

# CANNON BEACH GAZETTE



MARCH 13, 2015 • VOL. 39, ISSUE 6

WWW.CANNONBEACHGAZETTE.COM

COMPLIMENTARY COPY

## Council tackles gravel roads

### Councilors debate how much public should be involved

By Nancy McCarthy  
Cannon Beach Gazette

If neighbors on a local gravel road want their street paved, their proposal will be considered in a public hearing where everyone can discuss it and the Cannon Beach City Council will make a final decision.

That provision is contained in revised street standards guidelines considered by the council at its work session Tuesday night.

While the guidelines say that existing “unpaved” roads are to remain gravel, the City Council will have the right to determine when conditions, such as a slope or other problems, require that a road be paved. Neighborhoods, however, can request that their streets be paved.

Before a neighborhood’s graveled street can be paved, property owners must submit a request to the city’s public works director showing that at least two-thirds of the owners support the project and are willing to pay for it. The city will contribute 20 percent of the asphalt paving, and property owners will pay 80 percent. Property owners could opt out of paying, but the cost would have to be picked up by the other property owners. Even one property owner could agree to pay for the entire project, said Public Works Director Dan Grassick.

Property owners who fail to pay their share within 30 days after the project is completed will have a lien filed against their property, according to the street standards guidelines.

A neighborhood meeting to discuss the project, including street design and cost, would be conducted. Following the neighborhood meeting, a public hearing before the City Council would occur.

However, the councilors debated the need for a public hearing.

“I don’t like the idea that a neighborhood can come up with an agreement and

See Roads, Page 14A



Bill Taylor, a timber feller with Trails End Recovery, chainsaws through a log to make it fit for transport. Most of the tree-thinning took place on the east side of U.S. Highway 101.

## Residents wish process had ‘played out differently’

By Erick Bengel  
Cannon Beach Gazette

As an Oregon Department of Transportation crew systematically cut down trees near her property along U.S. Highway 101, Cannon Beach resident Kirsten Massebeau took out her iPhone to document the department’s March 9 tree-thinning project — and to protest it.

Accusing ODOT of “destroying our scenic byways,” she videoed the workers and their machines felling alders, sawing them and hauling away the debris.

Between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., five ODOT employees and three contractors from Trails End Recovery, a Warrenton-based timber recycling company, removed about 30 trees 8 or more inches in diameter

between the city’s north entrance and Sunset Boulevard. Approximately two-thirds of those trees were taken from the highway’s east side, near Kirsten Massebeau’s home on Elkland Court.

In addition, the crews cleared 20 to 25 smaller “brush” trees, resulting in the total removal of about 55 trees that ODOT officials had determined were leaning perilously over the highway, posing a potential threat to drivers.

The crew “flush cut” the stumps to make them even with the ground and then covered them with forest material to disguise them.

The roadway was “groomed clean,” Public Works Director Dan Grassick wrote in an email to a reporter. “If you didn’t know the work was done today, you would be challenged to know any trees were actually removed.”

Eventually, ODOT may plant new trees in that stretch of highway corridor, where about 5,000 trees currently stand, according to an estimate by Bill Jablonski, manager of ODOT District 1.

Kirsten Massebeau documents ODOT’s tree-thinning on her iPhone near the property she shares with her husband, Phil Massebeau, who stands behind her. With some trees gone, they fear they have lost the noise buffer between themselves and the highway.

ERICK BENDEL PHOTO



## ‘Hazard trees’

Because the trees were in a state right of way, state law allowed ODOT to remove them without first obtaining a city permit.

It was the first round of a tree-thinning project expected to take several years. However, ODOT will not return for further thinning until next year, said Kevin Werst, the department’s transportation maintenance manager for the Warrenton Section of District 1.

A year ago, the department marked for removal about 200 dead and dying trees considered to be in danger of collapsing onto the highway. When ODOT identifies “hazard trees,” Werst said, “We’re obligated to take care of it.”

“We have a responsibility to maintain the right of way,” he said. “And some people don’t want it maintained to the level that we

See Trees, Page 4A

# Laurel Street neighbors unhappy

## Notifications errors, disregard for city code cited

By Erick Bengel  
Cannon Beach Gazette

As the City Council gave final approval of Jeff Nicholson’s development proposal for 532 N. Laurel St. March 3, the councilors faced an exasperated audience that believed an injustice had taken place.

Before the council’s final vote of 4 to 1, Councilor Mike Benefield — the only councilor who, in the end, voted no on Nicholson’s plan — moved to deny

Nicholson’s three requests: the planned development overlay zone, the four-house development plan and the slope-density variance. The room erupted in applause and cries of “Yes!” “Bravo!” “Courage!”

Benefield’s motion, however, died for lack of a second.

Although they knew that the council had closed public testimony at its February meeting, the dozens who had arrived at the March meeting thought they would be able to voice their opposition before the council cast its final vote.

The city’s land-use attorney, Bill Kabeiseman recommended, however,

that the council review its findings from the February meeting and vote on the Nicholson matter first, before taking comments.

“That’s wrong,” Buzz Johnson protested from behind the crowd of nearly 60 community members that filled extra chairs and lined the back walls of the council chambers. “This is a public hearing, and I know you’ve got your rules to deal with, but you have citizens here who are concerned, and they have a right to be heard.”

If public comments had been made before the vote, the council would have

See Unhappy, Page 7A



ERICK BENDEL PHOTO

Jeff Nicholson’s property at 532 N. Laurel St. has been at the center of controversy for the last six months. At its March 3 meeting, the City Council finalized its approval of Nicholson’s planned development request, allowing him to build three new houses on the 0.57-acre parcel and rebuild this historic home from the ground up.

# Compassion and concentration focus of yoga festival

## Instructors show different ways to meditate, including art

By Erick Bengel  
Cannon Beach Gazette

Sarahjoy Marsh’s workshop on compassion towards oneself and others — held the second day of the three-day Cannon Beach Yoga Festival — began somewhat paradoxically.

Sitting upright on blankets and yoga mats in the Cannon Beach Community Hall, the 33 attendees gave their first names

and then uttered a *noncompassionate* word to characterized their lives or themselves.

The choices were revealing: “lame,” “shame,” “sadness,” “afraid,” “careless,” “failure,” “judgment,” “impatient,” “anxiety,” “defective,” “abandoned,” “unworthy,” “frustration,” “disrespect,” “rejection,” “jealousy,” “selfishness,” “shut down” and so on. When her turn came, Marsh said, “unkind.”

“That’s a relatively cruel perspective to have on ourselves,” she said. “First of all, it’s fundamentally not true. And secondly, it doesn’t leave a lot of room for growth or radiance to flower.”



Over the next two hours, Marsh, a yoga teacher and yoga therapist from Portland, discussed yoga-based practices to reach higher states of compassion. Singing long, deep notes is one such practice, she said.

Marsh led the group, call-

and-response-style, through a vowel-laden Sanskrit mantra meant to induce a healing trance. It translates to: “May we practice together in a way that is effective and strong and produces luminous outcomes. May we not feel impatient with ourselves or each

Marnie Rodebush, foreground right, a resident of the West Coast, and a group of yoga enthusiasts adopt the Namaste Pose during a yoga workshop. The workshop focused in part on dissolving the negative narrative about oneself.

ERICK BENDEL PHOTO

other in the process,” she said. One benefit of singing in Sanskrit: “We’re also not likely to be singing about how the dog died and the boyfriend left and the house burned

See Festival, Page 11A

PERMIT NO. 97  
ASTORIA, OR  
PAID  
US POSTAGE  
PERMIT NO. 97  
ASTORIA, OR