

IN BRIEF

Cross Creek development receives approval in Seaside

SEASIDE — The 74-unit Cross Creek apartment complex received conditional approval from the city Planning Commission last week.

The property comprises about 4 1/2 acres and is located near the TLC Fibre Federal Credit Union building near Neawanna Creek. Neighboring businesses include Randall Lee's Flooring America, Ticor Title and Seaside Car & Boat Wash.

Lots would be sold to builders, with apartments anticipated to be leased at \$1,200 to \$1,400 a month. The facility will include nine six-unit buildings and five four-unit buildings.

Along with the city staff report's findings, the Planning Commission added conditions.

The examples of pedestrian safety measures that were provided by the applicant's traffic engineering firm must be incorporated into the access at N. Roosevelt Drive.

Commissioners asked for improved lighting at the north and south ends of the crosswalks, flashing crosswalk signs and reflective thermoplastic in pedestrian rights of way. A warning sign could be installed on a northbound turn lane of U.S. Highway 101.

In a separate condition, the owners are asked to approach nearby property owners to rename the private access road for fire department identification.

The road could be named Cross Creek Lane, Way or Drive, subject to the approval requirements of Clatsop County's surveyor and acceptance by the other owners. If this name is unacceptable, the alternative name must be approved by the Planning Commission at the time the final plan is reviewed.

Passenger injured after boat hits sandbar near Astoria Bridge

A recreational boat hit a sandbar and got stuck on the Columbia River near the Astoria Bridge at about 6 a.m. on Saturday.

The U.S. Coast Guard airlifted a passenger, who had suffered a neck injury, to receive medical care. When the tide rolled in, the boat got unstuck.

— The Astorian

DEATH

Aug. 5, 2021

KNAPP, Charles, 68, of Brownsmead, died in Astoria. Hughes-Ransom Mortuary is in charge of the arrangements.

MEMORIALS

Saturday, Aug. 14

BAERGEN, Daniel Scott — Celebration of life at 1 p.m., Kicking Back Ranch, 92531 Koppisch Road.

CARPER, Dana Edward — Celebration of life at 2 p.m., Shelter A, Coffenburg Lake, Fort Stevens State Park in Hammond.

McMACKEN, Larry

— Funeral at 10 a.m., Pilgrim Lutheran Christian Church, 5650 S.W. Hall Blvd. in Beaverton.

RINER, Louann Luce — Memorial at 1 p.m., Caldwell's Luce-Layton Mortuary, 1165 Franklin Ave., followed by a reception at 2 p.m. at Grace Community Baptist Church, 1195 Irving Ave.

ON THE RECORD

Theft

• Sharon Elizabeth Saunders, 60, of Chinook, Washington, was arrested on the evening of Aug. 3 at Walmart in Warrenton for theft in the second degree.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

TUESDAY

Clatsop County Planning Commission, 10 a.m., (electronic meeting).

Cannon Beach City Council, 6 p.m., City Hall, 163 E. Gower St.

Lewis & Clark Fire Department, 6 p.m., main fire station, 34571 U.S. Highway 101 Business.

Warrenton City Commission, 6 p.m., City Hall, 225 S. Main Ave.

Warrenton-Hammond School District Board, 6 p.m., Warrenton High School Library, 1700 S. Main Ave.

WEDNESDAY

Clatsop County Board of Commissioners, 6 p.m., (electronic meeting).

Astoria School District Board, 7 p.m., (electronic meeting).

THURSDAY

Gearhart Planning Commission, 6 p.m., (electronic meeting).

Warrenton Planning Commission, 6 p.m., City Hall, 225 S. Main Ave.

the Astorian

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R.J. Marx/The Astorian

Seaside Chamber of Commerce CEO Brian Owen takes a selfie on Saturday at a celebration marking the 100th anniversary of the Prom.

Limit on weekend construction draws backlash in Gearhart

New rule could take effect in November

By R.J. MARX
The Astorian

GEARHART — Residents want a day off from noise and construction. But contractors, builders and landscapers say seven days a week are needed to complete their jobs in a boom economy amid a labor shortage.

“Our neighborhood has been subject to ongoing construction for the past two years,” wrote Sheila Nolan, a resident. “Commercial construction is permitted 10 hours a day, every day. I am urging you to vote to limit commercial construction to Monday through Friday.”

The city presented two options to curb construction noise, considering work prohibitions on Saturdays or on Saturdays and Sundays. Ultimately, the City Council voted by a 3-2 margin Wednesday to direct staff to prepare an ordinance prohibiting work on Sundays.

If passed, the police will have primary enforcement responsibility, and may fine violators up to \$500. Each occurrence or violation may be punished separately.

“It’s too bad we have gotten to the point where we have to enforce work ethics that should be obvious,” residents Wilson and Jeanne Mark wrote in a letter to the City Council. “It’s too bad we cannot get all builders to do the right thing.”

