

**From:** [Lorelei Brown](#)  
**To:** [Sadowsky, Steve](#)  
**Cc:** [elizabeth.purcell.purcell](#)  
**Subject:** The Texaco Depot and Reji's 414 Waller  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 12, 2014 8:33:42 AM

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Mr. Sadowsky:

I was caught off guard to speak at Reji's historic commission hearing a couple of weeks ago, so I wanted to write about what I might have said better that evening, and to up date you personally about the out comes since 2008 for The Texaco Depot. As it turned out, within a month of submitting that historic application, there was a minor fire in a back area of the 1300 building due evidently to an overheated extension chord to a clock radio. The affected area was already mostly repaired when Code Compliance walked through, and cited me for working without a permit. Thus my process began, with the assistance of Ms. Purcell, to figure out what commercial uses I would be allowed, and the resulting requirements they would entail. Once we had the plans made, Metro would not allow us to proceed unless I signed a new lease with them, a lease that would have required me to remove the buildings at termination. Perhaps you were included in some of the many emails that went round, to and from Commercial Permitting, Metro, Purcell, and others. Long story short, they finally sent a letter to permit my permit to repair to proceed.

I took care of the most difficult things first. I gave each building separate new sewer connections, then significantly raised and reframed inside the rear of the 1302 building. This gave cross bracing, framed to current standards, to satisfy code complaints. With the new sewer and drainage, the building was to have ground floor bathrooms, also required by the commercial department's plans for the buildings' renewed commercial use. Before the newly framed walls were clad, Metro evicted me. Evidently they expected the repairs to be complete in six months, and they complained that I was doing more than some minimum they preferred. I might have preferred a more minimum solution myself, but that was not what the city was going to allow, so you could say I wound up being caught between a rock and a hard place.

I hired an attorney, Mr. Ron Weddington, to represent me in county eviction court. I knew Metro would be going for the building's removal, which they were, which was beyond the purview of that court, so the judge told us to try to settle out of court. Mr. Weddington worked out an agreement for both Metro and me to 'go in peace' and be forbidden from any further legal action. So I left, although there were holding over tenants in the bigger building, that Metro evicted later, when they could

not work out with Metro to stay.

The buildings have been boarded up, as Metro's John Hodges wants no part of building management, and Vincent Sandoval indicated they would pursue a policy of abandonment and eventually designate the buildings 'surplus property' for sale or removal. Hodges was determined that they have no interest in managing buildings, at least not historic ones.

Someone, probably Code Enforcement, made them at least to hook up security lights at night, so I hope the buildings survive to be part of the redevelopment of Metro's land between 4th and 5th. I told Shannon Sedwick and her partner Michael Shelton, of Esther's Follies, about the buildings as I was leaving, and they got in to look around when the tenants were still at 1300 4th. Shannon and Michael, who is a skilled imaginative wood craftsman, also tried to get something going with Metro, and now are hoping to see if something can happen with the Domain developer people, and the architect for the project Mr. Hsu.

I believe Mr. Cortez spoke as if taking my buildings was without conflict. If any, it did not go as smoothly for them as they planned, but they are cold consummate smooth operators.

(Purcell says that Mr. Roudebush is to be no longer with the agency.) Last I heard Mr. Hsu would want to honor the neighborhood preference that the buildings be repurposed somehow. Who knows what he may be able to work out.

Good luck with Reji's building's hearing next week. I will be out of town on vacation, finally.

Sincerely,

Lorelei Brown

From: **Summer Time** <[suviaika@gmail.com](mailto:suviaika@gmail.com)>  
Date: Wed, Nov 12, 2014 at 7:37 AM  
Subject: Foo Fighters' Dave Grohl On Austin's Growth  
To: liz purcell <[purcelldesigns@gmail.com](mailto:purcelldesigns@gmail.com)>

November 8, 2014

Excerpt of an interview of Dave Grohl by Jason Newman of Rolling Stone:

You touch on it in the episode, but do you think Austin is getting too big for its own good? Is it hard to stay "weird" as it grows out of this niche city?

I think the message in the Austin episode is that we have to be careful that we don't overlook the reasons why people are drawn to these cities. There's something about Austin and its alternative culture that's an oasis in the middle of this country that attracted people to it in the first place. The personality and the fingerprint of this city is unlike anywhere else. The preservation of that needs to be a priority because if you're not careful, that could be wiped away and you're just left with a strip mall.

But that's not just Austin.

Right. That's happening all over the country. It's also New York. It's also Washington, D.C. There are so many cities that communities have shaped. It's important for the community to fight to retain what they've built and not just let the money come in and erase it like a chalkboard. But it's also inevitable [laughs]. My little HBO series might not make a dent, but at least I got my two cents in.

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