

'Frankendunes' need grading, homeowners say

Breakers from Page 1A

A fence would be placed around some of the vegetation to deter elk, though Bruce Francis, property manager of the homeowners association, said that aspect may be negotiable.

Breakers Point staff and residents are calling the changes a restoration to "what once was." The European grass was a man-made problem, they say, caused by the planting of the non-native grass in the area.

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Newport office lent a letter of support for the project.

Commissioner Joseph Bernt asked how long the grading would last. Horning answered eight to 10 years.

Commission President Bob Lundy expressed concerns about sand blowing onto neighboring properties, but was told it would go into the forest.

Commissioner Lisa Kerr asked if the Breakers Point grading request would be one of several over the next few years to eventually complete the originally proposed 73,400 cubic yards.

If it works, Francis said, then Breakers Point would likely come back with subsequent requests to stop sand inundation.

"I'm anticipating success ... to be able to continue restoration," he said.

Kerr requested a time line to judge that success. Francis said it would take about six months to a year.

Hours of testimony

Many who spoke at the five-hour meeting said they themselves or loved ones are unable to traverse the dunes anymore because they're so high.

"What used to be a fairly leisurely stroll along the dunes, and then a gentle descent to the beach, is no longer possible for me," Breakers Point resident Michael "Mick" French said. After recent knee surgery, that descent is now steep and difficult to navigate, he added.

Breakers Point attorney Dean Alterman said the growing dunes not only impact the development's homeowners, but other Cannon Beach residents and visitors.

French said some in Cannon Beach feel the development should never have been built in the 1980s, but added that is an "old, invalid argument." If taken seriously, he said, much of the city never should have been developed.

Because the city approved Breakers Point after a long development process, Albert Thompson, a Breakers Point resident said, it now has a moral obligation to the residents.

If sand blew onto the streets, he added, city staff would remove it. The same safety measures should be implemented at the beach, as well.

Other residents talked about beach hazards, including being unable to monitor their children at play and fears that a dune may one day bury a child.

The spectacular views Breakers Point provides were also mentioned numerous times, views some resi-

dents feel they have invested in and subsequently watched disappear.

Susan Neuwirth said she used to "laugh at the rich, spoiled people at Breakers Point because they wanted their stupid view," but then she accepted a job as a secretary for the development's office and saw the effect firsthand.

"It's like being buried alive," Neuwirth, who does not live in Breakers Point, said. "It's literally like being in a coffin."

If the "frakendunes" had been naturally caused, she said, she wouldn't feel the same.

Community concerns

The original proposal for dune grading presented by Breakers Point homeowners last year faced significant opposition at previous Planning Commission and City Council meetings.

After the council's denial, the homeowners association initiated a notice March 10 with the Oregon Land Use Board of Appeals to appeal the decision. That appeal was dropped in May.

While speakers were predominantly in favor of the grading at Thursday's meeting, three stood to object to any new dune grading plan.

Cannon Beach resident Jan Siebert-Wahrmund said she supports "all of us working together with a new sand management plan."

Clay Newton, with Friends of the Dunes, said he's not sure Breakers Point even has the right to grade with nearby state lands.

Newton said he "appreciates the idea" of returning native species to the land, but added he's skeptical of the science behind the experimental project. Breakers Point should wait on the city to finalize its own dune grading plan, currently in draft form, and then work together, he said.

The scope of the city's dune grading plan includes an Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries' science background report that would provide research and data gathering from Cape Falcon to Tillamook Head, addressing dune growth, impacts of grading and disposal practices on beach contours, habitat, sand supply and more.

After delivery of the plan, an implementation strategy would then be drafted, followed by public hearings before adoption. City Planner Mark Barnes said that process would likely take a year.

Representatives of Breakers Point opposed the delay. "If the Friends do not believe in the science that's being presented, I don't know how in the world we're going to work together," Francis said.

He added that they're trying to present the facts to make an informed decision, and that he wishes "there was some middle ground."

The commission decided to continue the discussion to the next meeting, keeping written and oral testimony open until Aug. 27 as requested.

Seizing the prey



REX AMOS PHOTO FOR CANNON BEACH GAZETTE

A bald eagle stealing the other bald eagle's prey, a murre, off the bird rocks.

Legion crafts fest draws a crowd

Bazaar from Page 1A

The Legion hall is more centrally located and vendors, both local and from surrounding areas, keep coming back, Furchner said.

"It's a huge auxiliary effort," she added, noting the event is really made up of three parts: the vendors, a quilt raffle and a bake sale.

The Johnstons hadn't gone inside to check out the baked goods yet, but that too was on their list.

The couple were among hundreds who attended this year's bazaar. Bob and Oddny's son got married on the beach here, and Bob's sister and brother-in-law own a place in town. So each year, they come to enjoy what Cannon Beach has to offer.

It was a family member who recommended they visit the bazaar.

Bob noted it was a good suggestion.



