

ICE faces new limits at courthouses

Agents must have a judicial warrant

By NICOLE BALES
The Astorian

A new rule in Oregon prohibits U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement from detaining people at state courthouses without a judicial arrest warrant.

The rule also protects people going to or from court proceedings from being stopped in nearby entryways, sidewalks and parking lots.

Oregon Supreme Court Chief Justice Martha Walters enacted the rule Thursday following concerns about ICE agents detaining people at courthouses through administrative warrants. Oregon is the third state, after New Jersey and New

York, to prohibit ICE detentions in and around courthouses without a judicial warrant.

“Arrests in courthouses have interfered with judicial proceedings and removed criminal defendants before they have been sentenced or completed their sentences,” Walters said in a statement. “We are adopting this rule to maintain the integrity of our courts and provide access to justice —

not to advance or oppose any political or policy agenda.”

After Ruben Vera Perez was detained by ICE agents outside the Clatsop County Courthouse last December, Judge Paula Brownhill, the presiding judge of the Circuit Court, said ICE enforcement actions at courthouses could deter criminal defendants, crime victims and witnesses from coming to court.

Fabian Alberto Zamora-Rodriguez was detained inside the Clatsop County Courthouse in July following a hearing on felony charges. ICE agents used what appeared to be pepper spray against Zamora-Rodriguez’s mother, partner and immigrant rights advocates while they tried to escort him away.

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Phillips appointed interim county sheriff

He intends to run in May election

By NICOLE BALES
The Astorian

Clatsop County commissioners voted unanimously Wednesday to appoint Lt. Matt Phillips interim sheriff.

Phillips will also run in the May election to replace Sheriff Tom Bergin, who is retiring effective Jan. 3. Phillips is the only candidate to file so far.

“I recognize the trust and the faith you’re placing in me to be the sheriff because the office of sheriff is a weighty responsibility and one that can have a significant impact on the community,” Phillips told commissioners. “It is my pledge that I will work hard to make sure that our sheriff’s office is one that everyone can be proud of.” Sarah Nebeker, the commission’s chairwoman, said, “And we know that you know what needs to be done because you have so much experience. And we also know you have your work cut out for you, but we believe you will meet the challenges.”

Phillips’ family, friends and colleagues came to the meeting in support.

During the public comment period, former Sheriff John Raichl and Port of Astoria Commissioner Frank Spence endorsed Phillips. They both praised his leadership in the new county jail project

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Connecting Astoria to its past



Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian
Liisa Penner points to different buildings on a historical map of downtown Astoria at the Clatsop County Historical Society.

Penner celebrated at research center and archives dedication

By JONATHAN WILLIAMS
The Astorian

Liisa Penner was working at the Flavel House Museum as a volunteer and was ready to quit. She was cold, but didn’t want to be the one to turn on the heater and potentially burn the house down.

Her boss convinced her to stay.

She moved over to the Clatsop County Historical Society and has worked there as the archivist and editor of Cumtux magazine ever since.

For over 34 years, she has helped thousands of researchers with their questions through archives full of city directories, maps, crematory and cemetery records, police logs and other historical materials.

McAndrew Burns, the historical society’s executive director, said it’s one thing for a researcher just to come in and look at a city directory, “but it’s that interaction with Liisa Penner that she gets involved in that person’s research. She helps everybody from a school kid to the visiting Ph.D. professor.”

The historical society will honor Penner’s work from 2 to 4 p.m. Saturday with an open house for the unveiling of the Liisa

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Pacific Seafood dorms recommended for approval

A bunkhouse for 70 workers

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Astorian

WARRENTON — The Planning Commission has unanimously recommended approval of a conditional use permit for a 70-bed dormitory near Hammond for Pacific Seafood workers.

The seafood processor has been planning a dormitory in 6,000 square feet of vacant space next to a machine shop it operates along state Highway 104. The company argued the dorms are necessary to avoid bussing in so many seasonal employees from afar amid a tight housing market.

