

## Astoria eyes new code for homeless shelters

Warming center worried about future

By **KATIE FRANKOWICZ**  
*The Daily Astorian*

Dozens of people had something to say last summer about whether the Astoria Warming Center should continue to provide emergency shelter on cold nights to homeless people, but the city's development code was silent.

The Astoria Planning Commission hopes to change that.

At a work session Tuesday night, commissioners discussed a possible code amendment that would create a conditional-use designation for emergency homeless shelters that house more than 10 people. The designation would be permanent unless the use at the location changes.

The warming center, which serves an average of 25 people on the nights it is open, operates on a temporary use permit that must be applied for each year. Approval is not guaranteed and it is difficult to plan for the future at one location or pursue outside funding, board members have said.

"The goal of this was to update our development code to provide some guidance on emergency warming shelters in our city," said Planning Commissioner Daryl Moore, who had drafted a possible code amendment, hoping to provide a basis for discussion.

The goal is not to make it harder to open shelters or pile on regulations, he added. "This would actually reduce the amount of regulation," he said.

Moore's draft combined language other cities have used as well as some procedures and approaches the warming center has adopted.

His draft did not allow shelters in high-density residential zones, where many churches are located and where the warming center is located now, in the basement of the First United Methodist Church on Franklin Avenue.

Moore said he wanted to incorporate concerns that came up during discussions last summer from people who said a neighborhood was the wrong place for the shelter. But Commissioners Jennifer Cameron-Lattek and Brookley Henri, in particular, urged Moore and city staff to consider including high-density residential zones in the draft code amendment.

Cameron-Lattek said the concerns Moore referenced come from "a particular R-3," the city's designation for the zones. Organizations most likely to provide space to a shelter — churches — are located in high-density residential zones, she said. Including the R-3 zone in the list as commissioners continue to look at amending the code could generate more of a communitywide discussion about where warming centers could and should be located, she added.

Dan Parkison, president of the Astoria Warming Center board, was not present at the Tuesday night meeting, but told *The Daily Astorian* that under the temporary use permit, "not only is our location not guaranteed, our very existence is not guaranteed."

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## Decision nears on Port oil contamination cleanup



EnviroLogic Resources Inc.

Much of the former oil company infrastructure has been excavated from the Port of Astoria's central waterfront, including parts of a former plant operated by ExxonMobil and Ed Niemi Oil Co. at the site of a present-day commercial complex.



Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

An oil boom sits in the water near Pier 2 at the Port of Astoria.

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The Port of Astoria's central waterfront used to be populated with bulk fuel plants, seen on the left in this photo. An oil sheen in the Columbia River in the 1990s initiated a multimillion-dollar cleanup effort nearing a final solution.

Clatsop County Historical Society



## Natural Grocers opens its doors in Warrenton



Edward Stratton/The Daily Astorian

Natural Grocers in Warrenton held a soft opening Tuesday and opens full time today.

The store is the chain's 10th in Oregon

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

WARRENTON — Natural Grocers, the region's newest grocery store, has opened at Youngs Bay Plaza.

The 13,000-square-foot natural and organic store employs about 20 people, including Store Manager Brian Marchello. Previously employed at Safeway, Marchello said he became

interested in retailers like Natural Grocers when his wife's medical needs required his family to take a closer look at their diet.

"We don't allow just any product to (be) put in here on the shelves," Marchello said of the retailer, which offers products such as organic produce, grass-fed beef and free-range eggs.

Along with groceries, Natural Grocers has a vast array of vitamins, supplements and body care products.

The store employs Michelle Larsen, a nutritional

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