

School from A8

"We've been talking about the bond and what we're going to do with the bond funds since September, which we almost every month reviewed," Sullivan said. "And this position of Harrison property was always on there. And no one came in to [comment]."

At this stage, it is not clear community involvement would have significant effect on future board decisions.

"This is board work," said Sullivan. "This is not a community engagement event. ... We did community engagement when we went through the whole process of how we passed the bond."

Housing Implications
And so the project to sell the old Harrison property moves ahead.

The school board's next step will be to put out a re-

quest for proposal (RFP) which will request development plans from bidders, allowing the board to choose plans which meet its particular criteria.

What exactly these criteria will be remains a topic of future discussion and will appear on a future board meeting agenda.

"My goal is to get it to the board by our board meeting in September," said Sullivan. "And it will have stipulations and a process of what it's going to be."

Top concern for the district will be finding developers who can address the issues with the current building.

"Any developer coming in is going to have to come and deal with that building demolition and abatement of asbestos," said Sullivan.

The RFP will also ask for design plans which correspond with the property's new R2 zoning.

Initially, the school district had considered rezoning the property to R3, which permits multi-family units such as apartments or condominiums. With advisement from the city and feedback from the board, the district was encouraged to change the property zone to R2 instead, which allows for single family residences and duplexes.

"They were very concerned with the density that an R3 would be and they felt more comfortable with R2 because of the predominance of duplexes, individual homes, cottages, things like that," said Sullivan. "It fit into that local footprint."

Ferguson, too, was pleased with the collaboration.

"It helped reassure them that the path of rezoning was a better option, that it wouldn't hurt them financially and it would meet the stated needs that the community has," she said.

"I think it was a really great partnership."

In the Cottage Grove's housing needs analysis, it is suggested that the city build an average of 69 dwelling units annually to meet the projected need of 1,379 more units by the year 2038, a number likely unachievable if single-family detached homes continue as a development trend. The site at Harrison has potential to add several dozen units to this year's tally.

"You look at the needs of the district and we have a lack of affordable housing for young families and children," said Sullivan. "We've seen a decrease in our elementary school population over the last five years and that might have something to do with it. I don't know."

Putting in housing that addresses these concerns may turn out to be the easiest step; developers have already appeared at the doorstep.

"We had a developer who came in and said he was very excited that it was going to R2," Ferguson said. "He's very interested and has actually already started looking at how he would lay out development on this property."

Considering city and school district leanings, housing in the area would likely fit an income bracket that can afford between \$800 and \$1,200 per month in rent, according to Ferguson.

"This would be looking at the group that really can't afford a single-family home on a single-family lot, but can afford more than the low-income stuff," she said, "so it's going to be in that 'missing middle' section."

Cottage Grove's median household income hovers around \$39,000, a demographic which housing of

this kind would be able to serve.

"I expect this property is going to be developed as a mixture of things," said Ferguson.

While plans for this site progress toward what inevitably looks like new housing, those troubled by the region's identified "housing crisis" may be happy to learn that this development will slake some of the burden off the shoulders of middle-income families.

For those crestfallen by learning a new community recreation area is that much more distant, the time to protest may well be over; but it does not preclude the voices of a community to shape future movements in Cottage Grove's future.

Plans from A1

a designated jurisdiction.

Though the program was once a feature of the Cottage Grove community, it gradually lost traction and dissolved years ago. The past few years, however, have seen a resurrection of the program in the Creswell area.

South Lane County Fire and Rescue (SLCFR) and the City of Creswell began a Teen CERT pilot program in 2016, encouraging young people in the Creswell area from ages 14 to 20 to learn disaster readiness skills. Along with disaster training, teens were able to fulfill some of their re-quired community service hours through the program.

SLCFR Division Chief Aaron Smith is the program director for the district's CERT program.

"This, currently, will be our third year," said Smith. "We opened it up to outside Creswell proper as well, because the more the merrier."

The program proved popular enough, with eight participants joining the first year and an additional four the second. With the success of the Teen CERT program in Creswell, SLCFR was convinced it could be successfully reintroduced to the wider community.

"We've put some money in the program and now we're going to open it up to everybody," said Smith.

The program, which is free to join, is delivered in nine units covering topics such as disaster preparedness, medical operations and light search and rescue. The entire course takes about 40 hours to complete spread out over a few months. The program finishes with a disaster simulation in which members are deployed and try to put their skills to use.

Through the course, participants are expected to learn skills such as how to identify hazards, set up treatment areas, work as a team to apply basic fire suppression strategies, employ basic medical treatments and perform other duties as needed under the CERT organizational structure.

"We even added on there CPR First Aid," said Smith, "so anybody who goes through the program will be CPR First Aid qualified at the end of the program."

CERT participation in severe disasters has its own limitations, though. Teen CERT members, for example, were not deployed during the recent flooding disaster in April.

"Do we want the CERT team going out to the trailer park and wading through water that's moving?" Smith said. "That's the thing, that's where you have to draw that line."

However, CERT programs can provide support to one of the key challenges faced by the fire district:

manpower.

"If we can employ and utilize say, 30 more people ... they can cover such a bigger area and then contact us," said Smith. "It casts a broader net."

Smith hopes to introduce CERT to the community this fall after a public question and answer forum this September.

"We'll hold the meeting here in the training room ... and find out what kind of interest we really have," said Smith.

One of the challenges of keeping such a program alive is maintaining member interest, as evidenced by CERT's gradual fading away years earlier.

"We want the CERT team to be more than just, 'We'll call ya when we need ya for a disaster,'" said Smith. "If you just have them sitting in the wind and they took the CERT program class seven years ago, the Rolodex is going to be obsolete."

With Teen CERT, SLCFR has used several programs and events such as the Emergency Preparedness Fair, Fourth of July celebrations and firefighter breakfast functions as components of its outreach program, keeping members involved and connected with the fire district.

Smith is intent on continuing to give CERT members a sense of community

with similar outreach events.

"They need to do more than just sit at home at wait for the call," he said. "We want to create a family dynamic as well."

Smith is hopeful the program will provide not only training, but a stronger community cohesiveness that will ultimately serve to aid SLCFR in its mission.

"It's that small piece of the pie that's missing in the community to supplement our efforts," he said.

Communities Action Response in Emergencies

While CERT carries the authority of federal backing behind it, smaller groups, too have come forward to fill in community gaps.

One local aspiring non-profit, Communities Actively Responding in Emergencies (CARE), has ideas of how to provide some foundations for the community.

"We're offering preparedness opportunities through presentations and we'll do consultations with folks if they request it," said co-founder Shiloh Glaspell. "We help them figure out what they need and how to best prepare those supplies."

In contrast to CERT, "ours will be more focused on helping folks get the supplies that they need and help them develop a plan for themselves, because everybody's lifestyle is going to be

different," she said.

Glaspell fears that many households rely too much on government authorities to take care of problems during an emergency and as such emphasizes individual dependence.

"Within certain guidelines they can help to an extent," said Glaspell of the government bodies, "but they're not going to be there to help us during an initial disaster. So it's up to the individuals to be prepared on their own — be aware of their needs and surroundings. If anything, our snowstorm and some of our flooding taught people that they weren't ready at all."

Clear plans of action, she said, are critical to resiliency in the face of disaster, because not everyone's plans may necessarily overlap.

"Our city managed their situation exactly the way that their emergency plan

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