Small Business
Home staging specialist Eduardo Mendoza
Page 21

At bat — again
Smith unfurls $750M plan

By JEANIE LANG JONES
STAFF WRITER

After eight years, and several sets of scrapped plans, developer Greg Smith now has a new, $750 million proposal for redeveloping an 8-acre site just west of Seattle's sports stadiums.

Smith envisions six office buildings, four residential buildings, scores of shops and restaurants, as well as a series of public parks, all on a long strip of aging industrial property west of Qwest Field. The site is sandwiched between the Alaskan Way Viaduct and First Avenue South, between just south of South King Street and South Royal Brougham Way. Its redevelopment would continue the stadium district's

Rising emigré club scene fuels sold-out crowds for Bollywood nights

We not only promise TOTAL COVERAGE of PUGET SOUND BUSINESS.
We Deliver.
To subscribe, call 206-447-9500, ext. 1 or log on to our Web site at seattle.bizjournals.com.

Out of India

By HEIDI DIETRICH
STAFF WRITER

By midnight on a recent Saturday night, The Baltic Room's dance floor pulsed with clubgoers moving to Bhangra and hip hop beats. DJs and music producers Rhythm Dhol Bass, flying in from the United Kingdom, mixed tracks as scenes from an Indian movie played on the overhead screen. With the night still young and the Capitol Hill club in Seattle filled to its 400-person capacity, bouncers began turning away disappointed Bhangra fans lined up at the door.

"Every single aspect of the show was amazing," said Manpreet Singh Wadan, who threw the event with his promotions

The UW wants $4.5 million in facilities funding to help recruit nanotechnology star Gabriel Aeppli.

The University of Washington is lobbying state lawmakers for $4.5 million to help recruit a star scientist to head up UW's nanotechnology program.

The scientist, Gabriel Aeppli, directs the London Centre for Nanotechnology and holds a chair in physics at University College London. Considered a pioneer in his field, he was featured prominently in a recent Time magazine story about the United States losing its edge in scientific research to other countries.

The requested funds would go toward renovating the university's Center for Nanotechnology and buying new equipment "as a carrot" for recruiting Aeppli, said Randy Hodges, the university's director of state relations.

While the UW has dangled incentives to lure top scientists in the past, it has typically focused on private funding or failed to connect with the university's own coffers to bankroll these efforts.

It's highly unusual for the UW to seek funds from the state Legislature to recruit a specific scientist.

The legislative strategy is merely a result of the lack of private funding sources for nanotechnology research. There are only a few foundations that fund nanoscience, and one of them, the Kavli Foundation in California, is focusing on international programs and not accepting new applications for U.S. research, said Mary Lidstrom, vice provost for research at UW.

The UW wants $4.5 million in facilities funding to help recruit nanotechnology star Gabriel Aeppli.
When sending e-mail, assume it’s not private

When you send an e-mail, you need to assume that everyone in the world could read it in the future.

What’s that you say? When you send an e-mail, everyone in the world doesn’t need to know your latest business plan, doesn’t need to see jokes that you think are funny, or see private messages between you and a special friend.

Then don’t send an e-mail.

Look at the example of Michael Brown, the ex-head of the Federal Emergency Management Agency. During Hurricane Katrina, he was sending e-mails during the crisis regarding his performance on TV and what food would be available to eat.

Don’t you think he would like to have those e-mails back?

Have you heard about the latest e-mail mistake that’s making the rounds? A law firm in Boston thought a young Boston lawyer had accepted a job with the company. But after the firm had ordered the woman’s business cards and prepared her office, she sent an e-mail saying the law firm wasn’t offering enough money. The law firm wrote back, criticizing her decision.

Her infamous response: “Blah, blah, blah.”

That e-mail exchange ending in “blah, blah, blah” was widely reported in the media, including stories in The Wall Street Journal and television network news shows. Some high-level government executives (it’s reported that President Bush doesn’t send e-mails to his daughters because he fears they might be made public one day) don’t even communicate via e-mail because of fears.

Just use common sense when you send an e-mail, says Ray Zambrowski, CEO of Essential Security Software.

Zambrowski can recite a litany of e-mail horror stories, from companies having to pay multi-million-dollar lawsuits when an employee e-mailed sexist jokes, to newspapers mistakenly receiving e-mails from sources that called their columnists “totally irrelevant” and worse.

He provides examples from a game developer that e-mailed proprietary screen shots of its latest game that ended up being posted on the Internet.

By CAROLINE LI

Sure, Eduardo Mendoza, your grandma’s old lamp—he says it could make your house sell more quickly and for more money.

Mendoza makes a living by rearranging living spaces. His business, The Enhanced Home, is based on word-of-mouth referrals from clients and real estate agents. He says at the rate he’s going, there is little need to advertise.

“I’m the creator, I’m the master, I do what I want,” said the 37-year-old designer.

