Harrison

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Those driving northward on Taylor Street will see the school's new library as they approach the school, Gorman said, adding that street improvements to correct a narrowing of the street from Taylor to Gateway will be necessary. Parent and bus drop-offs will occur in parking lots to the east of the school, and the 10th Street intersection will see new crosswalks. The current Kennedy High School location will become the early learning center that is slated to house Head Start, new preschool offerings and Peggy's Primary Connection, the District's family resource center. Kindergarten classrooms will be located nearby, and the current parking lot for the Warren H. Daugherty Aquatic Center will also serve as a drop-off for the school's youngest students.

The new school will be two stories tall, Gorman said, and will feature a dividing wall between the more public areas of the gymnasium and cafeteria and the classroom "pods" that should effectively allow the classrooms to be walled off from the public during a security emergency. These "pods" will feature four classrooms aligned around a common area that should also allow for the completion and display of longer-term projects.

Kindergarteners through second-graders will go to class on the first floor, with older students upstairs. The school will feature a design of wooden beams in one hallway meant to replicate the area's covered bridges, and its designers say the building will not lack for natural light.

Rising costs

Parent told the group that rising construction costs mean that the school, which was first estimated to cost $19 million, is now being quoted at a cost of about $23.4 million, even after designers cut 4000 square feet from its dimensions. She added that the District made money selling the bonds and expects to make more by investing bond funds that don't need to be spent immediately.

Parent said that a tight market for sub-contracting work, brought on in part by bond projects for other schools, means that sub-contractors don't have to "sharpen their pencils" and provide competitive cost estimates.

"They can ask what they want," she said.

Still, Parent said the District is confident that by positioning the timeline of its project between the completion of other school construction jobs, choosing materials wisely, making good investments and saving money on the other bond-related projects, the cost of the new school can come in closer to $20.5 or $21 million, though the District only budgeted for a $900,000 contingency.

"It's all about what we have to do internally to manage these projects," she said. "We should save money on other projects and make more by investing."

Parent said she is "totally certain" that the District will deliver on the promises it made regarding the use of its bond funds.

"We will deliver on our promise to build a quality, long-lasting and functional school that can be a hub of the community," she said.

Other projects

Parent and Maintenance Supervisor Matt Allen detailed progress on other bond-related projects, including the installation of night locks for every classroom door that are currently being installed to keep intruders from easily entering classrooms. Latham Elementary has received a new intercom and lockdown system, and the District has put out a request for proposals for camera systems for each school. The District has also ordered 25 new laptops, 300 Chromebooks, 15 projectors and 18 document cameras. With regard to deferred maintenance, Allen said that an aging sewer line has been replaced at Lincoln Middle School, a problem piece of sidewalk has been replaced at Bohemia Elementary and the District is shopping for the best system to replace the HVAC system at Bohemia.

Timeline

Parent said designers will hold another round of meetings with teachers this October. The new school will go to bid in March. A groundbreaking is scheduled for April 1, and the District hopes to "go vertical" next July in time to open for the 2018-19 school year. Kennedy High School is set to move to the former Delight Valley School location in the summer of 2018. More information on bond-related projects is available at the district website, www.slane.k12.or.us.

Fire

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with South Lane Fire and ODF in the investigation.

"I termed it 'reckless' because we're still not aware of the exact circumstances, and it's unknown if it was deliberately set," Shepherd said. "But it seems 'kiddish' to me, and at least one bystander said they heard voices up there at about that time."

Residents in the Northwest Neighborhood area and beyond were able to witness the response of firefighters from South Lane, Goshen, Lorane and Pleasant Hill, in addition to the Oregon Department of Forestry, which deployed the helicopter, bulldozer and other resources. Wooten credited a strong partnership with ODF with helping to preventing the fire's spread on a hot, windy day that might have otherwise carried the flames further up Mt. David or into the neighborhood below.

"We had a lot of resources on standby, but we were able to send them back because the helicopter got there so quick," he said. "That's why we love the partnership we have with them."

Wooten explained that South Lane is responsible for the structures in its District, while ODF protects the wooded areas around them. That afternoon, bystanders watched (with many later commenting about it on social media and elsewhere) the helicopter scoop up water from the Coast Fork of the Willamette River in its bucket, then make repeated trips to Mt. David to pour its contents on the flames. (The Sentinel attempted to contact the pilot in person but learned that he and his helicopter were already at work fighting the High Pass Fire on Bureau of Land Management lands about 10 miles west of Junction City.)

Teens

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before the fire could spread to nearby homes and an apartment complex," Gagner wrote in the news release.

"If it had been windy, it would have been all over," Branstetter surmised. "The fire could've easily jumped the path and gone toward the homes on the other side."