The proposal spurred a backlash as contractors, landscapers and developers turned out in-person and online at the council meeting to register dismay at another constraint to an already vol-



Builder Jon Shelton speaks against a proposed ordinance to limit work hours in Gearhart.

atile work environment, with labor shortages, supply delays and unpredictable weather.

Sometimes contractors have no choice but to work on weekends, Andrew Silvis, of AMJ Insulation LLC, said. “A few weeks or month delay can drastically affect our schedule as well, so everything rolls downhill and slows down the entire project,” he said. “If you need your project done and we have to push you back a week, that’s going to hurt everyone you know.”

The building process has been disrupted like never before, contractor Wesley Houck said. “Supply chains are a mess, material shortages are almost in every trade and timelines are undeterminable at the moment. ... I’m just trying to put food on the table, like the rest of us.”

City code allows construction and landscape work seven days a week between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. Landscaping is permitted from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.

An update to the code, with limits to contractor hours, passed the City Council unanimously in 2014, but

fell short of limiting weekend work.

According to the proposed ordinance, in cases of non-emergencies, the city administrator may issue a five-day temporary permit. The permit may be revoked if complaints arise by working outside of the permit parameters.

“As a commercial contractor, we cannot tell you how these changes would dramatically affect our business,” Ben and Tami Olson, of Clean-Sweep Maintenance, wrote city councilors. “In the summertime, we ‘make hay when the sun shines.’ We work longer hours to keep up with demand. In wintertime, our hours are less as the daylight is less. By putting restrictions on hours or less working days, it would greatly harm our ability to service our customers.”

Developer Robert Morey, the co-owner of the former Gearhart Elementary School, said he was “strongly against a reduction of contractors in our area.”

“Our feeling is we should have hours six days a week, longer days than 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.,” Morey said. “The

noise is part of life. We need to make accommodations for our contractors.”

Arlene Cogen, a resident, said she was “completely against” limiting hours for construction workers. “Financially, this would cripple our community,” she said. “This makes completely no sense whatsoever.”

City Councilor Kerry Smith said the city has a mandate to protect the health and well-being of residents.

He rejected the Saturday and Sunday option, making a motion for work restrictions on Sundays only.

“We have a right and duty to our citizens,” Smith said. “Even if they’ve had their own home built in 28 days, seven days a week, today is a different time. People want peace and quiet at least once a week.”

City Councilor Brent Warren and Councilor Reita Fackerell voted with Smith on behalf of the ordinance.

City Councilor Dan Jesse and Mayor Paulina Cockrum voted in opposition.

With staff revisions and approval, the ordinance could go into effect Nov. 1.

Crime historian conducts dig for D.B. Cooper evidence

Associated Press

VANCOUVER, Wash. — Nearly 50 years after sky-jacker D.B. Cooper vanished out the back of a Boeing 727 into freezing Northwest rain — wearing a business suit, a parachute and a pack with \$200,000 in cash — a crime historian is conducting a dig on the banks of the Columbia River in search of evidence.

KOIN reported that Eric Ulis, a self-described expert on the infamous D.B. Cooper case, began a two-day dig in Vancouver on Friday. Ulis and four volunteers are searching for evidence about 10 to 15 yards away from where a boy found \$6,000 of Cooper’s ransom money in 1980.

Ulis said his theory is that Cooper buried the para-



Associated Press

The famous 1971 D.B. Cooper skyjacking remains unsolved.

chutes, an attache case and the money at the same time, but dug smaller holes instead of the large one.

The case of Cooper has become infamous, not only in the Pacific Northwest but also in the country. The FBI Seattle field office called the investigation one of the longest and most exhaustive in the agency’s history.

On Nov. 24, 1971, the night before Thanksgiving, a man described as being in his mid-40s with dark sun-

glasses and an olive complexion boarded a flight from Portland to Seattle-Tacoma International Airport. He bought his \$20 ticket under the name “Dan Cooper,” but an early wire-service report misidentified him as “D.B. Cooper,” and the name stuck.

Sitting in the rear of the plane, he handed a note to a flight attendant after take-off. “Miss, I have a bomb and would like you to sit by me,” it said.

The man demanded \$200,000 in cash plus four parachutes. He received them at Sea-Tac, where he released the 36 passengers and two of the flight attendants. The plane took off again at his direction, heading slowly to Reno, Nevada, at the low height of 10,000 feet. Somewhere, apparently

over southwestern Washington state, Cooper lowered the aircraft’s rear stairs and jumped.

He was never found. But a boy digging on a Columbia River beach in 1980 discovered three bundles of weathered \$20 bills — nearly \$6,000 in all. It was Cooper’s cash, according to the serial numbers.

Over the years, the FBI and amateur sleuths have examined innumerable theories about Cooper’s identity and fate, from accounts of unexplained wealth to purported discoveries of his parachute to potential matches of the agency’s composite sketch of the suspect.

In July 2016, the FBI announced it was no longer investigating the case.