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ONE DOLLAR



WALK AND ROLL

Downtown Astoria tour highlights obstacles to mobility

By ERICK BENGEL
The Daily Astorian

The city benches in downtown Astoria — the wood-slatted ones with no back, arms or handles and that dip lengthwise along the center — look comfortable enough, but tell that to aging and disabled residents and visitors who, after sitting down, struggle to escape from them.

Purchased and installed a few years ago, the unusual benches add quirkiness to the cityscape. They're low enough that they don't block anyone's sight lines (a feature that merchants opposite the benches quite appreciate).

However, to expect older citizens and those with mobility issues — not to mention shorter people with little upper-body strength — to dismount the benches gracefully may be asking too much, according to City Councilor Drew Herzig.

"Try putting your grandmother in a beanbag chair and see if she can get out," he said.

Herzig helped lead almost three dozen residents through an informal one-hour "walkability tour" of Duane and Commercial streets Monday evening.

The tour — facilitated by Alan DeLaTorre, a researcher at the Institute on Aging at Portland State University; Elaine Friesen-Strang, a member of the AARP Oregon's executive council; and Noel Mickelberry, executive director of the pedestrian advocacy organization Oregon Walks — gave the group a chance to notice what able-bodied



ABOVE: Dr. Alan DeLaTorre, of Portland State University's Institute in Aging, speaks to the crowd about some of the accessible features within the Garden of Surging Waves during the Roll and Stroll walkability tour of Astoria Monday. TOP: People walk the streets of Astoria during the tour.

pedestrians tend to overlook: the design features that can prevent the mobility challenged from navigating the built environment.

"The more walkable and accessible we can make communities, the more likely people are able to stay in the place that they want to live," Mickelberry said.

Hazards

The benches — triumphs of form over function, character over convenience — came up time and again.

Pointing at a bench near Columbia Bank, DeLaTorre said, "If it had a back and arms, and a place underneath to put your feet so that you could leverage yourself up, that's the best set of design features that you could get."

Scott Tucker, superintendent of Lewis and Clark National Historical Park, noted that he wouldn't be able to spend federal funds on such a bench because the design doesn't comply with the Americans with Disability Act.

"We weren't thinking in terms

of ADA," Herzig said.

A nearby homeless man, who asked to remain anonymous, said of the benches, "They're all right to sleep on, but to sit on?"

The awkward benches aren't the only problem.

For people using canes and walkers, potential tripping hazards abound: broken sections of pavement, uneven slabs of sidewalk, warped utility vault covers that get slippery when wet, etc.

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Back to business

Warrenton biz group to focus on promotion, may cede charity activities to city

By ERICK BENGEL
The Daily Astorian

WARRENTON — The Warrenton Business Association, an all-volunteer city advisory board tasked with promoting the city's business community and increasing livability citywide, may soon cease to deal in social giving, possibly allowing the city to take over that role.

The City Commission, at its Tuesday work session, agreed that the association, whose budget comes from business license fees, should focus on advertising Warrenton businesses and business opportunities rather than on screening and consid-



Rick Newton

ering grant applications from local nonprofits.

Social giving "really doesn't fit in with what their goals are at all," Commissioner Rick Newton said.

The issue of whether charity should be within the association's purview arose last month when the city noticed that \$13,000 of the \$20,000 given to the association for social spending in fiscal year 2015-16 would have gone toward three religious organizations.

Only one of the three donations — \$3,000 for a Christian youth camp — was intended for a religious function; the church later withdrew its request for funding. A donation of \$5,000 for a playground fence went ahead because the fence served a public purpose. The third donation, a

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Stay away

Restrictions grow for man who tried to arrest mayor

By DERRICK DePLEDGE
The Daily Astorian

A Circuit Court judge Tuesday expanded restrictions on a man who tried to perform a citizen's arrest of Astoria Mayor Arline LaMear in June to include the entire City Council.

Zachary Seidel, 29, had been restricted from going back to City Hall after the disruption at a City Council meeting.



Zachary Seidel

Upset over the move of a communications tower off Coxcomb Hill, he at first tried to arrest LaMear, then Police Chief Brad Johnston, before Johnston tackled him to the ground.

Seidel was charged with criminal trespass, disorderly conduct and resisting arrest. As a condition of his release, he was barred from City Hall.

Later in June, he told The Daily Astorian he wanted to arrest the entire City Council.

The action Tuesday by Circuit Court Judge Fred Avera was largely to correct an oversight in the original release agreement.

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Seaside restricts marijuana grow sites

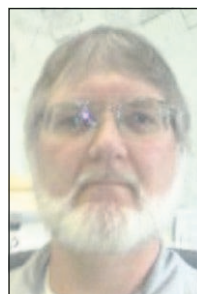
Licensing fee schedule yet to be determined

By KATHERINE LACAZE
EO Media Group

SEASIDE — An ordinance regulating medical marijuana grow sites in Seaside is in the books, but setting a local license fee for growers is still to come.

At its meeting Monday, Seaside City Council unanimously approved legislation to amend the city's general business license ordinance to allow medical marijuana production and processing and add a new chapter in the Code of Seaside setting restrictions on where and how those businesses operate.

The ordinance will go into effect after 30 days. At that time, medical marijuana grow sites will be restricted to the three areas zoned for industrial



Kevin Cupples



Angela Fairless

usage in Seaside.

A marijuana grow site is a location registered with the state where marijuana is produced or processed and may be transferred to a medical marijuana facility registered by the Oregon Health Authority.

How to decide

City Planner Kevin Cupples said he believes the ordinance would ap-

ply to all medical marijuana growers registered with the Oregon Medical Marijuana Program, whether they're growing one plant for profit or the legal limit. He said he is unsure how the city can differentiate for-profit operations from personal in-home grow sites, which became legal under Measure 91.

"Part of it is dependent on them," he said. If growers are part of the state's marijuana grow-site registration system, they have to take the initiative to get licensed with the city.

"I'm not sure how that will or won't happen," Cupples said.

Seaside resident and activist Angela Fairless said the ordinance is a good start, but she believes there should be more clarifying language about how the city "will decide who has to apply for this business license and be restricted by those zoning regulations." As the

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