The project has rankled neighbors to the south and to the east, who argue the space is inadequate to house so many workers and worry about the impact the project will have on their neigh-

borhood and property values.

Commissioners also didn’t like the location, but argued during deliberation on Thursday that there was no arguing against its merits or that it doesn’t meet the city’s codes.

Kevin Cronin, the city’s community development director, strongly recommended approval of the project, arguing the company has gone above and beyond to meet the city’s requirements. He included a condition of approval that the company start with 70 beds as a first-year trial run. The company had wanted 90 beds.

Paul Mitchell, the chairman of the Planning Commission, said that while he doesn’t agree with the location, Pacific Seafood is trying to be transparent and do something worthwhile to house employees.

“I have concerns about whether or not the living conditions” are adequate, Mitchell said. “But that really isn’t for us to make a decision on. It fits the criteria of what has been approved.”

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Spur 104 master plan rejected

City Commission will now decide

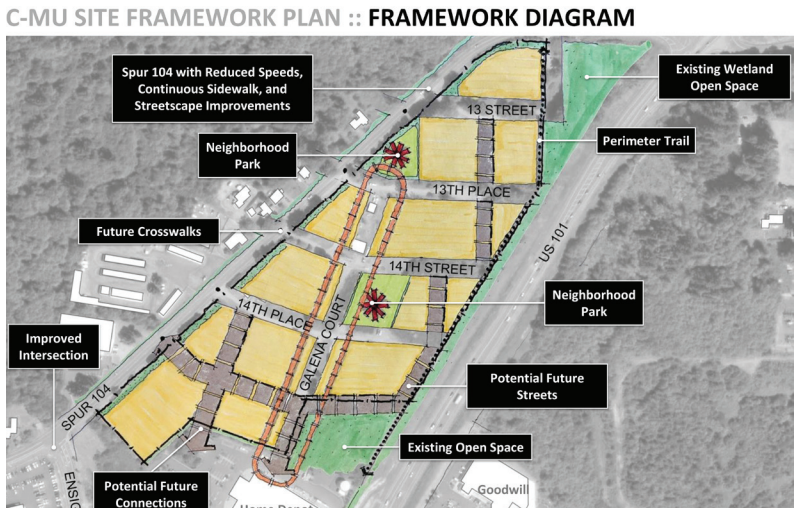
By EDWARD STRATTON
The Astorian

WARRENTON — The Planning Commission rejected an overlay zone for a mix of residential and commercial development along state Highway 104.

The City Commission recently approved a denser blend of commercial and residential development in the wedge of land known as the Spur 104 neighborhood. The area is bounded by the state highway spur and U.S. Highway 101 between Ocean Crest Chevrolet and Home Depot.

Split between 19 property owners, it is seen as a prime area for development out of the tsunami inundation zone and near amenities.

Worried about the effects development there could have on surrounding traffic, the City Commission later required a master plan. Kevin Cronin, the city’s community development director, presented a proposal for an overlay zone envisioning a mix of commercial property, varying densities of housing, public spaces, trails



A conceptual master plan for a neighborhood along state Highway 104 envisions a mix of commercial property, varying densities of housing, public spaces, trails and improved streets.

and improved streets. He proposed prescriptive caps on the number of homes and square footage of commercial space.

During deliberation Thursday, planning commissioners said they understood the merits of an overlay zone, but called it inappropriate for the neighborhood and too restrictive on property rights. Planning Commissioner Christine Bridgens said the commercial mixed-use zone already provides the flexibility of the overlay zone, while being

less restrictive.

“I can see this overlay if there was a clean swath of land, but ... to get that level of commitment out of all those property owners would be really tough,” Commissioner Ryan Lampi said.

Planning Commissioner Ken Yuill, who owns much of the property in the Spur 104 area, recused himself from the otherwise unanimous vote Thursday. But before

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