

With affordable homes the goal, rules face scrutiny

Planning commission considers code changes

By Brenna Visser
Cannon Beach Gazette

Does city code hinder affordable housing? The Planning Commission considered possible code amendments that proponents argue would help eliminate barriers for private developers seeking to building affordable housing in Cannon Beach.

A Jan. 25 public hearing was continued after some planning commissioners took issue with the fact those who live in the zone that would be affected were not notified.

Last fall, Mike Clark of Coaster Properties and former City Planner Rainmar Bartl proposed changes that would reduce parking and landscaping requirements, as well as increase height restrictions in the R3 zone — a zone designated for multifamily housing. The changes would only apply to developers willing to put a deed restriction on a project, which would forbid the apartments from turning into vacation rentals or condos.



COLIN MURPHEY/EO MEDIA GROUP

Nick Betts with Coaster Construction paints a room in a new house in Cannon Beach.

The idea came as Clark was looking into ways to rebuild the Sea Lark apartments, which reside in the R3 zone, that burned down last winter. The planning commission has granted a parking variance that reduces the number of parking spots he must provide to allow Clark to expand the complex from four to eight

units. But Clark wanted to look at long term solutions for developers, said Bartl.

Bartl argues reducing the city's parking requirements would be a way to entice more developers to build by allowing them to maximize the number of units on the property.

A study by the Victoria

Transport Policy Institute in British Columbia found that one parking space per affordable housing unit increases costs by 12.5 percent, which eventually translates into higher rent.

It also found the demand for parking in affordable housing complexes surveyed was 50 percent of what most

cities required.

By raising the roof-line limit from 28 feet to 32 feet, maximum building height for hotels in town, developers could build three stories to include more units, which ultimately drives down the rent charged at the end of the project, said Bartl.

But commissioners throughout these hearings have raised concerns about how raising rooflines would ultimately affect the character of the town. Commissioner Robin Risley said it is possible to build a three-story home under the current regulations if ceiling heights were kept at 7 feet.

Two times in the last five years, Dave Norstedt and his team at Martin North have attempted to build affordable housing for their employees. And each time, the team ran into roadblocks, he said. Norstedt came out to support the amendments because of how it would allow developers to build a third story and less parking, Norstedt said.

"You gave us a conditional use permit twice to build affordable housing, and we aren't. We put out this project to bid, and it was obvious fast the cost was going to be undoable for us," he said.

One of the main concerns planning commissioners have voiced about the proposal is the reduction in parking. With limited public transportation and skepticism surrounding parking studies conducted in large metro areas in comparison to a small coastal town, commissioner Lisa Kerr argues providing parking is a necessity.

"If there was a parking comparison with another small town that would be one thing. But these places all have robust public transportation," Kerr said. "It's not like that here."

But Norstedt argued the majority of the employees Martin North hoped to house in this project are employed through a J-1 Visa program, which brings students from foreign countries to work to help fill the growing number of hospitality jobs that are remaining vacant. Most of those students do not own cars and walk to work.

"For affordable housing to work, you need to do something that ensures some kind of profitability," he said, "unless you come up with some kind of subsidy."

Another public hearing will be held Thursday, Feb. 22.

Water rate increase will fund repairs to system

Water from Page 1A

But city councilors worried that without full funding from rates, the system would not be maintained and would eventually depreciate. Lingering questions about whether or not the plans should be fully funded by rates alone led city councilors to only approve the first year of increases with a commitment to re-evaluate in a year.

"When you do a 20-year masterplan, it's something you'll be constantly modifying and evaluating. We're trying to anticipate what's going to happen, but approving these plans doesn't commit us to any single project," said City Manager Bruce St. Denis. "Each year we will evaluate what needs to be done, and any project will be vetted and ran through the budget process."

Master plan problems

Part of what stalled this decision was concerns public works committee members had with how the water and wastewater plans were created. Committee mem-

ber Les Wierson, who has been involved with city public works in some capacity for 60 years, has long disagreed with what projects were listed as priorities.

While he agrees with the need to increase rates to finance needed repairs, he said certain items in the plans, like land acquisition and rebuilding reservoirs, shouldn't be factored in to be paid for by rates, but should be voted on through bonds.

"Our new city manager and our soon-to-be new public works director should be given more time to consider it, because it will have an impact on rate payers for the next 10 years, especially on fixed incomes," Wierson said in the meeting.

Councilor Mike Benefield argued that the plan is a living document, and provides context for how different projects interconnect.

"This plans also says we need to look at long term financing rather than being surprised a couple of years down the road when something fails," Benefield said. "Each one of our public works directors has had to start from scratch. This provides continuity."

Sharing the burden

The question of how much residents should pay for repairs on a system that is disproportionately large for a community of 1,700 to serve the influx of tourists continues to be raised by both city councilors and citizens.

Jeremy Clifford, owner of Voyages Toy Co., argued tourists should contribute more to subsidizing the costs of water infrastructure improvements before raising rates.

"We have 1,600 people living in Cannon Beach, but we have 500,000 people visiting every year. Clearly 500,000 people use significantly more Cannon Beach water than the 1,600 citizens," he wrote in a letter to the city. "Therefore, it is illogical to force the citizens and the businesses in Cannon Beach to pay for the entirety of the water infrastructure costs when the majority of the wear and tear is coming from tourists."

Clifford suggested the city consider a food and beverage tax similar to the City of Ashland, which uses the revenue to fund water infrastructure and parks. He

also suggested picking one of the city's parking lots and metering it for day use.

