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Higher assessments levied on LID 4

by DAN DILLON

The city of Sandy is going for broke in its attempt to recoup costs of the Heritage Square parking lot.

At the same time, city staff members are considering alternatives if adjacent property owners don't accept the city's new assessments.

The city last week mailed the new assessments to the seven adjacent property owners based on a new engineering report that bills them for the entire project, excluding the city's legal fees and part of its engineering cost. Preliminary assessment for the project is \$141,449.49.

The city will kick in \$23,047.98 on the project under the new plan.

In late 1981, Clackamas County Circuit Judge Winston Bradshaw ruled that property owners involved in the parking lot could be assessed just a portion of the cost. That would have left the city to pick up remaining legal fees, interest and construction costs.

However, since a recent state Supreme Court ruling stated the city had to reinstate the entire proceedings to establish the local improvement district, the Sandy City Council billed the participants for the cost of the project.

The 63-space parking lot was completed in 1977. Cost of the construction, including grading, paving and drainage, landscaping, lighting and removal of overhead utilities was \$56,954.89. The total cost, including engineering, legal expenses and land acquisition is \$164,497.47.

The city's participation under the new preliminary assessment considers lawsuit fees and engineering fees for Phase II of the project which wasn't completed.

The new assessments were the result of the Supreme Court decision which, in effect, negated the whole project and sent the city back to the beginning stages of an LID, according to City Manager Tom Reber.



The Heritage Square parking lot is the middle of a dispute between property owners and the city of Sandy. Monday, Dec. 13, a public hearing will help clear

the air about the financing and future of the area.

The property owners now have until a public hearing Monday, Dec. 13, at 8 p.m. to remonstrate against the project. If all the affected property owners say no to the new assessments, the city staff will come up with alternatives for the parking lot.

"We're just going to do some brainstorming on what alternatives are available," Reber said. "We'll be

presenting those to the city council and see what they will pursue."

The options should be ready for council consideration at the Dec. 13 hearing.

If all property owners remonstrate against the project, the city manager expects the council to take action swiftly.

"I would assume they would act that night," Reber said. "If all alternatives have been investigated and

we have a thorough report, then I think they'll make a decision. We won't be presenting a report if it isn't complete."

The new assessments are based on the square footage of each land parcel that benefitted directly from construction of the parking lot. The area of each parcel was calculated and then a percentage was determined of that area as it related to the total square footage of the properties

benefitted by the LID.

Credit was given to those who donated property to the project.

Under the new plan, estimated assessments are Warren and Elaine Decker, \$11,422.44; Arthur Bolster, \$21,343.42; Heritage Square Development Corp., \$39,497.82; the Double Dragon, \$20,405.66; Carroll and Phyllis Rader, \$19,317.86; Georgia Shaffer, \$17,967.49; and Betty Armstrong, \$11,494.80.

Prevention plan involves community

by DAN DILLON

"If people think safely, they'll act safely," said Sandy Fire Chief Bob Rathke, explaining new directions the Fire District's prevention program may take in coming months.

"That's what I think we're trying to promote community-wide."

Fire Marshal Jim Gallagher concurred. "Fire prevention here has never been stagnant. It looks like some real new challenges are going to develop."

The local district had been prepared to hire a fire prevention educator and work toward a local fire code. In light of economic conditions and the recent statewide attempt to limit property taxes, however, the plan has been abandoned.

"One of the things that came out of our review of Measure 3, in terms of that program," Rathke said, "we're not going to hire an additional man."

The fire prevention specialist and "all-encompassing" local fire code were two goals in the district's long-range plan completed three years ago. Now the district finds it hard to justify hiring the new full-time firefighter the program would require.

Instead, after a nine-month review of the fire prevention program, Rathke and Gallagher want to take the prevention program to the people in a greater degree.

"We're looking for outside help," Gallagher explained. "The new avenue to look at is to provide the service without major expenditures of

taxpayers' dollars."

The program, which the fire chief will present to the board of directors at its Dec. 14 meeting, could involve service groups, Boy Scouts and senior citizens.

"The whole concept is a different focus," Rathke said. "How can we increase effectiveness and get other people involved?"

The outside groups, after training by local firefighters, could provide home safety inspections on a volunteer basis, help out with the smoke detector program and take audio-visual programs to the schools.

Part of the long-range plan called

for greater emphasis on the use of smoke detectors. A recent survey by the district revealed that district residents got that word. Nearly 75 percent of those polled had detectors installed.

The next step involves a maintenance program to find a way where citizens, "besides us," Rathke said, become involved spreading reminders about battery checks and such.

"We're looking to make fire prevention a community effort, rather than a fire district effort," Gallagher said adding, the new program provides "better balance."

District personnel would also take an active role in the program, if it is implemented.

A review of the district's records showed a steady increase in the number of illegal fires such as burning on days when it is prohibited by the Department of Environmental Quality.

"One aspect is to make a greater effort in controlling illegal burns," Rathke explained. That could include revising administrative procedures for handling burning permits, instituting a brochure to be handed out to first-time offenders and, ultimately, assessing people the cost of putting out the fires, a practice permitted by Oregon law.

