



Murals line two walls (just one is visible in this photo) that outline the tiny downtown Founders Park in Tonasket, Washington. *

Saving Downtown Princeton...

...An Ongoing Series by George Elliott

The Town of Princeton could end up owning a little more of downtown Princeton.

The annual Tax Sale was held September 28th at Town Hall. On the list of properties with outstanding property taxes was the building located at 271 Bridge Street. That is the location of what was Keywest Motors when I moved to town in 1986. Old-timers will remember it as Galpin Motors before that. In recent years it was used for storage and a small woodstove/collector

business was operating on that premises.

The Tax Sale ended quickly at 10:15 AM two weeks ago with the Town of Princeton declared "the purchaser for the upset amount."

Owners of the properties in a tax sale have a year to redeem their property and can do that by paying the upset price at the time of the tax sale plus additional fees and interest. So, assuming a year passes by and no one moves on these properties (there were a total of five

buildings/homes and two mobile homes) titles will transfer to the Town of Princeton on September 28, 2016.

I like the idea of the Town of Princeton ending up with the property that forms an unusually large 'L' shape off of Bridge Street frontage across the street from Cooper's Foods. I'd like to ignore the contamination issue that exists there but it was a gas station for years long before I moved here and so that issue would have to be corrected before something substantial occurred there.

I'm pretty sure Envirogreen could help with that project and it would look good if the Town of Princeton threw their support behind such an innovative local business. After all, that's what the Mayor keeps telling us is that he wants to support local business as much as he can. Besides, it would be the right thing to do as a responsible property

owner to clean it up for the new chapter in the life of 271 Bridge Street.

But what could it become once all the soil is cooked and the contamination from oil, fuel and whatever else is lurking under the concrete there is fixed? I'm not so sure the Town really needs to own any more property in the community, but a piece of property of this size, right downtown could become something magnificent.

I'm actually going to 'borrow' an idea from our Sister City of Tonasket, Washington. In the centre of that community sits a quiet little park at the back of a piece of property that includes a parking lot and the Chamber of Commerce building.

The back two sides of that park contain walls where large murals of founding fathers are mounted with short bios of each. The park is called Founders Park.

I know, you are probably rolling your eyes about wasted space as if we need another park downtown but hear me out. Based on the incredible job the Town of Princeton did with Veterans Square I can see the property at 271 Bridge Street becoming another jewel in the crown of downtown. I suggest a park because I doubt anyone is going to buy the property the way it currently sits with the massive reclamation job ahead of them to address contamination issues.

My park idea has a lot more to it than just a green space. The Town of Princeton has allowed Princeton Arts Council the opportunity to produce and mount large murals of significant people in Princeton's past. The relatively new mural of Susan Allison on the Legion building is one example.

I think the building at 271 Bridge Street should be flattened and somecontinued on Page 20

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