



# NEWSLETTER



**CITY OF YACHATS**

**February/March 2007**

Visit [www.ci.yachats.or.us](http://www.ci.yachats.or.us) for the minutes of City Council and Commission meetings

## MAYOR'S MESSAGE

"Life is 10% of what happens to you and 90% of how you respond to it."

This month I have asked our City Planner, Larry Lewis, to write a "guest column". There seems to be confusion about development and what can and cannot be done in Yachats, as well as what the state of Oregon allows and requires.



### *Development and Livability*

By Larry Lewis

Yachats is experiencing a significant amount of development. This is not unlike other Oregon coastal communities. In accordance with Oregon state regulations, growth and development will occur within our city limits and urban growth boundary. We are fortunate to live in a state that does a good job of limiting sprawl outside urban growth boundaries, and protecting prime forest and agricultural lands. However, we are more concerned, and rightfully so, about how development within our city limits and urban growth boundary affects our livability.

My friend and colleague Joe Molinaro stated in the latest Planning Commissioners Journal, "We need to recognize that development does and will happen. Therefore, debating whether growth will occur is not a productive way to spend our time. Instead, we should be debating the pattern that this growth will take and the type of community we will be building."

Our recent community survey indicates that livability is very important to citizens of Yachats and the surrounding community. Livability also means many different things. We must consider how all elements of livability – environmental protection, transportation, public facilities and services, housing, economic development, recreation, etc. will be impacted by development. We must ensure that development within our city limits and urban growth boundary occurs in a manner that will protect and enhance our livability. Will development in Yachats take the form of and provide a discrete village, or will it spill haphazardly over our landscape? Will we identify and make the choices about which natural environments should be preserved and which should be developed?

Our Planning Commission is in the process of evaluating the community survey and incorporating the results into an updated Yachats Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan is the document adopted by the City that sets forth the general, long-range policies on how the community's future development should occur. Livability, as well

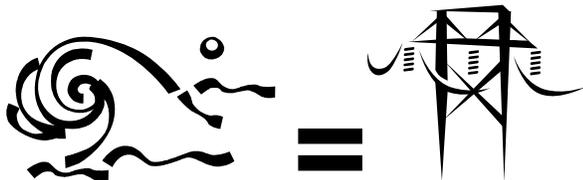
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as many other topics, is an integral element of the update. Public hearings will be conducted this year to review and revise the draft Comprehensive Plan. You are encouraged to participate in this update.

It is important that we, the planners, citizens and developers of Yachats, are able to accommodate growth and development while preserving and enhancing the livability that we have all come to know and embrace. A key component of evaluating, regulating, and monitoring development is to protect our natural resources – those natural elements that make Yachats such a special place to live, work and play. We must identify and protect our natural resources; and understand that natural lands and open space can best be preserved by clustering development in areas more compatible with development. We need to continue to identify those elements and implement regulations that will maintain and enhance our livability.

To again paraphrase Joe, “The task before today’s developers and planners is to design and build something of greater societal value than the natural site that was lost to development.”



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### WAVE ENERGY

By Susanne Smith - Mayor

At the City Council Work Session on February 5th, Lincoln County Commissioner, Terry Thompson, presented a "pre-primer" on Wave Energy technology and work that is being done at Oregon State University. At this point there seem to be more questions than answers as is most often the case with a new

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technology. It seems that the area off the central Oregon coast is ideal for the development of this alternative energy source. The Federal Energy Regulation Commission is, of course, involved and bodies from the State of Oregon to Lincoln County are watching this closely with regards to efficiency, the marine environment, effect on the fishing industry, etc. For information on OSU's work in this area, look at <http://eecs.oregonstate.edu/msrf/> Wave Energy as a reality is at least ten years in the future.

