

CANNERY from page 1A

"We want to make it its own little community so that as many possible amenities could be co-located," McGlade said. "It's more of a nodal center than just senior living. The hope is that it will be a vibrant, residential area that will include older people, younger people, little shops, restaurants and some amenities that will make it interesting to live in."

He also believed the north-of-town location would make a great visual and economical entrance to the City of Florence.

But by 2009, the Great Recession was in full swing. Multiple planned projects throughout Florence were ended, Cannery among them.

"Then the crash occurred, the plans were dashed," McGlade said. "It was an unusual roller coaster, to say the least."

The project was extended for two years with the hopes that the losses would only be monetary. But they weren't, and by 2010 Arlie & Company dipped into bankruptcy. Around that time, Musumeci succumbed to cancer. A year later, Arlie did as well.

"In the course of the year, the principals who were guiding the project were dead, and I was left with the project," McGlade said.

He had some development experience as well, so he stuck with the project, working on the designs and looking for investors.

"I needed to find people who believed in the vision, and this is quite difficult to do because of the location," McGlade recalled. "People who lend money usually want to be in larger urban centers."

He was able to find some overseas investors, mostly in China.

It should be noted that the project is not officially funded right now. To be able to have investments finalized, permits have to be given to the project. But McGlade has guarantees that the initial investment is secure. And if there's unseen financial problems in the future?

"I can't predict if another recession is going to happen," he said. "It's already happened in our lifetime and a lot of people suffered as a result. I hope it doesn't happen, but who am I to say? I can't guarantee anything. But I've stuck with this project for 10 years so I hope that shows a good level of determination to see this through."

With the promised money, McGlade able to partner with American United Development Group, creating Cannery Station Development, LLC. One of the project managers is Bryan Cavaness, who represented the company in the Florence Planning Commission meeting.

THE PLAN

City of Florence Planning Commission Chairperson John Murphy read aloud the official description of the project:

"Cannery Station, preliminary plan unit development (PUD). An application for a PUD ... for an eight-phase mixed-use development with 31 proposed lots over a 10-year period. The 17-acre parcel is located east of Highway 101, across from Fred Meyer, west of Florentine Estates, north of the Community Baptist Church and south of Munsel Lake Rd."

The audience was overflowing, a rare site for a planning meeting, and extra chairs had to be brought in to the meeting at the Florence Events Center.

"What are they proposing?" City of Florence Planning Director Wendy FarleyCampbell asked while giving the staff report. "They are proposing to build a mixed-use PUD. It will have a mixture of commercial, residential and different densities of residential."

The first phase, which will be located on the southwest corner of the property, would have the bulk of the commercial aspects of the project, including an assisted living facility. This section will be a 55-and-over community.

"In phase one, there will be a 70-bed assisted living facility, 20 of which will be specialized memory care," Cavaness said. "We have worked with this developer on a project in Albany, and that is currently being filled up. But one of the things that shocked and depressed me is that the facility is 82 beds, with 20 memory care units, and the memory care unit was the first one to fill up."

In a separate interview to the Siuslaw News, McGlade, who did not attend the planning meeting, expanded on the idea, stated there would also be an apartment building.

"We're looking at an age-restrict-

ed 55 and older. That would be considered independent living," he said. "Those would be people who don't require much help with day to day activities, but they can participate in amenities from assisted living. And we're also debating having a home health component as well, where people in the community can come."

There will also be 28 cottages that will act as transitional housing.

"Those are for people who wish to live in close proximity to an assisted living, but have more independence," McGlade said. "They may be someone who wants to be linked in technologically with the monitoring systems, they might want to take meals from assisted living and take part of social programs, but they still can live somewhat independently."

Aside from housing, there will also be extensive commercial properties available.

"Those could range from a doctor office to an accounting office," Cavaness said. "Lower intensity types of uses."

He said that he already knew of an urgent care facility that had expressed interest in the facility.

He added a description for possible retail shops.

"These are going to be smaller, owner-operated shops," he explained. "They are not going to be something that's going to be owned by large national corporations. Our hope would be that this would be something that would foster and increase economic development from within the community itself."

As Cannery Station's first phase is completed, more specific planning on the remaining phases will begin, with eight in total. The exact order of the phases is unknown, as the organizers will be looking for investors and ideas about the remaining pieces.

"In order to build phase one, there has to be a component of utilities and water that will be required for the whole development," McGlade explained. "If anything, it prepares the rest of this to more easily be developed, with less chance of running into roadblocks. When you have something operating and you have part of it built, it tends to accelerate the other pieces. They do act in a synergistic fashion

where the first one is the hardest to get built. Once that is put in place, it's much easier."

Cavaness explained how it is a benefit to have leeway with the time frame.

"What I ask for is flexibility, so that if there's a particular tenant who comes in with a need for particular square footage, we can provide them with an 8,000-square-foot building. If somebody says, 'I just want to come in here with a 25-square-foot area; I can provide that as well. All we're asking for is flexibility,' he said.

