



Submitted Photo

The Inn at Cannon Beach plans to add 18 additional units.

## Hotel expansion gets OK to go ahead in Cannon Beach

### Council overturns Planning Commission decision

By LYRA FONTAINE  
The Daily Astorian

CANNON BEACH — The path cleared on Tuesday for a hotel to add 18 additional guest suites.

The Cannon Beach City Council approved Hospitality First LLC's request for a conditional use permit to expand the Inn at Cannon Beach.

The 40-unit inn is located at 132 E. Surfcrest Ave. In the application, Hospitality First stated that Cannon Beach has an insufficient supply of lodging units for visitors during peak occupancy periods.

The council overturned the Planning Commission's 4-1 denial of the permit in September, a decision based on factors including impacts the hotel units might have on traffic and water use. In October, Patrick Nofield appealed the denial on behalf of Hospitality First.

After debate about whether the site qualified for motel use, Mayor Sam Steidel and Councilors George Vetter, Melissa Cadwallader and Mike Benefield voted in favor of overturning the Planning Commission's decision. Councilor

Wendy Higgins recused herself from voting due to conflict of interest and personal bias.

"We're very satisfied with the outcome," Nofield said Wednesday. "The Planning Commission's decision of denial regarding our conditional use application seemed to be a broad view of what they desire Cannon Beach to be ... For our purpose, the relevant question was, does the conditional use application meet the criteria as established in the zoning ordinance?"

According to the staff report, the application met six criteria for conditional use approval, which included demand, an adequate site plan and not overburdening public facilities or causing traffic congestion.

Nofield said the Planning Commission's decision was "subjective" and not "responsive to the language of the review criteria that was outlined in the zoning ordinance or based on evidence of the record."

"From our perspective, the staff report to the Planning Commission provided findings of fact to support the approval

of the project," he said at a Nov. 1 council meeting.

Jan Siebert-Wahrmund asked councilors to uphold the Planning Commission's denial, citing concerns about limited water resources and the need to be "mindful in making decisions about even modest increments of growth."

"Our town is already overloaded and cramped in the summer," Siebert-Wahrmund said. "Why would we choose to build more hotel and motel units when we are already stretched and strained as a community?" she said. "We do not need to exploit our precious place."

Public Works Director Dan Grassick said the city has adequate water resources for the proposed development.

"While it will add to the overall water consumption each year, it is not going to exceed your capacity," he said to councilors.

## State funding adds to Seaside district's school building budget

### With bond vote, district can cash in on state money

By R.J. MARX  
The Daily Astorian

SEASIDE — Driven by the threat of tsunami and evidence of crumbling Seaside schools, voters Tuesday rallied around the school district's \$99.7 million bond.

The district can now add another \$4 million from the state's Department of Education Office of Finance and Administration, which will bring total funding to more than \$103 million. The district was required to pass the bond to receive the state funds, which match up to \$4 million of a district's bond levy.

"I couldn't be more proud of our community for stepping forward and making a truly historic decision that will improve the lives of children and families for generations to come," Seaside Superintendent-emeritus Doug Dougherty wrote supporters in a post-election email. "Seaside School District will also receive \$4 million of additional capital funding from the state of Oregon."

The state funds come after the school district was unable to access funding through the Seismic Rehabilitation Grant Program to use to retrofit or relocate its schools because three of the district's schools are sited within the tsunami inundation zone, Dougherty said this summer.

The Legislature last year authorized \$125 million in state matching bonds to provide incentives to school districts seeking approval for capital projects. Estacada School District, Vernonia School District, and Gresham-Barlow



Submitted Photo

Superintendent-emeritus Doug Dougherty and Gail Dundas, co-chairwoman of Vote Yes for Our Local Schools, celebrate the bond vote on election night.

School District — three of the school districts ahead of Seaside — did not pass their bonds, Dougherty said Wednesday.

Seaside was first on a waiting list to receive the matching funds, which were contingent on the district passing a bond in November.

As a result of this week's bond vote, Gearhart Elementary School, Seaside High School and Broadway Middle School will relocate to a new campus location in the East Hills adjacent to Seaside Heights Elementary School.

Federal funds are unavailable to offset local school relocation costs because of a ban on federal earmarks, Dougherty said.

Dougherty said Wednesday

the district's first step will be to work toward expanding the city's urban growth boundary for development of the campus. The state requires cities to maintain a line around their perimeters to moderate urban sprawl. If more land is needed, such as for the new school campus, land is zoned and annexed into the city.

Earlier this year, the city's Planning Commission tabled discussions on a plan to increase the urban growth boundary for future residential housing. Seaside School District was purposely excluded from this plan so they could pursue an urban growth boundary expansion specifically to relocate its schools out of the tsunami inundation zone.

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