

Armory looks to finish restoration, ADA updates

By Caitlyn May
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The armory in Cottage Grove is currently undergoing a transformation. Efforts to restore the building and bring it up to code in regards to the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) have been in the works for months. A longterm project to update the windows was recently completed and during a meeting on Thursday, Feb. 9, future plans concerning the restoration were unveiled.

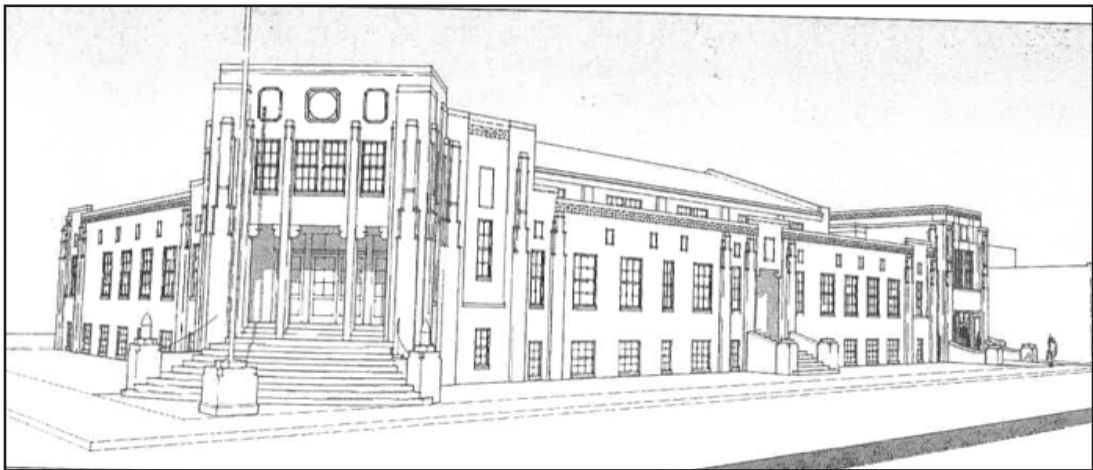
Purchased in 2010 by the city of Cottage Grove, the armory has been eyed as a location for local events and gatherings.

On Feb. 9, future plans for a community environment was still front and center. According to

Christina Lund, in charge of fundraising for the project, the city's aim has been to offer, not only Cottage Grove a space to utilize, but to attract out-of-town groups as well.

Several doorways and restaurants are far below ADA standards. To remedy the issue, plans have been laid out to create a separate entrance on the north side of the building at street level for ADA access. Additionally, an elevator to access all floors of the building is planned all at a cost of \$550,000.

"The longer the armory sits," Lund said, "The more the building degrades. We are being very careful to keep the 1930s' style and respect that it is a beautiful building."



City council denies loading zone for special needs foster home

By Caitlyn May
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Bobby Kraneski was denied a loading zone in front of his special needs foster care during the Monday, Feb. 13 meeting of the Cottage Grove City Council.

The issue first came before the council on Jan. 25 when Kraneski approached and requested that the board deem the area in front of his home a loading zone so that the school bus could pull directly up to the curb to load the children, some of whom use a wheelchair.

"I still, certainly feel for the applicant and understand the concerns unfortunately I think we would end up with stops around town and having looked at the map and location I just don't see an overwhelming need to put that stop in," councilman Mike Fleck said during Monday's meeting. During the meeting in January, the council tabled the item, asking for input from the school district as to whether or not bus drivers could safely load the children and what their preference was.

Cottage Grove City Engineer Ron Bradsby noted that he spoke with Chad Hamilton and Kyle Tucker, both of South Lane School District, concerning the issue. Bradsby reported to the board that both men had noted the district's preference to load the children curbside.

"Is the bus zone necessary? No but it would be very helpful," Hamilton told the board Monday night. "We will get the kids on the bus safely but it will come at a cost. We'll have to park in the middle of the street and it stops traffic between five and seven minutes. It'd be much easier for us to do door to curb service for these kids. Bobby's house serves kids at the highest level of need. There might be a child in a wheelchair so that five to seven minutes is just an estimate," he said. He also noted that, given the children Kraneski fostered, oftentimes students may have behavioral issues that require longer load times. Hamilton told the board that if a loading zone was instituted, the bus could turn its lights off, pull off the road and park until the child was ready to board the bus.

Council struggled with the issue with several members commending Kraneski on his passion but noting their hesitation to get

involved.

"If the school bus has to stop and turn the lights on anyway, the traffic is light on that part of the street. I understand the problem but don't see where the city should get involved with it," councilman Garland Burback stated.

Councilman Jake Boone agreed saying, "I want to reiterate what he's doing is fantastic. If I were in your position I'd do the exact same thing you're doing right now," he said. "However, I just don't think we can, because the difference is the transit time to walk or roll the eight to 10 feet, I just don't, I don't see my way clear to doing that and it bothers me and I'm probably going to lose a little sleep over it but never the less."

Retired bus driver Karen Munsell, who spoke on Kraneski's behalf at the January meeting, did so again on Monday. She noted Kraneski's struggle to escort several special needs children into the street to load them on the bus after she thanked the council for considering the item.

"I'm asking as a community if we could find a way. We're not talking grandma's wheelchair, there's some technical things going on," Munsell said. "They're 25 years old (Kraneski). They're very young and they are doing something. I don't know if we have another home in this town willing to do what they're doing."

Councilwoman Amy Slay reiterated that the board understood Kraneski's request saying, "I don't think there's a lack of support up here. I think we all agree what you do is amazing but I don't know if this would solve the problem."

While several members praised Kraneski's work with special needs children, the issue died for lack of a motion.

Kraneski thanked the board for its consideration and asked if councilors had suggestions on how to move forward and request that his neighbors not park in front of his home to allow for the bus to pull closer to the curb. After being called on by Slay, Cottage Grove Police Chief Scott Shepherd said, "I don't have any solutions that would offer any real change except to contact your neighbors."

Rosie from A1

Church," she said. The women did find time to have fun however, with Nelson explaining that she left just down the road from the beach and finding time to sleep between her work hours and extracurricular activities was difficult.

"We would go see the big bands play and Frank Sinatra, Bing Crosby and Guy Lombardo," she said. According to the women, it wasn't unusual for celebrities to stop in and put on shows for the workers in the factory. It also wasn't unusual to find soldiers strolling the same beach block.

"There were soldiers everywhere," Nelson said. "They would say, 'Where are you from?' We would tell them and they would say, 'Me too.' They would ask for the town and we would tell them and they would be from the same town," she laughed. "So we would go get coffee. That's not something I would recommend these days but back then, you could do that safely."

Fun aside, all three women agreed that the work of building wartime necessities came first.

"All Rosies will say, 'We did the best we could because we knew the troops were counting on us.'"

Dojo from A1

simple. "Our school is full of families of different races, value systems, religions and political beliefs. Despite the divide in our nation, the environment inside our walls has continued to be supportive and positive for all," she said. The idea, apparently came from another sign posted on social media. "One of our instructors shared a hand-painted sign that I thought truly reflected how we treat one another and I wanted the community to know as well."

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