

LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE DUEDALL-POTTS BUILDING
CARA's Upper Floor Redevelopment Pilot – February 2004

- ☑ **Elevators, seismic retrofits, multiple fire exits, ADA ramping & many other improvements are not “required.”** CARA began its exploration of upper-floor redevelopment barriers by discovering that almost all of the “requirements” that frighten some owners from using their upper floors are just myths. During this project we found that the City Building Division staff not only understood the requirements of the State Building Code (Albany does not have its own Building or Fire Codes – it follows State standards), but that they were willing to provide additional technical support to help determine which, if any, of these regulations applied to the redevelopment project.

- ☑ **Easily available professional services make a big difference.** An early walk-through by the City of Albany’s Building Division clarified that a residential unit would be considered a “re-use” of the upper-floor space instead of a more intensive use that could have triggered structural or other improvements. The contractors identified several potential issues that, with the agreement of CARA’s architect, resulted in further structural analysis. With CARA funding, the contractors were able to obtain structural engineering designs for a new support system for an overloaded rear wall & for replacing charred roofing members. All of these people gave timely professional input that was, in this case, free to the owner.

- ☑ **Separating demolition permits from building permits can cost time & money.** We learned that obtaining a separate demolition permit automatically triggers an asbestos review by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). Asbestos was a common additive to many building materials into the 1970s. DEQ placed a stop-work order on this project & ordered asbestos testing. Even with a quick turn-around by a consultant, the DEQ-required testing & report delayed the project over a week. If asbestos had been found, the project would have been delayed further as a remediation plan was prepared & enacted.

- ☑ **Separating building permits may allow unrelated projects to be occupied sooner.** The City Building Division recommended that the upstairs redevelopment be tied to structural repair of a ground-floor wall under one building permit. Linking these activities prevented the City from issuing the building permit until the structural engineering design was completed. Adding the structural work to the permits for redevelopment of the living space also prevented the living space from being occupied until the structural work was completed.

- ☑ **Someone on the “inside” helps.** CARA’s lead staff was called on several times to ease the project through the City’s review & approval process. Assistance ranged from presenting design concepts to the Landmarks Advisory Commission, to dealing with whether System Development Charges would be triggered, to tracking down permit questions. While none of the questions raised would have stopped this project, any would have added an element of frustration & time lost if someone had not been available to help.

- ☑ **It pays to have the “right” contractor.** Kelly James Construction approached this project with a commitment to craftsmanship & to retaining historic integrity. When they were unable to find compatible missing trim pieces, they custom-milled trims from wood found in the building. Broken & missing window glass in the northern windows now shimmers with historically correct hand-rolled glass. The new upper front windows mirror those of the original building. From start to finish, they retained a high level of professional quality that will help this building meet another century of use.

- ☑ **Plan to take longer & spend more than anticipated.** Anyone who has tackled a major remodeling job knows that you always discover additional things that need attention or, if added, would bring something

special to the finished project. Luckily for this building, owner Patrick Carney consistently chose to use higher-quality products that will serve the building well over the next 100 years. We expect you'll agree that the extra time & cost to remove the dropped ceiling was well worth the payoff & that the replacement of historically correct front windows & structural repairs serve the street & building well.

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