

Volunteer Fire Department

P.O. Box 2530/670 Pacific Way
Gearhart, Oregon 97138
503-738-7838 / 503-738-9385 (fax)
gearhartfd@cityofgearhart.com / gearhartfire.com (web)

April 19, 2017

Neal Bond
Protection Unit Forester
Oregon Department of Forestry
Astoria District - Astoria, Oregon

RE: Fire Access Road & Fire Break
Dune Area
City of Gearhart

Mr. Bond,

The City of Gearhart is in the process of setting guidelines for a fire road and "clear space" in the proximity of Neacoxie Boulevard right-of-way, west of the structures located on Ocean Ave, and to the south towards Little Beach. Please reference the included map in which the fire road is visible. There is a section between "E" Street and Pacific Way that is private property and we are unable to make any improvements in that section. As of now we still are able to access through these properties but could be denied at any time.

There has been discussion regarding our proposal since it would allow for widening of the "clear space" and the possible removal of the some coastal pine trees and other non-native dune plant species. The clear space would hopefully contain "light fuels" such as: European beach grass, wild strawberry, wild peas and the early blue violet which are more native to the dune environment. The following are some facts that we based our decisions on. If you feel that our requests are unreasonable or inadequate we would appreciate any feedback.

1. The fire road would not follow the entire foot print of Neacoxie Blvd.; instead it would be in very close proximity of the existing fire road which is visible on the maps.

2. We are requiring a 60 ft. clear area (approx. 30 feet from the center of the fire road on each side).

This is due to:

a. Fuels in excesses of 20 feet and the possible flame length that may occur (1½ times fuel height).

b. Topography near Little Beach has a 20 ft. embankment covered in vegetation, the possible flame length that could occur if a fire started at the base of the bank.

c. The existing fire road would remain similar in width as it is now.

3. The "clear space" could be used as an escape route and/or easily converted into a required safety zone in the event of a fire. Due to beach erosion it is impossible to access the beach from the dune area in any type of apparatus. Access to the east is very limited, only the Wellington Ave. access is safe and drivable in the southern section.

3. Coastal pine trees grow at a very rapid rate; this is very evident if you were to compare the spread of trees on photos over the last 20 years for this area. Having a 30 foot buffer from the center of the fire road would maintain safe access in-between the years when not maintained. I do not foresee the City of Gearhart budgeting money yearly for maintenance.

4. We would take in consideration the location of existing trees; to disturb as little as possible and still maintain our 60 foot clear space. The vegetation located near the banks of Little Beach (Necanicum Estuary) would be left alone as much as possible to help preserve the bank from erosion.

5. During the summer and fire season (depending on the year) resources are sent out of the county (both ODF & local FD's) because of this, in-county resources get spread very thin. With these limited resources having safe access and an easily defendable space could make the difference between quick extinguishment and the possibility of structures being threatened.

Firefighter safety is always our first priority, using the above as a guideline I feel we can safely respond and extinguish fires that originate in the dune area.

If you should have any questions please feel free to contact me.

Much Appreciated,

Bill Eddy
Fire Chief
Gearhart Fire



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Department of Forestry
Astoria District
92219 Highway 202
Astoria, OR 97103
(503) 325-5451
Fax (503) 325-2756

April 24, 2017

Chief Bill Eddy
670 Pacific Way
Gearhart, Oregon 97138



"STEWARDSHIP IN
FORESTRY"

Dear Chief Eddy,

I am writing this letter in regards to the fire access road and fire break of the dune area in the City of Gearhart.

In my professional opinion, I find that the guidelines for a fire access road and fire break in the proximity of Neacoxie Boulevard right-of-way, west of the structures on Ocean Ave, and south towards Little Beach as referenced in the email from Chief Eddy on April 20th, 2017 to be adequate and reasonable.

I hope that this information is helpful. Please let me know if you need any additional information.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Neal Bond
Protection Unit Forester
Astoria District, Oregon Department of Forestry

FW: Gearhart beach fire lane

Bill Eddy to me

10:28 AM

From: Pedersen, Tad [<mailto:tad.pedersen@state.or.us>]

Sent: Wednesday, April 26, 2017 10:13 AM

To: 'shkloepfer@gmail.com'

Subject: Gearhart beach fire lane

Ms. Kloepfer,

Thank you for contacting the Astoria office of the State Fire Marshal, it was my pleasure to assist you.

During our conversation, you requested that I summarize my position and my suggestions to you. First, I would encourage you to contact and work with the local authority having jurisdiction, in this case that would be the Gearhart Fire Department, they are the experts in their protection area.

As you, and your Dune Protection Committee move forward, I would take into account the following items, this is not meant to be a complete list: I would consider: The fuel model and it's seasonal volatility, the topography and wind patterns and their effect on fire behavior and fire spread, I would look at defensible space, both for the homeowners as well as for safety zones for the firefighters. I would also encourage you to look at the available fire resources and response times, as well as availability of heavy firefighting resources such as aircraft, both helicopter and fixed wing. The last thing I would encourage you to look at is the fuels themselves, are they an indigenous plant or an invasive species, as well as the potential growth, the estimated flame length is 1.5 times the height of the fuel.

