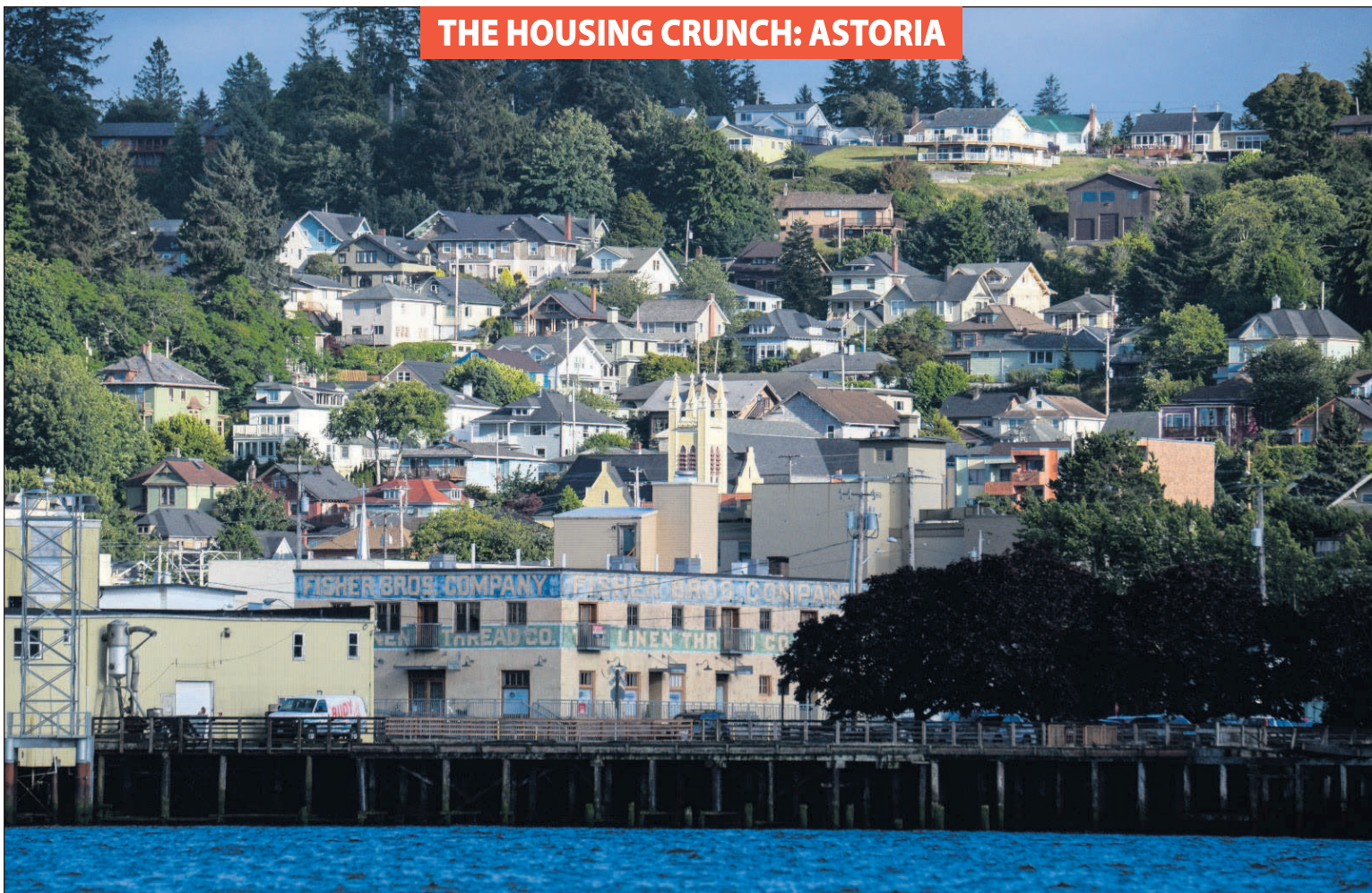


## THE HOUSING CRUNCH: ASTORIA



The city of Astoria photographed in June.

Danny Miller/The Daily Astorian

# A SLOW SEARCH FOR THE 'RIGHT FIT'

## CITY'S RESPONSE TO HOUSING HAS LACKED URGENCY

By **DERRICK DePLEDGE**  
*The Daily Astorian*

The goal was simple: Promote housing that Astorians can afford. Yet nearly 18 months after the City Council embraced the goal, the city has done little to achieve it. Instead, city councilors have discouraged modest changes to the development code to spark more housing as too aggressive.



