

An insider's tour of convention center

SEEN FROM SEASIDE

R.J. MARX



As the clock winds down, the \$15 million Seaside Civic and Convention Center expansion and renovation project will come to a close after 15 months.

A public reopening of the building is scheduled for Sept. 5.

In early August, Convention Center General Manager Russ Vandenberg led a tour through the center as it wound down its final phases.

At the concession center, a fryer has been added for food service. A sliding overhanging door will close the area from view when it is closed.

Restrooms have been expanded with added stalls and moved from the east corner closer to the center of the lobby. Two restrooms remain in place in the west corner.

Flexibility is a key to the renovation, Vandenberg said, with movable walls and dividers to enable adaptable use, including lobby check-in areas and registration booths. "The client can decide on that," he said.

The 6,500-square-foot Necanicum Room overlooks the Necanicum River and the expanded sidewalk area, with new overhead LED lighting and carpet tiles. The power now comes from the floor rather than the ceiling. Before everything had to be dropped down. "Now everything is a cleaner application for the trade shows," Vandenberg said.

The new floor covers all public spaces, with the exception of the 10,500-square-foot Pacific Room, which has a concrete floor. The Pacific Room floor received a complete sanding, charcoal staining and lacquered finish, Vandenberg said.

In the larger Pacific Room, ceiling mounted projectors can display on drop-down screens.

The project added about 50 Wi-Fi routers, along with additional outlets and wiring throughout the building.

A kitchen area at the southwest corner of the first floor enables greater ease of access for serving meals.

Upstairs, the Sand Dollar rooms received an update and remodeling. "They weren't used a lot, because they weren't soundproof," he said. "Now, these walls are soundproof."



Construction worker in the main lobby. Work is expected to be completed at the end of the month.



New lighting in the Necanicum Room.

Upstairs areas offer room for overflow seating and pre-function location for events like high school graduation or the Miss Oregon Scholarship Pageant, he said.

The corner "Sunset Room" offers views and breakout space for clients.

A former freight elevator has seen upgrades to also accommodate public use.

In upstairs hallways, acoustic panels provide better sound "so noise doesn't bounce off the walls."

The upstairs Riverside Room can be configured into three rooms, with a capacity of 250 people. An elevator runs to the

downstairs kitchen.

Overall, there are 13 separate breakout rooms, he said.

The new Sunrise Room also offers meeting space upstairs.

New storage areas upstairs eliminate the need for workers to bring everything from floor to floor.

The public is invited to the Sept. 5 reopening, from 4 to 6 p.m., with a presentation and guided tours.

"I'm really proud of this project," Vandenberg said, the tour ending where it became, at the northwest entrance.



Russ Vandenberg, general manager of the Seaside Civic and Convention Center, leads an August tour.

SOFFIT, SIDEWALKS, OUTDOOR LIGHTING REMAIN

Delivery of a metal soffit panels will delay exterior work 30 days at the Seaside Civic and Convention Center, the center's general manager Russ Vandenberg told members of the Seaside City Council Aug. 26.

"This is a zero-sum changeover," Vandenberg said.

Work on the convention center's \$15 million expansion and renovation project began early last summer.

Vandenberg said he anticipates one additional change order of about \$36,000 for a new sidewalk on the east side of the building and bollard lighting fixtures to illuminate the river path. Vandenberg expects a contingency balance of \$115,000 at the project's conclusion.

That does not include an additional art budget of \$150,000 that will be used to hire an art curator and artwork, which will happen in about a six-month period after construction is completed.

The schedule delay will not change plans for the open house scheduled Sept. 5.

Mayor Jay Barber and city councilors unanimously approved the change orders.

"There were some doubts on this panel that you can't hold to that budget — but you did," Barber said. "That is an amazing accomplishment for you and the construction company, O'Brien, and all the people that worked on this project."

"We're on budget, with a little delay of time," Vandenberg said. "I think we're moving along very nicely."

A gastronomic tour of Portland: coffee, schnitzel, anchovies and more

VIEW FROM THE PORCH

EVE MARX



We don't get into Portland very often but when we are there, we eat. While our friends on the coast tend to head into Portland to shop, see specialty doctors, visit grandkids, hit the airport, as gastrophiles, my husband and I experience Portland entirely through our mouths. Our son and daughter in law, who are also very food oriented, enjoy indulging in our habits.

We drove in to Portland the day after the much feared and anticipated white nationalists rally. All over the news we learned the city was braced for the event; thankfully nothing terrible happened. I was pretty annoyed by news coverage describing anyone who went to the rally as either "Far Right or Far Left." Ordinary people peacefully protesting white nationalism were labeled as extremists. And, for the record, if you're not anti-Fascist doesn't that make you pro-Fascist? We discussed this on the patio of Wayfinder Beer as Mr. Sax and I split a Black Lodge sandwich. This sandwich is smoked prime rib, beer cheese, grilled peppers and onion on a French roll. My daughter-in-law had a beautiful salad Nicoise made of yellowfin tuna, green beans, egg, tomato, Yukon gold potatoes, olives, and anchovies over a bed of arugula. My son, always a hearty eater, had a chicken schnitzel sandwich on ciabatta bread. We all had beers. It was pretty great.

