

Dune grading appeal denied

Commission upholds sand removal permit

By Lyra Fontaine
Cannon Beach Gazette

The Cannon Beach Planning Commission rejected an appeal of an administrative decision to allow remedial sand removal at the Breakers Point condominium development.

"I think there are a lot of erroneous information pieces in (Oregon Coast Alliance's) request to modify the conditions of our permit," Breakers Point Homeowners Association representative Bruce Francis said at a late September public

hearing. "I urge you to uphold it as written."

In July, the city approved the homeowners association's request for remedial dune grading from the lawns and irrigation systems in between two units.

In August, Oregon Coast Alliance contested the city's decision to issue the permit. The nonprofit organization stated that the permit lacked compliance with zoning code, sand-inundation proof, sand-volume estimates, a time frame and impact on the Ecola Creek estuary.

Francis said the amount of sand to be removed is 10 to 20 cubic yards and that he marked the sand location in the application. "I don't

see why that's not specific enough," he said.

"This is all sand that's within the property constraints of Breakers Point," property owner Frank Patrick said. "It blew all over the lawn and we're just trying to fix it."

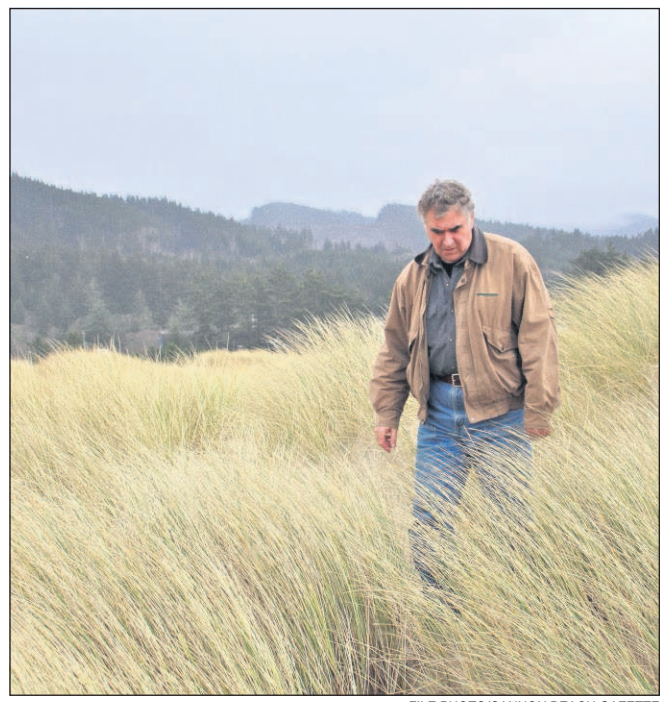
According to the staff report, municipal code includes a time frame for the project: a development permit will be null and void if work has not started within 180 days of its issuance or if work is abandoned for more than 180 days after work has started.

"I think some of the ideas (Oregon Coast Alliance) presented are good but I don't think they necessarily have to do with this permit," Planning Commissioner Lisa Kerr said.

The remedial dune-grading permit is a fairly common permit that many in Cannon Beach have, City Planner Mark Barnes said. Some permits are renewed annually to take sand off porches or backyards.

The remedial dune-grading permit states that the sand will be disposed on an eroding section of the Ecola Creek shoreline near the southwest corner of the property. Conditions include that all areas left bare of vegetation should be stabilized and revegetated. The proposal is not expected to negatively affect adjacent properties.

The commission could revisit the issue after the city's ongoing sand-management plan is finished.



FILE PHOTO/CANNON BEACH GAZETTE

Bruce Francis, property manager of the Breakers Point Homeowners Association, walks through dune grass in 2015.

Planning commission says 'no' to newer lodging on Surfcrest Ave.

Commission nixes hotel growth

By Lyra Fontaine
Cannon Beach Gazette

The Cannon Beach Planning Commission blocked a proposed expansion of the Inn at Cannon Beach on Thursday, Sept. 22, prompting conversation about whether more hotel units are needed.

The commission voted 4-1 to deny Hospitality First a conditional use permit to develop 18 guest suites in a two-story building in Tolovana Park. The additional units would be located on a .65-acre vacant lot at 132 E. Surfcrest Ave. and would meet demand for lodging during peak summer months and weekends throughout the year, the application stated.

"I don't see the purpose of creating more and more hotels," Commissioner Lisa Kerr said. "I see it as a detriment to the town."

Kerr said the additional units could impact traffic and



SUBMITTED GRAPHIC

The Planning Commission denied Hospitality First's request to expand the Inn at Cannon Beach to a vacant lot on East Surfcrest Avenue, shown here.

water use and lead to further development.

"Do we really need to keep encouraging more and more development of motels or hotels?" Kerr said. "I don't think you can take things like this individually. To me, it's a slippery slope. You have to look at the whole impact, not just this one motel."

Half the general fund

Commissioners said the project could lead to more traffic in the area, though the application stated that the site's proximity to U.S. Highway 101 would reduce Hem-

lock Street traffic.

The proposed hotel expansion would contribute about \$70,000 in new transient lodging taxes each year, providing economic benefit, the application stated. According to the 2016-17 city budget, transient lodging taxes are estimated to make up about 50 percent of the city's general fund resources.

Commissioner Joseph Bernt said the project would bring in money for the city, adding that 18 rooms does not seem "overbearing" compared to visitors who create traffic issues without staying overnight.



Lisa Kerr

Patrick Nofield

"These day-trippers are not providing the \$70,000," Bernt said. "If you're going to sell out to tourism, you ought to sell out for money rather than clogged arteries in the town."

Kerr said the city of Cannon Beach is "not poor."

"I don't see the demand being we need the money and the revenue," she said. "What it gets spent on is more celebrations and holidays to bring in more tourists."

Though Bernt said the hotel addition could be a "good investment for the town," he voted against allowing the expansion.

For expansion

Janet Patrick was the only commissioner to vote to ap-

prove the hotel expansion. She said a development will eventually be built on the lot.

"If its homes that are permanently occupied by residents, I would assume those residents will use a great deal of water," Patrick said.

If the project is approved, Commissioner Robin Risley said a stoplight for traffic and water-saving measures could both be considered.

The proposed development is located in a limited commercial zone, where a new hotel or motel is not allowed. However, since the property was a hotel site before 1979 zoning ordinance changes, a hotel could still be built on the lot under the city's pre-existing use regulations.

The lot, formerly the Cannon Village Motel, has been vacant since the former motel's structure was torn down in 2006. The request was based on a previous conditional use approval that has since expired. Escape Investment owns the property.

"We're trying to do something tasteful that fits into the

neighborhood," applicant Patrick Nofield, representing Escape Lodging Co., said to the commission.

Tolovana Park resident and Cannon Beach City Council candidate Herb Florer spoke in support of the project.

"We feel this would fit and conform with the existing uses in the area," he said.

Resident Jan Siebert-Wahrmund questioned whether the city's water supply can sustain further development.

"Hotels and motels use our water mostly in the summer months," she said. "Unfortunately, this would be quite a lot of extra water being used."

The Inn at Cannon Beach, which manages the 40-unit hotel on the south side of East Surfcrest Avenue and an eight-unit condominium development on the north side of the street, would also manage the proposed suites.

To continue with the project, the applicant could appeal to the City Council or resubmit an application to the Planning Commission, City Planner Mark Barnes said.

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