



Trolley Times

North Slope Historic District Inc. August 2024
YOUR HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOOD Volume 111

August Meeting Features Council Representative Sarah Rumbaugh

Sarah Rumbaugh, our City Council representative, will be the featured speaker at our August 22nd meeting. As this will be her first opportunity to meet and speak with those of us who have made the NSHD our home, she will share with us the challenges she faces representing our District, and the vision she has for the NSHD going forward.

Ms. Rumbaugh brings to her position a diverse background serving on the City Of Tacoma's Human Rights Commission to study and investigate problems of prejudice, bigotry, and discrimination in our schools. Ms. Rumbaugh also had a professional background for the last two decades, where she worked to raise funds for several non-profit agencies that address a range of social issues to include environmental education, university funding , sexual assault and abuse.

**August 22, Immanuel Presbyterian Church,
901 North J St. Enter on N. 9th.
Social begins at 6:30, Program at 7 pm.**

Come and hear what she has to say. Bring your questions. Social time begins at 6:30 in the large basement meeting room at Immanuel Presbyterian Church, located at North 9th and J Streets, with the entrance on North 9th. Parking lot available, with entrance on N. 9th. Program begins at 7pm.

National Night Out Is Nearly Here!

National Night Out is on **August 6** this year, so get ready to gather with your neighbors to set up your Block Watch group or celebrate the one you have. National Night Out is meant to foster relationships with close neighbors so that all can have someone to call on in an emergency because you *know* your neighbors. Have a cook-out, or a dessert pot-luck and select a chair who can collect phone/text numbers and distribute to all. Make plans to act on any problems you have in the neighborhood. Or, just take it easy and chat with each other!

So, get a Block Party together and meet your neighbors. You need each other!

1. Invite the neighbors in your block, asking them to bring something for a potluck (a dessert potluck is easiest), and decide where to have it. Just use someone's front or back yard.
2. Eat, chat, share contact info and talk about any problems you'd like to work on. Choose a chairperson and decide if you want to use emails or phones.
3. Call Board Member Julie Turner (253-383-2329) for more information.

North Slope Historic District

Reprint from *The Trust News* with permission from The Washington Trust for Historic Preservation and Elizabeth Anderson

The North Slope Historic District encompasses 950 properties in a wedge-shaped street grid that runs uphill from I Street to and including Grant Ave. between Division and Steele Streets in Tacoma. The slope provides views of Puget Sound, filled with sailboats in the afternoons, and the snow-capped Olympic Mountains across the Sound. The streets themselves are tree-lined, and older homes lend an air of comfort as a familiar American landscape. It is a very pleasant neighborhood, but why is this place historic?

Development of the North Slope area reaches back to the 1880s when the town began to flourish with the new railroad terminus at New Tacoma. The nearby waterfront tracks, warehouses and docks were part of an infrastructure that connected shipments of grain, lumber and manufactured goods to stations throughout the resource-rich Northwest and to ports up and down the West Coast.

Land speculation in Tacoma led to the platting of residential lots vastly in advance of the market for them. So buyers had the option of being the first on the block throughout the area, giving rise to a checkerboard or hopscotch pattern of development. You can see that today in the building styles and construction dates of the houses throughout the area where the Victorians and foursquares are juxtaposed with bungalows. The buildings manifest the influence of locally available lumber and an eclectic Northwestern mixing of styles.

Most of the homes were built between 1889 and before World War II. The neighborhood was almost entirely built up by 1949. The mixing of styles and periods from our grandparents' days is a reason why it looks so much like home to Americans. We find that construction dates in the North Slope cluster in times of prosperity, between the 1893 Panic, WW I, and the Great Depression.

Intense activity 1888 - 1893; 1902 - 1912 ;1919 - 1929

Little building activity Panic of 1893; WW I; and Great Depression

But, back in the 1880s, builders were dragging supplies and equipment down dirt roads to clear stumps to start a place many people could call home. The area became the haven of the respectable, a step up from Old Town, where fishermen, longshoremen and mill workers frequented saloons!