I realize this is a broad list of things to consider and a decision cannot be taken lightly.

Best of luck to you and your committee,

Tad

Randolph "Tad" Pedersen
Deputy State Fire Marshal
Office of the State Fire Marshal
Oregon State Police
2320 SE Dolphin Ave.
Warrenton, OR 97146
Office: [503-791-4007](tel:503-791-4007)
Cell: [503-791-1568](tel:503-791-1568)
Fax: [503-861-0356](tel:503-861-0356)

Cal Meintser

to me



8:55 AM



Hello Chad

I was shocked to learn that Gearhart Park was not only on the list of possible sites for the firehouse but one of the top three selections. Gearhart park is an institution. It is the heart of Gearhart. People use that park daily and it's the most beautiful location for anyone living here to sit and enjoy the views, besides the fact that driving up to it is iconic with all the beautiful trees. To put a firehouse there is an affront to the residence of this town. Everyone I talk to about this is absolutely against it so I don't know why this site is not taken off the possible sites list. This park is a community area not an area to build anything. It is the backyard for the community. Everyone who lives here and especially the city keeps talking about the Gearhart experience, so why in the world would we ruin that experience by building a firehouse on a historic site that everyone has enjoyed for generations?

Gearhart Park must be left as is so future generations can continue to enjoy that area and make more memories and experiences.

Please take this in and please reconsider this disastrous idea that a firehouse on the site of Gearhart park is more important than the Gearhart experience that that site brings all of us residents. A firehouse should not be on one of the best locations of ANY city. Those locations must be saved for the enjoyment of the whole community. The fire dept should stay on the location it has now.

Respectively submitted.

Cal meintser

City of Gearhart
Chad Sweet
P.O. Box 2510
Gearhart, OR 97138

April 18, 2017

Dear Chad Sweet:

Thank you for your commitment to renewable energy through our Blue SkySM program. You join a growing number of business leaders who are helping to create a sustainable energy future. As you already know, participating in our Blue Sky program will require paying more on your electricity bill each month. As a result of supporting 82 one-hundred kilowatt-hour blocks each month, an additional charge of \$159.90 will appear on your monthly Pacific Power statement.

Know your impact

Over a year's time, your support as a Blue Sky Visionary partner will reduce your carbon footprint by 44 tons of carbon dioxide emissions, providing annual environmental benefit equivalent to not driving a car 94,385 miles. Your support may also help fund new community-based renewable energy projects in your state. Learn more at pacificpower.net/blueskyprojects.

Get the most out of your participation

As a Blue Sky business partner, you qualify for additional benefits, including the opportunity to offer mobile coupons to Blue Sky customers for free through the Chinook Book mobile app. To learn more about offering a Blue Sky mobile coupon, visit pacificpower.net/coupons or contact coupons@pacificpower.net.

You can discover more ways to get the most out of your participation at pacificpower.net/bizpartner.

Show your support

Enclosed is a window decal to help you show your support of Blue Sky. To receive a Blue Sky partner logo, please send your request to custcomm@pacificcorp.com. Visit pacificpower.net/blueskybiz for more Blue Sky resources.

If you have any questions, please call **1-800-769-3717** or e-mail bluesky@pacificcorp.com. Our program's success is due to the participation of customers like you. Thank you again for choosing renewable energy through our Blue Sky program.

Sincerely,



Scott Bolton
Vice President, External Affairs



When you enroll in Blue Sky, Pacific Power purchases renewable energy certificates equal to your Blue Sky purchase; this guarantees that renewable energy was produced and delivered to the grid which helps reduce the need for non-renewable electricity production in the region where the renewable energy facility is located. For every unit of renewable electricity generated, an equivalent amount of RECs are produced. The purchase also helps build a market for renewable electricity and may have other local and global environmental benefits. For more information about RECs, please visit www.pacificpower.net/bluesky or www.green-e.org. Environmental benefits are calculated using methodology outlined by the Environmental Protection Agency (www.epa.gov/cleanenergy).

Gearhart City Council Meeting May 3, 2017

Ordinance Revision for Dune Vegetation

Nancie Clark, PO Box 2132, Gearhart

Today I am summarizing a time frame for what I call "A View For A Few". I have referred to this in past correspondence to the City of Gearhart. Over the past couple of years this objective has been disguised and hidden under other topics for concern for the community. The aggressive fight to cut trees and vegetation for a view has taken the FEAR APPROACH when its original introduction was shot down. That was when a realtor had represented several Ocean Ave. homeowners that had put together a sum of money for cutting trees and was denied their request for obvious reasons. So here is how it progressed from there.

