

building until 1965 when it was purchased by the Ocean Foods Company.

The concept

The plan calls for the conversion of two buildings associated with the fish plant: the cannery and its icehouse. Each stand on one side or the other of Ninth Street. The cannery will house 31 rooms on its first floor. Rooms will face either the Columbia River or the Riverwalk. An additional six rooms will be created on the second floor.

The footprint of the icehouse will be slightly expanded. In turn, it will be converted to a small restaurant with two hotel rooms on its second floor.

Colvin emphasized the overall building heights will not change. Further, current views of the river will be expanded through the demolition of a large cooler currently blocking the street end. He said the pier will be open to the public and will be a staging area for tents during specialty events hosted by the restaurant.

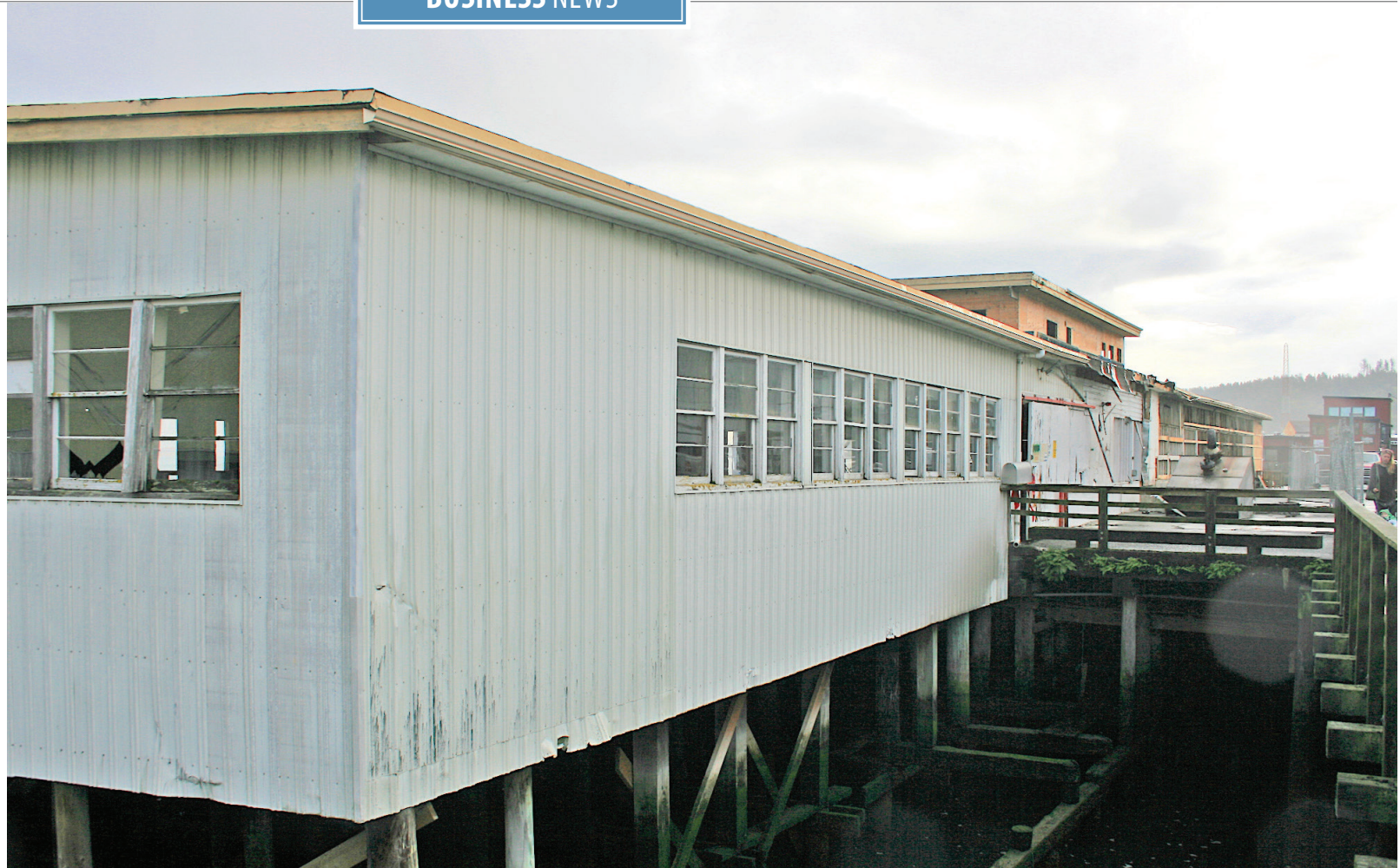
On-site challenges

The buildings were constructed on a piling field. Colvin believes most of the piles are in good condition, some “like the day they went in.” Mick Leinweber, a decades-long pile buck, is in charge of inspecting the piles and replacing them as necessary. Colvin is impressed by Leinweber’s hands-on knowledge and appreciates his use of traditional tools on site.

Unlike net lofts — whose upper floors were never meant to support much weight — canneries tend to be more stoutly built. This is true for the Sebastian-Stewart cannery. Heavy timbers and beams support the building above a concrete floor line.

The support system creates a challenge to design hotel rooms without destroying some of the historic nature of the structure. Fortunately, Colvin, his partners and Rickenbach Construction — including co-owner and architect Michelle Dieffenbach — were familiar with the design problem.

“We would have shied away without their experience on the



JOHN GOODENBERGER PHOTOS

The Sebastian-Stewart Fish Company cannery, between the foot of 8th and 9th Streets, is being renovated into the Bowline Hotel.



A former icehouse will be expanded and converted to a restaurant and additional hotel rooms.



The first floor of the former cannery will house 31 hotel rooms.

Buoy Beer building,” recalled Brady Turner, one of the project’s investors. Brady and his wife, Tiffany, own Adrift Hotels Social Purpose Corporation and will lease the building from Colvin and his partners. The Turners’ previous experience includes re-invigorating the Adrift Hotel in Long Beach and “sprucing up” the Shelburne Inn in Seaview. Both Turners enjoy working with older buildings and bringing out

their inherent character.

The vision

As plans develop, one thing will remain constant: embracing the industrial feel of the buildings. On the outside, the buildings will be wrapped in metal siding, windows will be kept simple and wood trim will be of traditional design. The overall shape of the hotel will change very little.

Inside, wood posts, beams and joists will remain exposed. Original volumes will be retained as much as possible. So, too, will the concrete floors. The Turners plan to contrast the existing materials and spaces with high-end furnishings and rugs. Rooms will gain both aesthetic and physical warmth through European gas fireplaces.

“We love the area — Astoria — for its maritime history,”

said Tiffany. “... We want to do it authentically.”

Sharing an experience

The Bowline Hotel, as proposed, will stand in contrast to typical chain hotels. There, the concept is to offer guests the same experience no matter where they might be in the world. Instead, the Bowline Hotel seeks a different kind of visitor, one whom is seeking a place-based experience.

The Turners said it is their company’s identified mission to not only be true to a building’s character, but to tell the story of its context. “We want bring visitors to a place that we love and give that experience for a two-night stay,” explained Tiffany. “Giving [the building] life now allows us to share that experience.”

For more information about renovating an old home or commercial building, visit the Lower Columbia Preservation Society website at lcp society.org.