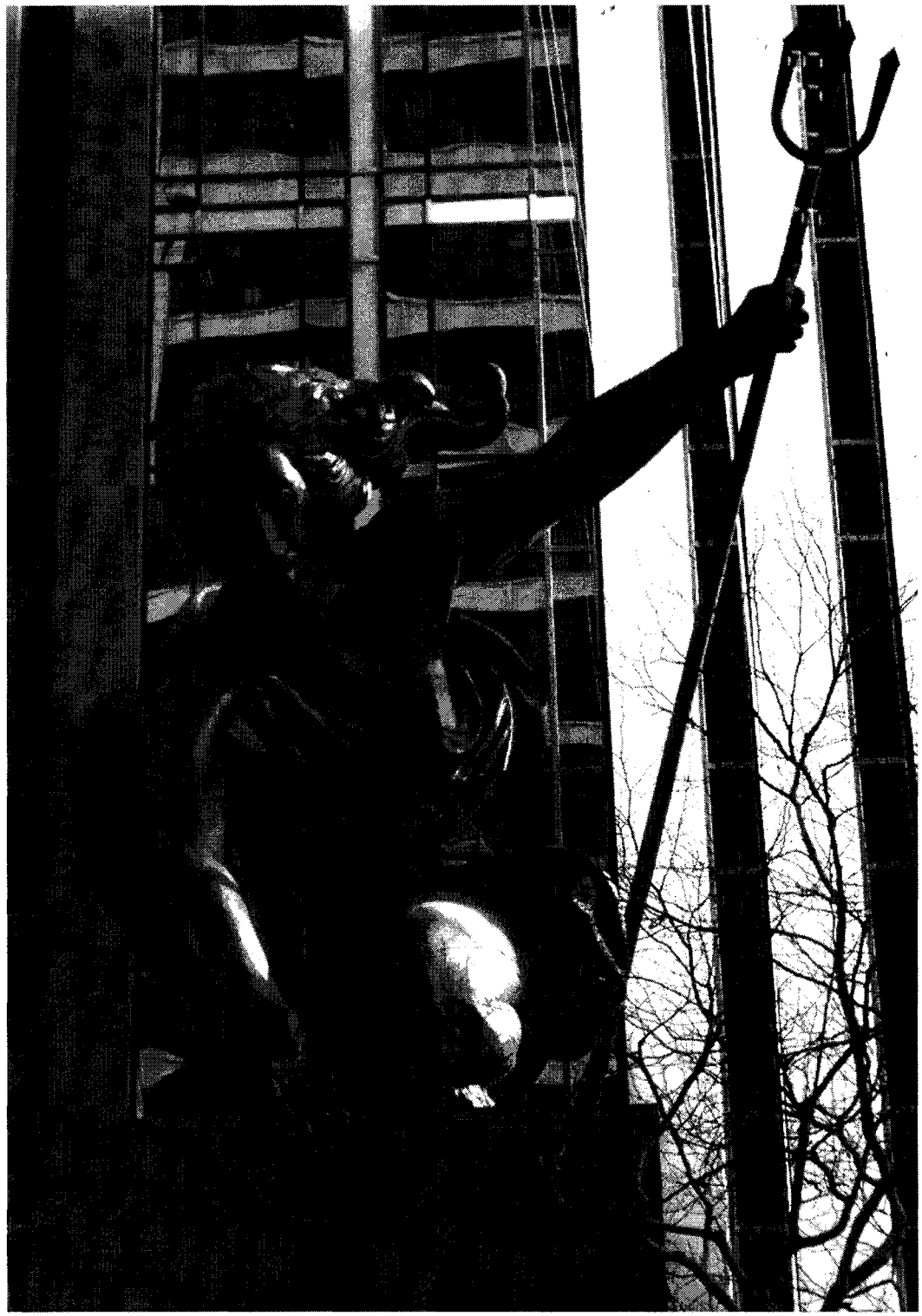

Figure 14.1 "Portlandia" reaches down to help a citizen at the Portland Building. Photo by the author.

Figure 14.2 Winter in Portland brings rain, low clouds, and a feeling of protection. Photo by the author.

Figure 14.3 Traffic near the merge between I-5 and I-405. Mt. Hood is barely visible above the second overpass. Photo by the author.

