

# Public rallies causing city headaches

BY CINDY YINGST  
The Columbia Press

The city wants to get a handle on public demonstrations after several recent political rallies last month posed health and safety hazards.

“During recent events in Warrenton, a group of people set up a barbecue grill and a table in a designated parking space across from City Hall on Second Street,” Police Chief Matt Workman wrote in a report on the City Commission agenda. “A week later, the same group set up a gas barbecue during a ‘flag-wave’ event in Warrenton Memorial Plaza park.”

The “Back the Blue” barbecue was supposed to support police and other first responders, yet a couple of the organizers became argumentative when an officer told them they had to pack up because the street event created a hazard. The group also had no food-service permit from the county Public Health Department, a requirement when serving food to the public.

“The city’s not granting any event permits because of the restrictions of COVID-19,” Workman told commissioners. “I find it ironic that, at a ‘Back the Blue’ event, one of them got mad at one of my officers.”

The place where the group had set up was near a “tough alley and a tough corner” for vehicles to negotiate, Workman said.

The silver lining, he said, is that the minor altercation forced him to pour through city ordinances. And he found many holes that need to be tightened.

“I don’t want to do anything political on any city piece of property,” Commissioner Rick Newton said.

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# Affordable housing project wins state funding

BY CINDY YINGST  
The Columbia Press



Trillium House will be a four-story 42-unit affordable housing project near Home Depot. It is within an easy walk to worksites, transportation and shopping.

Drawings courtesy Emmons Design

A 42-unit housing project in Warrenton, designed to bolster the lack of affordable housing for Clatsop County’s working families, has won more than \$4 million in federal and state grants and tax credits.

Trillium House will be in Chelsea Gardens, the city’s newest development area and one of the last developable properties along Highway 101 within city limits.

“Nothing was going to happen over in this whole entire area until someone made a leap of faith,” said Ken Yuill, a large property owner who rallied neighboring property owners to join forces in development of a unified plan. “If this catches on, maybe the next street over will do something.”

As infrastructure – water and sewer lines, etc. – is laid for Trillium House, construction of other projects will be more affordable.

“This is going to affect a lot of people’s lives,” Yuill said.

This week, Oregon Housing and Community Services awarded \$60.8 million in grants and tax credits throughout the state. Usually, “the North Coast doesn’t

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# Warrenton working to make routes to schools safer

The Columbia Press

Students will be safer as they head to Warrenton Grade School should the city win a Safe Routes to School grant.

A request for the \$400,000 grant from Oregon Department of Transportation would improve sidewalks and make other improvements in and around the intersection of South Main Avenue and Ninth Street.

Initially, the city had hoped the grant would fund a sidewalk project on Main Avenue from Ninth Street to the High School. But, while working with

its consultant on the project, OTAK, it was determined to be too big and less likely to qualify than the grade school access project, Public Works Director Collin Stelzig told city commissioners Tuesday night.

“That’s why this has been changed significantly,” Stelzig said. “Eventually, it will make its way to the high school.”

The Safe Routes to School program will award \$26 million statewide after considering requests, which are due Aug. 31. The city would have to kick in

some money for the project, estimated to cost half a million dollars.

Eligibility for the grant includes that the project must:

- Be within the public right of way of a state highway, Highway 104 in this case, which is called Main Avenue through town.

- Be within a mile of a school. Both Warrenton Grade School and Warrenton High School are within a mile of the intersection.

- Reduce barriers and hazards for

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