Market Wars

The inside story of how an improbable band of contentious Market activists managed to defy long odds and the Seattle business-media establishment

by Joyce Skaggs Brewater

November 2 will mark the tenth anniversary of one of the more remarkable elections in Seattle's history. On the ballot in 1971 was the Pike Place Market Historical District Initiative, passage of which would establish a 7-acre historical district around the market and a 12-member historical commission to oversee the "preservation, restoration, and improvement" of the market area. Defeat of the initiative would have removed the last barrier to the city's longcherished urban renewal plan, which made a much smaller market the center of a high-rise residential, commercial, and hotel complex.

Opposing Initiative One were the City of Seattle, the downtown business establishment, and the editorial voices of the major media. Promoting the initiative were two citizens' groups with a winning relationship of uncertain cordiality. Both sides claimed that they would save the market and that the success of their opponents would certainly doom it. Charges of deceit and obfuscation flew back and forth.

Yet the electorate apparently didn't feel confused in the end. When the dust cleared, 53,264 people had voted "no" with Seattle's movers and shakers, and 76,369 had voted "yes" with Victor Steinbrueck.

Ten years later, as the market nears the end of its "preservation, restoration, and improvement," most people agree that the voters have got what they asked for back in 1971, and that it is a good thing. You can still buy lobster and

berries direct from the farmers and pasta from Pete DeLaurenti; you can still eat the Athenaeum Cafe's special steak while watching the ferry boats and then wander through the lower labyrinths of the main market; you can still visit the Seattle Garden Center for hard-to-find spring bulbs.

Celebrating the victory of the initiative campaign is therefore important, but it is also important to understand it. The David-and-Goliath version of the struggle that has entered the city's mythology is only partly true. Profit and power were certainly issues in the market battles, but equally at issue were two conflicting visions, not only of the market itself but of civic good.

The story begins in 1958 with the formation of the Central Association of Seattle. This group of downtown business men, concerned about the lack of forward-looking drive in both the central business district and the city government, was soon working closely with the City Planning Commission to formulate a comprehensive plan for the central city.

An area that the downtown planners found especially worrisome was the Pike Place Market and its surroundings. Founded in 1907 to allow farmers and customers to meet without middlemen, the market had seen its heyday in the 1920s and 30s, when as many as 500 farmers a day rented stalls to sell their produce. Almost half of these farmers had been Japanese, and their intolerance during World War II dealt the market a serious blow. The explosion of suburbs after the war, the advent of supermarkets and frozen foods, and the gradual transformation of farmland into housing tracts or industrial sites—all this further eroded the market's ability to draw both producers and consumers.

As the market's economic health declined, its physical structures decayed and its surrounding residential community, mainly single men, grew older and poorer. From the perspective of Seattle's downtown merchants and property owners, some only a block or two away, the whole area took on the unmistakable aspect of urban "blight," threatening to creep out and engulf the central business district itself. Even if the blight didn't spread, it was already depriving Seattle of a "higher and better" use of some prime real estate and holding down the city's tax returns.

What to Do? The answer, unveiled jointly by the city and the Central Association in 1963, was the Downtown Plan for 1985. This plan envisioned for the Pike Place Market area, and the shocked response to it by critics, was to build a new market atop the "terraced" parking garage. A major hotel, a 200-room motel, a 1,500-person apartment complex, a park, and office buildings would comprise the market's new neighborhood. Made modern, safe, and clean, the market would thrive. Seattle would replace blight with some sparkling new amenities, would lure back from the suburbs a community of middle-class residents, and would multiply the value of its tax rolls in this area by a factor of 10. (A few developers would also make a great deal of money.)

The logic of this vision seemed compelling—unless, like a small band of "market freaks" who had been keeping an ear to the ground for several years, you cared a great deal about

and market, sites for several high-rise office buildings." Ehrlichman, writing in the Argus, went on to point out the advantages of this scheme for the overall market itself, which could "truly become a Market Place and a visitor and tourist attraction quite equal to the Los Angeles Farmer's Market."

