

Keizertimes

SECTION A

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Theater design unveiled, approved



Submitted

The concept design for a nine-screen theater in Keizer Station was approved last week by the Planning Commission.

By ERIC A. HOWALD
Of the Keizertimes

The owner of a planned cinema still hasn't signed a lease to locate on a city-owned portion of land in Keizer Station, but all the evidence points to it becoming a reality.

At a meeting of the Keizer Planning Commission Wednesday, Nov. 8, the planning commission approved a design variance that will allow the theater building to have fewer windows and compensate for the lack with additional landscaping.

"The requirement is 50 percent glazing/windows on the ground floor according to the master plan for Keizer Station but, since it is a theater, that many windows

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SKSD MANDATORY REPORTING

Board voted for judicial review, no mention of new policies

By ERIC A. HOWALD
Of the Keizertimes

A decision by the Oregon Court of Appeals regarding the dismissal of an employee for failure to report a potential case of sexual abuse (see related story, Page A2), threw a wrench into the way the Salem-Keizer School District had been interpreting its mandatory reporting guidelines.

While the court sided with the counselor who chose not to report a somewhat vaguely-described incident of abuse, it additionally determined that for mandatory reporting to be required "reasonable suspicion of sexual abuse necessarily encompasses a judgement as to whether the asserted physical contact was sexually motivated." Essentially, the court said that for an incident to fall under the sexual abuse category, and therefore trigger mandatory reporting to the Department of Human Services, the incident had to include the touching of private or intimate parts for the purpose of arousing either party.

That determination, and two executive sessions on the topic, led to a special meeting of the Salem-Keizer School Board on Aug. 15 to consider asking the Oregon Supreme Court for clarification on mandatory reporting laws. Board members approved moving forward with the request in a 4-2 vote with one abstention.

While the board is no longer seeking to punish the counselor whose actions led to the court decision, the action has led to new guidelines for mandatory reporting in the Salem-Keizer School District that includes a student inquiring about birth control options after admitting to sex with a partner; reports of a pregnancy; a student confiding in a teacher after being kicked out of his home for divulging a sexually active, same-sex relationship; in addition to suspected abuse or neglect.

Board Member Sheronne Blasi said she be-

lieved the Fair Dismissals Appeals Board (DFAB) made the wrong decision to reinstate the counselor involved in the inciting incident, but "I think that it's in the interest of children and protecting children and it's incredibly important that we bring this forward."

Board Member Jesse Lippold contended that such an action would reinforce the need to report and it would take pressure off teachers because they wouldn't have to make extra judgement calls or perform investigations.

Board Chair Paul Kylo disagreed.

"I think it puts more responsibility to report any suspicion they hear," Kylo said. "Any time there's somebody having sex under the age of 18 they must report it. Therefore, any time they don't report it, under the new standard we are setting, it means the mandatory reporter could be sent to the police and put before the DFAB board. We create that new problem."

Kylo added the reporting guidelines might also be weaponized by students who are mad at one another.

"I believe that then clogs up the system and creates more problems than it helps solve in any way, shape or form," Kylo said.

Board member Kathy Goss worried that a court might respond with requirements the district didn't want.

"The court has to rule on the facts but, in so doing, they could articulate a standard that is better for (mandatory) reporters, the same or worse. That's all within the conceivable," said the school district's attorney Paul Dakopolos.

Lippold responded, "I don't want a teenager who is worried about whether or not she is pregnant to be taken to court to be prosecuted along with any other because we decided to take this to court."

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What prompted the school district to revise guidelines?

MAY 2012

A high school counselor talks with a student who claims she was 'molested' by her younger brother. After further questioning, the counselor determines the contact was meant more to antagonize the student. No report is made to DHS or police, but the counselor contacts the mother.

OCTOBER 2012

The student repeats the claim to the non-custodial father and he accuses the counselor of negligence. The counselor is placed on leave on Nov. 1 and recommended for dismissal by Superintendent Sandy Husk. The Salem-Keizer School Board approves the dismissal in January 2013.

AUGUST 2013

The counselor appeals the dismissal to the Oregon Fair Dismissal Appeals Board and it is overturned. The counselor returns to work and receives back pay for time lost. Two months later, the school district petitions the DFAB for reconsideration. The board upholds its original decision. The school district files appeal with the Oregon Court of Appeals.

AUGUST 2017

The Salem-Keizer School Board convenes a special meeting and votes, 4-2, to ask the Oregon Supreme Court for clarification on the mandatory reporting statute. There is no mention of updating existing policies or guidelines.

OCTOBER 2017

New guidelines for mandatory reporting are rolled out in the form of training slides for SKSD teachers and staff. In addition to cases of abuse and neglect, mandatory reporters must call DHS in instances of a student inquiring about birth control options after admitting to sex with a partner; reports of a pregnancy; a student confiding in a teacher after being kicked out of his home for divulging a sexually active, same-sex relationship.



Diede to play D-I
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District will appeal league realignment
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Schools salute vets
PAGE A4



Playoff run ends
PAGE A9

Follow the yellow brick road



KEIZERTIMES/Derek Wiley

Dorothy, played by Grace Condello, arrives in Munchkinland. The curtain falls on McNary High School's production of The Wizard of Oz this weekend. Final performances are Friday and Saturday, Nov. 17 and 18, at 7 p.m. and a matinee at 2 p.m. on Saturday.

Keizer turns out for bond forum

By DEREK WILEY
Of the Keizertimes

Of the first four bond measure forums, Lillian Gовus, director of community relations for the Salem-Keizer School District, said McNary High School's drew by far the largest crowd as more than 70 people packed into the library on Monday, Nov. 13 to see how Keizer schools would benefit from a nearly \$620 million bond package.

About half of the attendees were focused on McNary, which would receive \$42 million to build 14 new general classrooms, one new science lab, one flexible lab space and two Career and Technical Education spaces.

The money would also go towards reconstructing office

space so it's easier to check students in and out and relocating softball/soccer fields and tennis courts to the nearly 4.5 acres purchased from St. Edward Catholic Church, which would allow for parking expansion and give McNary a blank slate to reconstruct the school's entrance.

But it was an item that wasn't on McNary's list that led the discussion—a new orchestra room.

"It's a storage space and it can't be anything more than that with our current number of students," McNary senior Emma Snyder said of the current orchestra room, adding that the orchestra consistently finishes top five in the state.

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