Gagner added that, after a brief investigation, police arrested three 15-year olds they believe were involved with both fires, who were to be lodged at the Youth Center on charges of Arson, Reckless Burning, Criminal Mischief and Conspiracy.

Branstetter said that the incident marked the first time in his career that he had taken juveniles to Serbu on felony charges. The youths were charged with Conspiracy to Commit Arson, he said, because it could not be determined which individual actually set the fire.

"No one said they actually lit it, and it would be difficult to prove who it was," he said.

Branstetter called the youths' actions "beyond reckless" with respect to the conditions.

"I didn't get a sense of remorse from any of the three of them," he said. "It was kind of shocking from that aspect. At 15, you'd think the fire bug stage might be over."

Branstetter said the teens denied involvement in the fire that broke out on Mt. David two days prior and is believed to have been intentionally set, though the investigation into both incidents continues.

DeFazio

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would be applied to barrels of oil at the refinery, but couldn't get much interest from his fellow congressmen.

DeFazio railed against the Transpacific Partnership, or TPP, which he called "the last and worst trade deal America will ever have." He expressed dismay that the trade deal was written in collusion with 500 corporations while he wasn't able to view its language in real time, though he believes the agreement may not pass.

"I think we're going to beat it," he said. "Americans have awakened, and they realize it's not about free trade; it's about chasing the cheapest sources of labor around the world. The mischief that can be done through this agreement is extraordinary. I think we might beat it, but lame duck sessions are very unpredictable."

DeFazio also addressed more than one question regarding the rancorous discourse of American politics.

"I have a concern about the tone of our political environment," said Ron Blackstone from the audience. "What can our political leaders do to change that tone? I would like to see more discussion, more hope, more optimism of how we can work together."

DeFazio responded that, at least in the House of Representatives, the practice of redistricting that has created essentially bulletproof districts aligned with one party or the other should be ended.

"We've got to change our elections," he said, adding that in the recent past there was a time when the voting habits of each party crossed over into the other party's territory. "In 2010, things were redistricted to create as many Republican districts as possible. That wipes out swing districts…because in their primary, their only concern is their party."

The deregulation of the telecommunications industry has also created "partisan media," DeFazio said, which also harms the political discourse. Later, he likened Congress to a high school class of 435 students.

"You're going to have the jocks and nerds, some smart people and a few real yo-yos," he said. "There are people who get elected that make you shake your head."

With regard to the "revitalized" notion of a national public option for healthcare, DeFazio said the public option is quite necessary.

"It's apparent now with the problems with the insurance exchanges and rates going up, we need to look at a different model," he said.

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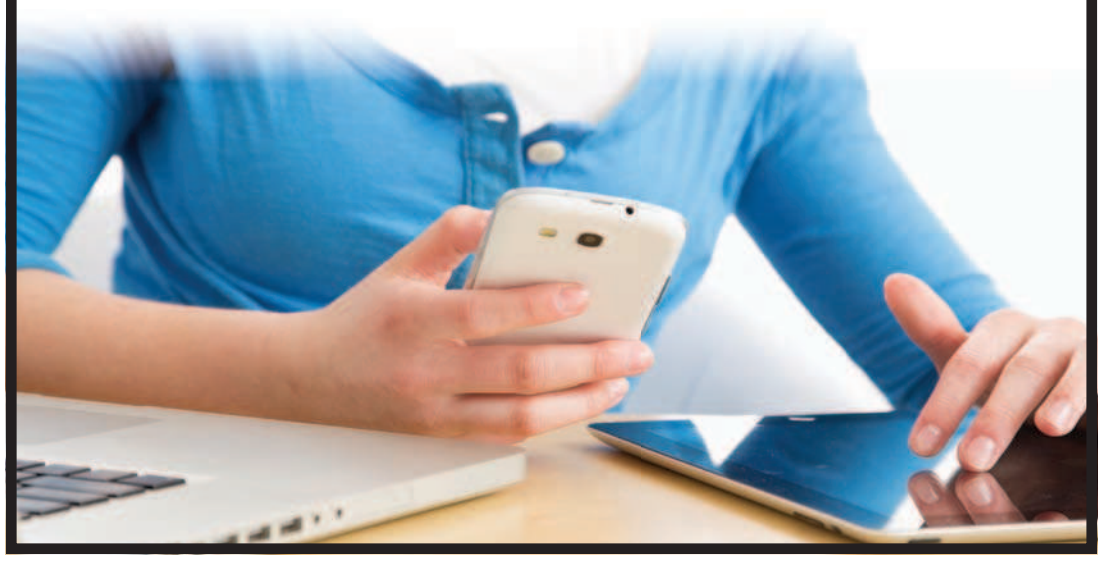

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