

To protect and serve

Two new police officers sworn in

Photos by Cindy Yingst



Clockwise from top right: Sheridan Crutcher, 29, (left) and Christopher Beem, 25, take the oath of office at Tuesday night's City Commission meeting. Crutcher smiles as his wife, Brooke, struggles to affix his badge. Beem, a former supervisor in the tire department at Costco, is pinned by his wife, Kristen, as Chief Matt Workman -- and Beem's daughter, Eliana -- stand by.

Plans approved for apartments near food bank

BY CINDY YINGST
The Columbia Press

Plans for Pacific Ridge, a 68-unit upscale apartment complex next to the regional food bank, have been approved with minor conditions, a move that will chip away at the area's housing shortage.

The approval did not come without some fuss by Warrenton planning commissioners, who wanted to see a park, playground and covered bus stop as part of the 8.8-acre project.

"If certainly fills a need in the county for workforce housing," Commissioner Chris Hayward said. "That's been one of our biggest concerns. These guys have spent the money (on design) and it's a nice plan."

The strangely shaped tract on the west side of Ensign Drive has high-voltage power lines, wetlands and a 100-year storm retention pond within its boundaries, making it difficult to design and locate the buildings and parking areas.

"We talked about this (playground issue) previously," said John Edwards, an engineer with Otak working on behalf of developer Dick Krueger. "The high-voltage lines bisect the property. Honestly, the only place you could site a park is under those lines."

The developer already donated an adjacent tract of land to the city for a future park,
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Artist's rendering of Pacific Rim Apartments.

City considers restricting locations of mini-storage units

BY CINDY YINGST
The Columbia Press

A push by Warrenton's mayor to eliminate mini-storage facilities downtown backfired when the Planning Commission rejected a proposal that would have banned them everywhere west of Highway 101.

About 20 people came to a hearing last week to speak against the plan.

"This raises significant legal concerns," said Sunil Raju, a lawyer representing Paul Leitch, who owns Sturgeon Paul's as well as America's

Best Storage north of Harbor Drive.

"The ordinance as written amounts to a regulatory taking of a business owner's property," Raju said. "It's as if a surgeon walked into the surgical theater and brought a hatchet with him instead of his surgical tools. It's poorly drafted, ... overly broad and overly generalizing."

Leitch said he owns a second piece of property adjacent to his storage units near Warrenton Marina and is in negotiations for a third with plans to expand his business.

"It's not fair to simply prohibit

them," Leitch said. "This ordinance treats my small business as if I'm a troublemaker and a blight on the city. It's anti-business and way too broad."

Several other property owners spoke against the proposed change to the city code, which deletes "mini-warehouses or similar storage uses" from the list of businesses allowed in commercial areas west of Highway 101.

"I don't understand why you would cut such a harsh line," said

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