The people who lived here and built the area over a period of five decades were a core and a cross section of Tacoma's working people. Physicians, RR workers, postal employees, businesspersons who ran all kinds of businesses from machine shops to florists, independent tradespersons such as tailors, electricians, a harbormaster, a watchmaker. The famous also lived here and include architects Carl Darmer, the favored architect of the Northern Pacific RR Co., and Roland Borhek, singers such as opera star Signor Fioli and the young Bing Crosby, athletes and Ernest Lister, who was the State's governor from 1913 to 1916.

The house builders were often unrecorded and pattern books may have been the source of many plans. The district does have several structures designed by notable local architects: Bullard & Hill, Larkin & Barton, C.A. Darmer, Ambrose Russell, Proctor & Ferrell, Frederick Heath.

The styles of the buildings represent what was most popular and useful and in America at that time. Most are not particularly high style, just good solid examples of what worked within the tastes and budgets of the builders. Prevalent styles show excellent representations of Queen Anne, stick styles, classic American foursquare, Craftsman and bungalow.

This local history and character is celebrated by the community in the ongoing work of the North Slope Historic District organization in gatherings and workshops on best treatments for maintenance of historic houses, earthquake safety and community security. The designation of the district as historic has proved to be a valuable planning tool to help protect historic character. District designation carries responsibilities, which add up to keep it looking historic.

"Home in Tacoma" Upzone Going to City Council

By Deborah Cade, NSHD Chair

The Tacoma Planning Commission approved the most recent version of "Home in Tacoma" on June 5, approving a plan that calls for "three new Urban Residential zones for low and mid-scale density, parking, including Reduced Parking Areas, and landscaping, including tree retention and minimum planting requirements." The summary of the program and other links to its components can be found at <https://www.cityoftacoma.org/cms/one.aspx?pageld=180033>.

The three new Urban Residential zones include "UR 1" and "UR 2," which will make up the North Slope neighborhood. UR 2 allows up to 12 units to be built on a typical 6000 square foot lot.

The updated map finally indicates the "view sensitive districts," which were carved out by the Council earlier and comprise most of West Tacoma and Northeast Tacoma, along with parts of Old Town. Development is limited to 25 feet in height, and in some areas 20 feet, which is a significant deterrent to demolition and rebuilding in those areas.

Another link is to the "Reduced Parking Area Map," which depicts which neighborhoods will have no parking requirements for new multi-family development. Although this part of the program was intended to comply with new legislative requirements, those requirements apply only to areas within certain limits around "major transit stops."

None of the areas indicated, which include large swaths of neighborhoods along 6th Avenue and Pacific Avenue, are served by "major transit stops," which are defined as stops for light rail, commuter rail, or bus rapid transit, not "traditional public transit" that operates on general purpose streets. The City has expanded this "reduced parking area" to include regular bus service. No extension of Link will occur on 6th Avenue until 2041 or later, according to Sound Transit's schedule, and it's not clear that it would meet the legislative definition of

"major transit stop" given that it shares the public streets. We in the North Slope know what it's like to have inadequate off-street parking. Even though we are served by two bus lines and now by the nearby Link, most people who use transit still have a car.

The Home in Tacoma program will next go to City Council for final approval. The Council's review and final action will occur between now and the end of September, with opportunities for public comment likely in August or September. **Please look at the Home in Tacoma website, get on the City's email list for notices, and provide comments during the comment periods.**

***Trolley Times* Editor And Graphic Designer To Retire**

It was in 2010 that the previous editor of the *Trolley Times* departed. Julie Turner took on being editor, deciding on what to print and often writing the articles. Jay Turner took over the formatting of the eight pages that make up the quarterly newsletter.

Over the years Board members and others have stepped up to write for the "Trolley." The goal of the writers is to inform the neighborhood residents of important activities and proposals happening in their historic neighborhood and in the city, and to encourage their participation.

