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WATERFRONT PLAN COMES TOGETHER

Port, city share final outline

By **ETHAN MYERS**
The Astorian

The Port of Astoria and the city gave a clearer picture of their plans for development along the waterfront in Uniontown during a virtual public meeting on Tuesday evening.

In November, Walker Macy, the landscape architecture, urban design and planning firm hired to help develop the waterfront master plan, presented two scenarios for development between Pier 1 and the Astoria Bridge. After receiving feedback from the public and stakeholders, the consultant team returned on Tuesday to share their final outline.

“We’ve done a lot of work with the community, with the Port and with the city to get to this point. We have received all kinds of great feedback from people, which has helped hone the plan,” said Mike Zilis, a principal and a landscape architect for the firm. “This is a tremendous place in your city, in our state and in the country. Astoria is known internationally as an incredible connection to the ocean and the Columbia River.”

The plan features a number of opportunities for development.

The majority of Pier 1 would contain maritime industrial uses. The Port is in conversation with businesses interested in the site, Zilis said. Among the types of activities that could operate in the space include manufacturing or assembly of water-related products, seafood processing and shipping.

“The prime industrial development opportunity is out on the end of Pier 1, due to its size and water access,” said Calder Gillin, Walker Macy’s project



Lydia Ely/The Astorian

The West Mooring Basin is central to redevelopment plans.

WATERFRONT MASTER PLAN

Learn more and provide feedback on the waterfront master plan via the Port of Astoria’s website: bit.ly/3GGQ6fW

manager. “The smaller sites that are around the West Mooring Basin are really better suited to supportive uses that are public facing.”

New hotel

On the east side of Pier 1, the plan contains a tower overlooking the West Mooring Basin, a footbridge and space for transporting cruise ship passengers.

The Astoria Riverwalk Inn and Chinook Building are not part of the redevelopment plan. During the first public meeting in November, the consultant team said they will advise the Port to replace both buildings.

On the east side of the West Moor-

ing Basin, where the Riverwalk Inn partially sits, a new hotel is being proposed, which would contain 60 to 90 rooms. In order to do so, the hotel would likely be built higher than the city’s zoning codes allow. The city would need to amend city codes if the project moves forward.

Astoria Mayor Bruce Jones indicated he would support some flexibility.

Next to the hotel would be a market hall, featuring a fish market, local vendors and a space for events.

On the south side of the West Mooring Basin — where most of the Riverwalk Inn sits — the consultant team is recommending a boardwalk, a fishing village and a multiuse structure supporting the basin.

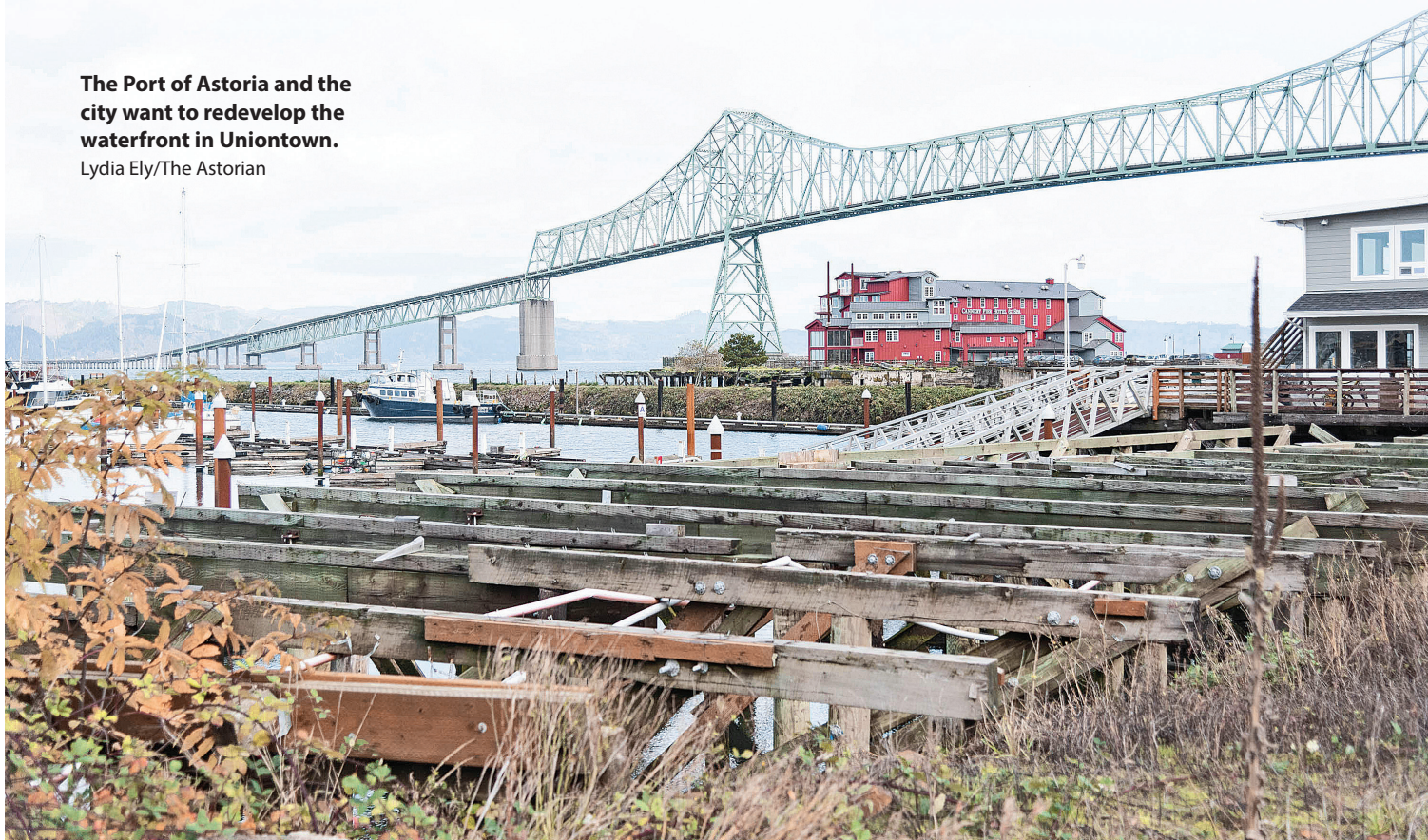
A key component, Gillin said, is to support the businesses and uses that already exist.

