

# Changes: Dollar General would employ six to 10 people

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Main Avenue in Warrenton, which he said is struggling. In the past several years, Warrenton has added both an O'Reilly Auto Parts and an AutoZone fronting U.S. Highway 101 at the retail center.

## Dollar General

The Astoria Design Review Committee will hold a public hearing in August on a proposal by Cross Development to build a 9,100-square-foot Dollar General with 29 parking spots at Commercial Street and Marine Drive.

Laura Somerville, a spokeswoman for Dollar General, said the national retailer is in a due-dili-

gence phase with Heestand Family LLC. The company owns the property leased to NAPA, along with two lots to the west where the store is proposed.

"We are reviewing the opportunity to add a new store in the area, but we have not committed to doing so just yet," Somerville wrote in an email. "Based on our current timeline, we anticipate to have a final decision on this location by late spring 2018."

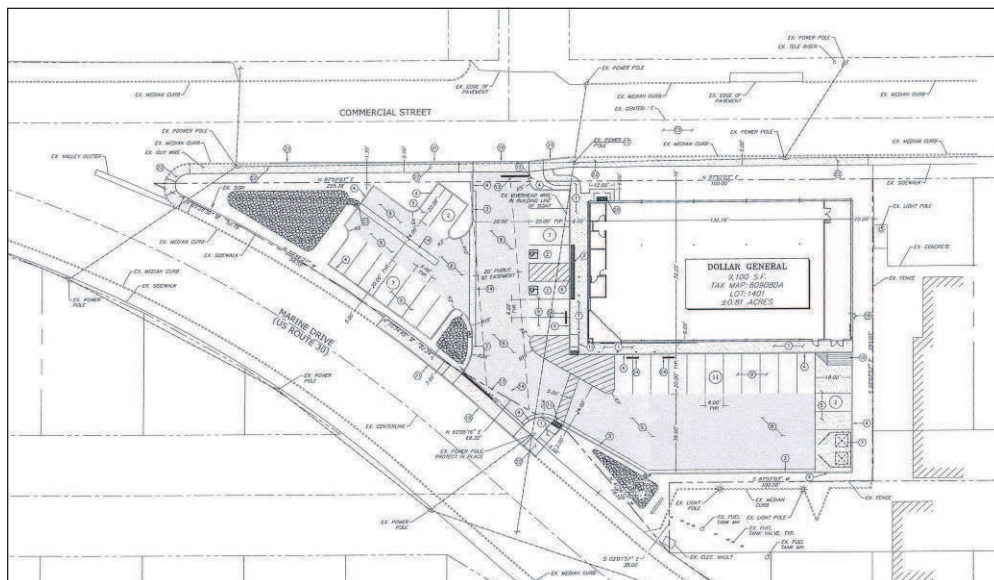
Somerville said the new store would employ six to 10 people. Dollar General has more than 13,000 locations nationwide, including about 10 in Oregon.

The property where the

store would be located is within the Gateway and Civic Greenway overlay zones, requiring design review by the city. The land is zoned local service development, which City Planner Nancy Ferber said includes retail stores like Dollar General as outright permitted uses.

At the corner of the proposed store site is TP Freight Lines. Justin Henry, an operations manager with TP Freight Lines, said the company hasn't heard much from the Heestand family.

"We know that the property is up for sale, and we've started looking at other options in the Astoria-Warrenton area for a freight dock," he said.



City of Astoria

Dollar General is planning a 9,100-square-foot store with 29 parking spots at the site of TP Freight Lines in Astoria's Mill Pond neighborhood.

# Salmon: Research funded by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

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and steelhead are navigating a river system loaded with dams.

The federal plan to help them has been challenged and rejected in court five times in more than 20 years. In that plan, the agencies told the court that restoring marshes in the estuary will help save threatened and endangered fish. The court's response has been along the lines of: Oh yeah? Prove it.

That's where Weitkamp comes in, with an elaborate research project funded by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

## Hormones and stable isotopes

After measuring and labeling the fish, Weitkamp hands them to Meredith Journey, who uses a syringe to take a blood sample.

