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Sewer system plan irking neighbors

CHRISTENA BROOKS
SPECIAL TO THE APPEAL TRIBUNE

A Silverton family's plan to develop a 21st-century commune on their property atop the steep hill near East Main Street and Steelhammer Road has sparked outcry from some neighbors.

But kibbutz-style living wasn't the focus of their dismay at the Silverton City Council's meeting on June 6. Rather, it was developers Mike and Lisa Leslie's petition to privately pay to connect their property on the hill to the municipal sewer system, which will eventually force some neighbors to pay to connect to the system.

About 30 homes on the hill use septic systems, with at least

10 being close enough to the proposed sewer lines to require to them to connect if their septic fail.

"I think the co-housing thing is a great thing. I'm for that. We just don't know what the cost to us is going to be," said neighbor Frank Petrik. "My wife and I never would have made the offer on our home if we'd known we'd have to incur this cost."

"Why should we incur this cost, if they're the ones benefitting from this, not us?" asked another neighbor, Brenda Wallsinger.

The council meeting stretched past 10 p.m. before councilors voted 6-1 to let the project move forward. Kyle Palmer was the lone dissenting vote.

"Why should we incur this cost, if they're the ones benefitting from this, not us?"

BRENDA WALLSINGER
NEIGHBOR

Adding to the evening's drama, some neighbors asked councilor Dana Smith to abstain from voting due to a conflict of interest.

Smith later explained that she's a member of the Silverton group interested in communal living—likely, but not certainly—on the Leslies' property. She and four others have committed \$1,000 apiece to a separate limited liability company, Evans Oaks LLC.

"We haven't even committed

to buying that property yet," Smith said. "In the past, I chose to recuse myself from discussions that directly affected only that property, but this sewer project is going to affect the whole hillside."

The project is set to bring sewers to the largest septic-only neighborhood in Silverton, said City Manager Bob Willoughby. Currently, the main line under Steelhammer ends just north of its intersection with East Main.

The Leslies plan to pay to extend 8-inch PVC pipe up to the intersection, partway down East Main, through an easement on their property, and on to Reserve Street. Estimated cost is \$120 per foot, but the project hasn't been put out to bid yet.

"Ultimately, we want sewer in Silverton," Lisa Leslie said. "Our family is going to pay for sewer in our neighborhood. We've been working on this for two years with the city."

Neighbors operating on septic under a special exception will soon live within 300 feet of a sewer hookup and thus be required to connect when their systems fail.

"In the code, septic tanks are

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Band back on track



PHOTOS BY SHELDON TRAVER/MID-VALLEY COMMUNICATIONS

The Silverton High School Marching Band and Dance Team perform in the Starlight Parade in Portland on June 4.

Silverton in parade

PORTLAND – Silverton High School's reinstated marching band ended its second year by performing for a crowd of 350,000.

On June 4, the band marched in the 2.5-mile Starlight Parade and earned second place in the parade's marching band category. The Foxes' dance team led the band with choreography matching the music and helped people get into the groove of Prince's "1999" and the school's fight song.

This year, the Starlight Parade celebrated its 40th year in Portland with nearly 100 entries, continuing a festival tradition that began in the early 1900s when illuminated floats on trolley cars made their way through cities. It's one of the highlights of the Rose Festival, which wrapped up June 12.

The parade was televised live on KPTV Fox 12, giving Silverton exposure throughout the station's viewership region. The second-place finish guaran-

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Silverton High School Marching Band members cool off on the bus before the Starlight Parade.



STATESMAN JOURNAL FILE

Silverton Hills Strawberry Festival will be serving free strawberries and ice cream beginning 11 a.m. Sunday.

Silverton berry fest has free desserts

CARLEE WRIGHT
STATESMAN JOURNAL

If strawberries, shortcake and ice cream is not enticing enough, how about if they are free?

The Silverton Hills Strawberry Festival will have just that this year thanks to the generosity of Silverton Health.

Wanting to do something special for the community, the Silverton Health governing board decided to treat the town. Each visitor to the festival will receive a free strawberry dessert starting at 11

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STATESMAN JOURNAL FILE

Silverton Hills Strawberry Festival is Sunday.

Hang in the forest at Garden Brewfest

CARLEE WRIGHT
STATESMAN JOURNAL

Kick back with a cold one amid a grove of towering evergreens. The Oregon Garden Brewfest is embracing its natural side and relocating from a traditional indoor setting to the forest of the garden.

"We have really outgrown the building that has hosted the event for the last 11 years," Regional Marketing Manager Sara Hammond said. "Last year we changed our dates from April to June so that attendees could ex-

perience the garden in full bloom, and we wanted to continue that focus on our unique and gorgeous venue."

When deciding on a new location, the Rediscovery Forest was an obvious choice, Hammond said.

"The forest is such a beautiful setting, and it's insulated from weather," she said. "When it's hot, the forest remains cool and shaded. When it's rainy and windy, the trees block a good portion of the

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