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Rules are fine, preservation's finer

Oh for heaven's sake, let the man put a toilet in the ruins of the Sinclair station he wants to rebuild on Market Street.

Yes, yes, rules are rules and the sewer's a disgrace, but if somebody is willing to spend the money and effort to restore a charming and historic structure, and if the potential effects on the sewer system would be undetectable, waive the rule for him.

It's one thing to tell a developer that, we're really sorry, but you'll have to wait a few months before you start building an apartment complex or a subdivision. It's quite another to tell one guy he can't add a single bathroom to a building that would make the community a more interesting place.

A year ago, Anthony Savas was a hero for announcing plans to turn the walls of a classic filling station into an office for his tugboat company. Today, he's so frustrated with the rules that he's filed a notice of his intention to demolish his rustic relic within 90 days. That would be sad - and unnecessary.

The city's sewer repairs supposedly will be finished next month, so even if the rebuilding work started today, it's unlikely that a single flush would molest the pipes before they're tighter than Jack Benny's wallet. (Editor's note to the chronologically impaired: Jack Benny was a famous tightwad, and a contemporary of the Sinclair station).

Come, let us reason together. Rules are written to make things better, not worse.