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### EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

By Susanne Smith - Mayor

Yachats Public Works Foreman, Rick McClung, has been appointed Emergency Services Coordinator for the City of Yachats. He informed the Council that the City is in a pool for over \$600 million dollars in federal money to improve communications during an emergency. Of course, as is true with federal funding, there are upgrades to equipment and improvements to be made, not to mention paperwork issues to be addressed. Independently, the City is pursuing locations and facilities for containing emergency supplies, as well as continuing to encourage individuals to be prepared for evacuation and survival in the event of a disaster.



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### CITY PLANNER'S SCHEDULE

By Susanne Smith - Mayor

Larry Lewis, Yachats City Planner, has requested.....and has been granted.....an adjustment to his schedule. For the foreseeable future, he will be in Yachats on Tuesdays. The work that he has been doing on his other day with the City will be done outside of office

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hours. For an appointment with Larry, please call City Hall to be scheduled.



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### **THE CITY OF YACHATS WANTS YOU!!!!!!**

By Susanne Smith - Mayor

Do you have a few hours to spare once a year? Are you interested in how our City budget is put together and what money we spend? Do you have a willingness to help? If so, then there is a spot for you on the Budget Committee! There are two seats available, both for terms ending the end of 2009. From early April until April 30th when Budget Hearings begin, you would be asked to read over the prepared budget, ask questions and have them answered, and participate in the process of determining how the City will spend its dollars over the next year. It's a fascinating process and one that does not require expertise; but rather a willingness to learn and take part. Applications are available at City Hall. Budget Committee members must live within the City limits of Yachats.



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### **AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

By Susanne Smith - Mayor

A second conversation was held February 20 to discuss what direction the City of Yachats might want to take in the creation of housing that is affordable to all. Current guidelines suggest that no more than 30% of a family income should go to housing. That puts

many, many people out of the housing market on the Oregon coast as well as many other places in the country. Options are available to communities who want to create affordable housing in order that those communities not become "monochromatic". These options span such possibilities as tax credit financing for people who invest in low-income housing and waiver of some fees for developers who add such housing to their plans. Several tasks were identified during this conversation including a needs assessment, visiting existing low income communities, educating citizens about the need and process, and seeing what statewide assistance might be available. While no further meetings have been planned at this time, it seems fairly certain that this conversation will continue. Stay tuned.



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### **WANT DIRT?**

Part of the wastewater project starting this spring includes the removal of several hundred cubic yards of material. The contractor for this project will be required to get rid of this material. If you have property that needs fill material please let the Public Works Director know by calling either City Hall at 541-547-3565 or Public Works at 541-547-3243. The City will pass the information on to the contractor to get in touch with you.

City Municipal Code requires you to obtain a permit anytime you place more than 50 cubic yards of fill per year. There is no charge for the permit.

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## **PEDESTRIAN CROSSWALKS – MARKED & UN-MARKED**

By Public Works & Streets Commission Member  
Bob Bennett

On December 8<sup>th</sup> representatives from the Public Works Commission attended a workshop in Lincoln City on Highway, Local Roads and Street Safety for Non-Engineers. A section of the workshop covered some surprising facts on pedestrian crosswalks. It turns out that marked crosswalks without other features such as pedestrian islands or other pedestrian aids may not be as safe as we think! On 2 lane roads (such as our US 101) pedestrian crashes are equal for marked and un-marked crosswalks. For multi-lane highways marked crosswalks are considerably more dangerous.

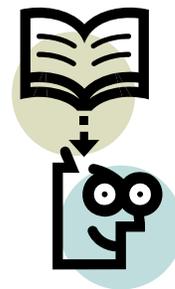
There can be many reasons why marked can be less safe than un-marked. Such as:

- Many pedestrians consider marked crosswalks as a tool to enhance pedestrian safety and mobility.
- They view the markings as proof that they have a right to share the roadway, and in their opinion, the more the better.
- They may also think that the driver will be able to see the crosswalk markings.
- They assume that it will be safer to cross where drivers can see the white crosswalk lines.

Adding marked crosswalks without engineering, enforcement, or education enhancement is not likely to reduce pedestrian crashes.

