'A BENCH IN THE SUN' AT COASTER THEATRE »INSIDE

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City moves to uphold Grocery Outlet denial

Pedestrian safety concerns

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Astorian

The Astoria City Council has tentatively moved toward upholding the denial of a proposed Grocery Outlet over concerns about pedestrian orientation and the building's fit within the Gateway Overlay Zone.

Main & Main Capital Group hopes to build a 16,000-square-foot store on a triangular lot where Commercial Street runs into Marine Drive. The building would face west toward a parking lot on the curve of Marine Drive, its back to 23rd Street and the Astoria Co+op's new store in the Mill Pond neighborhood.

The company also began work last fall on a new 18,000-square-foot Grocery Outlet in Seaside after resolving concerns about a turn lane off busy U.S. Highway 101.

Michael Robinson, a lawyer representing Main & Main, declined to comment after the meeting Monday night about whether the company would appeal Astoria's decision. Representatives from Main & Main could not immediately be reached for comment.

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State ready to partner with Port

Conditional approval of strategic plan

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Astorian

The Port of Astoria has the state's conditional approval of a new strategic plan needed to pay for more than $20 million in estimated deferred maintenance on sinking docks, and a promise to help plot out the fixes.

The Port Commission in October approved an update of its 2010 strategic business plan that prioritizes getting the agency on stable footing financially and with the public and state partners. An approved plan is needed before Business Oregon, which has already loaned the Port nearly $20 million since 2001 and provided several large infrastructure grants, will extend any more financing.

The financial need has become all the greater with the drying up of log exports, once the Port's largest money generator, amid a protracted trade war between the U.S. and China.

Stephanie Prybyl, the new ports manager for Business Oregon, on Tuesday commended the Port's progress, from approving a strategic plan and convening a finance committee to critique the agency's policies to signing numerous smaller, unique leases in an effort to make money wherever it can.

Business Oregon is ready to conditionally accept the business plan and pay for a capital facilities plan that will prioritize repairs at the Port, she said.

"We want to work with you as you take a hard look at the Port and forge a path forward that compliments the vision you outlined in your strategic plan," Prybyl said.

After the development of a capital facilities plan, the Port and state will sign an intergovernmental agreement to codify the partnership moving forward, she said.

Port Commission President Dirk Rohne called the partnership a practical road map.

The Port has no shortage of problems to fix. The causeway at the East Mooring Basin has been shut down because of a rotting substructure and will require millions to replace. The Port spends more than any

