



Photos by Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

Cannon Beach had hoped to develop the South Wind property into an elementary school. The city is now considering a new City Hall and police station on the site.

Cannon Beach gets a reality check on South Wind

A high cost for development

By BRENNA VISSER
The Daily Astorian

CANNON BEACH — Geotechnical findings are raising new questions about developing South Wind, a 55-acre, city-owned property which for years has been considered the long-term solution to moving critical services out of tsunami danger.

SRG, a Portland-based architecture firm, submitted a report to the City Council last week detailing the benefits, downsides and costs of building a new City Hall and police station.

Across the board, the project is estimated to be more expensive than the city anticipated, ranging from \$14.5 million to almost \$28 million, depending on the location.

A one-story building along Hemlock Street would cost about \$14.5 million and would not be tsunami resistant. A two-story building south and to the east of the existing City Hall on Gower Street would be resistant to a medium-size tsunami and cost about \$16 million.

At South Wind, however, the estimates jump to between \$27.2 million and \$27.7 million, depending on whether the city chooses to build out utilities for the benefit of future projects. The high price tag is largely because of the significant work engineers believe will need to be done to offset landslide risks.

The full geotechnical analysis is still underway and won't be completed



A new report is raising questions about the feasibility of developing the South Wind property in Cannon Beach.

until January, but preliminary findings suggest that addressing landslide risks could be more complicated and expensive than previously understood, adding “the potential of tens of millions of dollars” on top of the \$27 million estimate, said Lisa Patterson, an SRG architect.

“It’s bad. We have to mitigate through it,” Patterson said.

The report is shedding new light on the financial and logistical realities of South Wind.

“I’m struggling with why we would still contemplate South Wind after seeing those kinds of numbers and hearing these kinds of risks, even though it gets us out of the extra-large tsunami range,” City Councilor Mike Benefield said. “Are you willing to spend

\$15 million more for an area that may be out of the tsunami range but may slide down the hill in the end? The geology there seems much worse than I ever envisioned.”

An emergency building

Conversations about replacing City Hall resurfaced earlier this year at the urging of City Manager Bruce St. Denis, who had concerns about how the existing building would fare in a tsunami or earthquake.

“It was never meant to be an emergency building,” St. Denis said.

The idea is for the city to have a more suitable emergency operations center, with the majority of the

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Santa delivers the goods at Armory

A reward for volunteers

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

Skaters at the Astoria Armory got a surprise Friday from Santa, who passed out hundreds of locally donated toys and beanies.

Robyn Koustik, the manager of the Friends of the Astoria Armory, said she tries to organize Christmas events each year for the children who attend Friday and Saturday skate nights. The Friends recently received a donation of about 400 toys from Dollar Tree by way of the Astoria Elks Lodge. Sara Moritz-Crowell, a friend of Armory volunteers, added 40 beanies.

“I really enjoy helping out the community and just thought it was a good thing to do,” Moritz-Crowell said. “I actually just started up my own knit business. Just trying to get my name out there a little bit.”

‘THE PEOPLE ARE SO NICE. THEY WATCH OUT FOR YOU.’

Aubrie Haskell |
youth volunteer at the Armory

The beanies went to the youth volunteers at the Armory who keep watch and promote good behavior during skate nights. Aubrie Haskell has been volunteering over the past month. Along with her beanie, she walked away Friday with a stuffed bear and a jump rope she plans to give to her sisters.

“It’s just so nice,” she said of the Armory. “The people are so nice. They watch out for you.”

Haskell is one of nearly 80 volunteers between 5 and 15 years old at the Armory, at least half of whom Koustik estimates are low-income.

“For them, I think it’s a cool status, with the lanyard and the made-up names,” Koustik said.

Koustik runs anti-bullying, youth volunteering, roller derby and other community service programs aimed at promoting good behavior. Her focus is catching kids before high school to steer them away from bad choices, she said.



Edward Stratton/The Daily Astorian

Aubrie Haskell, right, was surprised Friday at the Astoria Armory with a stuffed bear and a jump rope from Santa, played by Jeff Daly, and his helper, Dan Stein.

Warrenton man to compete in skateboard challenge

McClelland will try to skate 200 miles

By JACK HEFFERNAN
The Daily Astorian

WARRENTON — When Randy McClelland was given a skateboard as a birthday gift at 3, he couldn’t have known that it would prepare him for a unique — and exhausting — hobby.

McClelland, 47, of Warrenton, was forced to quit long-distance running in 2015 because of a lung condition. Instead, he picked up a skateboard.

For the third year, McClelland

EVERYDAY
people

land will combine his passion for endurance and skating in a grueling challenge. In January, he will ride in the 24-Hour Ultraskate at a race-track in Miami, where he will attempt to skate 200 miles.

“When I go down there, I believe it’s an opportunity to recycle my own energy,” he said.

Dozens of people, with various skill sets, typically ride in the event, which will

start on a Friday at 8 a.m. Competitors will race on the Homestead-Miami Speedway, a NASCAR track.

In his first year competing in the challenge, McClelland skated 120 miles and was forced to stop near the 14-hour mark due to a hair-line fracture in his foot. Last year, he skated 160 miles in 20 hours.

Event organizers recognize personal-record plateaus, including the 200-mile mark.

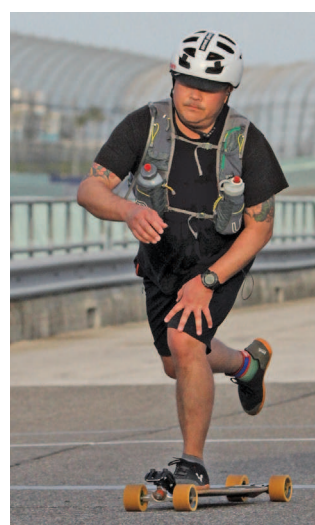
“That’s turned out to be a big deal to me,” McClelland said.

McClelland, director of strategic initiatives at

Columbia Memorial Hospital in Astoria, has also used the event to raise funds for local causes. Last year, he raised \$5,000 for the hospital’s Friendship Fund, which helps caregivers after crises such as house fires, critical illnesses, deaths in the family and other traumatic events.

This year, McClelland will support the Assistance League of the Columbia Pacific, which promotes child wellness and self-esteem.

“There’s nothing formal about it, you know. I’m just asking people I know if they



Jack Harris Photography

Randy McClelland participates in 24-hour Ultraskate events.

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