The key to this dream was the federal urban renewal program, which could give the city both the funds and the legal authority to assemble the checkerboard of small private properties in the area into one package, resalable at low prices to private developers. Accordingly, a citizens' advisory committee called Seattle Urban Renewal Enterprises joined the Central Association for the next phase of planning, and in August 1964 these groups produced a report and drawings for the Pike Plaza Redevelopment Project. Like the earlier version, this one proposed to demolish everything with it's 125-acre boundaries and to build a new market atop the "terraced" parking garage. A major hotel, a 200-room motel, a 1,500-person apartment complex, a park, and office buildings would comprise the market's new neighborhood. Made modern, safe, and clean, the market would thrive. Seattle would replace blight with some sparkling new amenities, would lure back from the suburbs a community of middle-class residents, and would multiply the value of its tax rolls in this area by a factor of 10. (A few developers would also make a great deal of money.)

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what was already there. For Victor Steinbrueck, a University of Washington architecture professor who was quickly to become the Don Quixote-Jean of Arc of the market crusade, the Central Association's plan was "a major catastrophe," and its version of the market amounted to replacing a "grandmother with a chorus girl." (Steinbrueck was always quotable, no mean advantage in the struggle that was to ensue.)

Steinbrueck and architects Ibsen Nelsen and Fred Bassetti had long been discussing the need for some sort of organized resistance to the rumored designs of the Central Association. During the summer of 1964, officers of Allied Arts of Seattle (Nelsen was then president of this association of Seattle arts groups) hosted a champagne breakfast at Lowell's Cafeteria, with the idea of bringing together supporters of the market and publicizing the need for action. About 60 people came and heard speeches of tribute to the market, and the event received wide coverage in the press.

Out of this and subsequent meetings came a steering committee to lay plans and monitor developments. By September, when the city was applying for federal feasibility studies of the Pike Place Redevelopment Project, the Allied Arts steering committee had become a separate organization, the Friends of the Market, with Steinbrueck and attorney Robert Ashley as co-chairmen.

Minutes of these early meetings reveal that the participants had no very precise ideas about what they could or should do for the market, but were very clear as to what they thought about it. Fred Bassetti's statement for the champagne breakfast, read in his absence by architect Laurie Olin and several times reprinted, became one of the rallying cries of the long campaign. The market, Bassetti wrote, "reveals the face of truth. Its roughness reminds me of Seattle's beginnings, its lumpy past, the vitality that gave it national notice long ago. It is an honest place in a phony time. . . . It needs the hammer and paint brush, not the black ball of destruction."

Painter Mark Tobey sent a letter from Basel which became the introduction to his book The World of a Market (just reissued this anniversary year by the University of Washington Press): "This fabulous, array of colors and forms," wrote Tobey, "alive with all kinds of people from everywhere," made the market "a refuge, an oasis, a most human growth, the heart and soul of Seattle." Lou Guzzo, then arts editor of The Times, chided the city for its "blind, foolish rush to eliminate one of its irreplaceable treasures."

Out of this emerged the Friends' idea of the market, the best primer for which is Steinbrueck's Market Sketchbook of 1968. "We discovered the word 'ecology,'" recalls Steinbrueck wryly, and the densely detailed sketches and text of his book, recording the market's spaces and wares and people from every conceivable angle, do indeed portray a living organism whose nature is inseparable from its environment. The message is clear: these humble, haphazard, peculiar buildings, these scruffy, colorful characters are the market, and embody a whole constellation of values-historic, artistic, aesthetic, social—that make the place unique. Vitality and fragility are the counterpointed themes of the book: the market is alive and well, if a bit run-down, but its particular nourishing web of conditions, once torn apart, can never be recreated.

The Friends' mission was to open other people's eyes to the market they saw before it was too late. Their goal was preservation, perhaps accomplished by some sort of public agency (an idea first suggested publicly by City Councilman Wing Luke), but the most urgent task was always holding off "the black ball of destruction." In November 1964 they opened a booth in the market to disseminate information and sell Tobey's newly published World of a Market and Steinbrueck's earlier Seattle Cityscapes. Other fundraising events—an auction, tours, parties—followed, always made part of the larger educational campaign. For the press and the public, Victor Steinbrueck and the Friends became synonymous. Rumbled and awash in appearance, somewhat dear and acerbic of temperament, with a fine relish for the absurd and a disinclination ever to give opponents the benefit of the doubt, Steinbrueck was a familiar figure around the market and in the hearing rooms where its future was debated, and he always provided good copy.

By January 1965 the Friends' efforts seemed to be having some effect. Co-chairman Robert Ashley emerged from a meeting with Paul Seibert of the Central Association announcing "a great area of agreement" between the two groups. "Retention of the general heart of the market," said Seibert, "is possible and desirable." This was an important concession in principle, but translating this "area of agreement" into specifics turned out to be much harder than either anticipated.

