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RDA plans \$25 million investment in Roslyn



PROFESSOR JIM NICHOLLS, director of the UW's Storefront Studio program explains design ideas displayed on the wall at the Roslyn Visitors Center to those who attended the last Studio open house on May 27. In the background, a blown up and cutout photo of two miners looks on. Soon the Visitors Center will display the Roslyn Renaissance mul-

timillion-dollar strategic plan, mission and vision statements, policies and procedures, outline of the organizational structure and growing network of partnerships as RDA begins their five-year project.

N.K.C. TRIBUNE/Lyn Derrick photo • 2011

To make Storefront Studio projects a reality and create another 100-year legacy

by Lyn Derrick
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Roslyn Downtown Association announced its five-year, \$25 million-dollar investment vision for Roslyn at an open house on Monday, June 13. It was the first step in the process of making projects designed by the University of Washington's Storefront Studio a reality for the city.

That's what Cheri Marusa of RDA and One Washington Outreach told those gathered at the open house in the Visitors Center of the NWI Building.

That building is the "mother ship" in the multimillion-dollar effort RDA is taking on, Marusa said.

All other projects "wrap around" the restoration of the NWI Building, said Kevin Kane of SKHS Architects. That means it – along with the post-master's house at 103 W. Idaho St. – will be the first focus of attention in this endeavor.

"It'll take about \$8 million and two years to restore the NWI Building," Kane estimated.

He said this dollar amount represents "a commitment to a high quality, well-done project" which would leave the NWI Building as "a legacy for an-

other 100 years."

Creating a lasting legacy is the motivation behind "Roslyn Renaissance," RDA's designated name for this multimillion-dollar undertaking. Marusa is the visionary for the five-year project, which aims to construct a viable future for Roslyn by building on its unusual cultural and historical character. Additionally, the project aims to preserve current businesses, attract new business and contribute to community's overall economic growth.

Other tasks and Storefront Studio projects RDA hopes to tackle with this financial investment in the community include:

- Acquisition of property and creation of a new Roslyn entry-gateway,
- Replication of historic baseball grandstands at Pioneer Park along with other improvements,
- Renovation of the former middle school, potentially for affordable housing,
- Enhancement of the Coal Miners Trail including more signs and replication of mineshaft structures along the trail,
- Development of designated parking areas,

- Development of other small street and park projects,
- And working with cemetery groups and other historic property owners.

How does Storefront Studio Director and University of Washington Architecture Professor, Jim Nicholls feel about the prospect of seeing the projects designed by his students become a reality?

"It's amazing news," he said. "And it represents the successful results of a huge community effort. It's wonderful to hear that the combined effort of Roslyn and the University of Washington has produced such amazing results. Now the hard work starts for everyone – to make sure all of Roslyn benefits from this influx of opportunity."

A \$300,000 investment from the state puts the Roslyn Renaissance project closer to achieving those benefits, and places the project in the "formative stages" according to Marusa.

She's already working through other state and national channels to acquire the funding needed to see this endeavor to fruition.

In an interview after the open house she said, "When you're talking about a relatively small amount like \$100,000, that's doable. When you're talking \$20 million plus, well, you've got to put some real elbow grease into it."

Over the next month and a half, elbow grease will be applied to developing the Roslyn Renaissance strategic plan, presenting that plan to the city council and planning commission, and

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...seeking ideas and feedback from the community – an undertaking Marusa says will be completed sometime in August.

“Soon we’ll have the strategic plan posted here on the wall in the Visitors Center,” she said. “And there’ll be forms at the front desk where people can sign up for some of the exciting volunteer opportunities. It’s already been interesting to see the people who want to get involved in the different projects.”

Clearly communicating their objectives is one of RDA’s goals. To that end, the group will display their mission and vision statements, policies and procedures, and an outline of the organizational structure at the Visitors Center.

The display will include what Marusa calls the growing “network of partnerships.” It consists of “an exceptional partnership with the University of Washington, as well as other state universities, plus private companies, and state and national organizations.”

Other elbow grease will be applied to acquiring funding. Marusa said she’s already met with state and national philanthropic donors.

She’s going to Washington, DC in the near future to present a variety of projects in-

cluding the Roslyn Renaissance plan. She’ll soon host congressional leaders here to “get the Roslyn project before them.”

In the meantime, firming up those local and state partnerships is high on the priority list.

Kane, who works closely with the University of Washington, said, “There are a lot of loose ends to be woven together by August.

Marusa isn’t daunted, she said, “If you set a deadline it will get done. After that, we’ll advance to the state and national level to seek funding.

“And we’ll keep everyone posted on how things are developing,” she added.

“This is an amazing undertaking,” Deborah Hoffman, RDA board member and Roslyn business owner said at the open house.

Hoffman expressed her astonishment that RDA had arrived at this turning point – poised to move forward in such a big way.

Marusa said it was the product of, “a great deal of hard work over the past years by many members of RDA.”

She conceded that the Roslyn Renaissance, multimillion-dollar plan for the future of Roslyn is, “an aggressive goal.”

But she said, “You have to have aggressive goals to get things done.”

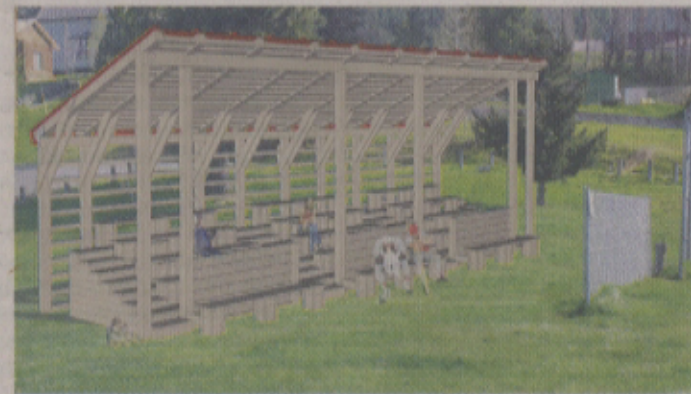
REPLICATION of the historic baseball grandstands is one of the improvements residents and visitors will enjoy as a result of the successful completion of RDA’s Roslyn Renaissance project. The project is spearheaded by RDA board members: Jennifer Basterrechea, Ryan Munsey, Debbie Hoffman, Susie Weis, Robin Whitlaw, Cheri Marusa and Jeri Porter. “Historic photos of the park show a wonderful old time baseball grandstand,” said UW Professor, Jim Nicholls. “It would be a real asset to the community to rebuild them, both for baseball and all the other community events that occur in the park. It’s important to design all park improvements in a manner that would not limit its use by the community in anyway.”

Courtesy of University of Washington



TWO OF THE 14 ARCHITECTURE STUDENTS who applied their gifts to the Storefront Studio project in Roslyn this year. Erica Witcher and Lillian Li. They’re standing in front of one of the maps created for the town this spring. After adjustments the maps will be printed for visitors. Additionally, the maps will be painted outside on one wall of the city hall building.

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