"If only 10 percent of tourists paid \$5 to park all day, the city would generate \$250,000 in parking revenue. Use that revenue to fund your city water issues," he said.

Others, like Mike Manzulli of the Ecola Creek Watershed Council, supported the increase to fix what he said has long been a culprit in high bacteria readings at outfalls that drain onto the beach. A section in the water and wastewater master plan highlighted 40 different locations where sewer pump stations and pipelines had leaks that could be contributing to high bacteria readings at places like the Gower Street and Chisana Creek outfalls.

"The public health issues surrounding these leaks in the Chisana and Gower Basins demand immediate attention and high prioritization," he continued.

What projects will be financed with the new revenue will be decided during the budget process this spring, St. Denis said.

City tackles emergent issues at goal retreat

Goals from Page 1A

affordable housing is going to address larger realities like the prevalence of short term rentals and high property values.

"How do you provide long-term when short-term rental is the profit?" Steidel said. "The income you could get from long-term versus a short-term rental used to be on par, now you can make much more than a short-term."

"Those houses aren't rental properties. They aren't properties people can rent," councilor Brandon Ogilvie added, in reference to high property values.

There was also renewed interest in prioritizing the purchase of the former Cannon Beach Elementary School. In the most recent citizen survey, more than two-thirds citizens said buying the property from Seaside School District was a high priority or medium priority.

Finally, city staff and council expressed issues with the current city hall. Some asked that a study be conducted to see whether it is economically advantageous to attempt repairs like installing a fire sprinkler system and other structural issues, or if a full renovation is in order.

Going coastal with new women's marketing event in Seaside

Oregon Coast Women's Expo coming Feb. 18

By Eve Marx
For Cannon Beach Gazette



WOMEN'S COASTAL EXPO

Event organizer Allie Kloster.

When Allie Kloster moved to Seaside two years ago, among other things, she saw opportunity. "I'm a full time social media consultant and manager," Kloster said. "I live on Wi-Fi."

Kloster, who grew up in western Pennsylvania, met her husband, a Seaside native, when they were both living in Portland. (His mom now lives in Gearhart.) The couple enjoyed spending time at the beach; two years ago they decided to move to Seaside and make it their full-time residence. Recently Kloster had the idea to produce a coastal

women's expo and hold it at the Seaside Civic and Convention Center.

"It's a one-day event," Kloster said. "We'll have a little bit of everything of interest to women — fitness, lifestyle, mindset, local artisans, nonprofits, activity groups, business owners, inspiring speakers, a charity raffle and even an awards ceremony."

Women vendors will showcase unique products and services from the Oregon coast. "It's a celebration of creative entrepreneurs and the womanly spirit. It's a family friendly event open to all ages," she added.

Kloster expects a turnout of established business owners, entrepreneurs, Pacific Northwest enthusiasts, and "Basically anyone looking to have fun and be inspired."

Kloster said she was inspired to produce the expo herself after experiencing the Portland Women's Expo, held at the Oregon Convention Center, a 400-exhibitor event featuring food, wine, music, fun and fashion, and often described as the number one choice for girlfriends day out in Portland for over 20 years.

"The Oregon Coast Women's Expo is a brand new event," Kloster said. "I'm a

businesswoman and I enjoy bringing more people to the coast. I love creating events and awareness and empowerment around women in business."

The expo was conceived as a fun event she would want to attend herself. "When I saw there was nothing like the Portland Women's Expo happening in Seaside, I decided to make it happen," she said. "It's free, it's fun. All you have to do is show up."

Professional and inspirational speakers are scheduled, covering a variety of topics. "There are speakers on fitness, health, lifestyle, and entrepreneurship." Vendors will be selling handcrafted soaps and lotions, as well as other artisanal goods. There is a vendor selling locally dyed yarn, as well as other colorful and wearable items. Handmade jewelry is for sale

inspired by the Pacific Northwest. The expo also features naturopathic women's health care resources, as well as professional services.

And then there's the wine and spirit tasting. Bottles will be for sale.

A charitable element engages donations for dogs and cats to benefit a local shelter.

Sponsors, volunteers, and exhibitors are still wanted. The Women's Expo takes place on Sunday, Feb. 18, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., at the Seaside Civic and Convention Center. Check out ocwexpo.com. For more information, contact Allie Kloster at 503-317-7163, or email her at ocwexpo@gmail.com.

THE COASTER THEATRE PLAYHOUSE PRESENTS



February 2-24, 2018

Tickets \$20 or \$25
Shows begin at 7:30pm
Sunday shows at 3:00pm

Sponsored by
Mike & Tracey Clark

COASTER THEATRE PLAYHOUSE
108 N Hemlock St
Cannon Beach, OR

Tickets: 503-436-1242
coastertheatre.com



SERVING LUNCH & DINNER

OPEN AT 11:30
Tuesday's Open at 4pm

Delightful Beer
Garden • Ocean View Deck
Pool Tables • Darts
Full Bar (including Bill's Tavern brews)
but that's not all...

Smoked Pork Ribs • Steak • Seafood
and much, much more!

Located in SOUTH Cannon Beach
3301 S. Hemlock St. • Tolovana Park
503.436.1130 • Minors Welcome

powered by



music first



Experience Family Dining in a Relaxed & Friendly Environment

Serving Seafood, Pizza, Sandwiches, Espressos, Beer, Wine, Ice Cream and our Homemade Desserts

We have a fabulous patio where you can enjoy the weather and your meal.

Breakfast
Lunch
Dinner

"TO-GO" Orders Welcome

156 N. Hemlock • Cannon Beach
503.436.9551
Owned and Operated by the Cleary Family