

# Estuary: Residents wonder if outlook can be saved

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Resident Ron Graham said the entire estuary parking lot should be purchased by the city. “Let’s not beat around the bush — at least go and talk to them (the owners) and say, ‘How can we work this out so it’s a win-win situation for both?’”

In December the Seaside School District sold the former high school to TM Development LLC, including Tom Utti and Mark Utti, for \$3.2 million.

“One of the things we talked about was the parking lot,” Public Works Director Dale McDowell said. “That was owned by the school district — the entire area except the two city streets 19th and 20th. They’re undeveloped streets at this point, even though one of them is paved as part of the existing parking lot. There’s no curb or sidewalks.”

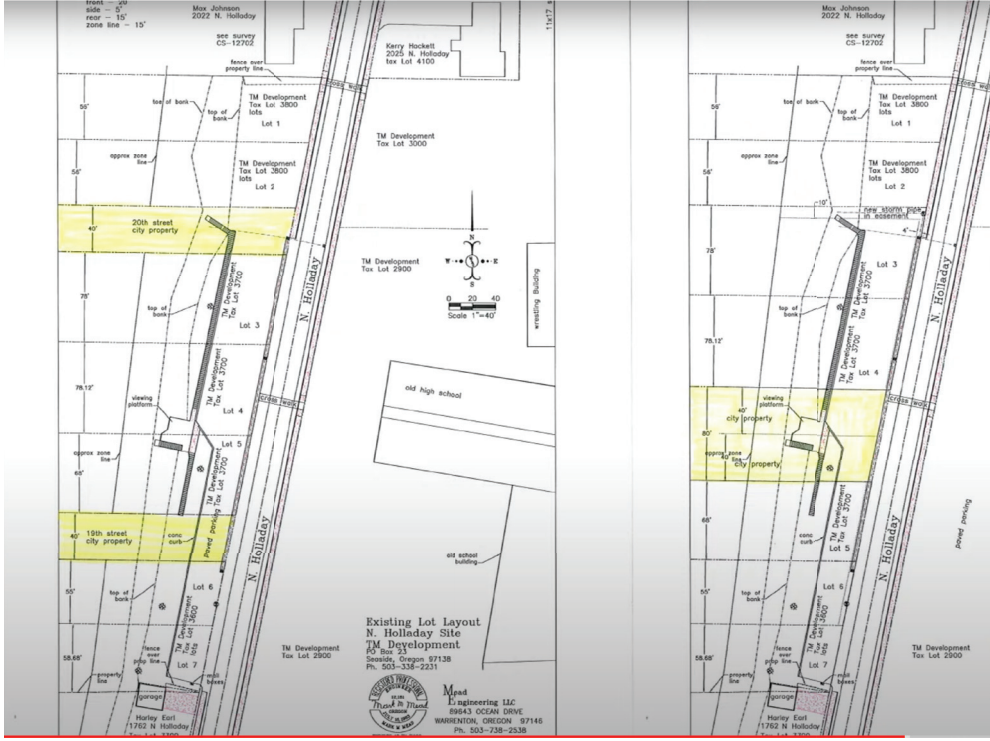
Of three shoreline parcels, 32,500 square feet are zoned R-2 for medium-density residential use, allowing 10 dwelling units per one acre. The remaining shoreline parcels are almost 28,000 square feet for aquatic conservation. Overall, the nearly 12-acre former school parcel is zoned R-2, with more than 454,000 square feet.

If the street vacations are adopted by City Council, the public parking area overlooking the estuary on North Holladay Drive, listed in the city’s visitors’ guide as one of the city’s attractions, could shrink down from more than 300 feet of estuary waterfront to 80 feet.

While no plans have been submitted for either the estuary area or the land east of North Holladay, McDowell presented drawings of the overlook before and after the proposed street vacation. If approved by City Council, developers would transfer a portion of land along the west side of the street to form a continuous 80-foot viewshed, which includes the



Parking on Necanicum near the estuary.



Mark Mead Engineering

A proposal to vacate two streets, in yellow, could combine land for a viewing area at the estuary. The new configuration is seen at right.

overlook deck. The remaining land, some now owned by the city, could be used for residential development.

Seaside’s parks advisory committee came to the City Council more than a year ago and considered ways to finance a purchase

of the park, McDowell said. When an interested purchaser backed away from the deal, the conversation was discontinued.

McDowell again reached out to the developers, who, he said, “are very approachable.”

