



The LCPS mission is to preserve, protect, and promote the historic architecture in the Lower Columbia region. These structures are important assets that contribute to the area's history, culture, identity, and livability.

## ALERT: ASTORIA CITY COUNCIL ELECTIONS

Dear Lower Columbia Preservation Society Members:

As you undoubtedly know, two Astoria City Council seats will be decided by voters in the November election. More than any other body, the Astoria City Council has a huge impact on historic preservation. If the candidates elected have a commitment to preservation issues, historic preservation will be positively effected. LCPS does not endorse candidates; however, it can assist with education and information to its membership regarding candidates views and commitments to preservation issues. With that in mind, the Board decided that both it and the membership should a) become educated with regard to candidates' commitments on historic preservation, and b) encourage the membership to assist the candidate(s) of their choice in whatever ways they feel are appropriate. To help the membership understand the candidates' views with regard to preservation, the Board mailed a survey to all of the candidates. The results of the survey are on pages 2 & 3. One candidate, Ed Selvin, did not return the survey.

Additionally, the Board invited the candidates to a special board meeting on September 13th. All five candidates attended the meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to inform and educate the candidates about LCPS, the value of preservation, the continued need for support of our preservation ordinances, etc. The candidates were asked four questions. A summary of their answers is on pages 4 & 5. When you have made up your mind, we urge you to involve yourself in the political process. The candidates need your help even if you do not live in the Ward they represent. The candidates' names and addresses are listed if you wish to contact them. Call Linda Oldenkamp at 325-3981 for further questions. Due to limited time, volunteers, and because the majority of the LCPS membership is from Astoria, the focus is on Astoria City Council candidates only.

*Signed, The LCPS Board: Linda Oldenkamp, Dave Pollard, John Goodenberger, Dave Fitch, Michelle Schmitter, Brad Alstrom, Melissa Yowell, Ann Gydé, Joy Brewer.*

Ward 2: Don Morden, 1140 Alameda Place, 325-7527  
Ed Selvin, 445 W. Marine Drive, 325-5886  
Ellen Young, 1042 11th Street, 325-1487

Ward 4: Laurie Caplan, 5125 Cedar Street, 338-6508  
Loran Mathews, 3168 Harrison Avenue, 325-6136

# WRITTEN SURVEY QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

## Question #1:

*What are your priorities for your term of office?*

## Question #2:

*Please share your vision of Astoria in twenty years. How do you envision our business district, residential districts, and industrial district? What change is desirable/undesirable?*

## Question #3:

*What is your support for the formation of additional historic inventories and Historic Districts if included in your jurisdiction?*

## Question #4:

*Given the attraction of the historic character of our city/county to tourism, how do you see the balance of private property rights versus private property responsibilities with respect to preservation of historic architecture?*

## Written Survey Responses: WARD 2 Candidates

### DON MORDEN

**#1:** Astoria has been discovered. We need to stay ahead of the growth in the visitor industry as much as we can. The big problem is traffic routing and control. We are up against lack of money for ODOT to implement known needs. With mall development toward Warrenton, we need to encourage entrepreneurship to develop niche markets drawing people to Astoria. We need a plan for the Column that will preserve its charm and exploit its advantages in its visual views and history. We should support projects that will make Astoria even more livable, such as the Liberty Theater, Columbia River Maritime Museum, Elliot Hotel, Trolley, Mill Pond Village, and a Conference Center.

**#2:** With the sky rocketing advances in technology I would have no idea what Astoria will be like in 20 years. However, I would still want it to be a town of history. The business district could still retain its quaint personality but could have extensive businesses run through electronic communication. I would hope that fish processing remains an economic factor.

**#3:** I have always and will continue to support historic inventories and Historic Districts.

**#4:** I support our current laws and ordinances. If a historic property is not in an Historic District the owner may choose not to be declared historic. (I can't imagine why anyone would make that choice). What has been done in Astoria has generally worked well in the formation of Historic Districts to maintain our historic character.

