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City hears feedback on Heritage Square

City Council could vote on Feb. 22

By NICOLE BALES
The Astorian

Dozens of people shared their input on workforce housing at Heritage Square with the Astoria City Council on Monday night, offering ideas about which workers should qualify and asking questions about parking and downtown vitality.

About 100 people joined the meeting in-person or virtually while the City Council discussed entering into an exclusive negotiating agreement with Edlen & Co., a Portland-based developer that pitched the housing concept.

The City Council also conducted the first reading of code changes to enable housing at Heritage Square.

Mayor Bruce Jones said the City Council will likely vote on the negotiating agreement and finalize the code changes on Feb. 22.

City councilors, acting as the Astoria Development Commission, voted 4 to 1 in January to recommend the Edlen & Co. concept after reviewing proposals from two potential developers.

Edlen & Co.'s outline would involve two buildings spanning the downtown block next to City Hall. The main building, planned along 12th Street between Duane and Exchange streets, would

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Astoria killer eligible for early release

Harned was convicted of murder as a teenager

By ERICK BENGEL
The Astorian

A man sentenced to life without parole more than two decades ago for murdering a girl in Astoria is on Gov. Kate Brown's list of offenders who committed crimes as juveniles and can seek clemency.

Patrick Lee Harned — who in 1999, at age 16, kidnapped, sexually abused and strangled his neighbor, 7-year-old Ashley Ann Carlson — has petitioned for early release, the Oregon Board of Parole and Post-Prison

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Photos by Lydia Ely/The Astorian

Workers in Cannon Beach struggle to find housing.

In Cannon Beach, workers struggle to find places to live

By NICOLE BALES
The Astorian

CANNON BEACH — When opening up the discussion with the City Council about affordable housing, Jeff Adams, the city's community development director, shared stories about the struggles his own employees have had finding a place to live.

One recently received notice that she needs to move out of her home to make room for a short-term rental and is scrambling to find another option. Another had to buy a trailer to temporarily live in until he can find housing. A planner who accepted a job withdrew because she could not find housing.

And those stories are not unique to city staff. Just 5.5% of workers in Cannon Beach live in the city, and some commute from as far away as the Portland metro area, according to U.S. Census Bureau data from 2019.

"If everyone gave their testimonials, it would put a face to what we struggle with as a workforce in this community," Adams said during a work session Tuesday.

"There's not an issue of this that doesn't come out when it's not above the fold," he said, lifting up an edition of The Astorian. "It's housing, it's housing, it's housing in every community. We've got to do something."

Adams pointed to housing studies, reports and task forces that have been put together to address the housing crunch in the city and across Clatsop County over the past decade. Not a lot of action has come out of them, he said, and the problem is getting worse.

The city's population is contracting and there are more vacant homes, which Adams attributes to a growing seasonal second-home market.

Some believe nothing can be done to cure the problem. Adams disagrees.

He presented some concrete steps to get

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Only a small fraction of workers in Cannon Beach live in the city.

SEASIDE

Emergency operations center to open above school campus

An alternate hub outside tsunami zone

By R.J. MARX
The Astorian

SEASIDE — The city will debut an alternate emergency operations center in the southeast hills above the new school campus.

The building, a trailer above the new high school and middle school, is adjacent to the city's

new 2-million-gallon water tank.

The center will provide a single location where city staff and stakeholders — the Clatsop County Sheriff's Office, the Oregon Department of Transportation or others — can help support an incident.

The city's primary emergency operations center in the police station has the advantage of having police and dispatch in one location near the downtown core, City Hall and public works.

"But we know that it's not going to withstand the earthquake and the tsunami," Anne McBride, the city's emergency preparedness coordinator, said. "If there was an incident in the downtown



The alternate emergency operations center began as an office trailer during renovations to the Seaside Civic and Convention Center.

core, you'd have to have someplace else to go and deal with the emergency."

A modular building used to house staff during the remodel of

the Seaside Civic and Convention Center became available after renovations were complete.

Public Works Director Dale McDowell proposed build-

ing a foundation and moving the 1,500-square-foot trailer above the school campus.

When complete, one side will be a situation room, with work stations, conference table and furniture with the former school administration building on S. Franklin Street. Dispatch, ham radio, storage, supplies and rest areas are designed for the opposite side.

The STARS radio group donated \$4,000 in equipment and \$2,000 in engineering support for ham radio at the site. Pacific Power moved and placed the two 80-foot communications poles into position.

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