

Container housing pitched at housing task force

What will workforce housing look like in Seaside in the future?

The Seaside Housing Task Force, an ongoing committee chaired by City Councilor Steve Wright, met Monday with Joanne Blackler, of Joanne Blackler Equipment Consulting LLC, based in Madras.

SEEN FROM SEASIDE
R.J. MARX



She and her father, Bill Blackler, appeared before the task force on Monday with a proposal for housing containers similar to those in use at work sites outside the U.S.

They may be of use in communities in the Northwest, especially areas with a large population of seasonal, agricultural cannery or logging workers.

“It’s a simple container concept, with quick transport and installation on-site,” Joanne Blackler said. “If you have budget constraints, this may be your way to go especially with the price of lumber nowadays and a timely manner. It’s a lot faster than having anything built nowadays.”

Delivery takes two to three months.

The containers can be set directly on the ground or on cement blocks, she said. Footings are available to raise them off the ground. The containers are more durable than an RV, with its 20-year expected life.

Inside is “plug-and-play,” with lighting, electrical and plumbing. “We could do commissary kitchens or little kitchenettes in them as well,” she said.

These originally were designed and built to serve the oil and mineral

exploration industry in South America, Bill Blackler said.

“The term I like to use they’re they’re built like ‘a prison toilet,’” he said.

“They’re tough, as opposed to a tiny home or RV. You’re going to get something that lasts significantly longer, that is a better investment for your money in that regard.”

The containers can be delivered empty or fully furnished. A 40-foot container can offer 310 square feet, she said. Costs begin at \$80,000 for a 20-foot container, with \$9,500 added for shipping. Forty-foot units start at \$9,600. Modifications could bring down that price, and units may be available at a multiple discount.

It’s a concept that we’re not really used to here in the U.S.,” Wright said. “You’re trying to get on the ground floor getting this going. I think it’s definitely an interesting idea. Particularly because you can do it so fast with everything else nowadays.”

Whether Seaside zoning would accommodate the unvits remains an open question, Jeff Flory, the active planning director said.

“It’s different from a manufactured home,” Flory said. “It’s different from an RV and different from a stick-frame house. First we would need to figure out how to classify these and what building codes would be allowed by the state of Oregon to set these up as permanent dwellings you could set up on a property. ... What it would look like, I don’t know.”

Revisions to the city’s comprehensive plan may be necessary to take advantage of options like this, Wright said.

While the containers may not be the city’s answer, Wright also presented



Joanne Blackler Equipment Consulting

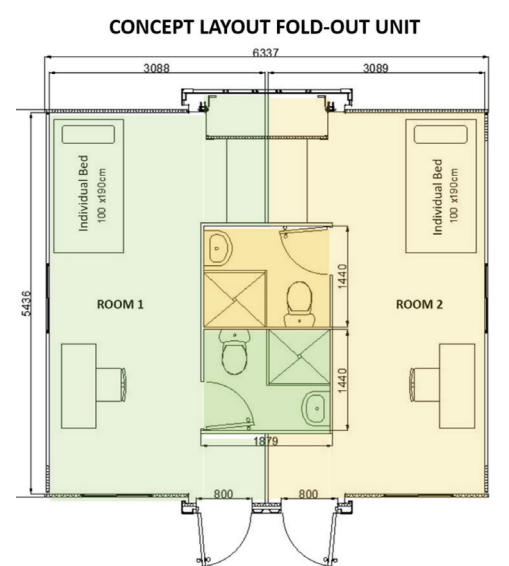
Containers like these are proposed for workforce housing.

potential modular solutions like those elsewhere.

“For us in particular in Seaside the biggest issue is where on how much space it’s going to take because we just don’t have much land, period,” Wright said. “We just need to find the owners of the places that do have it and figure out where we go.”

In late May, the county will convene elected officials and planning directors to talk about housing, Wright said.

“There’s lots of us around that want to do something about housing,” Wright said. “No matter what it is, I think every idea is worth talking about.”



Joanne Blackler Equipment Consulting

Layout of a living container proposed to meet workforce housing needs.

Fire station meets the needs of the future

Like all of you, I am not excited to pay additional taxes. But in the case of the proposed fire station, I am in willing to pay them. We support our volunteer firemen and obviously we and they need a facility that meets the needs of the 21st century. I plan to vote yes on bond Measure 4-213 and hope you will as well.

Karen Emmerling Gearhart

Stop selling candy cigarettes in Seaside

In the United States approximately 1600 youth smoke their first cigarette each day. We all know how detrimental smoking is to our health.

Yet here in Seaside, two local candy stores (Phillips and Schwiertert’s) continue to market gum and chocolate in the form of candy cigarettes.

What are they thinking? Do they really make such a profit on them to warrant making cigarettes attractive to children? I have asked both stores to stop selling them but have been met with resistance. As a retired Public Health Nurse, mother and grandmother, I respectfully request both Phillips and Schwiertert’s stop marketing cigarettes to children.