She'll test the blood for a growth hormone released by the liver that will tell them whether the fish has recently been eating.

From there, the fish go to Angie Munguia who clips their fins for genetic testing and puts them in a cooler.

"We try to put them on ice as soon as possible to try to stop the digestive process in the stomach," she said. "The more it digests, the harder it is to ID prey in the stomach."

Later, the fish will get sliced up and analyzed at what Munguia calls "cutting parties."

Looking inside the stomach will tell Munguia what bugs the fish have been eating, but her work doesn't stop



Cassandra Profita/Oregon Public Broadcasting

Research fisheries biologist Laurie Weitkamp with National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration collects juvenile salmon from the Columbia River.

there. With further analysis, she can also tell what plants those bugs were eating before they became fish food.

Together, Weitkamp says, these tests help build the government's case that restored marshes are feeding fish and helping them survive.

"Generally, the bigger you are, the fewer predators can eat you," she said. "So big fish generally have higher survival when there are (more) predators around than really small fish."

While Weitkamp is catching salmon and looking in their stomachs, other researchers are studying the bugs coming out of restored marshes. Their goal is to connect the dots between bugs in the marsh and bugs in the fish.

"Then we can kind of put it together, but it's tough," Weitkamp said.

## More certainty

The question of just how much habitat restoration improves salmon survival has become more and more pressing as judges have repeatedly rejected the federal plan for protecting salmon from dams.

In his ruling last year, U.S. District Court Judge Michael Simon called the uncertainty of habitat restoration a "significant deficiency" in the government's plan. He said the agencies should look at other options, like spilling more

water over dams or removing some dams altogether.

Michael Tehan, assistant regional administrator with NOAA Fisheries, said it's clear the judge wants more certainty about how much benefit the salmon can get from habitat restoration. What's not clear is whether the agencies can deliver.

"Through all these court rulings, the judge has been asking the question: We want to know exactly how much," he said. "The science just doesn't allow you to pin it down with that kind of certainty."

That raises questions about whether the agencies need more science or a different



Cassandra Profita/Oregon Public Broadcasting

A blood sample allows researchers to test for a growth hormone released by the liver after a fish eats.

strategy for helping salmon.

"There are some folks who are questioning: Why are you continuing to pursue habitat projects if you're not getting credit from the courts?" Tehan said.

## Will the science satisfy the court?

Mike Langsley, a fish biologist with the Corps of Engineers, says the agencies have made significant improvements in salmon survival through the dams themselves. Fish passage is up to 98 percent in some places.

That leaves them looking at where else they help salmon survive. Breaching dikes and opening up floodplains seems like it should help.

"Because we know historically that's how it looked," he said. "You've got a place salmon can't access. You open it up so they can access it. So how do you figure out whether that's good or bad?"

He said science can show

the fish are using the habitat and eating the bugs it produces, but that might not be enough to prove more salmon are surviving to adulthood as a result.

"They feed. They grow. Just being in there maybe is good," he said, "but it's a very difficult thing to say that's going to increase smolt-to-adult return rates by some percentage."

## Job security

Weitkamp says there's still a lot we don't know about how to help salmon survive.

"I mean, each salmon species makes its life slightly differently, and it's really fascinating to try to uncover: What is their strategy? What are they thinking?" she said.

For her, the need to save imperiled fish from dams in the face of a seemingly never-ending lawsuit means she'll always have more questions to answer and more work to do.

In other words, she said, "job security."

# Seafood: Company promised to rebuild in Warrenton

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rebuild in Warrenton.

With such a major city water customer out of the picture, Warrenton residents have seen water rates go up, Commissioner Paul Mitchell said. The return of the company should help, he said, adding, "So God bless 'em."

Warrenton City Commissioner Mark Baldwin has said he hopes the city will reconsider water rates following Pacific Seafood's return.

## Fort George

The Planning Commission also approved, with conditions, a site design for the newest venture by the owners of Fort George Brewery, a 46,000-square-foot storage and distribution campus on land near Costco and across the street from Astoria Ford's new location. The new facility will also include a tasting room, an area for food carts and a disc golf course.

