

PRICE TAGS – Issue 6

September 30, 2003

If you'd like to be enriched

Depending on your e-mail program, you may receive this newsletter in a different format than the one I designed. (It should come in a variety of fonts and sizes, along with line separators.)

I haven't been including attachments or photographs, given that some hosts won't allow potential virus-carriers or have very limited capacity.

So if you'd like to receive **Price Tags** in a text-enriched format, along with photographs and graphics, as a Microsoft Word attachment, let me know by "Reply" mail, and I'll put you on a separate list. Otherwise, you'll continue to receive PT as you do now, but without photos.

BTW, the next issue of PT will have some graphics of *The Vancouver That Might Have Been* that should amaze you.

Our First Letter!

Doug Purdy wins absolutely nothing for being the first reader to submit a response to a PT item – that Globe and Mail article in Issue 5 that discussed how wards might negatively affect planning in Vancouver:

I think the central issue that the consideration of the ward system raises is: “How will a ward system build a better city?” For is it not governance that establishes policies, sets the direction and priorities, and then stands aside to let a competent bureaucracy and responsive and responsible development community build buildings, community spaces (plazas, parks, public art, streetscapes, etc.) and create an environment where community itself will emerge and evolve?

We continue to receive accolades from many sources around the world who admire the evolution of the City, especially the core, its livability, and its neighbourhoods. This has not just happened in the past few years. The admiration has been happening for the past couple of decades, and has only increased as Vancouver has been exposed to more of the international community and vice versa. May it continue with or without wards, and you know where my sympathies are placed.

Responses to this, or any other item, welcomed.

Image versus Reality

I’ve always thought that Vancouver has some of the best renderers in the business – those graphic artists who create the image of a building or place before the ground is broken. At best, they turn architecture into art while still being true to the specs. And despite what you might think (that the image is always better than reality), it aint necessarily so.

The New York Times did a nice piece on this subject at:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/09/28/realestate/28COV.html?ex=1065731548&ei=1&en=236519f10dc01b0f>

Best quote:

"The computer has led a lot of people to believe that they are artists. And they are not. If you let a computer cook it for you, you're using it as a recipe, but you're not a chef."

Reality versus Image

These days, if you want to see the latest in graphic design (or at least in promotion) you go to websites for new condo projects.

Developer Robert Fung, who has lately been doing some personal and public development projects, supplied me with a link to his latest work in Gastown:

We just received OP for the Taylor Building at 310 Water St., and it is sold out! The units are as cool as anything in Yaletown. For a taste, go to www.thetaylorbuilding.com

Also, I have been renovating part of the Gaoler's Mews building, and have also replaced a t-shirt shop with the Irish Heather's interpretation of Meinhardt's for Gastown! The area is starting to feel better all the time.

So it's come to this: a version of Mienhardt's in Gastown.

Image and Reality

The Vancouver Sun did a nice spread on the abundance of public art that has been commissioned in the current development boom. Walking along the seawall these days is like touring a very linear art gallery. (Check out the latest at Coal Harbour.) In fact, there's even a do-it-yourself guide:

The City's **Public Art Walk/Downtown Shoreline** offers a brief introduction to public artworks sited along a 13-kilometre walk around the shoreline/perimeter of the downtown peninsula. A few architectural and heritage gems are touched on as well.

More information about the artworks is posted online at www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/publicart --click on Public Art Registry.

The free 48-page booklet is always available from the main floor kiosk at City Hall, or the Office of Cultural Affairs, #100, 515 West 10th. Download a PDF version from the Public Art homepage: click on **Resources/Links** and look under **Publications**.

Thanks to Bryan Newsom, the City's Public Art Manager, for that.

Skateboarders in Love

Notorious city-planner-and-skateboarder Michael Gordon sends this link:

www.philly.com/mld/dailynews/news/columnists/6774732.htm

Chinatown for Youth

From Andrea Tang:

We will be having a workshop on Saturday, October 18 from 12 to 3:30 pm at the Choi Hall (28 West Pender) that will be an exciting opportunity for dialogue on Chinatown's future and how it could become more "youth-friendly".

"Choosing Chinatown: Past, Present, Future"

E-mail Andrea at andrea_tang@mail.com to register.

Finally, at the southern-most tip of Price Tags ...

Bronwen Machin, who works for the City of Port Phillip in the Melbourne region, sent me the following link after noting the tag

on climate change in the Arctic. Turns out there are disturbing observations in the Antarctic that might explain their drought:

<http://www.abc.net.au/catalyst/stories/s948858.htm>

The Antarctic vortex is ... one of the engines that drive climate in the Southern Hemisphere. But now it appears the vortex is shifting gear, and is spinning faster and faster, and getting tighter. As it does it's pulling the climate bands further south, dragging rain away from the continent out into the southern ocean. ... Scientists at the US Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research believe the speeding up of the vortex is caused by the combined effect of global warming and the depletion of the ozone layer over Antarctica.
