



‘MISTAKE’ IN ARCH CAPE?

Clatsop County decision ‘lacked transparency,’ some say

By Lyra Fontaine
Cannon Beach Gazette

Some Arch Cape residents believe it was a mistake for Clatsop County to dissolve a design review committee that screened new development projects.

Tod Lundy, who was chairman of the Arch Cape Design Review Committee, said he was “appalled” by Clatsop County’s decision earlier this month.

The county failed to inform the committee in advance or allow them time to respond, Lundy said.

“I think the county has been looking for a way to get rid of our committee for some time,” he said. “It’s a burden for them to come down to Arch Cape and review every sizable remodel and new building.”

Nadia Gardner, who has lived in Arch Cape for 15

‘I’m extremely disappointed that staff made a recommendation and commissioners made a decision with virtually no effort to find out what folks in Arch Cape thought.’

Daniel Seifer, former committee member

years, said “the community is greatly saddened by the decision to dissolve a 39-year

committee. They were committed to making sure Arch Cape stayed special.”

Gardner said the decision “lacked transparency” and it was a mistake to dissolve an organization that gave residents and property owners a voice in Arch Cape land use issues.

“I’m extremely disappointed that staff made a recommendation and commissioners made a decision with virtually no effort to find out what folks in Arch Cape thought,” former committee member Daniel Seifer said. “Design review

has always been the community vehicle to participate in development and land use planning. The process makes for better neighbors and a better community.”

Other Arch Cape residents defended the county’s decision, which was based on claims the committee was costly, was not useful and limited to a small geographic area.

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Cannon Beach children’s center gets

3 STARS ★★



High-quality curriculum, family programming earn highest marks in Clatsop County

By Lyra Fontaine
Cannon Beach Gazette

The Cannon Beach Preschool & Children’s Center received a three-star rating from Oregon’s Quality Rating and Improvement System on Feb. 12. The rating is awarded for the school’s commitment to quality learning for all children. The preschool and children’s center is the first and only childcare provider in Clatsop County to be designated as a three-star program, director Christy Bisping said.

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Submitted photos: Cannon Beach Gazette
The infant room at the Cannon Beach Preschool & Children’s Center celebrates Valentine’s Day.

Last chance for Nicholson challenge?

Public hearing, decision expected in March

By Lyra Fontaine
Cannon Beach Gazette

Will this be the final decision? After a City Council approval and a Land Use Board of Appeals Decision, opponents to a four-home project on Laurel Street hope the council will reverse themselves at Tuesday night’s City Council meeting.

The council will hold a public hearing and consider final approval for the four-lot residential planned development on Laurel Street on Tuesday, March 1.

The meeting may be the last time that opponents have to make their case against the development proposed by Cannon Beach and Portland resident Jeff Nicholson. The application was returned to the council after the city’s Planning Commission found flaw with the proposal.

“I’m just plugging along and we’ve been over this for a year and a half,” property owner Jeffrey Nicholson said this week. “I’ve done so much beyond what was asked for in order to pacify the planning commission,” he said. “I’m just jumping through hoops and I fully expect City Council to give final approval.”

The city approved preliminary plans for the project in March 2015. Their decision was upheld by the state’s Land Use Board of Appeals.

But after outcry from neighbors and Friends of Cannon Beach, a nonprofit group formed to fight the proposal, the Planning Commission reviewed and found flaws with the application.

In January, planning commissioners said the Laurel Street development plan lacked details, including when and how the new houses would be built, landscaping, protection of trees and protections for neighbors during construction.

Friends of Cannon Beach said the approval set unwanted precedent for future developments, since the City Council’s tentative approval came after a threatened lawsuit by the developer.

Overlay zone at issue

The 532 N. Laurel St. property was purchased by Nicholson in 2014 for \$900,000. Nicholson said he plans to construct four family-sized homes on the .57-acre lot, which

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Jeffrey Nicholson

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LYRA FONTAINE/CANNON BEACH GAZETTE

Volunteer coordinator Kelsey Brown educates visitors at Haystack Rock,

Stewards of Haystack Rock

Volunteers make a difference as they help protect natural wonder

By Lyra Fontaine
Cannon Beach Gazette

It’s just his third shift, but Eric Owen is confident when he educates visitors about the marine life on algae-covered rocks leading up to Haystack Rock.

“I love being in natural habitats, so it was a good fit for me,” he said, stopping to point out a fish. “I’m looking forward to spending a lot more time out here.”

The new staff environmental interpreter for the Haystack Rock Awareness Program, which started its season earlier this month, has worked as a land steward for the North Coast Land Conservancy and holds a degree in environmental science.

Kelsey Brown joined Owen on the sunny Monday afternoon. She began volunteering as

a Rocky Shore Interpreter last March, before becoming the program’s volunteer coordinator.

“I wanted to get outside,” she said. “My favorite part is showing kids cool things they haven’t seen.”

Brown hopes to garner more volunteers for this extended season.

Call for volunteers

The Haystack Rock Awareness Program is seeking volunteer Rocky Shore Interpreters. Those interested in learning about the marine areas of Haystack Rock and sharing wildlife facts and trivia with visitors are encouraged to volunteer, even if they have no prior experience with marine life.

“They can have no previous knowledge, and they will learn so much,” program coordinator Melissa Keyser said. “I always tell new volunteers that even educators and interpreters who been here for 15 or 20 years still learn something new every time we go on the beach.”

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