Fort George had based distribution and orders out of another Warrenton property but has outgrown that facility, said co-owner Chris Nemo-will. The new facility, while filling the growing company's needs, would also provide a community space, he added. He said he hopes to see people walking their dogs through the campus and enjoying the disc golf course free of charge.

Thursday's approval comes with 17 conditions. The only



Alex Pajunas/The Daily Astorian

A fire destroyed the Pacific Coast Seafood plant in Warrenton in 2013.

one the company contested was the condition that requires them to build a sidewalk or some sort of paved path along 19th Street, a county-owned road that wraps around one corner of the property.

Jesse Graden of Scott Edwards Architecture said this could be very expensive for Fort George. The road is adjacent to wetlands, said Warrenton City Engineer Collin Stelzig.

"It's difficult, there's no question about it," he told the Planning Commission after they asked for his input. The company could easily spend

thousands of dollars on wetland mitigation alone. He said the company already plans to construct a path through the campus which would serve the same purpose as a sidewalk on 19th to get pedestrians off the side of the road.

The commissioners, though sympathetic, said they had to consider possible risks to pedestrians. That area is already frequently used by volunteer dog-walkers at the Clatsop County Animal Shelter and others. With various apartments and subdivisions planned for the area, foot traffic and vehicle traffic will

likely continue to increase, they said.

Warrenton Planning Director Skip Uring agreed, but he said the city code doesn't require a full sidewalk with curbs and drainage. A paved path would suffice.

The Planning Commission approved Fort George's application, with all conditions remaining in place.

## New apartments

In April, the City Commission voted to allow multi-family housing in commercial zones. On Thursday, the Planning Commission approved the first application since that amendment was passed.

Developer Antoine Simmons plans to build the 37-unit Skipanon River Apartments on First Street and Skipanon Drive near the Bayview Apartments. The two-bedroom apartments will include one bathroom, a washer and dryer and will likely rent close to market rate, between \$1,000 to \$1,100 a month, Simmons said.

Planning Commissioner Mitchell said he wished a children's playground had been included in the design, but Simmons said there wasn't enough space. Commissioner Ken Yuill worried that parking could become a problem, especially when residents have guests over. Simmons' application follows city planning code, providing 1.75 parking places per unit, Uring said.

# Locks of love: 'I'm so grateful I had any power to help these people'

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a GoFundMe account, "Malama Love for Daxton," with a goal to raise \$5,000. Between the account and donations received at her spa, Irie said she has raised \$3,300.

"I heard the story and I couldn't not do something," she said.

As friends took pictures and videos of Irie's locks being shaved, the salon on Marine Drive was filled with emotions. Tears streamed down many of their faces as the last of her hair was cut off.

"It's really emotional," said Kim Supple, a client at Malama Day Spa and a friend of Irie. "I don't know how I'd feel doing what she's doing."

Irie said shaving her head was an opportunity to help someone and make a change in her life. "My head shave was part of my own self-love journey," she said.

Irie said she does not plan on growing her hair back long any time soon. "My goal is to rebrand myself, reinvent myself."

Her co-worker, Dani Stevens, helped with the shave. "It's just so cool to be around so much love in such a heavy

time for the family," Stevens said. "It's just a brave thing to do. She's challenging her inner beauty."

Kallie Linder, the owner of Salon Boheme, who was in charge of the shaving, is active in the community and is known to give free wig fittings to cancer patients. "I think it's important that when you're a part of a community you give back to the community that gives to you," she said.

Olson and his parents, Bruce and Ashley Olson, could not attend Thursday night because he had an appointment at Oregon Health & Science University.

Irie will continue to accept donations for the boy at her spa. Olson can also be supported at [gofundme.com/olson-family-love](https://www.gofundme.com/olson-family-love). Another fundraising campaign — Dimes for Daxton at <https://www.youcaring.com/ashleyandbruceolson-769929> — was set up by Jon Rahl, Seaside's public information officer. The Olson family has close ties to Seaside Fire and Rescue, which held a spaghetti feed dinner and fundraiser in April.

"I'm so grateful I had any power to help these people," Irie said. "They have been so gracious about everything."