To aid in redevelopment, room for more parking and a new street has

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The Port of Astoria and the city want to redevelop the waterfront in Uniontown.

Lydia Ely/The Astorian



Legislators approve rent relief

State also takes steps to prevent evictions

By **PETER WONG**
Oregon Capital Bureau

SALEM — State lawmakers cleared the way in a scripted special session for \$100 million more in state rental assistance and \$100 million more for local efforts to prevent evictions.

During the one-day special session on Monday, lawmakers also approved \$25 million for enforcement against illegal cannabis-growing in southern Oregon and \$18 million for resettlement of up to 1,200 refugees who fled after the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan. They also released \$100 million already set aside for relief from the drought in outlying areas of Oregon.

Gov. Kate Brown called the special session, the year’s second, to approve more rental assistance and extend the grace period for evictions stemming from the coronavirus pandemic. But the final agenda came together just a few days beforehand, when Brown and legislative leaders from both parties agreed to include a few other items.

“There was no plan. No agreement. Success was not guaranteed. Your Legislature worked hard since that day,” state Senate President Peter Courtney, the veteran Salem Democrat, said.

“Oregonians can be proud of their legislators today, Democrat and Republican.

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Johnson leaving state Senate

Four-term senator to focus on her bid for governor

By **ERICK BENGEL**
The Astorian

State Sen. Betsy Johnson announced Tuesday that she will resign from the state Senate to focus on her independent campaign for governor.

The Scappoose Democrat said her resignation would be effective at 11:59 p.m. on Wednesday.

“Serving in the Senate has never been a part-time job for me but neither is running for governor. Northwest Oregon deserves a full-time senator and running for governor is a full-time job,” Johnson said in a statement.

Johnson represents state Senate District 16, which covers the North Coast.

Elected to the state House of Representatives in 2000, she served until 2005, when she was appointed to finish the Senate term of Joan Dukes. She was elected to the Senate in 2006 and is in her fourth term.

“Together, we’ve done some great

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Betsy Johnson

Warrenton commissioners urge colleague to resign

By **ERICK BENGEL**
The Astorian

WARRENTON — Three city commissioners on Tuesday night urged their colleague Rick Newton to resign, arguing that his behavior is problematic and disrupting the city’s business.

Commissioner Mark Baldwin, Commissioner Gerald Poe and Mayor Henry Balensifer expressed concerns about how Newton has handled himself over a controversial infill on his property.

A formal process for removing

Newton from the City Commission has not been initiated. Newton indicated at the meeting that he does not intend to step down.

The pleas came after the commission agreed with a Planning Commission determination that an infill Newton had arranged to be dumped on his S.W. First Street property last summer was illegal.

The commission voted to give Newton until 7:30 p.m. on Friday to fix the flooding that the infill has caused on neighboring properties or face fines of \$500 per day until he does. Newton recused himself from the vote.

The fill material is on a lot where Newton and his girlfriend, Patty

Bonamici, providers talk gaps in child care

By **KELCIE GREGA**
Oregon Capital Bureau

It’s no secret that Oregon is in desperate need of more child care.

Every county was deemed a child care desert for infants and toddlers in 2018 in an Oregon State University report, long before COVID-19 put the issue on the forefront. Child care providers and advocates say the problem has only worsened.

U.S. Rep. Suzanne Bonamici reiterated this point during her quarterly Oregon Child Care Advisory Board meeting on Monday.

“I want to say that it’s finally getting the attention it needs and deserves: the issue of affordable accessible child care,” the Oregon Democrat said. “And we know it was a challenge even before the pandemic, and the pandemic exacerbated it.

“I’ve been working to deliver this sort of long overdue investment in both providers and in affordable access.”

The Build Back Better Act is designed to improve the nation’s “care economy,” as proponents put it. President Joe Biden’s signature legislation



Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

Clatsop County is considered a child care desert.

includes a historic investment of nearly \$400 billion, which is intended to both lower the cost of child care and secure universal prekindergarten for 3- and 4-year-olds.

Today, only about 23% of Oregon children in that age range have access to publicly funded preschool,

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