

Council *from A1*

the use of the land was borne by a school board which failed to plan and budget properly.

"We were told that that area was going to become a community-use area," she said. "It was going to be playgrounds. It was going to be an almost Parks & Rec-type situation. And because they did not budget well, they don't have the money to do what they promised."

Patterson worried that giving the school board rezoning options — and thus potentially more profit from the planned sale of the land — was effectively rewarding bad behavior.

Trusting the school board to ensure that the

land would not be sold off to build apartments, she said, was not a level of trust that had been earned and keeping zoning at R1 could at least minimize the impact if the school board does indeed allow for residential development.

"No one I have talked to trusts the school board to keep their promises," said Patterson as she bid the council, "We're asking you to take a second look at this."

Councilors addressed Patterson's statement as the ordinance was brought to the table for a vote.

Councilor Jake Boone explained that as the matter was quasi-judicial, "We can only decide things based on very limited criteria. ... I don't

think we are able to deny this application based on whether or not the school district budgets properly or whether or not the school district said anything to someone that they then didn't fulfill."

Boone emphasized that the council's responsibility was simply to make sure the application met requirements set by the law.

"As far as I can tell it does," he said. "It's not the case that we're ignoring anyone, but this is not the venue to pursue a problem with the school board in particular."

Councilor Mike Fleck added that the council's role in creating code was legislative, but applications could only be assessed with regard to meeting the code's criteria.

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"If we go outside of that, we could end up with a challenge to move and have that come back or end up in the courts," he said. "The criteria in our code does not include the voting process with the voters. It doesn't include the school's budgeting process."

Fleck also extended his appreciation of citizen complaints.

"I certainly understand concerns, but what has to happen is we have to follow this document," he said. "I do not find in this document that the applicant has not met the code and therefore I'm going to support this."

Fleck then offered to answer questions after the meeting.

The ordinance passed unanimously.

Other items at the meeting included:

• LTD MOD program

Mark Johnson, assistant general manager of the Lane Transit District (LTD), presented an update on the LTD Mobility on Demand (MOD) program underway in Cottage Grove.

Now halfway through its 12-month pilot program, MOD transportation services launched on

Jan. 14 as LTD planned to reduce its service to Cottage Grove. The program, which utilizes local company South Lane Wheels, allows passengers to book trips anywhere within the city by using a mobile app, the website or with a phone call.

Johnson reported an average ridership of about 65 people per day and more than 1,500 riders in April. Wait times were reported to be averaging at about 13 minutes, with 10 percent taking over 30 minutes and another 10 percent taking under five minutes.

With an electronic payment system coming this week and student passes which will allow middle and high school students to ride for free planned for this fall, ridership is expected to rise.

"Now we're just in a process of evaluation," said Johnson. "We're paying attention to the community and how they're responding to it."

Councilors Mike Fleck, Greg Ervin and Candace Solesbee commended the program, though some residents raised concerns before the council.

Resident Jane Rapier commented that she was dissatisfied with having to wait up to 30 minutes

at times.

"You have no idea when you're going to get home or whether you're going to make it to an appointment," she said. "Therefore, you cannot do any planning ahead."

Rapier also lamented that waiting at the transit station at Walmart was unsafe in the dark.

"I definitely dislike the service," she said.

Resident Donald Nordin, a member of the LTD board, also said he was disappointed with the stop at Walmart and expressed hope that LTD could bring regular service back downtown to encourage tourism.

"I'm hoping that by the time we do route reviews in January, evaluate the service, that at least we'll have some service coming into the center of town like all the other communities in Lane County," Nordin said.

• Main Street Program Coordinator

Main Street Program Coordinator Jared Sidman shared the progress made in his 11 months with the city as his tenure comes to a close.

Sidman's contributions to the city included the 2018 Halloween Howl event, Turkey Drop-in, Christmas Kick-off, the creation and launch of History Pub, helping to secure a \$200,000 Oregon Main Street Revitalization Grant for the Bank Building renovation and finding funding for the installation of flower baskets downtown.

Under Sidman's coordination, the Main Street Program is also spearheading a pilot project attempting to illuminate downtown with LED fixtures on the tops of buildings, which is to be paid for privately by building owners.

"I'll be happy to come back and see the growth of the things we started this past year," said Sidman.

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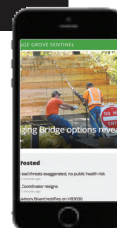
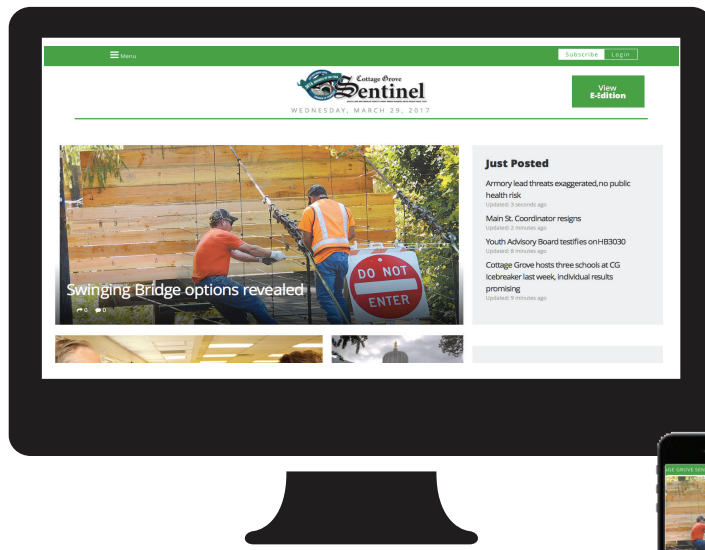
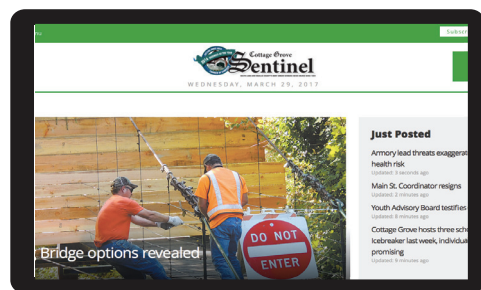
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