Sally Gardner Portland

When considering the bond, set emotions aside

Gearhart’s fire station bond are full of emotional pleas about the volunteers needing a new station. The Gearhart Volunteer Fire Department does need a new station. No one disputes that. However, when considering a \$14.5 million bond, set emotions aside, facts take precedence.

The preliminary geological report indicates the proposed site sits atop a large sand dune. Extensive ground work will have to occur to stabilize any structure. The survey was conducted July of 2021, the driest time of the year. The report mentions wetlands bordering the

proposed location but gives no guidance to the impact on them.

Moving the station from the town center increases response times for everyone in Gearhart. Even a minute or two makes a difference.

Gearhart already purchases a large portion of their water from Warrenton and only +/- 50% of the residents live here full-time. Warrenton intends to place a moratorium on selling more water. The “aquifer” Gearhart residents rely on isn’t an aquifer but rather treated ground water. In a dry year, available ground water will be less. Clatsop County intends to place a 1-acre restriction on building sites involving septic systems. Where will the all the extra needed water come from?

Gearhart doesn’t have enough buildable land, water, or economic development for the size and scoop of the proposed project. Without grants, the cost of this bond falls to property owners.

Please, emotion aside, look at the facts. The proposed location and price tag do not make fiscal sense.

Beth Cameron Gearhart

Firefighters earn your support every day

The evidence of growth is all around us these days. An empty cul-de-sac close to me, long unbuilt on, no longer hosts the elk herd’s overnight stays.

Instead, it’s growing new houses! I miss seeing the Gearhart volunteer firefighters practicing drills there of an evening. My gosh, they work hard! I am very proud of our group of firefighters. They deserve the best support we can give them. They earn it every day with their commitment to their mission and to the continuing education that they need to do it well.

The current firehouse was built 64 years ago, in 1958, and I don’t think anyone seriously argues that it is adequate today.

Sixty-four years is a long time; our new facility for fire and police will also need to serve for many years. Decisions we make now will reverberate for decades. I find it difficult to imagine what

Gearhart will be like in the year 2072, 50 years from now, but I hope right now that we plan well and optimistically. The investment in our town that we decide to make now will provide benefits throughout the lifetime of the facility. And history suggests that lifetime may be quite long! Let’s make the best investment we can in the future of Gearhart.

Please vote yes on Measure 4-213.

Janet Elliott Gearhart

Facility would play critical role in firefighter training

I have been reading many good and heartfelt letters to your newspaper regarding the need (or not) of the proposed fire station for Gearhart. I would like to write this one from a different perspective.

Responding to a current critical event is not the only reason to vote yes for this station. As one of the original members of the Gearhart Community Emergency Response Team, I studied, trained and remain ready to act in case of an emergency whether it be some kind of weather event, a tsunami or any other local emergency of any size or complexity.

We need ongoing training with professional trainers, many of whom are volunteer firefighters or locally hired staff of the Gearhart Volunteer Fire Department. As many of us are also ham radio operators we are available to facilitate communications when all else fails, and practice regularly with our local fire department, county officials and other volunteer ham radio operators.

The lack of space, amenities and other conditions of the current fire station for training purposes hampers our ability to be prepared and resilient in the case of an emergency.

When an emergency situation occurs, that is no time to be wishing that your CERT is not trained and available to assist the firefighters and the residents of our town.

Please vote yes for the fire station bond measure.

Pat Wollner Gearhart

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Contact local agencies for latest meeting information and attendance guidelines.

TUESDAY, April 19

Community Emergency Response Team, 5 p.m., 989 Broadway.

Seaside Planning Commission, work session, 7 p.m., 989 Broadway.

Seaside School District, 6 p.m., <https://www.seaside.k12.or.us/>.

Gearhart City Council, special meeting, 6 p.m., cityofgearhart.com.

WEDNESDAY, April 20

Tourism Advisory Committee, 3 p.m., 989 Broadway.

THURSDAY, April 21

Transportation Advisory Commission, 6 p.m., 989 Broadway.

MONDAY, April 25

Seaside City Council, 7 p.m., 989 Broadway.

TUESDAY, April 26

Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District Board of Directors, 5:15 p.m., 1225 Avenue A.

MONDAY, May 2

Seaside City Council, special meeting, executive session, 6 p.m., 989 Broadway.

TUESDAY, May 3

Seaside Community Center Commission, 10 a.m., Bob Chisholm Community Center, 1225 Avenue A.

Seaside Library Board, 4:30 p.m., 1131 Broadway.

Seaside Planning Commission, 6 p.m., 989 Broadway.

WEDNESDAY, May 4

Seaside Improvement Commission, 6 p.m., 989 Broadway.

Gearhart City Council, 7 p.m., www.cityofgearhart.com.

THURSDAY, May 5

Seaside Parks Advisory Committee, 6 p.m., 989 Broadway.

MONDAY, May 9

Seaside City Council, 7 p.m., 989 Broadway.

THURSDAY, May 12

Seaside Convention Center Commission, 5 p.m., 415 First Ave., Seaside.

TUESDAY, May 17

Community Emergency Response Team, 5 p.m., 989 Broadway.

Seaside Planning Commission, work session, 6 p.m., 989 Broadway.



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