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Monterey County

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Seaside: KB Home/Bakewell settles Highlands property suit

Housing fund gets \$1.1M boost

By LAITH AGHA
Herald Staff Writer

Seaside's low-cost housing fund is expected to receive a \$1.1 million boost today.

KB Home/Bakewell, developers of the 380-home Seaside Highlands subdivision, agreed to pay the amount to settle a 5-year-old lawsuit by Seaside resident Ben Kaatz, who alleged the city grossly undersold the 107-acre property, which used to be part of Fort Ord.

The City Council, acting as the

redevelopment agency board, will consider accepting the payment at tonight's meeting. The agency must decide to accept the money in order for it to be deposited in the city's redevelopment fund. Deputy City Manager Daphne Hodgson said the agency is expected to approve the settlement.

No specific use for the money has been determined, Hodgson said.

When Kaatz filed the suit in 2003, he sought to force KB Home/Bakewell to pay Seaside \$100 million for the

Housing



property, which Kaatz estimated to be worth between \$94 million and \$115 million.

Kaatz also alleged the development did not include the low-cost housing that KB Home told the City Council in 1998 it would build.

The development, which is completely built out, does not include any affordable homes, but rather 380 upscale houses, many of which have been resold by original owners for more than \$1 million.

The city bought the land from the

federal government for \$5.1 million, then sold it to KB Home for \$6 million.

More than \$5 million went to the federal government, while Seaside received \$850,000, according to city documents.

The suit was dismissed in 2004 by Monterey Superior Court Judge Kay Kingsley, who ruled that the suit did not meet legal deadlines. But an appellate court reversed that decision and reopened the case in 2006.

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Your Town



MONTEREY

TRASH COLLECTION RATES TO GO UP

Trash collection rates will rise 8.9 percent in Monterey effective April 1 for commercial customers, May 1 for residential customers.

The City Council unanimously approved the refuse collection increase by Monterey City Disposal Service on Tuesday. The increase is expected to raise revenue for the city through the disposal service franchise fee by \$47,000 annually.

Rates will rise from \$15.92 to \$17.34 a month for basic residential service, from \$9.84 to \$10.62 for lifeline service and from \$11.52 to \$12.55 for senior service. A 2-cubic-yard commercial container picked up once a week will go from \$124.75 to \$135.85.

SEASIDE

Fire department, Cal Am to conduct hydrant flow tests

The Seaside Fire Department, in conjunction with California American Water, will be conducting hydrant flow testing from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday in the area west of Yosemite Street to Del Monte Boulevard.

A slight loss of water pressure and discoloration may occur during the time of the test.

DEL REY OAKS

Council to broadcast playbacks of meetings on Saturdays

Beginning this month, playback of the City Council meetings will be broadcast at 8 a.m. the Saturday after the meeting on Comcast Cable Channel 26.

LIVE OAK

Surfrider Foundation sponsors shark talk

Sean Van Sommeran of the Pelagic Shark Research Foundation will speak on "Shark Smarts: A Surfer's Guide to the Sharks of the Eastern Pacific Coast and the Monterey Bay Region" at 7 p.m. Tuesday at Simpkins Swim Center, 17th Avenue and Brommer Street.

Van Sommeran will talk about shark safety tips and updates in local research and behavioral studies of sharks. His appearance is sponsored by the Santa Cruz chapter of Surfrider Foundation and is free and open to the public.

For information, see <http://surfridersantacruz.org> or <http://pelagic.org>.

MONTEREY COUNTY

Red Cross to hold mobile blood drives

The American Red Cross will hold mobile blood drives in Monterey County next month.

Donations will be taken from 1:30 to 6:30 p.m. April 1 at the Salinas Recreation Center, 320 Lincoln Ave., Salinas, and from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. April 23 at the CSU-Monterey Bay Alumni and Visitor Center, 100 Campus Center, Building 97, Seaside.

For information, see www.BeADonor.com or call 800-GIVE-LIFE.

MONTEREY

U.S.-China trade policy topic of MIIS conference

A conference for local business owners focused on trade policy between China and the United States will be sponsored by the Monterey Institute of International Studies from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. March 21 in the Steinbeck Forum at the Monterey Conference Center, Portola Plaza.

Representatives from China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Commerce, the U.S. Trade Representative's Office and other local and foreign trade officials will talk about how to conduct business in China. The event is free, but registration is required.

