

## FUEL, continued from Page A1

Seth King, a land use attorney, spoke on behalf of Safeway saying that the staff-proposed amendment to the zone was largely acceptable except for a prohibition on sales of other merchandise. If approved, fueling center plans call for a convenience stand where items like soda, coffee, cigarettes and other convenience fare would be sold.

"This is not a workable business model. It wouldn't be a full-service convenience store, but some ancillary sales are expected and a necessary part of these fueling stations," King said.

King said Safeway would either like to have the prohibition on such sales removed or have the hearing continued at a later date.

Safeway had looked into building a gas station on the site as early as 2013, but the plan never moved forward internally, said Chris Miles, a construction project manager for Albertsons, the company that acquired Safeway in 2014.

"This is something our customers have requested over and over. Our nearest fueling center is in Salem," Miles said. "We'll survive without a fueling center, but we will most likely do something with the property because it is a dirt lot and ugly right now."

Miles said the additional merchandise sales were an essential part of the package.

"That sale doesn't do much for us overall, but if we don't offer it, we lose the fuel sale," Miles said.

A main point of contention in the conceptual plans is an increase in traffic to the shopping center that would result from adding a gas station.

Keizer Fire District Chief Jeff Cowan said the district would

not support a change to the overlay zone.

"Don't change it. It's there for a reason," Cowan said. "We have to go into oncoming traffic to reach River Road or the other side of Chemawa every day," Cowan said.

Miles walked commissioners through some of the changes Safeway is proposing to help alleviate clogs on Chemawa if a fuel center gains approval. The main entrance would be widened by 12 feet to allow for easier flow into the parking lot, especially for those turning left from westbound lanes. However, the draft plans also included a reworking of the parking lot near the main entrance. At least three of the parking spaces on both sides of the first aisle of parking spaces would be removed and some handicapped parking added to force customers further into the lot rather than allowing them to wait for the closest parking spaces to open up and creating congestion on Chemawa.

"I don't think we addressed the fire district, but we addressed the flow," Miles said.

Chris Brehmer, an engineer with Portland's Kittleson & Associates, said additional mitigation might be possible with some linking of the signals on River Road North.

"The development will increase traffic and we are trying to understand what they will be, but this is a chance to improve the entrance issues," Brehmer said.

Commissioners didn't show much of their hand with their questions on the proposed changes, but said they wanted to get more input from the other entities that might be impacted like the Keizer Fire District and Salem-Keizer Transit District.

"This is a big investor in our community and I don't want to slow them down, but if we are going to continue this, I want the other interested parties to be here," said Commissioner Garry Whelan.

# Other code limitations take fire during Safeway fuel hearing

By ERIC A. HOWALD  
Of the Keizertimes

If politics makes for strange bedfellows, the same might be said for business.

While the Keizer Planning Commission was taking testimony on a proposed fueling center at Safeway on River Road North, the proposed removal of an overlay zone drew support from a connected pair of individuals. They supported the Safeway proposal, but had other vested interests in having the overlay zone removed.

While Safeway wants a prohibition on gas stations in area between Claggett and James streets on River Road North and Elizabeth Street and Bailey Road on Chemawa Road lifted, the same part of the development code also prohibits auto dealers, auto rental and auto repair businesses, recreational vehicle parks, public utility structures and building and drive-thru windows asso-

ciated with eating and drinking establishments.

That last provision is what brought out Adam Wittenberg and Coldwell Bank Commercial realtor Pam Rushing.

Wittenberg recently acquired the old Bank of the Cascades building at 5120 River Road N. and has had some interest from a restaurant looking to locate there. The drive-thru prohibition stands in the way.

Wittenberg did not say who was interested in the site, but said "great businesses like Burgerville, Chick-Fil-A and Del Taco" aren't looking at Keizer, and implied that the drive-thru window prohibition is snarling the deal for a potential tenant at the Bank of the Cascades location.

"We're excited about reinvesting in Keizer," Wittenberg said. "When companies want to invest, we have to make sure we're not prohibiting (it)."

He said he fields multiple offers each week to set up a marijuana dispensary, but it sits within 1,000 feet of McNary High School.

Rushing said that it is getting easier to attract businesses to River Road, but that prohibitions like the ones set forth in this specific section of the development code make it difficult.

"The Bank of Cascades has a drive-thru and we have a tenant that would like to make it a food drive-thru, but it can only be used for a bank," Rushing said. "I've been fortunate to work a lot in Keizer and represent a lot of property owners and tenants. It's been hard to attract national tenants to River Road and it hurt the (other) business owners on River Road, but the trend is starting to change now."

While there is a prohibition on new food drive-thrus, old ones — like the ones at the old

Roth's location — are grandfathered in. Because those windows are now inactive, the property owner was able to shift them to the new building that will be home to The Human Bean, a coffee company. When Starbucks reps selected its new site south of Chemawa Road, they chose the first property in the immediate vicinity not included in the drive-thru prohibition zone.

