

**CANNERY from page 8A**

To be fair, many neighborhoods have setbacks as low as 10 feet, but residents of Florentine came specifically for peace and quiet, Nelson said. When other phases do take place, and the age restrictions will be lifted, younger homeowners may cause loud distractions.

Even though the Cannery lot is covered with trees right now, some local residents claimed they can still hear Highway 101. A closer, and potentially louder, family would be amplified, they said.

And those noises would be small to the sound of the construction that could take years to finish.

Nelson said there are two barriers that have been presented to help with the noise.

The first is the vegetation the currently exists. On both sides of the property line, a tall mass of thick plants and trees can block a considerable amount of noise.

While Florentine does have its own thicket, the new property would limit its choices in the future as to what they could do with the property. And there's no guarantee that all the vegetation on Cannery's side will be able to remain as well, though the company will try to preserve existing native vegetation.

To create a permanent sound barrier, Florentine would like a wall.

Nelson stated that a previous proposal had suggested a solid wall be built, but current plans call for an eight-foot tall cedar fence.

Not only does Nelson fear that will not create a strong enough sound barrier, it will also create a security risk.

Nelson gave an example of a child breaking through a fence to get a ball thrown on the other side. But childish hijinks really aren't Florentine's concern.

"In their plan, they say walking and paths and trails will be next to the wall, and that path will be open to the residents, the visitors, the shoppers and employers," Nelson said. "That to me is everybody. They say it's private, but it's not completely restricted use."

Neighborhood kids would be

one thing, but a more open population could create more chances of problems. While simply having a fence next to a walkway is no clear invitation to crime, Florentine Estates population can be particularly nervous.

"It's a vulnerable population and a lot of them feel vulnerable," Nelson said. "It just scares them to think that living in a gated area, where not even a bear is coming through the bushes, would potentially be accessible to anybody."

And a wall would also help protect against any financial burdens the company may face.

"God forbid we have another economic upheaval and they get halfway into it and the bottom falls out, and they have to leave it again for another 10 years," Nelson said. "We want security there for the future. If they go away, who's going to maintain that fence? If you don't have the money to do your development, I can't call you if a tree falls down on a wooden fence."

Nelson sees another advantage to a wall, and that's blocking water flow from the Cannery.

**WATER FLOW**

Unlike the wall, the fear here is concrete.

As of now, the area in which Cannery Station will sit is filled with lush, thick vegetation. However, there are also swamplands in the area, and it can become thick with rain.

"There are places I can't walk into with boots," Nelson said.

Because of that, Florentine residents attribute the water to helping create floods.

"We've had two feet of water in Florentine Estates," one resident said while raising her concerns at the meeting. "People were floating their little dinghies and fishing boats."

Florentine fears that once that vegetation is gutted and streets are paved, the flooding could get worse.

"You add a whole bunch of asphalt, the water has to go somewhere."

And somewhere, Nelson fears, is Florentine Estates.

Cannery's plan is to have three different rain basis throughout the facility which will retain water, along with culvert systems

that will drain the water into the city storm system.

"At full development 90 percent of the water that is currently coming down from this site will be redirected west, and it will go out to the city storm system in Mun-

**"As long as people make an investment in their property, I think there's an opportunity. I don't think it will fulfill all the needs that we have, but it would free up other housing in the areas for other family types."**

— Wendy FarleyCampbell  
City of Florence Planning Director

sel Lake Road, or straight out to the right of way," Cavaness said. "From a practical standpoint, any drop of water that lands next to Florentine will go out to Highway 101. ... There will be less water flowing in this site from a storm than what presently comes off from the property."

"I'm not disclaiming what he said," Nelson said. Nelson brought up Cannery's plans to use six-inch curbs to redirect water.

"A six-inch curb is actually a very good answer, and it's what we would like to see," Nelson said.

However, looking at the plans, Nelson feels that there may have been some areas missed the could use better fortification, including more catch basins.

Nelson gave another example, saying, "They talk about using street level sidewalks. We just want to know that they have a six inch back."

It's not that Florentine residents believe that Cannery is skimping on storm water containment, they just want to have assurances that all contingencies have been covered.

"To be honest, I think for the most part they're addressing our concerns, and a lot of what is not addressed will be picked up by the city and ODOT," Nelson said. "I can't speak for the board, but I wouldn't support a recommendation of boycotting their project because we don't get variances. We're not that petty. It's not about stopping them, but just doing what's best for our community. We need to be on the record that we have concerns about it."

I have been trying to have

conversations with Florentine Estates," Cavaness told the commission. "We are sympathetic and understand the concerns."

But while walls and storm drains may be Florentine specific concerns, there are larger fears

many driveways and too much traffic."

