



# Ballard News-Tribune

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## Is Denny's building a landmark?

By Rebekah Schilperoort

Rhapsody Partners, the development firm that wants to tear down a Ballard Denny's Restaurant to build a six-to-eight story condominium, plans to nominate the 1960's building for landmark status.

"We want to make sure that things are going the way they are supposed to go," said Katie Vance, a partner with the Kirkland-based developer.

A well-known Bay Area architect, Clarence Mayhew, designed the building at 15th Avenue Northwest and Northwest Market Street. It was built in 1964 as a Manning's Cafeteria, a local family-owned chain that has since gone out of business.

Often referred to as a long-time hangout for "old Ballard," the style of the building, with its curled A-frame roof, is a post World War II architecture style called "Googie." It is reminiscent of the roadside style first popular in the Los Angeles area, with bold angles and sweeping cantilevered roofs.

Since anyone can nominate a building for conservation 25 years or older with Seattle's Landmark Preservation Board, it's common for developers to do so first in order to save time and money, said Sarah Sodt, landmark coordinator for downtown.

"They want to know whether it will be designated or not as soon as possible," Sodt said. "It gives

them the ability to start planning for the future depending on the (board's) determination."

Nominating the building is a way to remove all "incumbrances" on the project and avoid costly delays if construction had to stop for any reason, said Louie Richmond, a spokesman for Rhapsody.

"That's what every developer wants to avoid," said Richmond, chief executive officer of Richmond Public Relations. "When (the developer) starts to build they want to make sure they can proceed in a judicious way."

In some cases, if a building is more than 50 years old or there's a significant public interest in preserving the site, a standard environmental review can force a landmark nomination. A failed nomination can't be appealed for at least five years. Scott Kemp, the city's land use planner for the project, said he hasn't received any public comments asking that the site be preserved.

"People seem to be more used to change than they used to be," Kemp said.

The project has also been criticized by a nearby developer and community members for not being walkable enough, but Richmond said Rhapsody is "very interested in making it pedestrian and neighborhood friendly."

"The design is not final...it goes

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Dean Wong

WHAT ARE SHARROWS? A Seattle Department of Transportation crew paints a sharrow (shared lane pavement markings) on Stanley Street in Georgetown. The city has sharrows planned for Northwest 85th Street, installed later this year. The markings remind drivers and bicyclists to share the road.

## 'Sharrows' coming to Ballard streets

By Dean Wong

On our city streets, bicycles pedaled by human power and weighing a few pounds must maneuver among speeding cars, trucks and buses, so the city has introduced lane markings called sharrows, reminding drivers to share the streets with bikes.

The sharrows (shared lane pavement arrows) are indicated by a bike symbol and two directional arrows on the streets.

"Sharrows do not change the rules of the road for cyclists or drivers. They're just marks

indicating to motorists to expect cyclists," said Gregg Hiramawa, spokesperson for the city's Department of Transportation.

Up to 6,000 people commute by bike in Seattle and that number is expected to triple in 10 years. The city plans to put in 53 miles of sharrows and 37 miles of bike lanes in the next two years.

Stone Way, just east of Ballard, now has sharrows. Later this year, sharrows will be introduced on 85th Street from 32nd Avenue to 8th Avenue.

Eighth Avenue, 100th Place and

Third Avenue from 85th Street to 105th Street will also have sharrows.

Capitol Hill, Magnolia, Fremont, West Seattle, Beacon Hill, University District, Stone Way, Green Lake, Queen Anne, Central Area (Yesler Way), Rainier Beach and Georgetown are the other neighborhoods where sharrows will be placed.

The city did not begin the sharrows program because of demands from bicycle advocates, said Hiramawa. "It was done by

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Steve Shay

SPACE COMPETENCY. Alex Allred stands at the "Space Competency Certification Station" in the 826 Seattle storefront window. Allred, the financial and operations manager of 826, is being tested by volunteer Scott Rosen.

## Greenwood space travel store 'not what it seems'

By Rebekah Schilperoort

On display in the window of the Greenwood Space Travel Supply Co. are retro his-and-hers space suits and a Space Vehicle Hull Repair Hatch, labeled "for emergency use only."

Inside, it's stocked with all the necessary gear for a journey into space: Atomic Teleporters, Black Hole starter kits, jars of Mars Mud and an Anxiety Eradication Kit, equipped with a "blanky" and a brochure on a "serious look at anxiety."

The store's peculiarity has, on more than one occasion, prompted the question, "What is this place?"

But that's part of its charm and its success, said Alex Allred, the store's financial and operations manager.

"Like most things in here, it's not what it seems," she said.