We wandered around the Southeast Second Avenue neighborhood for a short while before ducking in to Never Coffee on Southeast Belmont. First we made a pit stop to their home to



Half a "Godfather" sandwich from The Baker's Mark in Portland.

let the old dog out to pee and to bring the young dog with us. We brought the min-pin to the coffee shop, which meant we sat outdoors. My daughter-in-law got a signature latte. I stuck to an Americano. The drinks menu at Never Coffee is very intriguing with offerings like the Holy Grail, a beverage infused with turmeric, ginger, and orange blossom water topped with local cherrywood smoked honey, tellicherry pepper, and Jacobsen sea salt. I was tempted to try the Rich Kid, which is a concoction of rose water, saffron and cardamom, as well as the Hugg, a heady combination of spicy cacao, smoked chilis, and cinnamon. My son only drinks black, unsweetened ice coffee straight up.

After a visit to the Burnside Skate Park where we watched amazing stunts, a few hours later we waited outside for a table for close to an hour at Ken's Artisan Pizza on Southeast 28th. The hour passed quickly as I couldn't get enough people watching. The people in Portland are for the most part quite attractive. The pies are worth the wait (they take no reservations) as they are thin-crust, wood-

fired, blister-crust marvels. We started with an appetizer of four exquisite baby meatballs and then shared three different pies. There were no leftovers.

The next morning our son had some working conference calls to make, so our daughter in law escorted us to one of her favorite coffee shops in their Hawthorne neighborhood, Oui Presse. They make a dreamy coffeecake that has real coffee in it. The shop also has a great selection of newspapers and magazines and the French Presse coffee is excellent.

We took a breather from eating and drove to Mt. Tabor Park where in the company of the younger dog, we took a brief if challenging walk. Our house in Seaside is a one-level affair and it's been awhile since I have climbed a lot of stairs. The idea of more food made me feel a little sick but we pushed on to meet up with our son who had finished his work call and was ready for his lunch break.

Our final dining destination was The Baker's Mark on Southeast 12th and Division. If you haven't been, this is an awesome place. Our son recommended the Godfather, a monster submarine-style sandwich made of Genoa salami, prosciutto, capicola, ham, mortadella and provolone which was dressed with mayo, mustard, lettuce, tomato, onion, pickles, Italian dressing, and pepper salad, i.e. "the works." Mr. Sax and I split it and despite my complete lack of hunger, I ate every bite.

For the past week I've been doing double duty on my sit ups and trying to walk a lot. I still can't close my snuggest pants. A trip to Portland is a treat but I'm glad I don't eat like that very often. Meanwhile, I'm going to try to duplicate that salad noise if I can find arugula at the Seaside Farmer's Market.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Beach safety policies in Seaside need changing

I intend to dismiss my suit against the city (see "Seaside drowning suit," A-1). The suit was my way of fulfilling an obligation I felt to Conner. The last act I could do for him, defend his character and try to ensure this did not happen to anyone else.

I filed this suit hoping to change the policies of the city of Seaside. However, for my own well-being, I am not continuing this effort. Instead I will describe the circumstances and trust the residents of Seaside to appropriately change the city's policies.

I appreciate the efforts of the hospital staff, the support of the funeral home and the compassion shown by everyone I met at Seaside, after my son died. I am grateful lifeguards were able to rescue my nephew and recover my son's body. However, this tragedy could have been avoided. I know that if warning flags were on that beach, the boys would not have gone into the water.

My son drowns directly in front of the lifeguard tower at the foot of Broadway. Just the day before two people were rescued in that same vicinity. We later learned this dangerous area was created by spring storms, which carved a 100-foot wide hole, with an abrupt drop-off, in the ocean floor. My

nephew described fighting against ocean currents that pulled him underwater. While media reports stated warning flags were at the water's edge, flags were placed there only after my son died. Given the public restrooms and manned lifeguard tower, this appears to be a designated swimming area. City policies should be implemented that warn visitors of dangerous ocean conditions, especially at this location.

The morning after my son died, Jon Rahl, as spokesman for Seaside, made a statement to the media. He disclosed both boys' name, age, home city and reason for visiting Seaside. He stated they were transported to Providence Seaside Hospital, where my son died and that my nephew was released from the Portland hospital where he had been flown. Through court filings Seaside stated making these disclosures were part of Mr. Rahl's job. The City Council should rethink having its spokesman disclose this private information. It is hurtful that family and friends learned of my son's death on the news.

The environmental conditions causing my son's death may never happen again. But if they do, I hope you will ensure the public is properly warned so that no other family suffers a similar tragedy.

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