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**MORE INSIDE: COUPLES, NEW CCC PRESIDENT AFFECTED BY HOUSING CRUNCH • PAGE 5A**

## A stable place to stay while searching for a new home

**Emerald Heights is one of few affordable options**

Jessica Jacobsen and Jesus Morales have been looking for a house to rent, but they feel fortunate to have a stable place to live during their search.

The young couple and their 10-month-old son, Daniel, who share a three-bedroom apartment with Morales' mom and partner, are among the residents at the 375-unit Emerald Heights Apartments, a World War II-era, low-income housing complex in the hills just east of Astoria.

See *EMERALD HEIGHTS*, Page 5A



Danny Miller/The Daily Astorian

Jesus Morales, fiancée Jessica Jacobsen and son Daniel Morales stand outside their apartment in the Emerald Heights complex in Astoria. "No one wants to move, so there are never any openings anywhere," Jacobsen said.

## Seaside OKs pot production places

### Astoria warehouse fire hits home

By **R.J. MARX**  
*The Daily Astorian*

SEASIDE —A warehouse fire in Astoria at a marijuana processing site this week left an impression in Seaside. At Monday's City Council meeting, councilors expressed concern that recreational growing and processing facilities would be properly monitored for safety, including extracts, oils and ether.

"I do have a concern in light of what happened in Astoria this week," Councilor Tita Montero said prior to a vote amending administrative rules for the production, whole-

sal and processing of recreational marijuana.

The licensing of medical marijuana production facilities is already included in city code. But when Seaside's City Council voted to allow licensing of recreational marijuana retail shops a year ago, they left out three aspects of the Oregon Liquor Control Commission administrative rules: production, wholesale and processing.

Without an amendment to include recreational processing and production, City Planner Kevin Cupples said, Seaside would be ineligible for a share in state marijuana tax revenues, and could preclude the



Tita Montero

city from levying a 3 percent tax on its sale.

Before voting, councilors asked what oversight the city would have over production facilities to prevent incidents like the explosion at High Level Concentrates on Astoria's west end, which injured three and shut down nearby businesses.

Cupples said a review with input from Seaside's building official Bob Mitchell and fire department personnel could determine if additional safeguards could be rolled "into our own version of the code."

See *SEASIDE*, Page 7A

# Group appeals curbed rentals

**Gearhart owners: Rules cost 'real money'**

By **R.J. MARX**  
*The Daily Astorian*

GEARHART — Fourteen Gearhart property owners provided notice that they intend to appeal Gearhart's short-term rental rules. An intent to appeal was submitted to the state Land Use Board of Appeals earlier this month and signed by 14 parties, including two limited liability corporations. Those seeking to appeal may do so by Thursday, within 21 days of the ordinance's passage.

"We have no choice, we have to appeal it," short-term rental property owner David Townsend, one of those filing the appeal, said Friday. "We're hoping we can set down and get some dialogue to make this a win-win situation for everybody."

Townsend said he and others are not against some aspects of the rules, but oppose what they say are plans to eliminate short-term rentals altogether.

"People are really against nontransference of the license to be sold," he said. "That costs people real money."

"We are just a group of homeowners who sometimes rent our homes to other families that want to experience Gearhart the way we're able to experience Gearhart when we first came to visit years ago," Jim Whittemore, one of those who signed the notice of appeal, said. "It's that simple."

Gearhart City Planner Carole Connell responded Monday the Planning Commission and City Council "listened to all the



Carole Connell

See *GEARHART*, Page 7A

# Avakian campaign accused of violations

**Staff denies allegations**

By **CLAIRE WITHYCOMBE**  
*Capital Bureau*

SALEM — Brad Avakian's campaign denied wrongdoing following accusations made Monday that his campaign fund paid government employees for campaign work, and that the work may have been done on state time.

Avakian, the Democratic candidate for secretary of state, is the head of the Bureau of Labor and Industries.

In an opinion piece Monday on Forbes.com, Adam Andrzejewski, of Open The Books, a private transparency group, claimed that three of Avakian's employees were paid money out of Avakian's campaign fund and that two of those employees also contributed to Avakian's campaign for secretary of state.

The piece alleges BOLI communications director Charlie Burr, legislative director Paloma Sparks and Jesse Bontecou, Avakian's executive assistant, were paid a total of \$3,500 from Avakian's campaign fund in 2014 and 2015.

Brad Pyle, Avakian's campaign manager, said payments from the campaign fund, the Committee to Elect Brad Avakian, to three Labor and Industries employees in 2014 and 2015 were "fairly routine" holiday bonuses.



Brad Avakian

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