To register online, see http://policy.miis.edu/programs/maipt_china_trade.html, or send an e-mail with your name, physical mailing address, organizational affiliation and telephone number to miistradeconference@gmail.com.

For information, call 647-3516.



ORVILLE MYERS/The Herald

Seaside High School seniors Daehan Kim, 18, left, and Ethan Miller, 17, have won appointments to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.

WEST POINT BOUND

Two JROTC MEMBERS WIN APPOINTMENTS TO PRESTIGIOUS MILITARY SCHOOL

By RACHEL TOMPA
Herald Staff Writer

For the first time in 12 years, Seaside High School will be represented at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.

And not just once.

Two JROTC students from the class of 2008 have won appointments to the prestigious military academy. Daehan Kim, an 18-year-old senior from Marina, and Ethan Miller, a 17-year-old from Salinas, will join the approximately 4,000 cadets studying and training

"West Point offers unreal opportunities that most people don't normally get."

Daehan Kim

at West Point next fall.

"We are very proud of these kids," said retired Col. Chuck Hurd, senior army instructor of the JROTC at Seaside High School.

"West Point offers unreal opportunities that most people don't normally get," said Kim.

"I'm pretty excited to go," said Miller. "I can't wait."

Admission to West Point and the other U.S. military academies is competitive. Out of 10,000 to 12,000 applications, approximately 1,300 students are given appointments in the enrolling class, said Theresa Brinkerhoff, spokeswoman for West Point.

Cadets receive a bachelor's degree after four years, but the admission procedure is different from

Please see West Point page B2

Council rejects funding feasibility studies

Monterey says no to high-rise buildings

By KEVIN HOWE
Herald Staff Writer

Downtown Monterey doesn't need high-rise buildings, the Monterey City Council ruled Tuesday.

The council voted against funding studies that would determine the economic feasibility of buildings five or six stories high in the downtown core area bounded by Pacific, Abrego, Hartnell and Webster streets and Del Monte Avenue.

The cost of a study looking at the impact of allowing four-story buildings was estimated at \$28,920; the cost of looking at permitting five- and six-story buildings was estimated at \$41,000.

The city limits buildings downtown to three stories.

Resident Bud Miller said he and 10 other neighbors who own seven houses on Pearl Street oppose having multi-story buildings go up, arguing that Pearl provides "a comfortable" entrance to people driving into town.

While Monterey has many historic buildings, said Jerry Anderson of the

Monterey Commercial Property Owners Association, downtown "still has many buildings that are neither attractive nor historic."

Allowing more stories, he said, might provide an economic incentive for owners of less desirable properties to improve them.

Councilwoman Nancy Selfridge said the city should stay with its three-story building limit downtown and not fund the study.

A study that would show what direction the city should go might be useful, said Councilman Frank Sollecito, and the city will have to build up because it can't build out. But he agreed that paying for a study now wasn't necessary.

"It's not a good use of public money," said Councilwoman Libby Downey.

Mayor Chuck Della Sala recused himself from the meeting during the discussion on the grounds he might have a conflict of interest.

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The city will have to build up because it can't build out, said Councilman Frank Sollecito.

Row project's fate uncertain

By KEVIN HOWE
Herald Staff Writer

A hearing before the state Coastal Commission on the Ocean View Plaza project on Monterey's Cannery Row that had been scheduled today in Carmel Valley is expected to be postponed at the developer's request.

The developer, Cannery Row Marketplace LLC Monterey, may withdraw the project entirely and reserve the right to resubmit it at a later date, said Coastal Commission planner Susan Craig.

The developers have run out of extensions and face a deadline at the commission's April meeting, she said.

The 92,000-square-foot project was approved by the Monterey City Council on June 1, 2004. It was postponed at the Coastal Commission's December meeting and had been rescheduled for today.

The commission will convene at 9 a.m. at Rancho Cañada Golf Club, 4860 Carmel Valley Road.

Proposed is a mixed-use project that would include 87,362 square feet of retail and restaurant development, 38 "market-rate" condominiums, 13 inclusionary housing units, 377 parking spaces, a replication of the San Xavier fish reduction plant warehouse, a community park, rehabilitation of the historic Stohans building, a history plaza and a replication of a street-spanning, historic utility bridge connecting two buildings in the 400 block of Cannery Row.

The Coastal Commission's staff recommended denial of the project, and the developers have a number of issues to resolve before it could be recommended for approval, Craig said.