Meanwhile, the redevelopment plan was inching its way down the long, slow road to approval and funding. In September 1965 the city asked HUD (which administered urban renewal) for a surveys-and-planning grant, but HUD could not come up with the requested $370,000 until December 1966. Mayor Dorr Braman had by then appointed a Pike Place Advisory Committee headed by Donald Voorhees, previous chairman of Seattle Urban Renewal Enterprises. When this committee issued its interim report in June of 1967, Voorhees echoed the earlier assurance that "we would like to preserve the market pretty much as it is"—if the physical condition of the buildings made this possible. Various studies were commissioned: a structural survey, a sociological study, an economic-feasibility study. And in August the Voorhees committee announced selection of its design and planning team, to be led by highly respected local architects Paul Hayden Kirk and John Morse.

Without public fanfare, another design team from the Naramore Bain Brady and Johanson firm was already at work for a group of private investors. Mayor Braman, leery of turning the market area into the sort of wasteland that urban-renewal dereliction was producing in other cities, had even sought "assurance from private enterprise that the property will be fully utilized and that the money we are talking about is within sight." About 30 local investors responded by incorporating in April 1966 as the Central Park Plaza Corporation. Attorney William H. Ferguson, who had been chairman of the Central Association's Pike Place committee, headed the new corporation; other officers were Gus Doce of the furniture store, William Bain Sr. (NNBJ), Robert Banks (Henry Broderick real estate), and John Sellen (Sellen construction). The group immediately hired NBBJ as its architect, began investigate-
the friends of the Market position paper on the plan granted that "a sincere and professional effort has been made to assemble and present the facts," but went on to state that the proposal "could have a harmful and detrimental effect upon the intricate social and merchandising conditions within the Market Area." The statement noted that "the people's" interest in the city's historic past, in the market's "economic, social, and cultural importance," and in the "preservation of the neighborhood's identity" should be considered.

The next flurry of public attention to the project came late in winter 1968, when the Seattle-Kirkland design team presented their preliminary design for the Seattle Planning and Rezoning Council. The designs offered a proposed 51-foot-high market building and a proposed 30-story apartment building for low-income and elderly residents. The project was praised, but concerns were raised about the potential impact on the historic market area.

The plan for the Market provided for housing for the low-income and elderly, but it was unclear how this would affect the friends group's vision of the market. The group wanted to preserve the historic market building, but they wanted to ensure that the housing for the low-income and elderly was also preserved.

The design team, however, and the city's project manager continued working on the project, and the proposals were presented to the public. The city officials approved the plan, and the Market building was preserved.

By September, the city officials authorized the submission of Scheme 2, which was approved by the city council. The next step was to negotiate the terms of the agreement, and the friends group met with city officials to discuss the terms.

The negotiations were complicated by the fact that the friends group wanted to preserve the historic market building, while the city wanted to use it for a new purpose. The negotiations continued throughout the fall, and in December, the friends group and the city reached an agreement.

The agreement was signed in January 1969, and the project moved forward. The Friends of the Market continued to work with the city officials to ensure that the historic market building was preserved, and the friends group continued to work with the city officials to ensure that the housing for the low-income and elderly was also preserved.

The project was completed in 1971, and the Market building was preserved, along with the housing for the low-income and elderly. The project was a success, and it is a testament to the power of public involvement in the design and preservation of historic sites.
An earlier Newsweek story was also markedly favorable to Ullman. Newsweek quoted Ullman as saying, "I never promised we would preserve every piece of oak. I said we would preserve the oak." Ullman also said, "Well, we've done it." Ullman, along with the mayor, had agreed to the initiative's terms.

When the story was published, it received widespread coverage. The main market buildings, and two other market buildings, were demolished. The city, which is a representative of CHECC (Choose An Ecological City), this group of young political activists was then headed by John Hempelmann, very much a rising star and a colleague of Manning in the Pershing law firm. Since the previous December, Hempelmann had already got him trying to get CHECC involved in the market, forming a committee and doing...

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the kind of thoughtful, meticulous research that was his forte. The result was Manning's City Council testimony, a carefully argued case against the economics of the urban-renewal plan.