Bob and Oddny Johnston, of Seattle, walk arm-in-arm at American Legion Post 168 during the Craft Bazaar on Saturday.

DANI PALMER/CANNON BEACH GAZETTE

New maps show potential flood risks

Maps from Page 1A

Columbia River, near Warrenton and Astoria. These concerns have stalled adoption of all Federal Emergency Management Agency mapping work throughout Clatsop County, including Cannon Beach.

The map changes wouldn't be good news for all, though.

Councilwoman Melissa Cadwallader asked about the impacts on those living along the waterfront.

Barnes is still waiting on that particular map, but answered it would likely be a 50-50 split. Some insurance rates for waterfront area homeowners would rise and others would lower or remain the same.

Oceanfront homes are most affected by velocity flooding, caused by storm surges, as opposed to downtown flooding which would come from overflows in storm drains.

The new maps show potential risks from veloc-

ity flooding that could impact homes on the beach. This could result in higher insurance rates for homeowners and new regulations regarding construction or rebuilding.

"I think if we're going to be helping a majority of our citizens, then we should do it," Councilor George Vetter said of the map revision request.

But he also sought more information and numbers on those affected first.

Barnes has requested the new maps and plans to bring them to the August work session for review.

"If I haven't made that clear, the map is going to be effective at some point in the future, the only question is whether we try to take measures to put it into effect sooner rather than later," he said.

Officials are exploring the possibility of sending a map revision request to FEMA to allow it to begin using the new flood plain maps, possibly within 90 days if approved.

Pelican Brewery coming

Pelican from Page 1A

Walls on the brewery side will be designed to give visitors a peek at operations as staff work a seven-barrel brewing system, making about 600 barrels per year, Pelican CEO Jim Prinzing said.

He added that Cannon Beach's location will be primarily utilized for research and development, collaborating with chefs and brewers from areas such as Portland. They'll be "fun, one-off type of beers."

He noted that production of core brands, such as Kiwanda Cream Ale, will remain at Tillamook.

Pelican has also acquired the Sunset Inn that sits next door. Prinzing said there are "no definitive plans for that property yet," but that they are exploring the possibility of making it a "Pelican's Nest" with pelican-themed rooms and a "beer-centric hotel experience" similar to that of the Dogfish Inn in Delaware.

Surrounded by pine trees, grasses and perennials, the building's landscaping has been designed to make it look like a "land-

scaped dune," Rita Frailey with Cannon Beach Landscape Services said.

Design Review Board members objected to the removal of the property's cherry trees, however, noting they were unique to the city, and negotiated the planting of three healthy ones in a T-shaped zone in the parking lot.

While the exterior design is now complete, Prinzing said they still have the interior and brewery to work on. He doesn't have any cost estimates yet for those.

He added that they'll begin the hiring process in December, and that Cannon Beach's managers will likely start in Pacific City for training.

During peak season, he said they expect to have a staff of about 60 to 70 people. In the off-season, there will be 40 to 50 employees.

Vonada said they're "counting on a heavy traffic flow," and that he expects the new brewpub to draw more people to midtown.

Schons noted they may be "overly optimistic" about starting the brewpub construction in September and opening March 1.

Cannon Beach's South Wind site also closed due to threat of fire

Ecola from Page 1A

Also closed is Cannon Beach's South Wind site, 58 acres reserved for "essential" city facilities east of Highway 101.

Cannon Beach Fire Chief Mike Balzer said his department's recommendation to close the reserve early this month was based on dry weather conditions and the influx of Fourth of July holiday visitors.

Fireworks and dangers from campers or transients building campfires

in commercial timber areas were also matters of concern, Kucera said.

Typically, the Ecola Creek Forest Reserve closure occurs in August or September.

"It's been very dry, very early," Kucera said. "It's better to be safe than sorry."

Lack of rain

According to Clinton Rockey, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Portland, the Cannon Beach area has only received about .02

inches of rain this month, around .66 inches below normal. Rockey based his estimate on Astoria and Seaside data, and added that Astoria had .73 inches of rain in June, 1.82 inches below normal. All of Clatsop County has been dry.

"The light showers we have don't really do anything," Balzer said, adding it would take significant rain to reopen the reserve. "It could be awhile."

Last year, Ecola Creek closed for about three

weeks, Public Works Director Dan Grassick said.

Kucera said Cannon Beach would need at least half an inch of precipitation in one rain event to open Ecola Creek Forest Reserve back up this year.

"There's not much chance of that happening soon," Rockey said.

In the meantime, Kucera said officials want to safeguard the public and protect forestlands and wildlife. There's also the issue of liability.

If a fire started in the city-owned Ecola Creek Forest Reserve and spread to commercial timberlands, Cannon Beach could be held liable. The person who started the fire, even if accidentally, could also be held accountable for fire-fighting costs.

So any who pass that red sign and are discovered on the property will likely be fined for trespassing, Kucera said.

"In my opinion, we're very lucky to not have had any forest fires yet," he added.



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City Manager Brant Kucera