The retail shop actually makes up just a small portion of the 3,500 square foot space. The rest is dedicated to the non-profit 826 Seattle, a writing center that offers free drop-in tutoring and writing workshops for students ages 6 to 18.

The store's entire proceeds go to the non-profit, but funding mostly comes from individual donations, said Allred. Additional monies come from grants and annual fundraisers.

"We exist because people out of the kindness of their hearts donate to us," said Allred.

Fundraisers include quirky pledge drives like this year's second annual Mustache-a-thon. From August through October, volunteers see who can grow their facial hair the longest. It brought in \$10,000 last year.

Four full-time staff members run the store and writing program, but they get a lot of

assistance from nearly 320 active volunteers. More than 800 are registered.

The program's budget last fiscal year was around \$305,000, said Allred, and with that more than 3,200 students were served through drop-in visits, in-school sessions and field trips to the center.

This summer 15 different writing workshops were held, all taught by volunteers.

Throughout the school year staff and volunteers host twice-weekly field trips from local schools. Students participate in a two-hour writing exercise, in which they collaboratively compose a book, from dialogue to illustrations, and leave with their own printed and bound copy.

"Our mission is to help kids write better," said Allred. "Their imaginations are unlimited. We've had ghetto poodles with Afros battling giant banana monsters...I

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## SHARROWS: Markings are advisory only

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the city as a visual cue to enhance existing traffic laws. On some roadways, why not come up with some way to provide notice to motorists?," he said.

Both cars and bike riders are expected to follow the rules of the road on streets marked with sharrows.

Sharrows will give bicyclists a guide on where to ride on the street and remind them not to ride too close to parked cars. Cyclists have a term "doored" to describe being hit by car doors opening unexpectedly.

"A sharrow does remind people to be away from car doors. It allows a car to pass and provides horizontal separation," said Hiramawa.

Phil Miller, a designer with SvR Design, said his company's studies are showing that bike riders are riding over the templates painted in the streets and that they are maintaining a two to six foot distance from parked cars.

Drivers should see bikes more easily on streets featuring sharrows and need to give them three feet of space when passing. Motorists are also doing a good job of giving bikes more room, said Miller.

The city has hired SvR Design to collect data on the sharrows and form preliminary plans to include in Seattle's Bicycle Master Plan. The information is being used to decide what improvements the city's bicycle network requires. The plan's elements include: bike lanes; signage; policy evaluation; design guidelines; and maintenance strategies.

Miller said his firm is in the early stages of an implementation plan to identify streets that can accept sharrows without a major change in parking. Video cameras will record the traffic movements where sharrows are in use.

SvR Design will later be working with the University of North Carolina to study the success of the program here in Seattle. The Federal Highway Administration is monitoring the use of sharrows to see how effective they are in cities.

"San Francisco has had a good experience with them as well. They are the first to use them on a large scale," said Roger Geller, bicycle coordinator for the city of Portland,

Ore.

A 2003 study by the city of San Francisco showed that sharrows moved cyclists further from parked cars. Automobiles also gave bikes more room.

As a competitive bicyclist himself who rides on city streets, Hiramawa said sharrows give him more separation from cars. "It's a smarter use of our roadway," he said.

David Hiller, the Cascade Bicycle Club's advocacy director has biked on streets with sharrows and says they don't change anything legally in regards to cars and bikes. "It reinforces where bikes and motorists are allowed to be. It is a reminder for everyone," he said.

Ballard resident and bike commuter Kevin Carrabine said it is a good idea to define routes for bikes. For people who may be afraid to ride on streets with traffic, it may encourage them to get on their bikes.

Aaron Goss, owner of Aaron Bicycle Repair in West Seattle said bicyclists already have the right of way and the city should spend money paving the roads. Goss said the surface of California Avenue, where a sharrow is planned, needs work.

In selecting a route, the city of Seattle developed their plan based on streets used by bicyclists that were convenient roadways for them. Engineers consider criteria such as rush hour traffic, parking restrictions, peak hours and streets often used for bike commuting.

In areas where sharrows are going in, the city places notices on people's doors alerting them to their installation and explains how drivers and cyclists are to use them.

Hiramawa said more outreach will be done at a later point to educate the general public.

The city's "Bridging the Gap" property-tax levy is providing \$27 million for bike projects over a nine year period. This works out to \$3 million annually during that time.

Bike lanes can cost \$10,000 to \$20,000. By comparison sharrows are inexpensive said Hiramawa, although he did not provide a financial figure.

The city is also planning to put a dedicated bike lane on 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue Northwest from Northwest Market Street to Northwest 85<sup>th</sup> Street.