### ELLEN YOUNG

**#1:** My priorities for my term of office are to bring a fresh perspective to our City Council, to give a voice to the community members trying to be heard and considered, and to be a part of taking our community forward while being respectful of what has passed.

**#2:** The idea of projecting ahead 20 years for Astoria is one which brought me some unease. It was easier initially to delineate what I didn't want to see in our future. Then I was more comfortable envisioning what could and should happen in our city. I would like to have our business area refreshed by having a plan and action taken on the areas of town which are unoccupied, not well cared for and are not owned by individuals living within our area. Many times I have overheard visitors wondering out loud, "What's with those first couple of blocks? Why hasn't something happened to them?" Restoration or rehabilitation may be out of the question for some buildings; in that situation, it would be appropriate to consider replacement of structures while maintaining the flavor of the times and architecture of the original structures. As to residential districts, being a "purist" I like to see homes well maintained in the original style. Realizing not everyone likes older homes and the inconveniences accompanying older homes, it seems some neighborhoods may become "mixed", blending both new and old homes harmoniously. Density and green area needs should be considered when new development is planned. Our industrial district is an arena with which I am unfamiliar. I respectfully decline to attempt to respond, as I am not well informed about the current

situation or about what potentials exist for Astoria. I certainly intend to become informed if elected as it is an area as important for our future as others are, possibly more important.

**#3:** Regarding the formation of additional historic inventories and Historic Districts, given that building owners are notified in writing, and thus the opportunity to respond to the proposal, I would be inclined to support these activities.

**#4:** I found this question to be the most thought provoking. Having lived in a community that relies heavily on tourism, I don't feel it is wise for a town to "bank" strongly on tourism as a financial source. Astoria is a unique city, with a special place in the history of the Northwest and of our Country. It is possible we may always need to consider that historical tourism will play a greater role in our community than in other similar sized towns. With that in mind, it is a delicate balance between the individual property owner rights and responsibilities. To me it makes sense that someone who purchases a home that is historically or architecturally unique was probably attracted to that uniqueness. Why would he or she want to change the uniqueness that caught the eye in the first place? Personally, I have no problem with my own sense of responsibility to the greater community and its needs. I can understand that not everyone feels the same way as I. Is it possible that certain districts and/or buildings within districts could be evaluated on a case by case situation? This is justification for inventories, public input, and individual financial considerations of both the owner and the restoration/rehabilitation requirements. Tough question.



## Written Survey Responses: WARD 4 Candidates

### Laurie Caplan

**#1:** Your survey raises important issues about how our choices will affect Astoria's future. We all benefit from visionary, pro-active City leadership communicating with an informed, participatory citizenry. We need to keep Council business public, productive, and progressive, involving our citizens on advisory boards and with various City projects. Wisely using limited City funds, we can expand our economic base and encourage private and public innovation. All of us must stay informed, explore options, ask questions, and listen to each other. We live here because we love our town and our quality of life. Working together, we can prevent the unfortunate transformations seen in other attractive communities. Even long-distance commuters, real estate investors, and seasonal residents have a stake in a strong, safe, and prosperous Astoria. Let's build on our strengths: talented, sturdy people; a wonderful sense of community; and a willingness to work together for the common good.

**#2:** Our entire city, including its business, residential, and industrial districts, is changing in ways few people imagined even ten years ago. The challenge is for us to anticipate the unknown - new and ever-changing technologies, employment opportunities, demographics, information, even weather. We cannot know what lies ahead, but we must have in place the processes, people, and open-mindedness to plan for the predictable and prepare for the unexpected. The changes can be desirable and manageable if they are accompanied by cooperation and communication within an informed, involved community. We must ask lots of questions: What are the consequences if train service resumes? ... if we have two or three cold, wet summers in a row? ... if we have an increasing number of second homes that are shuttered and uninhabited for much of the year? ... if the in-town traffic jams on Highway 30 get worse? ... if we start to grow like Ashland, Bend, or Cannon Beach?

