

American Dream

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April 2003

{Holly and Fred Minniti are restoring their home at 1018 No. 7th St.}

When asked to write an article about the "why" to restoring an historic home – I thought "no problem". Fred and I certainly have the passion for what has become our project, but articulating it has proven to be difficult!

Upon discussing the topic, Fred and I came to the realization that we didn't buy this house to 'restore' it or move into an historic neighborhood, rather, this is where we have evolved to. The commute from Gig Harbor was starting to wear on us and we had already tackled a couple of fixer-upper investment properties, albeit on a much smaller scale. When Irma Cole showed Fred the house – the prospect of buying it fulfilled some pretty basic needs: move us to Tacoma and step up the challenge of a remodeling project just a notch.

Things have changed...

With this move Fred and I have attained a portion of the American Dream. We, along with our bank, own our own home. We can paint it, remodel it, demolish it, decorate it, use it as we wish... If we choose to let it fall down around us, use it as storage and live in a tiny carved out cubby hole, raise violets on the living room floor – that is our right... but, is it right?

We Westerners, in our quest for rights, can lose touch with responsibility, accountability, empathy... especially when it comes to historic homes. Should we be pushing the fact that we own our homes, or rather, consider that we are merely caretakers of an important part of our past – ensuring that our homes are here for the future?

Fred and I believe that the North Slope Historic District, is a neighborhood where the majority, in their own ways, realize that we are only passing through. We don't condemn the ones before us that let our homes fall into disrepair for whatever reason, but we don't want to repeat that process. I like to think that we are seeing a resurgence of people who have recognized the



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value of our neighborhood with its important link to the past. There is no doubt that one of the greatest assets of our neighborhood is the people, but why have so many with common interests, goals and attitude converged on this proportionately small area of Tacoma?

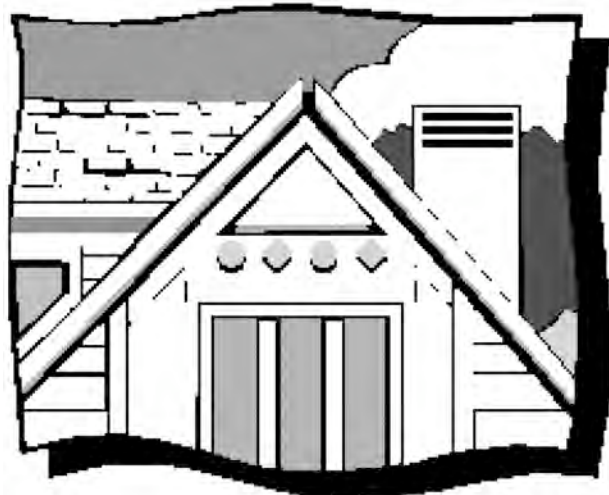


Of course, I can only speak on behalf of myself and my small circle of friends that I also call neighbors. Our historic homes lured us, the fact that we moved in and found that we have similar ideals made it a neighborhood in the best sense of the word. Commitment to historic preservation and involvement to accomplish the task!

Now, I believe, we have a responsibility to ensure that this neighborhood stays wonderful for the generations to follow. This is the driving force behind the North Slope Historic District neighborhood group and having us registered with the National Park Services on the National Register of Historic Places.

To tell the truth, Fred and I have made some mistakes along the way. We now recognize the benefits of comparing notes with those that have gone before us, having projects reviewed by Landmarks Preservation Commission, and researching! You don't need to tell me that time is of the essence and that money is tight! But I don't need to tell you that we only want to do our projects once!

Please join us in preserving what makes our neighborhood special by restoring your home with sensitivity to historic past and character. By owning these unique structures in this distinctive neighborhood we all have a responsibility to preserve and protect our homes to ensure that they are here to be appreciated by future generations. If we all do this, in the long run, everyone benefits – *we all get to share the "American Dream"!*



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