



## J.C. PENNEY SPACE TO BECOME A MARKET

### Tap house, restaurants planned

By EDWARD STRATTON  
*The Daily Astorian*

Sean Fitzpatrick, the owner of Astoria's Illahee Apartments, and Chris Holen, the chef and co-owner at Baked Alaska, were playing poker one night, lamenting the loss of the J.C. Penney Co. store on Commercial Street last year, when they had an epiphany.

"I don't think anyone else had any idea what we were talking about, but it was like, 'OK, you know; let's do it,'" said Fitzpatrick, who recently purchased the building after four months of negotiations.

He and Holen are reimagining the 6,500-square-foot main floor of the department store as the Astoria Oregon Marketplace, a high-end indoor food court and tap house connecting the retail corridors along Commercial and Duane streets.

A drawback of opening a retail store or restaurant in Astoria is biting off too large a space, Holen said. He started Baked Alaska in a trailer, before moving to a small slot of a storefront on 14th Street and later opening a larger space on Pier 12.

Fitzpatrick and Holen have divided the main floor of the former J.C. Penney into several blocks, each approximately 15-by-15-feet, the size of the kitchen in an annex of Baked Alaska. The spaces will be built out into fully functional kitchens for three new restaurants to customize and quickly open.



Photos by Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

TOP: Plans for the former J.C. Penney in Astoria include restaurants. ABOVE: From left, Chris Holen, Sean Fitzpatrick and Shannon Fitzpatrick discuss the potential for the basement floor of the former J.C. Penney store in downtown Astoria.

The partners are also looking several other vendors, such as a sandwich shop, coffee stand or ice cream station, that require a kitchen.

"It's an opportunity to see if their business works," Holen said.

He envisions a diverse lineup of cuisines, different from surrounding restaurants, each with their own customized facade. Anchoring the restaurants will be a tap house Holen is planning with more than 50 beers, wines and ciders on draft, focusing on Astoria and Pacific Northwest producers.

In the middle of the court will be

communal seating at long tables. While restaurants will have control over what they offer, the market will try to be as close to zero-waste as possible, Holen said, with compostable silverware and glasses instead of bottles and cans.

Contractors brought in by Fitzpatrick are ripping out carpet and linoleum, revealing the fir floor beneath. They are taking out walls and uncovering windows on Commercial and Duane streets, turning J.C. Penney's former display cases into seating areas.

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**'WE WOULD LOVE TO HAVE SOMETHING KIND OF LIKE WHAT J.C. PENNEY DID, MAYBE MORE ALONG A BOUTIQUE LEVEL.'**

Sean Fitzpatrick | owner of Illahee Apartments

## Warrenton schools eye master campus sites

Three sites under review

By EDWARD STRATTON  
*The Daily Astorian*

WARRENTON — The Warrenton-Hammond School District has narrowed its possible master campuses to three sites southeast of U.S. Highway 101.

Superintendent Mark Jeffery has been looking for a site between 50 and 70 acres outside the tsunami inundation zone to eventually place all the school district's campuses.

The first step was to overlay the city and school district boundaries with the tsunami inundation zone. "It knocks out probably 90 percent of the land inside city limits," he said.

The first potential site would be at the northeast corner of Ensign Lane and 19th Street in Clatsop County's North Coast Business Park on industrial-zoned land. There are multiple areas in the business park that could accommodate the campus, Jeffery said.

The second site is on Warrenton Fiber-owned land zoned agricultural forest along U.S. Highway 101 Business near Trails End Recovery, in an area known as Airport Hill.

The third site, a mix of high-density residential and industrial land also owned by Warrenton Fiber, is near Dolphin Avenue, south of Walmart and Astoria Ford.

Each of the properties present challenges and will likely require mitigation of wetland impacts, Jeffery said. The school district is performing due diligence on the properties, looking for any fatal flaws for development, and will likely decide by this month or next month.

The Warrenton-Hammond School Board recently decided to float a \$32.4 million bond in November to buy a master campus and build a middle school to relieve overcrowding at Warrenton Grade School, a K-8 campus serving more than 700 students. A facilities committee recommended a 2022 bond to move the high school, and a 2032 bond to move the elementary school.

The city has experienced rapid growth in recent years as one of the region's foremost affordable housing markets. As a result, the school district has grown as well, recently becoming the third largest in the county with more than 1,000 students, after Astoria and Seaside.

The Warrenton bond will likely join a \$70 million bond being considered by the Astoria School Board to rebuild and modernize the classroom wing of Astoria Middle School, while improving overall district security. Clatsop County will ask voters to pay for a \$23.8 million remodel of the former North Coast Youth Correctional Facility in Warrenton into a new county jail.



The Daily Astorian

The Warrenton-Hammond School District is considering several possible sites for a master campus, including property owned by Warrenton Fiber near Dolphin Ave.

## After snub, tall ships set sail toward Astoria

### Permit revoked after complaints in Newport

By KATIE FRANKOWICZ  
*The Daily Astorian*

Tall ships plan to split time between Astoria and Coos Bay in July after they were unable to find moorage at the Port of Newport.

Port commissioners in Newport revoked a permit for the Lady Washington and the Hawaiian Chieftain to use a dock in the city's busy historic

bayfront at the end of July. Fishermen and businesses said the vessels' presence during the height of the summer tourism season would hurt their business and create a parking nightmare.

Grays Harbor Historical Seaport, the Aberdeen, Washington-based nonprofit behind the tall ships, now has moorage plans with Astoria for the 17th Street Dock and with the Port of Astoria for a spot in the East Mooring Basin.

Both vessels are regular visitors to the area. Fort George Brewery hosted a benefit night for Grays Harbor

Historical Seaport in late May — the same night port commissioners in Newport decided to revoke the ships' permit.

An agreement with the Port of Newport had provided the ships with moorage in April and included dates in July. But bayfront merchants and fishermen were concerned about parking and the extra crowds that come with a visit from the tall ships. They submitted a petition, calling for commissioners to revoke the permit.

Newport's bayfront is a popular tourist destination and



The Lady Washington, right, and the Hawaiian Chieftain will be in Astoria in July.

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