One of the recurring issues has always been zoning. It is an on-going problem to keep NSHD and Tacoma residents informed about the zoning plans of the City. Stay tuned!

This is the last issue of the *Trolley* with the Turners as editor and graphic designer. The Board of Directors of NSHD, Inc. will soon decide on a new team to make the new *Trolley*.

How the North Slope Historic District Park Began

By Julie Turner

By 2000, the old power sub-station at the corner of North 8th and K Streets had been mothballed for years, waiting for the contaminants from transformers to dissipate. Kelly Halligan, a K St. resident, suggested the idea for a park in that space. It was better than another apartment house, the NSHD Steering Committee agreed, but how to pay for it?

Fortunately, the City was floating a bond issue to encourage development of the Foss Waterway, and as a sweetener gave each Neighborhood Council \$750,000 to spend. Our representatives on the Council, Bill Johnston and Dan Klein, held forth at North End Council meetings until \$100,000 was designated to build a park at North 8th and K.

In 2001, the property was transferred to the City from the Utility, and Metro Parks became the developing and managing partner. The Parks Department included planning sessions with NSHD neighbors and a design was chosen. In the meantime, the Steering Committee began to think about names for the park.

Naming the Park

Valerie Sivinski had been the "guiding force" for the formation of the Historic District when she was Tacoma's Historic Preservation Officer during the 1990s. In 1993, she had met with a J St. group wanting to form a district, and thus set a group of residents working over the next 6 years to accomplish the goal of saving our historic houses. Valerie's guidance and inspiration were instrumental in helping residents persevere. She died tragically in October of 2000.

During those 6 years, Valerie was to remark, time and again, that one of the most important reasons to form an historic district in the North Slope was to "preserve the homes of many of the real people who built Tacoma" before the 1950s. She said it is great to preserve large buildings, but we get a better view of life in early Tacoma from the homes of those early residents. The NSHD Steering Committee members wanted to name the park "Val's Park" to honor Valerie for her invaluable help, but were precluded from doing so because of the short time

since her death. When her husband, Tim McDonald, was asked to suggest a name, he came up with "North Slope Historic District Park;" it would be dedicated to Valerie and would honor one of her achievements as Preservation Officer.

Tim designed and donated a memorial marker, built of local Tenino and Wilkeson sandstone. The marker showed carved books from Valerie's personal library. The stone was from the Marenakos Rock Center and carved by Keith Phillips of Tenino.

The park was to be named by the North End Neighborhood Council, the sponsoring agency. To ensure that Tim McDonald's choice for a name was honored, the Steering Committee gathered up about 30 North Slope residents and went to the meeting to vote. We emerged with the park named: North Slope Historic District Park!



Dedicating the Park

On June 8, 2002, 125 neighbors, relatives and friends of Valerie Sivinski attended the dedication of the park. The sun came out just in time for the event. Councilman Bill Evans read the city's proclamation of "Valerie Sivinski Day." Park Director Jerry Thorpe expressed Metro Park's good wishes. Tim McDonald spoke about his wife's interest in historic preservation in Tacoma. Former Historic Preservation Officers Elizabeth Anderson and Michael Sullivan told stories about Valerie's work.

As the dedication ended, Tim unveiled the memorial and explained the various titles of the books carved there, books that represented important aspects of Valerie's life. At the base was the park name: *North Slope Historic District Park*.

As the crowd drifted toward the Immanuel Presbyterian Church to partake of refreshments, the little children in the group made a dash for the play equipment in the woodchip area, long occupied by an electrical sub-station, but now converted to playtime and conversation for the neighborhood.

Painting Your Historic Home

By Marshall McClintock

Here are some resources that may be useful for choosing historically appropriate exterior color schemes for your home. Many North Slope homes built before about 1920 would have had a minimum 3 paint colors and more likely 4-5 colors.