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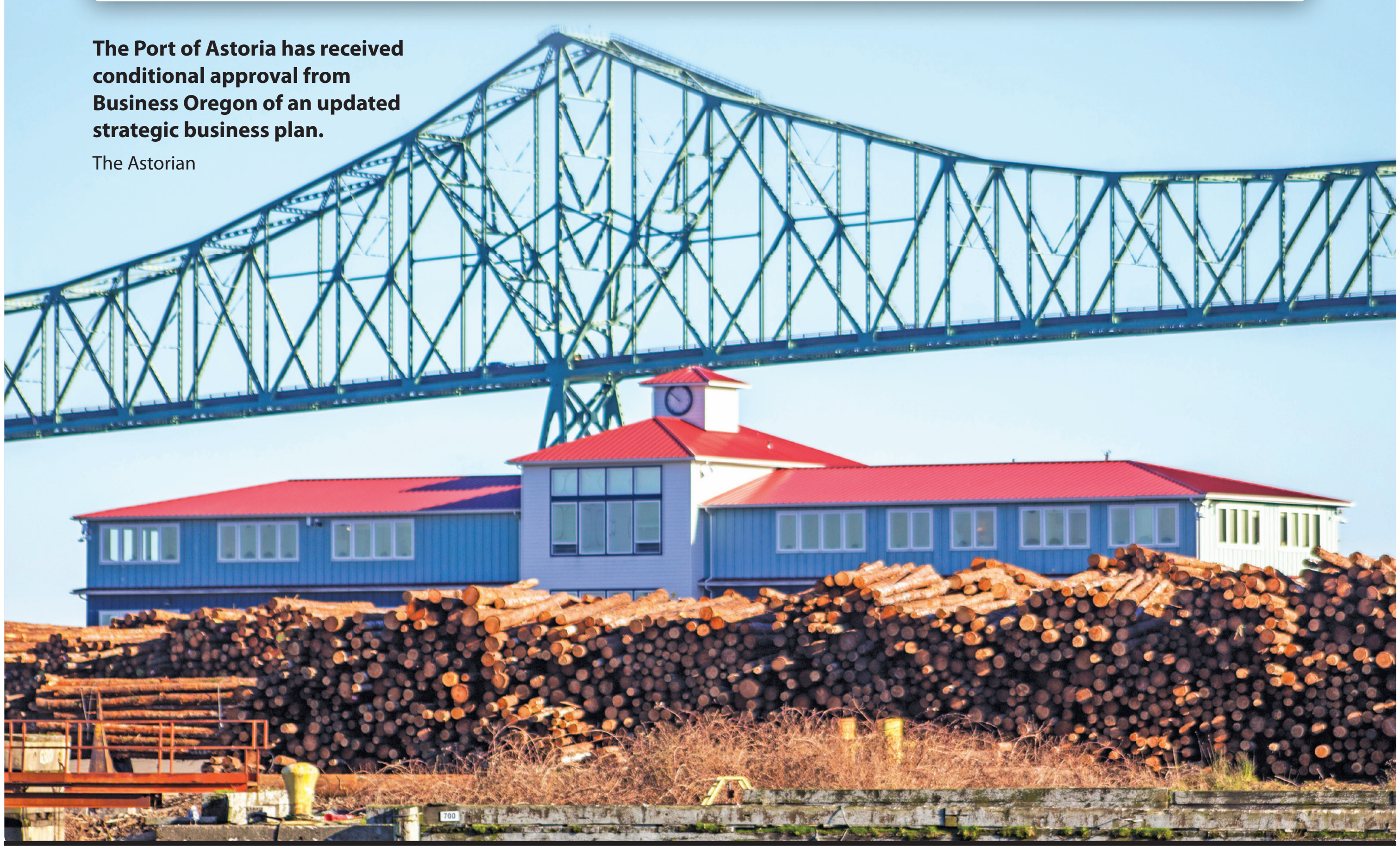
Edward Stratton/The Astorian

The Port of Astoria needs millions to replace the causeway at the East Mooring Basin, where a rotting substructure has closed the road to pedestrians and vehicles. The Port has a plan to repair the pier enough for foot traffic.



The Port of Astoria has received conditional approval from Business Oregon of an updated strategic business plan.

The Astorian

Pacific Seafood housing project stays alive

Planning Commission was close to a denial

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Astorian

Pacific Seafood's housing proposal at Astoria Pointe narrowly avoided denial Tuesday, even after the company lowered the number of workers it hopes to house in the former drug treatment center from 125 to 80.

The company argues the housing is necessary to help fully staff its Warrenton plant, reopened in 2018 five years after being destroyed by fire. The plant is running with 100 workers but can go up to 300. The company buses many workers in to sustain the workforce.

Many of the workers who would live at Astoria Pointe would be international and on seven-month worker visas, said Michael Miliucci, an attorney and special projects manager for Pacific Seafood who has been securing housing along the Oregon and Washington state coasts. The company was recently approved for a 70-bed dorm in part of a metal fabrication shop it owns in Hammond, which Miliucci said would take a year to retrofit.

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A homeless camp cleanup wins support

Event set for Saturday

By R.J. MARX
The Astorian

SEASIDE — Jesse Anderson, a 37-year-old commercial fisherman, was walking his dog near the Tillamook Boat Launch on the Necanicum River south of Seaside in mid-January when he found used hypodermic needles littered amid piles of trash.

An illegal encampment was occupied by three people and a dog, filled with trash and more needles.

"I know it floods out there," Anderson said. "I know needles float and end up on your beaches. I just ain't gonna have it."

He called Seaside police to see what could be done. Officers told Anderson he could start removing garbage, though he couldn't legally remove occupied tents.

Police ticketed the squatters.

Meanwhile, Anderson collected 20 yards of trash, using bags he brought himself and Sharps containers provided by police to handle used needles.

Seeking awareness of the problem, he turned to social media, posting pictures of the encampments and the waste. Day after day in late January he picked up garbage, and while admittedly not tech savvy, conceived the Seaside Community Cleanup Facebook group.

On Jan. 29, he received assistance from city public works employee Jeremy Strimple, who worked with the department's director, Dale McDowell, to provide a backhoe and a dumpster.

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Seaside Community Cleanup

Jesse Anderson cleaning the riverbank during a recent storm.

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