



Lydia Ely/The Astorian

Teresa Retzlaff looks over plant starts growing in a greenhouse at 46 North Farm in March.

Farmers: 'This is a year where we really need community to step up'

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I've seen elements of all of these things, but I've never seen them all in one year. It was crazy. It was really unexpected."

Farmers in the area have gotten to know what grows well in a coastal environment. However, with the weather becoming harder to predict, they aren't as sure which crops will prosper.

"I feel like all my previous experience just like flew out the window," Retzlaff said. "And I'm like, 'I have no idea what's going on here.'"

Plants that are indigenous to the North Coast should be doing well in their natural environment.

But the unusual weather has affected the entire local ecosystem, not just farms. Retzlaff said birds are struggling to find berries in the wild that are late and flocking to crops instead, depleting harvests even further.

Kelly Huckestein, who owns Spring Up Farm in Knappa, said fluctuating temperatures throughout spring have led to crops being severely delayed and not as robust. This is the first year her yields will not increase after seven years.

There is more exhaustion and fatigue among the farmers in her circle this year after trying to adapt to the different weather conditions.

Julie Hackett, who

started Laughing Rabbit Farm in Astoria last year, had begun to hope this was just an unusual spring for the coast when the weather became exceptionally cold and the rain soaked her field.

At farmers markets, people who had lived in Astoria all their lives told her the season was returning to what it had been 30 to 40 years ago, she said.

Huckestein has been told the same thing, but extreme weather like last year's heat wave and this year's late snow makes her think the future is going to be unpredictable.

"I think it's just going to be more and more different weather and that farmers are

going to definitely feel that first or more severely than a lot of other folks on the coast," Huckestein said.

Some farms, especially smaller ones, have had financial difficulties after losing their crops or having smaller harvests this year, Retzlaff said.

Larger farms tend to have insurance that helps them with crop loss, but smaller farms have to take that financial loss.

"This is a year where we really need community to step up and help," she said. "That's the best way you can do it is to just go out and support farms economically because that helps us get through these years that are really challenging."

Haefker: Terms are also expiring for mayor, Ward 1

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I took the old buildings that were closest to my house, and I fixed them up because it improves the street and there was a need for housing."

Over the years, Haefker said he has been an active participant in City Council, Planning Commission and Historic Landmarks Commission meetings.

Haefker said he is running for Ward 3 because he

feels connected to downtown and believes in civic duty. At this point in his life, he said he feels ready to give back in that way.

He said his core priorities are downtown vitality, housing and the arts.

"I understand the housing issues pretty well firsthand and doing my best being creative, trying to do what you can with what you have," Haefker said. "And sometimes it works for

some people's agenda and sometimes it doesn't. But that's how we have to be with this quirky infrastructure and inventory. We've got to work with that."

He added that housing is a complex issue.

"We're not going to solve it," he said. "We can help improve it."

Along with Ward 3, terms are also expiring for the mayor and Ward 1, which covers part of the

Port of Astoria, Uniontown and the western edge of downtown.

Mayor Bruce Jones and City Councilor Roger Rocka, who represents Ward 1, do not plan to seek reelection in November.

Sean Fitzpatrick, who owns Wecoma Partners and serves on the Astoria Planning Commission, is running for mayor.

The election filing period extends through Tuesday.

Copeland: 'District has been expanded in the past'

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Commons, said he has had good dialogue with the city about the situation.

He said he is energized by the support that the City Council showed after a presentation he gave during a work session on Friday. He thinks the problem can be resolved if there is a desire to make it happen.

"The district has been expanded in the past to enable specific projects like the Liberty Theatre, and if council remains supportive this just means spending a bit more time ironing out wrinkles," Davis said in a text message.

Congregants at First Presbyterian Church, which later formed the nonprofit Copeland Commons, purchased the building in 2019 with a plan to renovate and provide housing.

Davis told the City Council on Friday that he expects the nonprofit will sign a development agreement with Innovative Housing Inc., a Portland nonprofit, in the coming weeks. Innovative Housing Hotel next to the former Waldorf Hotel next to the Merwyn Apartments.

Davis said the group intends to apply for low-income housing tax credits to help complete the project. While the details and costs are still estimates, he said the

group appears to have a funding gap of about \$1.5 million.

Davis said there is urgency on the nonprofit's part to fill the gap and move the project forward, and asked how the city could assist.

The City Council unanimously supported exploring how to support the project.

The building, which used to serve as a boarding house, is blighted and would need to be gutted and rebuilt, according to Davis. There are also plans to build a second, attached building on the empty lot to the east, which is also owned by the church group.

Davis said that together, the two buildings could provide more than 60 units targeted for people who earn between 30% and 80% of the area median income. Most would likely be studio apartments and the others would be a mix of one and two-bedroom units.

Morrisey and Solem announce City Council campaigns in Seaside

By R.J. MARX
The Astorian

SEASIDE — Seth Morrisey, who opted not to run for reelection to the City Council in 2020, has launched a council campaign for the November election.

He will be running for the at-large Ward 3 and Ward 4 seat held by City Councilor Dana Phillips.

After speaking with Phillips and confirming she was not seeking reelection, Morrisey submitted his paperwork.

A Seaside High School graduate, Morrisey studied business at Lane Community College and Portland State University. He is co-founder and president of Morrisey Productions and Oregon Web Solutions.

Morrisey won his first race for City Council in 2014, filling the two-year seat of Rafael "Stubby" Lyons. He was reelected in 2016, running unopposed.

"I opted not to run for reelection in the fall of 2020 to spend more time with my wife and two young children," he said. "After a brief hiatus I was appointed to the Seaside Planning Commission in 2021."

During that time, he said, he learned more about the city's zoning ordinances and building codes.

"In a short period of

time we've made great progress and pushed forward with major updates to the vacation rental ordinance and other important land use issues," he said.



Seth Morrisey

"If elected, I look forward to once again serving the citizens of Seaside as a city councilor."

Seamus McVey will also seek the Ward 3 and Ward 4 seat.

McVey facilitates a recovery clinic working with people struggling with addiction, mental illness and homelessness.

Duane Solem, a postman, has announced he is running for the Ward 1 seat. City Councilor Steve Wright is giving up the seat to run for mayor.

"The reason I'm running is because I speak to people on my route in regards to how they feel and they basically let me know that they're not being represented," Solem said. "I just want to jump in and be part of our community and put my best foot forward for everybody."

Solem said he grew up in Las Vegas, Nevada, where he lived and worked in the tourism industry for almost 40 years.

"My background is from the casino industry, and one of the things I know is the tourist side as well as being a homeowner here in Seaside," he said.

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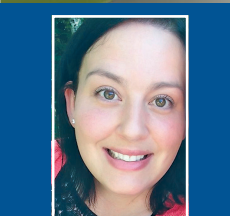
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