The district would also place greater emphasis on buildings where there is a potential for the loss of lives such as assembly halls, restaurants and taverns.

"In the past it's been, 'If you call us, we'll make an inspection,'" Rathke said. In the future, the district could begin a regular inspection process.

The district also plans to update the fire loss records annually to make appropriate adjustments in the fire prevention program.

Wy'East Lodge celebrates new craftsmanship

The craftsmanship of the 1930s WPA project that became internationally-famous Timberline Lodge comes full circle this weekend with the culmination of an 18-month drive to furnish the new Wy'East Day Lodge with the craftsmanship of the 1980s.

Two flat bed truckloads of new art works and furniture have been delivered already to the day lodge by Sandy Truck Lines as the grass-roots fund drive celebrates completion of the project. More will be delivered this week and in the coming months.

This Saturday, 4 to 8 p.m., visitors will have the opportunity to chat with more than 30 craftsmen involved in making the 80 tables, 400 chairs, 20 concrete containers, 115 steel and wood signs that continue the commitment to works by the hands of Northwesters begun with Timberline.

At 4:30 p.m. there will be a short dedication ending with the ceremonial cutting of a cake in the shape of the day lodge by Dick Kohnstamm, area operator for 28 years; Dick Hoffman, Timberline forest ranger, and Dick Spies, day lodge architect.

Because all the funds—more than \$260,000 in cash, materials and labor—raised for the project were used only for the hand-crafted work, the contributors going to the celebration are bringing the hors d'oeuvres for the party themselves. It is expected to be Oregon's biggest potluck in the spirit of community and pitching in for that spirit.

District joins area-wide cooperative

At the same time the Sandy Fire District is examining its prevention program, it is beginning a unique cooperative venture to combat the growing fire problems of the area.

The Mt. Hood Fire Prevention Association, following the old sports adage that teamwork wins the game, utilizes the expertise of fire and ranger districts in eastern Clackamas and Multnomah counties.

The purpose of the new cooperative is to "consolidate information and make it go twice as far and reach more people," according to Sandy Fire Marshal Jim Gallagher.

The group includes experts in structural and wildlands fires. "Both have been doing basically the same thing," Gallagher noted, "but approaching it in different manners."

Charter members include Sandy, Estacada, Hoodland and Corbett fire departments, the Oregon State Department of Forestry, and Columbia Gorge, Clackamas, Estacada and Zigzag Ranger District of the Mt. Hood National Forest.

Once initial studies of the major fire causes of each member agency have been completed, projects of the association will include a regular newsletter, cooperative presentations on fire safety to schools and community groups, newspaper articles to keep the public informed about fire issues and programs aimed at reducing fire hazards in summer homes in forested areas.

"Part of this joining together is dropping some identity," the local fire marshal said. "We're talking as members of the co-op about

common problems, rather than individual."

The cooperative's educational programs are designed to tie in with local districts' individual prevention programs enabling districts to get more mileage without spending more money.

A partial list of subjects which have been targeted for Mt. Hood Fire Prevention Association attention include safe wood stove installation and use, woodcutting, forest campfires, debris burning and fireproofing holiday decorations.

Programs help handle winter bills

Heating bills rise as the temperature drops. Post-Christmas bills put a pinch on budgets.

For families and individuals with troubles meeting wintertime expenses, two programs can lend a helping hand.

Wednesday, the state of Oregon began taking applications for low-income families who need help to meet winter heating bills.

This winter, an estimated \$23 million will be available from the federal government for the Low-Income Energy Assistance Program. Local agencies, including the Sandy Community Action Center and

Sandy Senior Center, take applications or help area residents set up appointments for interviews.

Any household whose income is at or below 125 percent of the poverty level is eligible for assistance. Poverty levels are based on household incomes. To be eligible, the household must have demonstrated energy costs.

For example, a family of four with a monthly income of \$969 or less, or an annual income below \$11,625 would be eligible.

Community action and senior agencies around the state take the applications for assistance from low-

income families who face rising bills. Checks will be distributed by the State Community Services Program. Payments are made to suppliers who sign contracts with the state or to applicants whose suppliers haven't signed contracts.

BILL-PAYING HELP

Free professional counseling is being offered local residents whose family income can't keep up with debts incurred when the economy was better.

Consumer Credit Counseling Service of Oregon is currently helping some 16 Sandy, Eagle Creek and Bor-

ing residents find ways to make financial ends meet. Of the estimated 15,000 persons in the area, however, Larry Winthrop, president, calls 16 "an insignificant number. Several hundred people in the area could use our services."

"The trouble is getting to people to tell them there is a non-profit service that's ready to help them, free or for very little money," he said.

The services are open to anyone, regardless of income level, who can't pay the bills.

"Our clients are people anxious to pay their debts and protect their credit," Winthrop said. "In the past,

we've said their troubles were caused by bad luck, bad management or a combination of both. These days, it's also a bad economy and the loss of a job or a lay-off."

Counseling is free. If more help is needed, there's a debt management program for which a \$9 charge is made—or waived in hardship cases. In these programs, counselors work with clients and their creditors to arrange mutually satisfactory programs for getting debts paid—usually by extending repayment periods and reducing monthly payments.

Appointments are available by calling 232-8139.

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