**#3:** Like many Astorians, I come from a city that has nearly obliterated its past, so I understand the fragility of Astoria's historic buildings and character. Our challenge is to achieve a balance between old and new. We can allow for modernization that also protects the heritage of our homes and buildings through additional historic inventories and Historic Districts. We can encourage owners to maintain, update, and preserve their homes and buildings. We can educate the public about the economic and social value of historic inventories and Historic Districts, showing the documented increase in property values, neighborhood cohesion, and community attractiveness. The LCPS, homeowners, Realtors, building supply companies, and others can lead an effort to educate City government and the public about the long-term benefits of Historic Districts and inventories. This is a win-win situation for all of us, if we approach the issues determined to communicate and cooperate.

**#4:** I teach my Job Corps students that there are no rights without responsibilities. In the case of preservation of historic architecture, the rights and responsibilities are multi-faceted and often controversial. We have to consider many concepts that are difficult to define, such as the common good, aesthetics, historical worthiness, private property rights, and restoration versus remodeling versus transformation. The issues are endless and without simple, all-encompassing answers. Should we have statutes about paint colors and building additions on historic structures? Do we allow the "Pop-top" remodeling so prevalent along Cannon Beach's dunes and in other cities? What should be preserved? What can be removed and replaced? Homes and buildings are often restored for sentimental, aesthetic reasons that please our souls. Too often, public discussion about restoration ignores fact and law. This results in an adversarial stance that benefits no one. We can change this discussion to one based on education and communication. We have an opportunity to demonstrate that preservation and restoration are good for the soul and for the bottom-line of individuals and the community.

### Loran Mathews

**#1:** (a) Balance the budget as the City has been spending its cash reserves. (b) Continue the revitalization of the waterfront and downtown area. (c) Upgrade the infrastructure of the City.

**#2:** (a) I envision our business district as being tourist oriented while emphasizing the historical areas and to be also oriented toward the riverfront. (b) We need to utilize our residential lands better to cut down on the trend to use up green spaces. We should consider allowing smaller lot sizes and more density of houses. (c) Industrial areas need to be set aside along the waterfront and in areas outside the core area of downtown. Existing processors in close proximity to the downtown area that now exist are compatible. (d) Changes that are desirable or undesirable are hard to define. I do not look forward to seeing the Warren Field area put

into a grocery complex. If it is not going to be a sports field then I would prefer to see an expansion of the hospital facilities.

**#3:** I want to hear further discussion on this issue before I decide either yes or no.

**#4:** I believe that we need to balance these rights both ways and feel that we need to review some of the current rules.

# LOWER COLUMBIA PRESERVATION SOCIETY Special Board Meeting

September 13, 2000, 7:00pm • Summary of Astoria City Council Candidates Presentations

**Board Members Present:** Linda Oldenkamp, Dave Pollard, John Goodenberger, Dave Fitch, Michelle Schmitter, Brad Alstrom, Melissa Yowell, Ann Gydé, Joy Brewer

**Candidates Present:** District 2: Don Morden, Ed Selven, Ellen Young. District 4: Laurie Caplan, Loran Mathews.

## QUESTION:

*Both current historic preservation ordinances and the Gateway Master Plan (Mill Pond site) include design review. Please share your views on design review.*

**Caplan:** Design review is not a government takeover plot, which a lot of people fear. If done right and people understand the goals and how it benefits them individually, it is a win-win for everyone involved. I would like the Lower Columbia Preservation Society to be part of the education process to diminish fear, which is disproportionate to what it does. I would encourage the Lower Columbia Preservation Society and others to continue informing people about the benefits of design review, aesthetics, economics, the benefits of increasing home values and protecting the stability of neighborhoods, and thinking in terms of the common good.