Beyond commerce, the finished project also plans to be environmentally pleasing.

"From a landscaping standpoint, 30 percent of the developable area is going to be landscaped," Cavaness told the commission. "Approximately 45,000 square feet of that area will be dedicated to a combination of passive and active recreational uses, which is 39 percent of the open space. Code requires 25. We are almost twice as much as what the code requires."

He also stated that there would be a heavy use of native plants in the area.

"We don't want to bring out other items that we have to be constantly replacing that have increased water needs. We will be making every effort the use native landscaping materials to the greatest extent practical," he said. "This will be a very beautiful place that will only enhance the area."

Q&A

The Planning Commission asked Cavaness many clarifying questions, including when the project could break ground.

"I would like to start site improvements as quickly as possible," Cavaness answered. "If I can start before Thanksgiving, I will be very happy. I would like to start vertical construction in February."

The commission also compared Cannery Station to existing developments and their homeowner association (HOA) requirements for storage, as well as questions on clearcutting.

"We have obtained a clearing permit for a portion of the property (phase one)," Cavaness said. "Anything up to the north will re-

main in its current vegetative condition until a development plan is proposed. With that said, an access road will be constructed off of Munsel Lake."

According to the current plan, the transitional housing portion said that two-story residential housing would be part of the design.

The commission suggested that most transitional residents would be adverse to stairs.

"In all of the best worlds, those would be single-story homes," Cavaness said. "However, given the available depth that we have, and the intent to have a one-car garage, it's going to be difficult to get footage on the main floor on those buildings. It will be easier across the street, but on those structures, it will probably be two stories. I'm guessing one bedroom with one window."

Cavaness later told the Siuslaw News that this was due to some uneven elevation in certain areas. While he will build single stories when he can, some homes will not be able to fit on a slope without two stories.

"I'm very concerned when they come in and build small townhouses," one audience member said. "We don't have two stories [in Florentine Estates] because our residents can't climb stairs very well. So if this is supposed to be transitional, no transitional homes can be two stories. It's just a bad idea."

Cavaness told the news that while it is a financial risk, there are

people in transitional homes that do prefer a second story.

One member of the public, who stated he had heard the same presentation in 2008, had choice words for the project.

"We know that the world is changing, that Florence is changing, and that this property will be developed," he said. "The mission of the commission is that it's done in a reasonable way. Yeah, we need housing, but we don't need it all on this one piece of property."

"When we heard this presentation before, we were told there would be one-story houses. Now there will be two-story. ... It's going to affect a lot of people."

There could have been more comments, but the June 12 meeting had run long. Public comments began almost three hours into the night, and most of the audience had left by then.

Nothing was decided by the commission that night, as members held off a final vote until the next public meeting on Tuesday, June 26, also at the Florence Events Center.

This will allow the public to continue to voice their views on the project.

For those who did stay around, they would have noticed a pattern of intense questions about three major topics: A wall, flooding and traffic.

And all of these were major concerns for Florentine Estates, the 55+ community that rests just east of the proposed Cannery Station.

THE WALL

Florentine Estates General Manager Jason Nelson has been working closely with Cannery Station and Florentine residents, including an estate committee that works to preserve the estate's interests in the matter, to present the community's concerns about the development.

"Florentine's stance isn't against the project," Nelson said.

The people he has worked with are generally supportive of the development; there are just a few concerns that have come up that residents would like addressed.

The first regards the property line between Florentine Estates and Cannery, and the barrier that should be used to help separate it. Much of the conversation revolves around 35 feet.

Taken from the property line, Florentine Estates has a 40-foot setback from the estate's property line to a home's property line. On the Cannery Station side, there is supposed to be a 35-foot setback.

Adding in the distance from the home line and the side of a house, there's around 80 feet separating two homes, wall to wall.

However, Cannery is asking for an exception to its 35 feet to put in an eight-foot deck. This would encroach six feet into setback, cutting the length to 29 feet, according to Nelson.

Florentine fears that even just a few feet could make any noisy neighbors that much more noticeable.

See CANNERY page 9A

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(541) 997-9110
info@florencefoodshare.org

Florence Van Fans

We are looking for new volunteers to join our team and help out with new ideas and support. Van Fan volunteers raise money to help keep the busses running 5 days a week transporting cancer patients from Florence to Eugene. Our success is because of our volunteers. Please help us help others by volunteering your time. Meet 1st Wednesday of every month
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www.facebook.com/restoreflorence

Meals on Wheels and Cafe 60

Meals on Wheels are available to people over the age of 60 who cannot get out much due to illness or advanced age and who are not eating properly, regardless of income. Cafe 60 is available for those who prefer to make new friends in a dining room setting.
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541-997-5673
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Fri.-Sat. 6/22-6/23
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2293 Willow Street

Sat.-Sun. 6/23-6/24
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Grand dining room table w/6-chairs, Lenox China, Vintage thumbprint glassware, dog supplies-gates, ramp & stairs etc., small appliances, collectibles.

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6/22-Till Gone?
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