Mendoza is a house staging specialist. Over the last three years he has become a favorite among local real-estate agents who are looking for someone to stage their properties before an open house.

“The agent gives me the house, the owner says, ‘do your magic’ and then they don’t talk to me. The agent trusts me 100 percent,” said Mendoza. “My agents are my heroes. They all love me,” he half boasts.

But his work backs up his confidence. “My business is with occupied homes with furniture. There’s already furniture and I just need to put it in a way that looks better,” he said.

He works for clients as far as North Carolina without ever going to their homes. “They send me the floor plan of their home. I look at the walls, can picture everything in my head and I can tell them where the bed goes,” he said.

“There aren’t many people out there like him that does what he does,” said Nancy Williams, real estate agent with Windermere Real Estate in Queen Anne. According to Williams, a staging operation will cost about $3,000-$5,000 — and is paid by the owner.

“Most stagers will have you use their furniture. Eduardo is just very talented and it lies in the fact that he takes furniture that people already have. You never know what your going to get, but you know it’s going to be nice,” said Williams.

Mendoza says he tries not to stage homes like show homes, but give a natural, realistic feel — often using old sports items such as hockey sticks or tennis rackets and mounting them on a bedroom wall. In the kitchen, items spilled from a woman’s purse onto the dining table add an extra hint of reality.

“I don’t want you to come into my house and think you’re walking into Bon Marche, like everything is matching. I make it unique. I want you to feel like the people who live here have taste,” said Mendoza.

All it takes is one mental picture and he’s off to find the missing pieces. Often, clients will give Mendoza a blank check to purchase additional items that he feels are needed for the house. Depending on the theme of the house, Mendoza will hunt for the perfect pieces in thrift stores or places like Crate & Barrel. Sometimes, all it takes is a little digging through the family’s packed boxes of old trinkets and unwanted items.

“People have all the elements at home, it’s just a matter of showing them” said the designer.

Mendoza said he doesn’t look like a typical designer. Dressed in cowboy boots, cargo pants and a jean jacket, he has both of his ears pierced and a shaved head. Laughing at himself he said, “People don’t really trust a guy who looks like me. I don’t look like a designer. People are usually expecting someone with flowers in their hair who wears nice clothes and have a beautiful vocabulary of design,” he said. “I don’t have the big vocabulary, but I’ll do my best.”

He uses his short list of adjectives to his advantage. His Spanish accent also scores him points with new clients.

“Some people love it that I have an accent and the fact that I’m not from here, they think that’s kind of cool,” said Mendoza, who grew up in Peru and studied business and space planning in college. After graduation he went to Quebec to study French for one year. Then he left for Ottawa where he
HOMES

FROM PAGE 21

dabbling in international business for another year before he went back to Peru to work on construction with his father.

He said working with his father allowed him time to figure out where his real interests were. In 1997 Mendoza came to Seattle to study residential design and travel management at the Art Institute of Seattle.

The dot-com boom opened up new opportunities and in 1999 Mendoza landed a job at vacationspot.com Inc., which was later bought by Expedia Inc. in 2000. He spent two years at Expedia working in the operations department as a computer reservation analyst.

Before starting The Enhanced Home in 2004, Mendoza worked for Jan Sewell, another staging company operator. Sewell’s company worked only with empty houses. When clients wanted to keep their things in the house or were working on a tighter budget, Sewell would refer them to Mendoza.

“She knew that I liked doing those types of projects and eventually I realized I could do it on my own,” said Mendoza. Opening up his own business allowed him to work in his own way, with no creative limits.

“With Jan, she had her own furniture. The paintings looked like they came from an art museum and the sculptures and everything were so nice and high end. It was scary to the customer living there. You’re scared you might break something,” said Mendoza.

Though Mendoza might be at a lack of words to describe himself, Williams praises him for his “different level of sophistication and uniquesness.”

“He has a foreign flair that a lot of locals don’t have. He’s very artistic and I think part of it is because he has that background that gives him different perspective to his design,” she said.

Both Williams and Mendoza say most people don’t know how to present their house the best way possible, which is a reason that designers like Mendoza enjoy good business.

“They don’t see the full potential of the house. Eduardo comes in and refurbishes things up and it looks amazing. It’s really a good way to get top dollar for your investment,” said Williams, who is convinced that a staged home sells for more money than an empty one.

Mendoza says his 2005 revenues were between $185,000-$230,000. He’s the only full-time but he employs two part-time movers and two people.

One house will usually take Mendoza three days to finish “Since I’m not an Incredible Hulk, I need my movers. I have them move my pieces and then I have to be alone, really.”

Contact: info@enhancedhome.com • 206-583-0702

NO TIME TO EXERCISE?

Sneak It In

Walk wherever possible

Take the stairs whenever you can

Exercise while watching TV

Plan social time around a physical activity