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The Friends had raised some of the same issues, but Bagdade and Manning felt that the economic argument had to be made more forcefully, and this became the focus of the news conference announcing the Alliance (Manning and Jack Levy of City Fish, co-chairmen). Contrasting the current depression with the city's own 1987 economic study, which had cautioned that the boom conditions then prevailing were of vital importance to the Pike Plaza Project, Manning pointed out that apartment vacancy rates were up from 1987's 0.6 percent to a current 13.2 percent and that Seattle's present luxury hotels were having a hard time keeping their rooms filled. Consequently, both demand and available financing for two key components of Scheme 23 are severely limited. Rebuilding delays in construction could turn Seattle into another Baltimore, where 35 acres still lay vacant nine years after federally funded demolition for urban renewal. During the delay no new jobs would be created, but hundreds of people currently working in the market area could be expected to lose their jobs, as the network of small businesses there endured the uncertain fate of relocation. (Small Business Administration figures showed that 31 percent of displaced businesses failed, 50 percent if they were food-related.) Finally, in the tiny rehabilitated core market itself, the city's own study predicted a tripling of rents and the return of many of the current tenants—tenants the rest to be replaced by "cheap, Ghiradelli Square-type" enterprises. In short, Scheme 23 would be an "economic disaster," and the Friends' Initiative was the only way to stop it.

Manning was careful to pay tribute to the Friends in his press release, and he now says that he (unlike Bagdade) never saw the Alliance as a criticism of the Friends but only as a different and complementary kind of organization. "Victor was more like Saul Alinsky; we were more concerned with putting together a coalition that could work with the city later if we won." Nevertheless, the Friends did not exactly welcome their new allies with open arms. Steinbrueck, who was in London for a month when the Alliance went public, still believes that the group did little but add to the confusion that "was our most serious problem," though he acknowledges that there were "good people" working in it. For its part, the Alliance seems to have recognized only fairly late in the game that, in the public mind, Steinbrueck was the crucial symbol of the "real" market-savers. A handsome silk-screen poster that said only "Vote Yes—Market" had to be reprinted with Friends of the Market and Alliance endorsements added on, because people wouldn't display the poster until Steinbrueck's imprimatur told them what it really meant.

The Market scene today: more than a tiny core was saved.

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Still, the Friends and the Alliance did manage to work together, thanks largely to the efforts of Jerry Thom. An affable, low-key conciliator whom many regard as the unsung (or at least undersung) hero of the later stages of market-saving, Thom held Saturday morning meetings of the two groups in his living room. There the delicate issues of who did what and with which funds were plotted out.

By this time a last, indispensable member of the Alliance team, campaign coordinator Harriet Sherburne, was hard at work. Recently returned to Seattle from political work in Chicago, Sherburne had run into old acquaintance Tim Manning late in the summer and been instantly recruited to replace Al Pierce, who had returned to school. The Friends had expected to get the Initiative on the September primary ballot, but the City Council delayed taking action until it was too late—a ploy, according to the Friends, that allowed the urban-renewal forces more time to organize against the Initiative. Sherburne found that Pierce had done little but antagonize a few important people, that the Friends were in very low gear because of Steinbrueck's absence, and that money was short, but she plunged in.

The first step was to get out a mailing to all the signers of the Initiative petition, Jean Falls contributed $1000 and carloads of volunteers from Bush School to this effort; after endless nights of addressing envelopes, they were mailed in half a dozen as a last-minute printing fiasco, the letters went out. Although the mailing didn't really make money, it brought in "heartwarming" letters of support and a cadre of volunteers.

Sherburne also worked on putting together an advertising and media campaign, enlisting volunteers and services wherever she could. One tricky moment, she recalls, came when Steinbrueck (whose market sketches and posters were universally admired in the Alliance) wanted to do the art work for the ads. The ad agency searched through the Sketchbook and managed to find a single little shopping-bag lady, seen from the rear, whose magnified image satisfied everybody and became an effective emblem for the campaign. Another potential crisis arose late in October, when Sherburne desperately needed funds for a last minute blitz and the only resources available (aside from Jack Bagdade's mortgage payment, which he contributed) were 30 lithographs that Mark Tobey had sent to the Friends. Only one of the prints sold at a Highlands party held for that purpose, but the Friends were persuaded to use the rest as collateral for a bank loan, and Sherburne got her tv ads.

