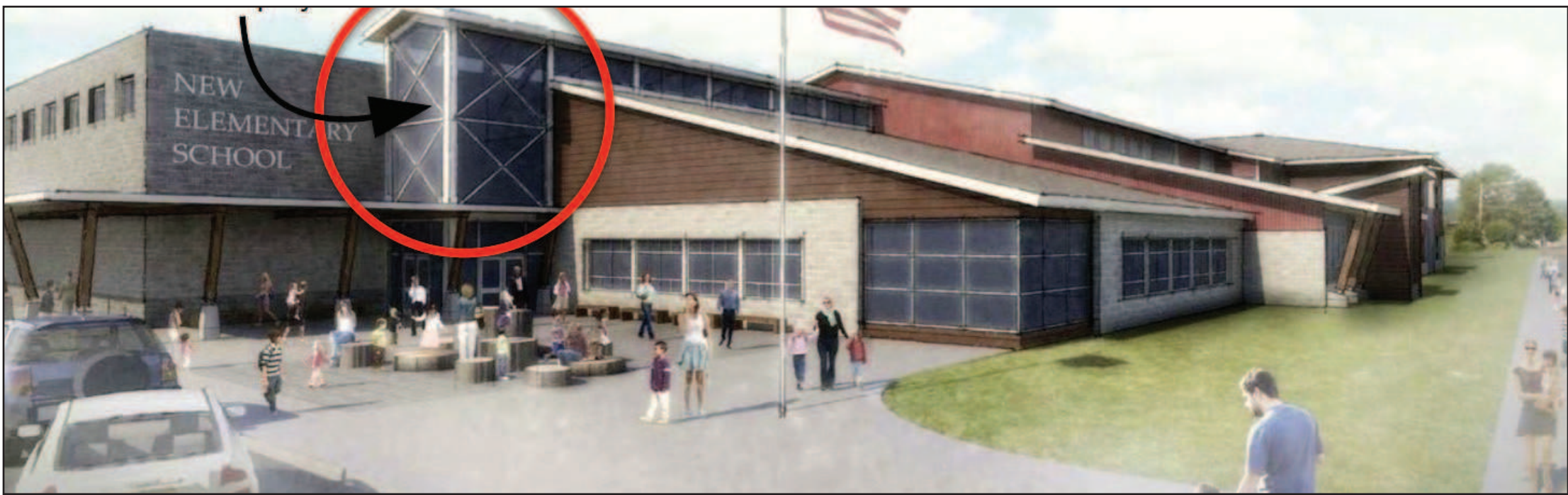


The 'New School' clears planning hurdle



The new school's height variance was approved by the Cottage Grove Planning Commission, paving the way for construction and the installation of a winning art piece on the front vestibule as pictured above.

BY CAITLYN MAY
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When the former Harrison Elementary School was demolished 13 years ago, it was always the intention of the school district to place another building on the property at some point. And as Amanda Ferguson of planning told the Cottage Grove Planning Commission, that point is now.

The project, which won bond approval by the voters in November, came before the planning board on Jan. 17 to request approval for a conditional use permit and site plan review; both of which were dependent on the commission's approval of a height variance.

"The application was originally submitted as a conditional use permit and a site plan review," Ferguson said. "While reviewing those applications we realized that they also needed to apply for a variance because the building is substantially higher than allowed in the residential district." City code calls for buildings in the area to fall in line with a maximum height of 28 feet. However, the proposed school building came in at 44.5 feet. While the new school was described as being similar in height to the old Harrison Elementary, a variance was still required.

"Because of its use as an elementary school which has specific needs that are very different than single family homes, which makes sense as a 28 feet maximum

height while a school, it does not," Ferguson said. The planning staff recommended to the commission that variance be approved. The vote passed unanimously. Had it failed, the board would not have been able to move forward with the site plan review and conditional use permit.

Ferguson explained to the commission that schools in the area are always considered conditional use but noted that the code for the city had changed dramatically since the old Harrison Elementary school was built, which was reflected in the application for the current conditional use permit.

"We are considering it a new development even though they are partially redeveloping the site," Ferguson said. While plans for the new development included demolishing all structures on site other than the early education building and community pool, staff still categorized the development as new and noted that the school district would be redeveloping nine acres for the school.

The 89,000 square foot building will serve 650 students at its peak but according to a traffic analysis, no added congestion is expected. Ferguson did note however, that the traffic analysis suggested the addition of a new stop sign on 10th and Taylor, making it a three-way stop.

The district will also have to improve the streetscape along Taylor including adding bicycle lanes and widening portions of the street.

The driveway located at the community pool will be improved and a second fire hydrant will be added to the area.

Ferguson did say that there were "many" conditions of approval for the applications that included ADA upgrades, which would also be made by the city of Cottage Grove. The addition of sidewalks and several fire safety requirements were included.

Under fire code the height of the building caused different mandates that were remedied in the conditional use permit by adding a wider turning range in the driveway, losing parking on the south side of Taylor and dropping existing power lines down.

Before the planning commission moved to approve the applications, Ferguson added that there was one more condition.

"We're asking that the school district work with the city to pursue the extension of Gateway Blvd." She said. The city has already been purchasing property for well over two decades to make an extension of Gateway with the intention of connecting the street to Cleveland St. to create a loop around the city.

The planning commission approved the applications with several members of the community stepping forward to thank the city for its cooperation with the South Lane School District on the project.

The new school is expected to open in 2018.



Oregon Department of Transportation Public Hearing/Open House (STIP)

Wednesday, February 8, 2017

Lane County ACT Open House

4:30-5:15pm;

followed by Lane County ACT Meeting

5:30-7:00pm

Lane County Public Works Complex
3040 N Delta Hwy, Eugene, OR, Goodson Conference Room

The open house will feature maps to view and handouts about selected projects. ODOT staff will be on hand to answer questions and take comments. There will be comment cards available to leave comments regarding specific projects.

The meeting is open to the public for comment.

To view or comment on this document, please visit:

http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/TD/STIP/STIP/DRAFT_STIP_18-21.pdf

You can also contact the Region 2 STIP

and Financial Plan Manager John Maher at Ph. 503-986-2614

or his email address: John.D.MAHER@odot.state.or.us.

Accommodations will be provided to persons with disabilities.

To request an accommodation,

please call John Maher the Region 2 STIP and Financial Plan Manager.

Statewide Transportation Improvement Program
Draft 2018 to 2021 STIP for Public Review



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