Resident Thomas Schwenzer said the city could receive assistance in a purchase from the North Coast Land Conservancy or in city grants. “I’m going to suggest that we take a look at a larger acquisition by the city from the current land

**‘I DON’T THINK THE START IS THAT WE VACATE — I THINK THE START IS THAT WE COMMUNICATE.’**

City Councilor Tita Montero

owner,” Schwenzer said. “We might end up with the sort of parking lot that people are used to and viewpoints that they’re accustomed to.”

Others suggested that the owners be encouraged to donate the property or to negotiate system development charges that will be incurred during the building process.

Twelfth Avenue resident Pam Bierly said the estuary is one of only six conservation estuaries on the Oregon Coast, and should be conserved, maintained or restored in that natural state.

“Unlike other district properties, it has always

been a public place and even is labeled on various tourist maps and reviews,” Bierly said. “It’s also listed online at the city of Seaside parks information and most recently, the Prom Centennial booklet calls it a park.”

Council members directed McDowell to pursue discussions with the owners.

“I love the idea of doing this,” Randy Frank said. “I think it would behoove us to explore all the options we might have. Currently we don’t know what those are.”

Councilor Tita Montero called it a “two-way conversation” between the city and developers. “What are you thinking about?” “What does the city need?” “What do the citizens need?” I don’t think the start is that we vacate — I think the start is that we communicate.”

McDowell and Barber met with the TM Development team on Tuesday afternoon, McDowell said, and discussed options for obtaining additional property along the Estuary. “The meeting was well received, and all parties are eager to work together on a possible solution.”

## NEWS NOTES

### SOLVE cleanup on Gearhart beaches

Sign up for the Gearhart Beach Cleanup on Saturday from 10 a.m. to noon.

Meet at the Gearhart Beach access off 10th Street. There is limited paved parking, with additional parking on the beach recommended for hardy vehicles only.

This event is part of the annual Oregon Spring Cleanup, presented by PGE.

The beach cleanup is family-friendly, and volunteers of all ages will find the event fun and rewarding. Help protect marine life and maintain the beauty of our coast. Be prepared by dressing for any weather and wearing sturdy shoes. Participants are encouraged to bring their own reusable bucket/bag, gloves and water bottle to help reduce plastic waste. SOLVE will provide bags and gloves. Please keep dogs on a leash and steer clear of roped off snowy plover nesting areas.

### Seaside Library presents April events

The Seaside Public Library presents live events throughout April.

On Saturday, April 30 at 2 p.m. the Friends of Seaside Public Library will host long-time sportswriter Kerry Eggers who will be discussing his most recent book, “Jerome Kersey: Overcoming the Odds.” This event will be held in the Community Room of the Seaside Public Library with a Q&A and signing following the book talk.

Teen Tuesday, for teens in grades six through 12, takes place at the Seaside Public Library. On April 26 at 4 p.m. belt out favorite songs at “Karaoke!”

Storytime, for preschool age children, takes place at the Seaside Public Library. Sign-ups are required to attend these events so contact the library to reserve your spot. In-person Storytime on April 28 at 10:30 a.m. will feature the theme “Superhero Day!”



Seaside’s Future Business Leaders of America made an unprecedented showing at the business leadership conference.

### Seaside’s Future Business Leaders of America celebrate achievement

Thirty Seaside High School students went to the Future Business Leaders of America 2022 State Business Leadership Conference in downtown Portland earlier this month. Seaside FBLA finished in the top three in every competition, a first for any of faculty member Mike Verhulst’s chapters in 13 years as an adviser.

Their performance has qualified every student to participate in the National Leadership Conference in Chicago this summer.

## Posalski: City councilor, restaurateur sees the world

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to three weeks. The emergency prep package comes with two basic buckets, water barrels, bucket opener, bung wrench and emergency radio. Pre-order and assemble on May 14 at the Seaside Fire Department.

Posalski recently returned from a journey to Egypt with his son Berkley.

“I love traveling,” he said. “I’ve traveled since I was a kid. I think by the time I was 18, I’d probably been to 25 states. My son and I travel for Christmas. That’s his Christmas gift.”

In a separate trip, he was joined by his mother in Iceland, where he fulfilled a



R.J. Marx

David Posalski speaking to members of the Seaside Chamber of Commerce.

dream of seeing the Northern Lights, followed by a visit to Ireland where a positive COVID test delayed

their return.

With city budget season, a new camping ordinance and tourist time in Seaside, he’s

not going anywhere at the moment.

What is he most proud of? “We are definitely known for our pastrami, the tsunami pastrami, which is our signature sandwich. The other thing that I’m super proud of is our people.”

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