# Fire chief on fuel restriction code: 'Don't change it'

By ERIC A. HOWALD  
Of the Keizertimes

There was only one voice of dissent during a public hearing on a proposed fueling center at the Safeway on River Road, but it came from a powerful local entity.

Keizer Fire District Chief Jeff Cowan said the district would not support a change to the overlay zone.

"We have to go into oncoming traffic to reach River Road or the other side of Chemawa every day," Cowan said.

Cowan spoke to the Keizer Planning Commission at its meeting Wednesday, March 15.

Cowan called to mind one relatively recent incident — a traffic crash involving a Keizer Police Department motorcycle — near the intersection of Chemawa Road Northeast and River Road North as reason for denying the change.

"Even one of our Keizer police officers was hit as someone was turning left out of the parking lot (and couldn't see the officer) as another customer was turning in," Cowan said.

Moreover, the lack of consideration for the impact of increased traffic around the Keizer Fire Station was a glaring omission, Cowan suggested.

"The analysis only comes halfway across the street, and it's based on traffic standard set in the year 2000 and a transportation plan from 2007," he

said. Cowan said KFD officials had not spent any time analyzing the site-specific plans, but that the impact to congestion around the fire station was worrisome on its face.

On average, KFD crews respond out of the fire station about 15 times a day and must return at least once for each of those calls. It's not uncommon for emergency response vehicles to get caught in the snarls around the Chemawa-River intersection.

"Safeway itself generates 20 calls a year. Add Shari's and it's 26 times a year, so a couple of times a month we are going to need emergency vehicles into that parking lot," Cowan said. "Our concern is emergency response."

The center entrance in the north side of the parking lot also already exceeds the expected critical crash rate for a driveway of its type. More traffic, Cowan said, would create additional problems. Safeway representatives said they are exploring options at that entrance to pull traffic off of Chemawa and reduce the number of incidents.

Citing Cowan's concerns, and others raised at the meeting, planning commissioners continued a public hearing on the matter. It will return to the commission at its April 10 meeting.

## BURGLAR, continued from Page A1

At the time of the One Stop burglary call, Keizer's night shift officers had just begun their investigation at Smoker Friendly. The investigation including taking statements from eight people present during the incident. The suspect later admitted to police that he had not drawn a knife but a screwdriver that had been sharpened.

When SPD officers arrived at One Stop Smoke Shop, the suspect was still trapped and found to be bleeding from lacerations suffered while trying to enter the business.

A door to the business

needed to be breached by officers so they could enter to detain the suspect and provide medical treatment for his injuries, a process that took about 40 minutes.

Jose Manual Alvarado was then transported to Salem Health for treatment of the injuries. He was released from Salem Health about 9:30 a.m. the following morning after receiving treatment for his injuries. He was transported to the Marion County Correctional Facility.

At Smoker Friendly, 32-year-old David Anthony

Kellum was arrested and taken to the Marion County Correctional Facility where he was charged with disorderly conduct.

Keizer police officials would like the city to add five officers to the current roster of 37 officers. Two of those new hires would become part of night shift patrols, which would mean four officers on duty each night instead of three.

If the city were to create a dedicated fund, through a fee, the cost is \$44 per year for each residence and business.

# Pucker up!



# Lemonade Day!™



SALEM-KEIZER

## Saturday, May 20

Lemonade Day is the national event that teaches kids how a business works by operating a lemonade stand. With help from parents and sponsors, kids create their own recipe, build a stand and sell lemonade.

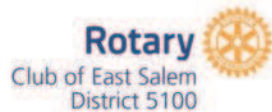
*Create a recipe • Design a stand  
Attract investors • Do it alone or with friends*

Learn more at  
[saalemkeizer.lemonadeday.org](http://saalemkeizer.lemonadeday.org)

Main Squeeze Sponsor



Fresh Squeeze Sponsors



Presented by



Media Partners



## THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY'S BEST KEPT SECRET

ASSOCIATE GOLF PACKAGE  
Now available for only  
**\$875 ANNUALLY**

MENTION KEIZERTIMES AD FOR AN EXCLUSIVE OFFER!  
CALL 503.982.1776



Woodburn Estates & Golf  
Active 55+ Community



Enjoy unlimited play on the toughest 5400 yards private course

Associate Members Must Be 50 & up  
First year prorated

[www.WoodburnEstatesGolf.com](http://www.WoodburnEstatesGolf.com)

keizer art association  
NURTURE CREATIVITY

Presents:

# Birds of a Feather

4th Annual  
Mother's Day Tea  
Saturday, May 13

12:30 to 2:30 p.m.  
at Keizer Heritage Center  
980 Chemawa Road N

**\$20 per person**

Tickets available at Keizer Art Association.  
Please come wearing your tea hat!

For more information call  
Keizer Art Association at 503.390.3010

