

# Warrenton to allow apartments to be built in commercial zones

Move could help ease the housing crunch

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

WARRENTON — Hoping to loosen up the housing market, Warrenton will allow new apartment projects in some commercial zones.

The City Commission cast an initial 3-1 vote Tuesday night to amend the development code. A final vote is expected later this month.

Multifamily development would be a conditional use in commercial zones except along the U.S. Highway 101 corridor, near big box stores like Costco and Home Depot. The projects would have to go before the Planning Commission for approval. Planning Commission decisions can be appealed to the City



Danny Miller/The Daily Astorian  
**Warrenton has encouraged new housing projects.**

Commission.

Skip Urling, the city's community development director, said "this was a measure to help loosen up the market a little bit, provided that development proposals for such uses would get the extra scrutiny provided by a conditional use permit review."

The Planning Commission voted unanimously in

March to recommend the change. The City Commission had asked the Planning Commission to consider the idea to help with the region's housing crunch.

Acting Mayor Henry Balensifer voted against amending the development code, citing concerns about more apartments on the downtown commercial corridor along Main and Harbor streets.

## New coordinator for Early Learning Council

By **EDWARD STRATTON**  
*The Daily Astorian*

The P-3 Early Learning Council, also known as Clatsop Kinder Ready, will enter a final year of funding with a new coordinator.

Dan Gaffney, a retired Seaside principal who has served as the face of the group since its creation three years ago, told the Warrenton-Hammond School Board Tuesday that he is reducing his role to focus on a yearlong feasibility study that could result in 600 subsidized preschool slots for Clatsop, Tillamook and possibly Columbia counties.

Replacing him as the primary coordinator for Clatsop Kinder Ready is Rob-

bie Porter, vice principal of Warrenton Grade School, who will oversee local coordinators in each of the county's five school districts.

Clatsop Kinder Ready was originally funded with a three-year, \$225,000 grant from the Oregon Community Foundation, which was set to run out in March. Gaffney said that after being interviewed by foundation members, he is confident Clatsop Kinder Ready will receive a fourth year of funding.

The P-3 Early Learning Council, focused on pre-

paring the area's youth for preschool and kindergarten, has coordinated with other county agencies on workshops, training, health screenings and other events.

While the county has not yet seen a significant change in student scores on the kindergarten readiness exam, Gaffney said, there is a closer link between families and educators that will eventually pay dividends.

"We're finding there is a whole lot more awareness of the need to start education younger to be ready for kindergarten," he said.

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