**Young:** (Requested background on design review.) **Pollard:** Discussed the role and responsibility of the Historic Landmarks Commission and the Gateway Design Review Committee. He reviewed the regulations affecting primary and secondary historic structures and adjacent construction. Mr. Pollard briefly touched on National Historic District regulations. **Young:** From what has been explained, I can't see how it would be something restrictive, since it sounds like it gives guidelines. I could see how someone who really seriously wanted to change the appearance of a building would have problems; however, my personal view is why did they purchase the building in the first place? I have no difficulties with what has been explained.

**Selven:** If I have a building and want to change it, they tell me what to do. They should work with a building owner and not against him. That would be design review in my personal opinion. If you tell someone you're going to do it this way, then you're going to get a fine. Design review is okay, but work with the person. This isn't about pricing the owner out of the building.

**Mathews:** The Gateway Master Plan design review is a clean slate; people go in knowing what has to be done. However, there is some problem with design review beyond that. During my previous eight years on the Council, I was not in favor of design review because people were very leery about subjective rather than objective standards. They saw it as one more layer of government. Many home builders are up against timelines. If there is going to be design review, it must be very objective and the criteria set down. The process can be inequitable because an old piece of junk can dictate terms to owners trying to upgrade.

**Morden:** I see the minutes of the HLC meetings; they work with the owners and are not dictatorial. I am thoroughly impressed with the members' knowledge and sensitivity. The Shawa Building is an example of the process. The first plan was turned down and resulted in criticism from the community. But look at that building now; it speaks strongly for the process. I am impressed that Jerry Ostermiller (Columbia Maritime Museum) is getting design review on a \$5 million project for the Maritime Museum. It (Historic Landmarks Commission's design review process) is an important part of our community and they are not the demons some make them out to be, and they do try to work with the people.

## QUESTION:

*The issue of notification of owners of their responsibilities when purchasing historic buildings has been an issue with part of the City Council recently. What is your view of the issue?*

**Selven:** This is a sore one. My thinking is if you're going to buy a home, they should list out what you're going to do. If you don't agree, you're going to walk away from it. You've got to let them know somehow there are restrictions on it, but I'm not sure how that would be done. Who's going to enforce it? This committee? The city? The police department? It's going to take money.

**Young:** I recently received notification that I live adjacent to or in a district that would be under inventory. This is great. I'll get notification and wonder how this will impact me. I love my home and what's old about my house. I guess in terms of purchasing a home, there is a part of me that says it is the responsibility of the buyer to get that information. I don't know if that's a reasonable expectation. It would be great if potential homeowners could be notified, but I don't know how to implement it. The purchaser does have the responsibility to get the information.

**Morden:** I'm struggling with how big an issue this is. When coming into an historical community to buy a house, it seems like the person would be interested in the history of the house and maintain it as such. Oregon law is buyer beware. All the information is at City Hall for the buyer. I personally don't see that we have the problem (notification) that has been brought before us. I opposed Heilman's position on this issue.

**Caplan:** My concern is that this is a red herring issue to distract and disguise what is good about design review. However, Ed's and Loren's comments also address perceptions, and that is the weak link. I would like to see this group (LCPS) and other groups work with the City to help people with the things they need to do. I would like to see an ongoing liaison at every meeting at City Council. There have to be effective ways to educate the Council and the community about what the choices are. I don't feel there is a practical way for the City to deal with notification; I would rather put the focus on education.

**Mathews:** This is a bit of a quandary. How can this be done? A disclosure statement is probably not possible. People can question, it's easy enough to get the information. It's not a big issue.



**Call to Order:** The meeting, which was held in Patriot Hall, Clatsop Community College, Astoria, was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Ms. Oldenkamp. She welcomed the candidates and thanked them for participating. Each member and candidate introduced him/herself. Ms. Oldenkamp discussed the organization's history and provided the candidates with a copy of our mission statement, vision and goals. Ms. Schmitter moderated the candidates' forum. She explained that each candidate would be allowed three minutes to answer the question, and Mr. Alstrom would serve as timekeeper. She also explained that candidates could ask for background information if the question was not understood.

