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NEWS

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How to Keep our region moving faster, farther: Sound Transit 3 (more light rail) or Smarter Transit (more buses)?

Above: Maggie Fimia, left, confers with MDC officers Jack Whisner and Eleanor Munro, standing, before she speaks in opposition to Sound Transit 3. Others from left are Kathleen Flynn, Dan Fievez, and in the upper right corner, Dick Nelson. Below: Ruth Pelz explains the ST3's 25-year plan.



July was transit month for the Metropolitan Democratic Club of Seattle.

At the club's July 13 meeting Janet Pelz, communication project manager for Sound Transit 3 (ST3) communications and external affairs, explained the background and primary features of the ST3 measure that will appear on the general election ballot this November.

At the July 27 meeting John Niles, president of Global Telematics, and Maggie Fimia, former King County councilmember, spoke on "Troubling Aspects of Sound Transit's \$54 Billion Expansion Plan for the Next Quarter Century." They represent People for Smarter Transit – NoST3.

ST3, developed over the last three and one-half years, is a 25-year plan to expand the Puget Sound region's mass transit system to accommodate the increase in population of 800,000 by 2040. It is a project of the three-county (King, Pierce, Snohomish) regional authority, Sound Transit, which is chaired by King County Executive Dow Constantine. It proposes

to feature significant expansion and improvement of light rail, express bus, and heavy rail commuter service.

Ms Pelz said that since light rail stations opened this spring on Capitol Hill and at the University of Washington ridership is up from 35,000 to 60,000 per day. Another station, to include a 1,000 stall park and ride facility, will open this fall at Angle Lake. In 2020 new stations will open in the University District, Roosevelt High School and Northgate. In 2023 stations will open at the Microsoft campus and downtown Redmond.

The ST3 plan is necessitated by the growth of population in the region, Ms Pelz explained. The system will go from servicing 2.9 million people in 2016 to 3.7 million in 2040. She added, an increase of 1.45 million projected in the next five years equates to 145,000 rides per day. One hundred additional cars are coming into the region every day, she said, and the average commuter spends 53 hours per year stuck in traffic.

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book review

Chain of Title: How Three Ordinary Americans Uncovered Wall Street's Great Foreclosure Fraud

by David Dayen

The New Press, New York, 2016

Reviewed by Dan Fievez

This book is about three Floridians' battle with banks as they try to save their

homes from foreclosure. The bank fraud since 1995 is the worst financial disaster in

United States history, and this book exposes it very well. It describes the fraudulent

behavior of the banks, as well as collusion by elected officials and judges concerning

the illegal activities of our financial institutions. Nearly 10 million US homeowners have been affected by this behavior. While the book is easy reading, the content is extremely disturbing for those of us who have fought the banks for several years.

"Chain of title" has been how the transfer of property has been recorded since 1677. With the instituting of the Mortgage Electronic Registration system (MERS) in 1995 and the securitization

of the loans, ownership can no longer be proven. In addition to lack of ownership, MERS eliminates the recorded record of each county as well the recording fees. King County is owed millions. The book describes the failure of both the Bush administration as well as Obama, and his former Atty. Gen. Eric Holder, Who went right back to his former law firm, Covington and Burling, the bankers attorneys. "Robo Signers" are described. These are people who sign mortgage documents with responsible titles such as vice president. Not only are the signers not the rank stated, but often sign mortgage documents from many different

banks using such titles as vice president. In my case, my loan document has 10 signatures. Mine is the only legal one. Two of the Robo Signers are nationally known for the number of signatures on a different number of banks.

One bright spot in the book was the filing of a federal False Claims Act Request to the

US Department of Justice by Lynn Szymoniak. Her qui tam suit retrieved \$95 million for

the US government, and under the law, she received \$18 million for being a whistleblower. I hope my \$25 Million dollar qui tam False Claims Act Request against Chase is as successful.



New members

The MDC welcomes new member

Jerome Greene.



From the editor

Please send notices of upcoming events, letters, articles, and book reviews to Editor Eleanor Munro at walker1@msn.com or 1925 41st Ave SW, Seattle WA 98116 no later than the fourth Wednesday of the month. All contributions are subject to editing. For more information call 206-370-1374.

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John Niles speaks in opposition to ST3 and in favor of Smarter Transit.

ST3 will finance 52 miles of light rail, a significant element of the plan, she said, as one light rail train of four cars can move 800 people. It takes 10 buses or 500 autos to move 800 people.

Improvements in the Greater Seattle area include a second underground transit tunnel in downtown Seattle running parallel to the existing tunnel that runs under 3rd Avenue, elevated bridges to Ballard and West Seattle, and an extension of the Sounder platforms in the South Sounder line (Sound Transit is in negotiations with Burlington Northern Santa Fe for midday use of its tracks).

NoST3 asserts ST3's light rail system will reach only a fraction of the population and is expensive and inflexible.

Another important element of the plan is transit oriented development - walkable, car-free neighborhoods around the transit stations.

The \$54 billion mass transit plan is funded by three taxes, Ms Pelz explained: sales taxes increase by 0.5 percent; license tabs (motor vehicle excise tax) increase by \$80 per year; and property tax would increase by \$100 per year for a \$400,000 value home. The total of these three taxes would cost the typical household \$169 per year.