Houses with distinct banding, such as a watermark, a bellyband, changes in building material (such as clapboard on the first floor and shingles on the second), or bands of different shingle shapes usually had different colors or shades to highlight these different body areas. Major architectural elements such as corner boards, cornices, bands, window and door trim and porch elements were defined by the trim colors, which could range from one to upwards of eight colors. Window sashes and muntins (including the storm windows) were another color and usually the darkest, often black or near black.

Here are some resources available to help you develop a color scheme for your home:

Century of Color: Exterior Decoration for American Buildings 1820-1920. (1981). While it covers a broader period than is relevant to the North Slope, it provides excellent paint history, examples and guiding principles.

Roger W. Moss is the author of *Victorian Exterior Decoration: How to Paint your Nineteenth-Century American House Historically* (1987). This book provides many photographs and an excellent chart mapping Victorian paint names to contemporary paints from Sherwin-Williams, Benjamin Moore, & Glidden.

Bungalow Colors: Exteriors. (2002). This book focuses on the period from 1900 to 1920 and is a much-needed supplement to Moss' books. The book covers most house styles of this period, not just bungalows. Elizabeth Pomada and Michael



Larsen published a series of books on the detailed color schemes known as "painted ladies". These include *Painted Ladies: San Francisco's Resplendent Victorians* (1978), *Daughters of Painted Ladies: America's Resplendent Victorians* (1987) and *How to Create your own Painted Lady* (1989). While some North Slope homes have the architectural detail for these elaborate color schemes, most will find these books a source for identifying complementary trim colors.

The Heritage Foundation of Vancouver, B.C., has a palette of historical colors based on paint matching research from over 50 historic Vancouver homes. Historic Seattle is currently working on a similar project. < www.vancouverheritagefoundation.org > Both Benjamin Moore and Sherwin Williams have developed their own historic palette cards to help you select colors. Other manufacturers may have them as well.

Edited from Trolley Times July 2004



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The Importance of Historic Preservation

Taken from article by Chris-Tel Construction, 2017

The preservation of historic sites enables a city to reflect on the past while preparing for the future. Historic sites are an integral aspect of any community, providing visitors with an education of how the community was formed. There are many benefits of preserving historic sites, including an abundance of intrinsic value, an appealing aesthetic, cultural sustainability, and community revitalization.

One benefit of preserving historic buildings is the subsequent protection of their intrinsic value. Generally speaking, historic buildings were built with high quality materials that are either rare or no longer exist, such as hardwoods, natural stone, and precious metals. Many historic buildings also feature original craftsmanship that is unique to the time period in which the building was constructed. These high-quality materials generally last a great deal longer than modern materials used today. This makes historical buildings smart long-term investments.

The aesthetic of historic buildings often entices people to restore rather than rebuild. Whether it's the authentic craftsmanship or a distinguishing façade, historic buildings draw attention and create visual interest. This aesthetic also attracts visitors to the historical site. Many people see historic sites great photo opportunities, due to the visual appeal of the buildings. These photos are often shared with friends and family on social media sites, increasing the awareness of the historic site and the businesses around it.

There is also a cultural sustainability aspect in the preservation of historic buildings. Historic buildings provide an insight into the formation of a city, telling tales of struggles and triumphs that shaped the city into what it is today. By preserving these historic buildings, the culture of the city is also preserved for generations to come. Current and future generations can learn about the history of the city from the historic sites. For example, visitors to the

Edison and Ford Winter Estates, restored by Chris-Tel Construction, can learn about the Edison and Ford families and their direct impact on the growth of the city of Fort Myers, Florida. Historic preservation can also revitalize a community. If a neighborhood has deteriorated, historic preservation can be utilized to revamp the area, creating a feeling of "rebirth" for the surrounding community.

This feeling has the potential to inspire change, motivating the community to take action in efforts to improve the areas surrounding the historic site. Preserving one historic site can give the community the push it needs to get on board with rejuvenating a deteriorating neighborhood.

The importance of historic preservation is sometimes overlooked, but historic sites are truly an essential part of any community. Not only do historic sites provide insight into the history of a community, but historic preservation also retains the intrinsic value of the building, provides attractive aesthetics, ensures cultural sustainability, and helps promote community revitalization.