**QUESTION:**

*Does preservation play a role in economic development. If not, please explain. If yes, is it a positive and/or negative impact? Explain.*

**Young:** Astoria is a wonderful town with incomparable buildings, and it would have a negative impact if we failed to recognize that. It would be ridiculous to not recognize the potential for bringing it all into the future; it all has to come. It has to play a positive role and to do otherwise would be detrimental.

**Morden:** Old 300 is an example of preservation and a great economic indicator for our community. It generated over \$21,000 in the summer. The Shawa Building and the Maritime Museum are other examples. Certainly there is an economic factor. Preservation does play a role in economic development. I would not want us to become a theme city, but we are a historical city.

**Caplan:** I have a friend who appreciates old fashioned ways, who is a preservationist, and who is also very forward thinking. I call this person an old-fashioned visionary because of valuing a way of life. Treasuring the old is great, not just buildings but also a way of life. We are realizing we aren't going to be a fishing or lumber town in the same way. I don't see Astoria as a theme city because nothing is artificial. This is part of what makes Astoria so nice. The economic consequences are positive and I can't see a negative one. We must be careful what we do in the future, continuing the protection.

**Mathews:** Preservation does play a role in economic development. We see that all the time. The trolley, Shawa Building, Maritime Museum, and Gunderson's efforts are examples. These definitely play a role. When on the trolley, I'm amazed at where the riders are from. Especially the waterfront. Lumbering and fishing is not gone and is alive. People on trolleys are very interested in this activity as a working waterfront. There is still viable fishing, crabbing. Logging is very much alive.

**Selven:** Preservation has a role in economic development. I have had people stop in front of my house and ask questions about the area. Several of the people I talked with have retired and moved here. They brought more money into the community. I've participated in burning down (*he was a firefighter*) and saving a few historical homes. They notice if houses are run down because they are eyesores and on the main drag. Most of the places, they like them.

**QUESTION:**

*Why are you running for City Council?*

**Selven:** I would like to see the City turned around a little bit to serve the people. Some of the stuff that is going on is not serving the citizens of Astoria. My goal is to serve all of the City, not individual groups or organizations. Schmitter: Do you have individual examples or concerns? Selven: Parking problems and grants under discussion.

**Young:** I like to participate in the decision-making processes that impact all of us. I have attended a few City Council meetings, and as a citizen, it feels difficult to be heard. I haven't felt there's been a way to make my concerns heard. I haven't always been satisfied with the decisions that have been made.

**Morden:** In the last several years Astoria has turned around and is known as a progressive community. An example is the Gateway site. This got attention, all the way up to the governor's office. Seventeenth Street dock expansion and Coast Guard housing on the south side have been happening. There are other issues coming up that will be involved with the next Council, and the Liberty Theater is one of the major projects that will require the City's participation. I would like to continue my contribution for the progress that might be made in the next four years.

**Caplan:** I have been involved in the community in volunteer work and active with the County on committees. When the Astor Column became an issue, I became involved in the process and took a role with the process. I found the process so exciting because people, not previously involved, were taking a stand. Having the process work so well was thrilling. I would like to continue in this capacity, because of my work on the committee. Astoria is changing, and we have to be prepared and have people in place who can take in new information and adjust their ear to new voices. I want government to be open and progressive and moving forward.

**Mathews:** I have been involved in the community for a long time and previously served on the City Council for eight years. Since my retirement, I would like to become more active in the community. I am involved with the trolley, Christmas Basket project, and the Budget Committee chair. I saw a great need in the City regarding its financial situation and identified what programs should be funded and which should be cut. That is my background (reviewed his former position as the school district's financial/business manager). I enjoyed the eight years I served on the council and now have time more time to give than before.



**DON'T FORGET TO VOTE!**  
Ballots will be mailed on October 20th, and must be returned  
by 8:00p.m. on November 7th.  
You have until November 7th to change your address if you do it in person  
at the County Clerks Office in the County Courthouse. For more  
information, their telephone number is 325-8605.

**LOWER COLUMBIA  
PRESERVATION  
SOCIETY**

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