At that point, the audience cheered and clapped.

Originally, there was a traffic light planned for the intersection. "On the last approval in 2008, they needed a right-hand turn lane, an additional turn lane on Munsel Lake Road and also a light," FarleyCampbell told the Siuslaw News.

But recent estimates have shown that traffic does not yet warrant a stoplight, though turn lanes are being looked at.

"We are not yet to the point in full development to trigger a light at the location," said Kelly Sandow of Sandow Engineering, who worked on a traffic analysis for Cannery Station. "That said, as the project is developed, if something does change seven years from now and there is additional development [in the area], we can revisit it. But keep in mind, this is for the entire 10-year project, not just for phase one. All of the proposed access points are expected to be safe."

But what happened between 2008 and now that would have reduced traffic?

"When ODOT was talking about putting in a light back in 2008, there was significant traffic flows back then," Sandow explained. "We expected traffic flows to grow over the years, but what happened was we had a recession, and traffic counts dropped all over the states. The math changed, and what changed was the recession we had."

Sandow did take a traffic count, but that was in February.

"We didn't have any choice but to take traffic counts then," Sandow recalled. "So we worked with ODOT who did traffic recordings north of Munsel Lake that looked at 24-hour a day traffic. We looked at what happens in July and August. February is 30 percent lower traffic. So we took our traffic numbers and increased them by 30 percent to match that number. That's what our analysis is based on."

But the idea that traffic has decreased since 2008 didn't sit well with the commission. The 30 percent increase didn't seem correct. ODOT had also written a letter asking the Cannery to re-analyze some of the assumptions made in Sandow's report.

"We're discussing that," Sandow said. "The traffic recorder was located quite a bit north of city limits. That flow doesn't consider urban traffic. But in our area, there's a baseline. You have a lot

of homes in the area, Driftwood Shores and Fred Meyer. So there's minor difference. If ODOT says we have to change the number, we have to change the number. We don't think a new analysis will change the numbers."

It was also noted that this analysis was one-and-done. Sandow expects to be continually analyzing traffic whenever a new subdivision is put forth.

It's important to get these numbers right as soon as possible. If construction is completed and it's discovered that traffic is indeed too heavy, it could take months for a light to be actually approved and installed. During that time, drivers could be put in danger.

This is not to say that the intersections will be dangerous without a stoplight. The numbers could be correct.

"Does the traffic model that you use do visuals?" Young asked Sandow at the meeting. "Is there a way to run a model to show all the interaction at peak, so we can all see?"

Young suggested that the issue be revisited during the June 26 meeting, with Sandow bringing visual representations of traffic flow.

Sandow stated that she could, and would also be making revisions to the plan.

The concerns regarding the traffic light underlies another concern. While most of those who spoke about Cannery believed the project was good for Florence, there were fears of growing pains.

**MOTION**

Cannery Station will be a big job creator, according to McGlade.

"If you look at a typical assisted living building and memory care, there are a lot of jobs that are created, and if you add in a home healthcare component to that, you would be looking at a very significant job creation on a day to day basis," he said.

McGlade stated that the industry itself has seen increases in income levels, particularly in the last two years. The jobs would be "considerably above minimum wage." And there's opportunity for those without a college education to train, gain skills and be allowed upward mobility.

These would be careers, with year-round schedules, a possible relief for many from the boom and bust job market of a seasonal vacation town.

"I'm hopeful that people will find meaningful employment that would allow them to live in an apartment building in Cannery," he said.

This is not considering the employment opportunities that would come with the many shops, restaurants and businesses that would populate Cannery.

And McGlade stated that all of these job opportunities are always best when filled by local residents.

But a bellwether of growing pains lies in the construction industry.

"We don't have a lot of commercial contractors here," FarleyCampbell told the Siuslaw News. "It's not a lack of workers, but a lack of credentials to do the work. And the right kind of insurance and certification."

And the contractors who are in town have been busy with other projects.

"There have been people who have done housing analysis, and they've come back and said, 'I can't get anyone in here to build,'" FarleyCampbell said. "It's just expensive because you have to import workers."

While McGlade said they would try to hire locals first, it's a probability that he would have to hire outside. And when this happens, the housing problem continues.

A recent housing needs analysis by the City of Florence found that more than 500 affordable housing units are needed in the area. It's possible that construction workers could not easily come, rent a home and set up a family for a year.

FarleyCampbell stated that several times, companies have rented out hotels for an entire summer, just to house workers.

After Cannery Station's phase one is fully completed, there will be multiple other job opportunities. It is hard to predict where those employees come from, and McGlade hopes that they will come from the community. But it's possible a portion of them won't.

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