

Winners of holiday light displays

Lights from Page 1A

“My maintenance staff worked diligently for days to put it together,” Blankenship said of the displays, both inside and outside the resort. “They did all the hard work.”

Blankenship highlighted the contributions of two employees: maintenance manager Art Stockenberg and executive housekeeper Iolanda Salome. “They really have to have the credit for putting everything together,” Blankenship added.

The award for best business window went to Bruce’s Candy Kitchen. The top residential lighting display was at 216 E. Monroe. The votes were collected online and announced by the Cannon Beach Chamber



ANDREW TONRY PHOTO/CANNON BEACH GAZETTE

Lights at Hallmark in Cannon Beach.

of Commerce. Each winner received a plaque.

“I’m really excited about the participation that we seem to have in Cannon Beach,” said Chamber of Commerce Executive Di-

rector Courtland Carrier. “We get comments from people all the time about how good the town looks.”

And while the chamber promotes the event, they neither require participation

nor facilitate lights for businesses who would rather abstain — all participation is voluntary.

For Carrier, along with a number of Cannon Beach citizens and visitors, the lights are quite welcome — perhaps even beyond the end of December.

“Having a lighting that might be up on a more permanent basis is something residents have told me they’d like to see,” Carrier said. “And I’m interested in perusing that.”

After all, Carrier too has felt the deep, darkness of the winter skies. On the night of Dec. 22, the shortest day of the year, Carrier and his wife celebrated with martinis.

“It can only get brighter from here,” he said.

Oregon Coast Alliance says foredune planning must be collaborative

Dunes from Page 1A

Follette said it should be updated more often.

The city considered prohibiting foredune grading after the Planning Commission approved a 13,700-cubic-yard Breakers Point Homeowners Association dune grading project in August. Councilors expressed concern over effects to the littoral cell without a finished sand management plan on hand, but ultimately decided to table the topic until further notice.

Other developments

La Follette said homeowners should be more thoughtful about the foredune grading’s impact on other properties. At Planning Commission meetings, Chapman Point homeowners stated the last dune-grading project completed at Breakers Point increased the amount of sand coming their way.

“It should give pause,” La Follette said. “It’s necessary to work collaboratively. What you do affects your neighbors.”

She called foredunes the “first line of defense in storm surges.” If the dunes are flattened, the area could become a safety concern in case of a surge or tsunami, she added.

When the Breakers Point Homeowners Association proposal to grade was approved, Property Manager Bruce Francis said the tsunami of 1964 showed the dunes provided little protection.

La Follette said the dunes are based on ocean cycles. In the 1990s, residents worried about dune erosion about rather than an abundance of sand.

With El Niño this year, there is a chance the sand will move on its own, she added. Littoral (or sediment) cells constantly move.

Patrick and other homeowners say the European dune grass has accumulated over 2 million cubic yards of sand over the last 15 years and needs to be removed along with the European dune grass.

La Follette countered that the Breakers Point Homeowners Association revegetation plan approved by the Planning Commission raises its own concerns.

“It’s generally a good thing to eliminate invasive species, but American dune grass doesn’t hold as well as European grass. The dunes move much more without it,” she said. “The grass stabilizes it. European grass is in a category of its own.”

Much of the area homeowners want to grade doesn’t even belong to them or the city, she added. La Follette said the land belongs to the state.

The views homeowners are fighting for are for everyone, she said, adding many like the dunes. They’re characteristic of Cannon Beach to some.

But homeowners say changes in dune patterns have made beach access a nightmare in some locations, especially for those with disabilities.

La Follette said she is not aware of any major public access issues, and added there is no guarantee to views or access for beachfront property owners.

Frank Patrick said the Breakers Point homeowners will likely regroup at the beginning of the year to plan their next step.

Comment period open for Nicholson subdivision

Nicholson from Page 1A

“As a builder, the building inspector made us get a geotechnical report,” Capper said. “The geotechnical report came back and said a standard foundation isn’t going to work. They dug some test holes and all they found was sand. This guy [Nicholson] says he’s not going to drive pilings.”

“Most of the people here live in the neighborhood and they don’t like the idea of a subdivision,” Capper added. “I don’t live anywhere near there. I just felt that nobody knew what my experience was. We put two houses where he’s going to try to put four, with a common road. And maybe you can do that, but nobody has signed off and said, ‘Yeah, there’s no problem, I’ll take responsibility if there’s any failure.’ That’s my big concern. I’d like to see him adhere to the same standards I do.”

“I’m not against building there,” Capper said. “But

there’s a procedure that you have to go through and he hasn’t done it.”

Rasmussen, Nicholson’s lawyer, contended that at this juncture their development plans — and geotechnical consultation — do not call for pile-driving to secure the foundation, though he would not rule out a change.

The meeting also included a lengthy debate over the Planning Commission’s jurisdiction to even approve or deny Nicholson’s application on the basis it was incomplete.

The objection, however, was mostly moot as Nicholson’s application was legally approved the moment City Planner Mark Barnes set a return letter accepting the application.

“The only way to stop that is for me to say it’s incomplete and say why it’s incomplete,” said Barnes. “I couldn’t in this case. There was nothing I could point out and say, ‘this is clearly missing.’” Barnes also said he

consulted with the city’s attorney, and that the attorney supported his finding.

Nonetheless, Cannon Beach resident Cleve Rooper addressed the audience in regards to Barnes.

“Your planner has accepted this application even though it wasn’t complete,” said Rooper. “It doesn’t reflect well on the planner. Maybe it shows his bias towards the developer, I don’t know.”

Rooper looked at Barnes and added: “Shame on you, Mark, for letting that happen.”

Barnes had no further comment.

Everyone at the meeting was afforded the opportunity to speak. Those who couldn’t attend were asked beforehand to submit written comments to the public record. There were no comments in support of the project.

As the two-hour mark neared, the Planning Commission voted to keep debate open.



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