Light rail expansion, which features prominently in the ST3 plan, is not the answer, according to John Niles and Maggie Fimia, who spoke of their opposition to the plan at the MDC's July 27 meeting. They represent People for Smarter Transit – NoST3, which prefers investment in a high-capacity rapid bus

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mdc

Legends and lore
by Eleanor

When I became a member of the Metropolitan Democratic Club of Seattle, I also became interested in its history. I asked around, but could find no one who knew when the club originated. Nor did I know at that time that there was a small cache of early documents being held by Ken MacDonald. After searching for hours through microfiche at the Seattle Public Library I found an article that announced the incorporation of the club in April of 1956. As I made this discovery too late for us to celebrate our 50th anniversary, we celebrated 56 years of promoting progressive values at our Gala 56 in 2012.

At that time many of us wanted to bring back the “MDC Follies,” a program of political satire that was produced intermittently from 1975 to 1994. However there was no one who felt capable of assuming the task of organizing the event.

“The MDC Follies” was originated by Shirley Skellinger (now Anne Trevett) and was later written and produced by Fred Tausend and Carole Glickfeld. The productions featured many elected officials (Booth Gardner, Randy Revelle, and Wes Uhlman to name a few) as well as MDC members. The local media always covered the event, sometimes producing full-page stories with photos.

At last a few of our members have decided to dust off the Follies and present a much reduced version (10-15 minute) of this flamboyant entertainment at our Diamond Jubilee. This year’s Follies, which will be presented at the September 18 Jubilee, is entitled “The Donald’s First Day.” As you will probably agree, there is plenty of raw material to work with. The playlet was written by Allan Munro and edited by Eleanor Munro and Justin Simmons. Co-directors and producers are Carol and Justin Simmons. Dan Fievez plays the lead role. Ms Simmons has called a meeting to read the script and assign roles immediately following the August 10 MDC meeting.



Diamond Jubilee

60 years of promoting progressive values



Keynote speaker
is Congresswoman
Suzan DelBene
(CD 1).



Master of ceremonies
is King County
Councilmember
Rod Dembowski.



Lifetime achievement awards to



Nick Licata
former
Seattle City
Councilmember



Kiku Hayashi
former president
of MDC

5 – 9 pm

Sunday, September 18, 2016

Salty’s on Alki, 1936 Harbor
Ave SW, Seattle

Admission: \$120



Left, Lisa Wellman, candidate for senator in the 41st LD, stopped by to say hello. Ms Wellman was endorsed by the MDC. She can be contacted at wellmanforwasenate.org. Right, Brent Williams-Ruth dropped in to request campaign assistance for Kristine Reeves, candidate for representative in the 30th LD who has been endorsed by the MDC. To offer assistance contact Brent at brent@bwconsults.com or 425-830-5134.

mark your
MDC Calendar
August – December 2016

MDC meetings take place the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month, noon – 1:30 pm, Plaza 600 Building #205, 600 Stewart St, unless otherwise noted.

Wednesday August 10

Topic: The Future and Risks of Transporting Fossil Fuel

Speakers: Seattle City Councilmember Mike O'Brien and Barbara Kubesh.

Wednesday August 24

Topics: 1) For whom should the MDC provide campaign support and how. 2) Open discussion.

Speakers: Members and guests of the MDC.

Wednesday September 14

Topic: Immigration – not confirmed.

Speaker(s): To be determined.

Sunday, September 18

Diamond Jubilee – 60 years of promoting progressive values.

Wednesday September 28

Topic: General election endorsement proceedings.

Speaker(s): Members and guests of the MDC.

Wednesday October 12

Topic: Review of general election ballot measures.

Speaker: To be determined.

What's happening

August 12 Noel Frame's inaugural Bingo Karaoke fundraiser, 7 – 10 pm, Greenwood Senior Center, 525 N 85th. Suggested donation \$36 and up. Questions? finance@noelframe.com or 206.245.0708.

August 18 Reception fundraiser for Tina Podlowski, 5:30 – 7:00 pm, home of Clayton Lewis and Tom Rasmussen, 3822 Boyd Pl SW. RSVP nicole@votersfortina.com or 206.328.2969.

August 20 Northwest Progressive Institute's 13th annual anniversary picnic, 5 pm, Redmond's Perrigo Park, 9011 196th Ave NE. Suggested donation \$25 or pay what you can. RSVP nwprogressive.org.

**Wednesday October 26**

Topic: Global warming

Speaker: To be determined.

Wednesday November 16

Topic: School to prison pipeline

Speaker: To be determined.

Saturday November 19

Retreat to develop operating plan for 2017.

Wednesday December 11

Winter Holiday Party (watch for more information).

Wednesday December 14

Topic: Review and approval of 2017 operating plan.

Speakers: Members of the MDC.



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system. The plan's light rail system, they maintain, will reach only a fraction of the population and is expensive and inflexible.

NoST3 emphasizes the potential of HOV systems, carpool and vanpool programs, repairing existing infrastructure including sidewalks and bike paths. It also wants those who oversee the existing systems to be elected by the people instead of by boards that have no accountability.

Ms Pelz is responsible for timely and accurate communication of information regarding Sound Transit 3 as well as initiatives to involve the public in shaping ST3 plans and proposals. She previously served as communications director for the Port of Seattle and has worked on many civic projects in the Puget Sound region.

In addition to serving as president of Global Telematics, Mr Niles holds professional appointments with Mineta Transportation Institute at San Jose State University and the Center for Advanced Transportation and Energy Solutions. He frequently writes on transportation subjects and is in the process of writing a book, End of Driving.

Ms Fimia, who works with Smarter Transit opposing many of Sound Transit's plans, was a former King County councilmember.

For more information on Sound Transit 3 and Smarter Transit see soundtransit3.org and nost3.org respectively.



Membership renewal date appears on above label

August 2016