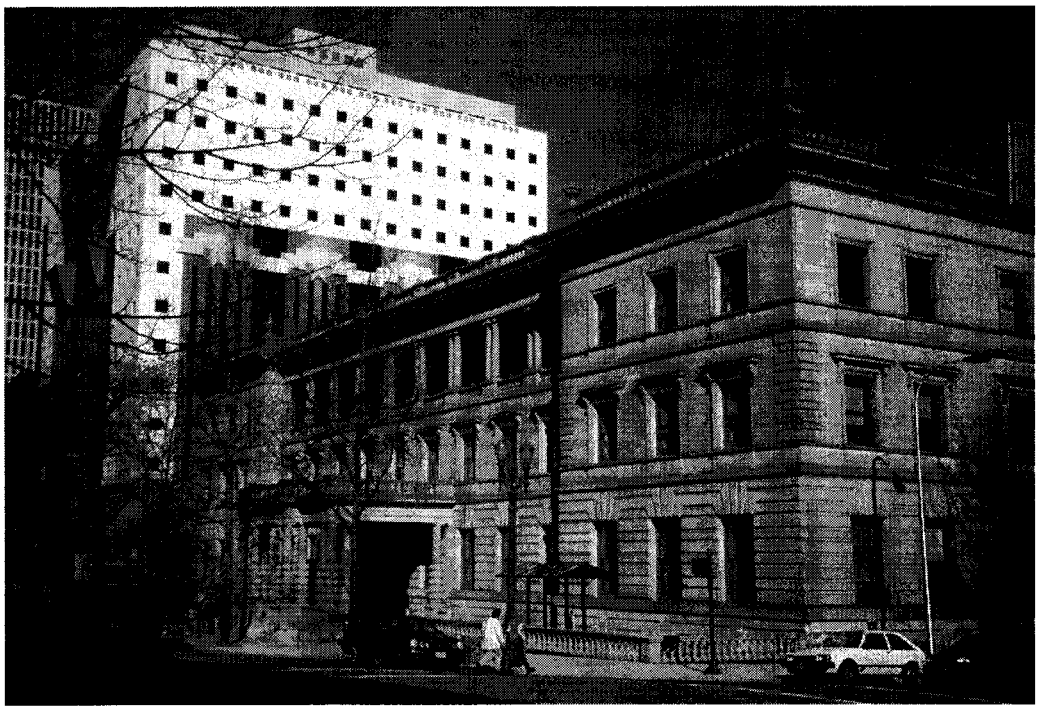

Figure 14.4 The newly refurbished City Hall, foreground, and Michael Graves Portland Building hold citizen resources for Portland's future. Photo by author.

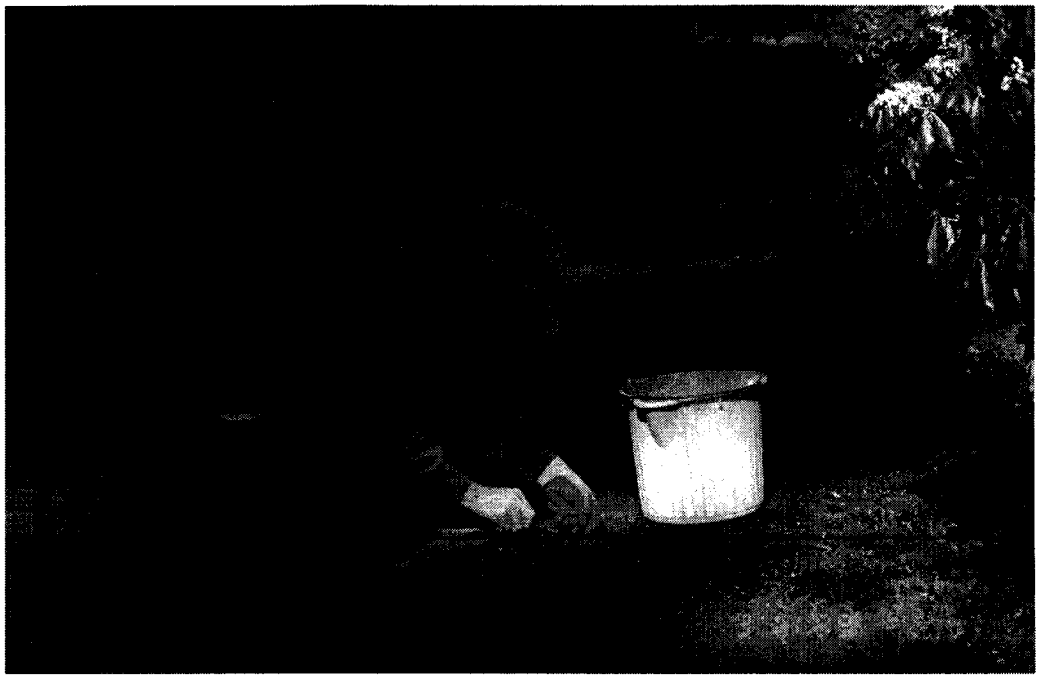

Figure 14.5 In city making, as in Japanese gardening, care for the details is never wasted. Photo by the author.

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[15] Clapp coined the phrase in conversation with the author, but has also developed the connections between language, identity, and political action in Tara Lynne Clapp. 2003. *Environmental Identities: Rhetorics of Environmental Planning*. A doctoral dissertation for the University of Southern California, Los Angeles.

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[25] Stone, 1989; Gottdiener, 1994; DeLeon, 1993; Elkin, 1987.

[26] Barber, 1984.

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Vita

Bradshaw Hovey specializes in the study of cities, democracy, and planning, working as Associate Director at The Urban Design Project, an institute in the School of Architecture and Planning at the University at Buffalo. He was a contributor to the founding of the University of Washington undergraduate major in Community and Environmental Planning and taught in the program for several years. He has worked as a planning consultant on community visioning, organizational development, and planning projects through the Urban Design Project and through The Caucus Partnership.

Hovey earned his doctorate in the Interdisciplinary Program for the Ph.D. in Urban Planning at the University of Washington in 2003. He earned his Master of Urban Planning in 1991 from the University at Buffalo, and wrote a thesis entitled: "Taken in Again: Citizen Participation in the Buffalo Waterfront Plan, 1982-1987: Or How The Public's Cynicism About Really Having A Say in Big Decisions Was Confirmed One More Time." Hovey earned his B.A. in politics and journalism at Empire State College in 1980.

He spent most of a decade in the newspaper business, working as a reporter or editor for *Business First* of Buffalo (1985-88), *The Record* in Hackensack, NJ, The New Mexico Sun, in Albuquerque (1982-1983), *The Courier-Express* in Buffalo (1981-1982), and *The Spectrum*, the student paper at the University at Buffalo (1978-1980), often covering stories about planning, urban development and politics.