Whether preserving one building or an entire site, the importance of historic preservation to the surrounding community should always be recognized.



SOME GOOD THOUGHTS

By Roger Johnson

Recently CNN Travel declared Tacoma the third best city in the nation to visit! The travel editors considered dozens of cities and compared all the sites, activities, entertainment options, built environment and physical beauty. All cities have the same problems as Tacoma but we have so many saving graces. A list: Puget Sound, Mt. Rainier, Olympic Natl. Park, the Dune Peninsula, Pt. Defiance Park (760 acres), Chihuly Bridge, Museum of Glass, Tacoma Art Museum with it world class Western Art collection, the Washington History Museum, the fascinating LeMay Auto Museum, Chambers Bay Golf Course and park and the



fabulous Ruston way waterfront, including all the fun dining options. Several restaurants and breweries are mentioned and in particular two world class eateries: The Table (James Beard award nominee) and the small Tibbitts at Fern Hill (named the world's best brunch restaurant!). Don't forget the fascinating and fun McMenamins Elks.

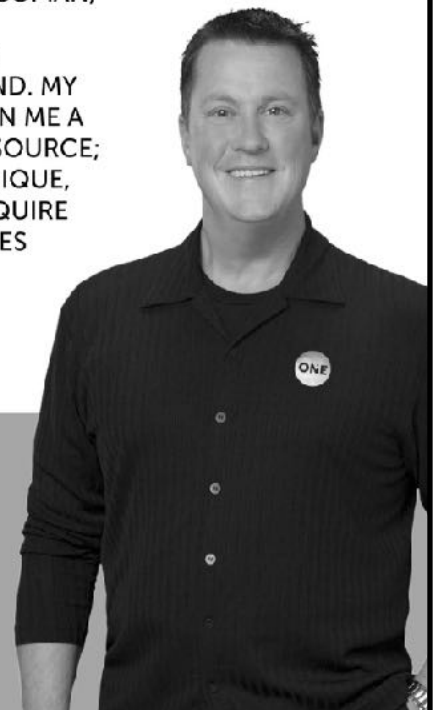
You can find the CNN article at CNN-Tacoma. Don't forget that the North Slope Historic District has been recognized by the US Dept. of Interior as a special historic neighborhood.

Celebrate the positive attributes Tacoma provides!

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HELLO NORTH END NEIGHBORS!

I'M CRAIG TUTTLE, MANAGING REAL ESTATE BROKER OF TEAM TUTTLE AT REALTY ONE GROUP TURN KEY. I'M A BORN AND RAISED TACOMAN, PASSIONATE ABOUT ALL THINGS LOCAL. FOR OVER 20 YEARS, TEAM TUTTLE, HAS HELPED BUYERS AND SELLERS ACROSS THE TACOMA, SPECIALIZING IN HISTORIC HOMES IN THE NORTH END. MY DECADES OF SUCCESS SERVING THE NORTH SLOPE HAVE GIVEN ME A PERSPECTIVE THAT IS UNBEATABLE. I'M YOUR REAL ESTATE RESOURCE; I KNOW THIS NEIGHBORHOOD AS ONLY A LOCAL CAN. THE UNIQUE, CHARMING AND DIVERSE PROPERTIES OF THE NORTH END REQUIRE AN IN-DEPTH UNDERSTANDING OF THE HISTORY OF THE HOMES & OF THE CITY. IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR HOME, OR ARE BEEN CONSIDERING LISTING YOUR PROPERTY, TEAM TUTTLE IS HERE TO HELP! REACH OUT ANYTIME, FOR ALL YOUR REAL ESTATE NEEDS.



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Dates to Remember

Aug. 6 -- National Night Out

Aug. 23 -- NSHD Aug. Meeting
Sarah Rumbaugh, speaker

Nov. 21 -- NSHD Nov. Meeting/Holiday Party

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