While Sherburne was managing mechanics, the strategists were also busy. On September 21 the Alliance announced the results of its poll of market merchants: of 82 merchants who responded to the questionnaire (160 received it), only 11 percent favored Scheme 23 when its details were spelled out—all 41 percent replied "yes" to the more general question, "Are you in favor of the urban renewal project?" Mike MacEwan immediately denied that the poll proved anything, since, by his count there were 230 merchants in the market. MacEwan's Committee To Save the Market also replied with an ad headed "Pike Place Market Merchants Ask Your Support" and listing about 35 merchants as endorsers, including such stalwarts as Pete DeLaurens and Sol Amo. "We've been analyzed, scrutinized, and idolized by every hippie, do-gooder, and dilettante who has needed a special project to earn a market merit badge," read the ad. "We're sick of it—vote No." Then
the Friends issued a flyer listing 79 merchants (among them several farmers) on two sides.

Clearly the presence of Seattle Department on the urban renewal side of the fence put the merchants in a tricky spot. Desomine, according to Frank Miller, was a toughgal. His main interest seemed to be that feudal lord who took seriously each market transaction and the quality of every head of lettuce. Both personal allegiance and product quality are measures by which the merchants could line up with Desomine or to sit out the battle. This also seems to have left deeper and widespread concerns among merchant associations about the safety of their businesses a better chance to thrice, Miller thinks the majority of market tenants supported the initiative. The Merchants’ Association itself never took an official stand. "We knew we had to go on living there after it was all over," says Miller.

On another front, the city’s c-c-csorts to come up with a compromise were now in high gear. Both Selma Lamm (running for reelection against Bill Harrington, a candidate backed by the Friends) and Jim Brumbaugh were behind a new amendment presented to the City Council by DCD late in September. The changes: expand the zone reserved for market use from 1.7 to 2.5 acres, which would include along other things the Vaccine Triangle building, and City Fish; prohibit demolition in the project until the city Council should have approved redevelopment proposals in hand; eliminate the double dedicatory road; and make provision for more long-income housing for relocation of tenants near the market, and for "reasonable rent schedulings" in rehabilitated buildings.

For the Friends and the Alliance, these proposed changes were too little, too late, and too uninteresting—"clearly a political maneuver designed to burnish the name of the water." The Alliance charged. The City Council then put off voting on the amendments until it could also consider a review of the economics of the urban site that was deferred in the same comment that had done the public debate—a step that could not be completed before the election.

Hence the city’s "compromise," whatever it merits, was only a promise on election day. But then so was the assurance by the Friends and the Alliance that urban renewal funds would still be available if the initiative passed. Both sides agreed that the new federal money was essential to whatever form of market-savings each espoused, and the most damaging change of the anti-initiative forces, gradually impressed, was that the initiative would in fact "doom" the market by delaying or eliminating altogether the funds HUD had already promised for the city’s plan. In the initiative, the argument ran, would in effect create a whole new plan, subject to all the funding delays and uncertainties that Scheme 23 had left successfully negotiated, and would perhaps, by all its restrictions, discourage private investment that HUD would find it unwise. To this the Friends and Alliance always replied that they were not against urban renewal but only wanted to channel the funds into a more sympathetic treatment of the market area, and that since HUD had never withdrawn funds from an approved project there was no reason to expect that now.

In the last week before the election everybody was trading quotations from four shadow letters written to the Seattle Times editor in Seattle and two from an Assistant Secretary in Washington. None, unfortunately, made a definitive commitment one way or the other. But the Alliance was firming in its expectation that funding would continue after passage of the initiative "to the extent that the project remains viable" and another letter’s promise that HUD "is very interested in continuing historic preservation." And on October 27 Brumbaugh announced that his worst fears had been confirmed, offered his HUD quotation: passage of the initiative would "affect the project’s financing, and all agreements to one of uncertainty due to a multiplicity of new factors." Concluded Brumbaugh, "This is a disaster to Seattle. The people of Seattle cannot afford this." (Brumbaugh now confesses he didn’t actually believe the risk was all that great, though he had a "real concern." Harriet Shere had written a lot of crossed fingers behind the Alliance’s confident predictions.

"Other" should place their votes where they place their trust; because that’s the only real issue in this election.

If trust was the issue, the Committee To Save the Market was in trouble—and, by extension, the whole effort to defeat the initiative. Two rocks on which it was foundering were the state’s new law requiring disclosure of campaign finances and a KOMO-TV documentary—appropriately titled, "Who Will Save the Market?"—by Patrick Dough. In mid-September CHECC’s John Hempen- mann had called on all sides "to make at least three campaign finance reports during this month and next," since the legal deadline for the reports, October 31, would be "too late to adequately inform voters casting ballots on November 2." (The Alliance was assured that CHECC, on whose early endorsement they had counted, did not in fact come out for the initiative until late in October, but raising the financial-disclosure issue turned out to be more significant.) The Friends and the Alliance immediately complied with the request. Mike MacEwan did exactly the same, saying he "had not observed the legal deadline line. One can only assume the Committee has something to hide," prodded Hempenmann.