Steve Shay

**FREE BALLARD.** This 108' boat at Fisherman's Terminal has "Free Ballard" painted on the wheelhouse which refers to the fact Ballard should have remained an independent city and not have joined Seattle 100 years ago. The longliner "Blue Ballard" will fish in Dutch Harbor, in Alaska's Aleutian Islands, for two months with a crew of 18, then return to Ballard.

## Writing center attracts top name musicians

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mean we've had everything."

Outreach is focused mostly on public schools with high percentages of students on the federal free and reduced lunch program, often an indicator of poverty and need.

826 has worked closely with students at the John Marshall alternative high school, even publishing a book with the students called, "Burning the Post." Hamilton Middle School students will create two publications with 826 through a two-year grant from the Seattle Foundation.

Several student-authored publications are for sale at the center.

Seattle's is one of seven chapters of the national 826 organization. Others are in New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Boston and Ann Arbor, Mich. Each has its own retail front and original theme.

It's a pirate supply shop in San Francisco, where the program earned its name (it opened on 826 Valencia Street in 2002) and was founded by novelist David Eggers.

Chicago caters to spies and

secret agents through the cover of "The Boring Store." New York's supplies superheroes and the one in Los Angeles is a time-travel convenience store.

The humorously labeled merchandise, which is repackaged and relabeled by 826 staff, helps to draw in students as well as volunteers. One can't help but stop and ask, what exactly is a Cherry-Scented Diversion Deployment System (a plastic ray gun that shoots smoke rings)?

An inflatable globe becomes an "all purpose mini-earth circulator." At the Space Competency Certification Station, space hopefuls are asked a series of queries to determine whether or not they are suitable for zero gravity travel.

"Kids wouldn't want to be here if it was just like school," Allred said. "It creates a feeling that they are coming to a place that's different. There's a little mystique about us. It helps us and it hinders us."

But the center has certainly caught the eye of some major celebrities. Last summer Pearl

Jam handpicked 826 Seattle to be one of three charities to split proceeds from their concert at the Gorge Amphitheater.

The actor Paul Newman and Nick Harmer from the Bellingham-based band Death Cab for Cutie have stopped by, too, each giving generous donations. Harmer even taught a writing workshop on mythological creatures of the Northwest.

The future of the center and it's ability to continue help young people gain skills will rely on that sort of generosity, in the form of volunteer work and financial donations, said Teri Hein, executive director of 826 Seattle.

"I love that we have created this place that is unexpected, demonstrates a sense of humor, is so useful and is completely free of charge to any young person who wants to take advantage of it," Hein said.

The Greenwood Space Travel Supply Co. is located at 8414 Greenwood Ave. N. Drop-in tutoring starts Sept. 5. For more information visit <http://www.826seattle.org/>.

## DENNY'S Developer thinks site is not a landmark

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through many, many changes," he said.

The site was purchased from the failed Seattle Monorail Project, which planned to build a station there for the 14-mile elevated line.

Bob Derry, former staff member for the Seattle Monorail, said all the properties purchased by the organization were studied for landmark status, including the Denny's building. The "cafeteria with a funny roof" was found to have no historical, archeological or indigenous significance, he said.

Rhapsody first hired Seattle historian and author Mildred Andrews to research the building further, but ended her contract

after she submitted her preliminary report. Andrews wasn't willing to disclose her findings just yet, but said, "It's a very interesting building."

Preservation architect Larry Johnson is now consulting with Rhapsody's architects and will write the landmark nomination. His goal is to "stick to facts, not conjecture," Johnson said. "

Johnson was also hesitant to reveal any of his findings about the building while under contract with the developers.

"My job is to report the facts," he said. "My opinion only enters in when I write a landmark nomination."

Richmond said Rhapsody is somewhat confident the site will not pass a nomination.

"Rhapsody feels the site indeed is not a landmark," he said. "What they want to do is vastly improve the lot."

Johnson is concerned that nominating a building for historic status has become the new way to fight unwanted development.

"I think all these fights — we're reacting to change, such rapid change," he said.

The city's all-volunteer landmark board already has its hands full with considering the designation of 38 downtown buildings, he said, and their time shouldn't be used inefficiently.

"We're scraping the bottom of the barrel (sometimes)," Johnson said. "We can't keep everything and we shouldn't be throwing everything out either."



**BEWARE THE  
BLADES.**  
"Swopo," juggles knives while balancing on a board. The professional juggler is a Ballard resident and is practicing in Ballard Commons Park. Swopo performs with Pure Cirkus in the Seattle area.

Steve Shay