1. Fear of Vagrants living in the wooded areas
2. Fear of Bears and Cougars hiding
3. Fear of predators for women and children
4. Sex and lawlessness in the dunes
5. Fire

The first four didn't gain the traction because there was no credible basis for it. But fire was the one that could gain enough steam if enough fear was produced. There has been excellent information that has been brought forth from the community from professional sources on reasonable fire protection. It has all been ignored. We now even have a ghost road "Neocoxie Blvd" that just happens to be in front of Ocean Avenue Homes. It has been added as a "fire break". This is in addition to the fire road, both having dimensions that are far reaching and obsessive but very convenient for wiping out huge swaths of trees and vegetation but conveniently providing a view corridor. Also designating Neocoxie as a road opens up possible real estate deals in the future. This needs to be removed.

Everything has been poured into this "fire protection" that is purposely far reaching without any concern for wildlife and their habitat. There is no concern for the residents of Gearhart and Visitors for their quality of life such as enjoyment of the wildlife and walking paths. The newly formed Committee for Vegetation management was disrespected and totally ignored at a planning commission meeting along with all the information the citizens and professionals had brought forth through letters and speaking. The planning commission didn't care what the newly formed committee had to say because they made a decision before they had their first meeting. That was a shocking meeting. Even correspondence between fire departments on the width of a fire road has been going back and forth with questionable answers.

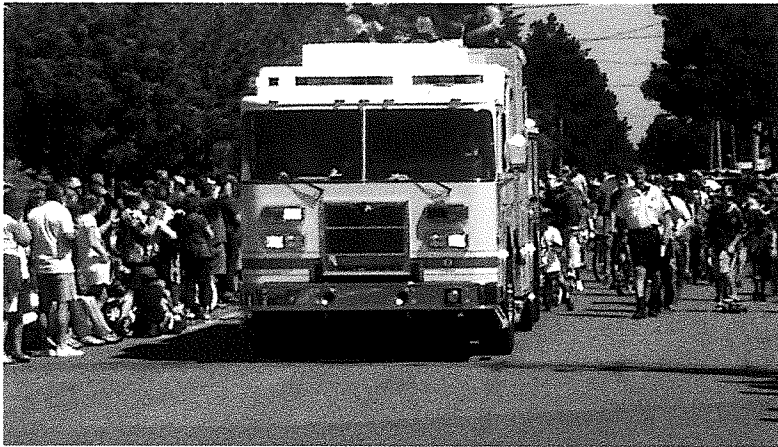
Now at the end the original fears have now been brought back the last few days to make sure all the angles come back together in a neat tidy package. My favorite is: THE HOMELESS ENCAMPMENT with pictures. We all know there is no homeless encampment. I personally walk through there twice a day.

Nothing is there. Anybody can stage a little garbage and of course a hard liquor bottle. Scary stuff. Hey folks , do you even know what a HOMELESS ENCAMPMENT is ? Turn on the Portland and Seattle news and see the real deal. This is a joke. And a picture of this nonsense !!!!! Also letters of fear of scary animals. What else is interesting is how many letters are from Ocean Ave. homeowners on all these fears ? And "by Golly" we also have a suggestion for the revised amendment from an Ocean Ave. resident, that has under #2-to protect views and fire. She snuck the view in there!!! Fire even came after the word view!! So we have completely circled back to the view at the very end and THAT'S THE END FOLKS....this is my "VIEW FOR A FEW'.....We are closing in on 2 years of this BS pretty soon.

I strongly suggest that the City Council stop right now and really think seriously about whats really going on here. It looks a lot like a lot of BACKDOOR DEALS. In this political environment it's not a good idea to ignore the concerns of a community for the personal gain of a few (like the 1%). There is room for a lot of compromise to establish a great fire road that provides safety for all. (review the Schultz letter and format suggestions) that isn't destructive for wildlife and "The Gearhart Experience". If we don't give any concern for the amazing place where we live and what it offers and only care about a few, then the wonderful place that we have will no longer exist and the city will be known for its disrespect to its citizens and backdoor deals.

TOWN HALL

FIRE STATION/PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING LOCATIONS



WHEN

**Thursday, May 4th
6:30 pm**

WHERE

Gearhart Volunteer Fire Station

670 Pacific Way—Gearhart

PURPOSE - TO DISCUSS THE PROS-CONS OF TWO LOCATIONS:

1) CURRENT LOCATION

2) EAST HALF OF THE PARK BETWEEN PACIFIC WAY AND 1ST ST ON MARION

PLEASE ATTEND, QUESTIONS WELCOME

PANEL MEMBERS AND PARTICIPANTS

FIRE STATION COMMITTEE

Jay Speakman

Carolyn Anderson

Grace Bruseth

Marilyn Gilbaugh

Gary Gillam

Will Leroux

Lori Lum

Jeanne and Wilson Mark

Tom Thies

CONSULTANTS

Tom Horning, Geologist

Fire Chief Bill Eddy

Asst. Chief John Baum

Sue Lorain, Council Liaison

Mark Brien, Building

Official

Chad Sweet, City Administrator

Gearhart CERT

Ivars Lazdins - Consultant Architect

SPONSORED BY:

Fire Station Committee appointed by the City Council

And The City of Gearhart