Another exchange followed in mid-October, with CHECC announcing that the Friends and Alliance between them had raised about $7,500—more than double what the Committee was afraid to make a similar disclosure. At this point MacEwan confronted with his backers, who apparently decided that what was in order was more than enough and on October 15 the Committee released its list of contributors. The largest single contribution was $3,000 from Destomine’s Pike Place Public Markets, Inc., but the rest of the list ($32,315) included a number of those businesses that were very much in favor of the initiative, such as Bank of America, First United, and other downtown business establishments: $2,500 from SeaFirst.

"You can’t get your money back," says MacEwan, but the hope is there that a campaign that cost $40,000 in total expenses can continue despite a $35,000 loss, a figure that does not include the campaign's legal fees.

So much for campaign rhetoric.

Voters who really wanted to save the market thus had to choose between November 2 versus two unfriendly promises: 1) that the city was destined to lose whatever it had, and 2) that the forces behind the initiative had the practical ability to carry out their plans. The potential disasters on either side were quite different, but either would suffice to finish off the market. Among the several newspaper columns that were written on the initiative, one was "Yes" and was Do N. Carter of The P-I.

"Fixing up the hillclimb corner: finger-crossing time.

$1,700 from Washington International Hotels, $1,700 from Salcon, $1,500 each from Central Park Plaza and Frederick & Nelson, $1,000 from Deuces, and so on.

MacEwan still insists that there was no "conscience of confidence" invested in setting up a committee of market merchants to "save the market" and finance the operation with money from corporations whose main interest was saving Scheme 23. At any rate, the Committee’s credibility suffered a blow when its long-deposited financial ties with downtown were revealed. Dough’s KOMO documentary on October 27 complied the damage, showing that the Committee was indeed the brainchild of the Central Association and caging MacEwan in some undermining inconsistencies.

Although MacEwan ranked high in the demarcation of the market-towinners, both Bag- dade and Mannin today concede that he was "given a bad rap." MacEwan points out that he was hired on as a "legman" for the campaign but ended up as a spokesman "because nobody else would do it," the revelations prior to "telling the truth" to the voters.

Although the business community had not been given a fair hearing if it had been more open about its position? MacEwan ponders this question as if it had never occurred to him, but does not answer it: the political climate was such that overt campaigning by business interests was out of the question.

This picture of the business community at the underdog of the campaignprovokes astonishment and incredulity among pro-initiative businessmen. Certainly he had a completed version of who was planning who and what, but MacEwan shifts his charges on each side of the argument. On the one hand, the opposition had "washeded" the campaign with the "concealed issue" of the Committee’s finances and origins; the real issue revealed by the Committee never got a fair hearing. Would the business community have got a fairer hearing if it had been more open about its position? MacEwan ponders this question as if it had never occurred to him, but does not answer it: the political climate was such that overt campaigning by business interests was out of the question.

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The old emotions of common cause and noblie purpose are being revived in the numerous meetings held this fall by old friends and old antagonists who have gathered for a few more rounds of back-patting and fellow-feeling. There will be parties and street markets and potlatches and a show of Tobey's drawings and a dedication of a new park designed by Steinbrueck. In short, the reunion of that most promising set of alumni in decades, the Class of '71.

The battle zone: the historic district kept widening to the Friends' dimensions.

PIKE PLACE MARKET REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT

The Pike Place Market is a historic and cultural landmark in Seattle, Washington, United States. It is located in the heart of downtown Seattle at the intersection of 1st Avenue and Pine Street. The market was established in 1907 as a public market and has since grown into one of the largest and most vibrant indoor farmers' markets in the world. It is known for its diverse range of vendors, including farmers, fishermen, and craftspeople. The market is a popular destination for both locals and tourists, offering fresh produce, seafood, crafts, and unique souvenirs.

The Pike Place Market Redevelopment Project is an ongoing effort to preserve and enhance the historic district. The project involves various initiatives, such as the renovation of public spaces, the improvement of transportation access, and the promotion of sustainability practices. The goal is to ensure that the market remains a vital and vibrant part of Seattle's cultural landscape for generations to come.