For more information check out the City's website location for some statistics and examples of effective crosswalks which try to

address some of these issues. (web address [www.ci.yachats.or.us](http://www.ci.yachats.or.us))



## **HOW-TO BOOKS AT THE LIBRARY**

If you need a book to help you with a project, come browse at the Yachats Public Library. Woodworkers will find dozens of manuals. Quilters can look through a 20-year collection of Quilter's Magazines donated by a generous patron. We have new books for knitters and needleworkers. Young artists will find new how-to books in the children's room.

We are always trying to add to our collections. If we don't have a book/manual for your particular craft, just add your request to our wish list. We'll do our best to purchase a book that will fit your needs.



## **MAGAZINE WISH LIST**

The library is upgrading the number and variety of magazine subscriptions. We will keep subscriptions to Oregon Coast, Smithsonian, Sunset and Consumer Reports; and, begin subscribing to Money. We'll also add a weekly newsmagazine.

If you would like us to subscribe to a particular magazine, call us at the library (547-3721). If you are feeling generous and would like to donate a one-year subscription for a magazine we do not currently have, our address is: Yachats Public Library, PO Box 817, Yachats OR, 97498. Thanks for your support.

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**THANK YOU !**

By Betty Bahn

The Yachats Community Park Task Force would like to thank the 35 Yachats area volunteers for planting the 650 native wetland trees and shrubs on Saturday, Feb. 17th.

The plants were planted around the ponds at the Yachats Community Park. The volunteers put their shovels to work in drizzle and fog, and were finished before noon.

We expect to see these plants leaf out and begin to grow this spring.

This is the second planting, the first being last November, when 1600 marginal wetland plants were planted along the edges of the ponds by volunteers.

We would like to thank Central Lincoln PUD for their help in planning and erecting the osprey nesting platform at the north end of the park. Also, thanks go to Ray Meehan, a member of the Task force, who constructed the platform and attached it to the pole.

We expect the osprey to return to this area from their winter sojourn in warmer climates about mid-March. We hope they will select this platform to build their nest and raise a family.



**Commons News**

By Susan Garner - Commons Coordinator

The big news here at the Commons is that our ceiling in the multipurpose room has been redone. It is through the hard work of the

Friends of the Yachats Commons that our ceiling looks clean and tidy again. Leon Sterner, president of the Friends, called together his “friends” and an amazing crew of people showed up for several days to improve the building for the rest of us to enjoy. An extra special thanks goes to John May who volunteered his expertise to the cause.

Don't forget:

**Saturday, March 10**

**Yachats Commons Swap Meet - 9 – 4**

You can clean out your closets and garage and stay dry inside, rent a table for \$15 for the day and let someone else have your treasures. Call me at 547-4734 to reserve your space.

When you get a chance, check out the bulletin board on the south end of the building. Thanks to Mayor Sue Smith who supplied the replicas of our short Yachats history and Debrah Edwards who was kind enough to put the bulletin board together. It is very interesting to see how we have grown through the years.

**Coming in March:**

- Thursday, March 1, 7 pm Yachats Big Band Dance
- Friday, March 2, 6 pm Family Night Out, come play some games!
- Friday, March 9 Teen Night
- Saturday, March 10, 9 am Swap Meet
- Thursday, March 15, 6:30 pm Movie Night
- Saturday & Sunday, March 17 & 18 Spiritual Retreat
- Friday & Saturday, March 24 & 25 Arts and Crafts Fair
- Friday, March 30 Yachats Library Book Sale

There are always ongoing events happening here, so check our web site at [yachatscommons.org](http://yachatscommons.org).

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## NEW PLANNER'S OFFICE HOURS ANNOUNCED

Starting the week of February 12, 2007, the Yachats City Planner's office hours were changed. The Planner's office hours are now Tuesday – 8:30 to 4:30.

### LOW INCOME WAIVER ON WATER BILLS



Yachats Code allows the City Recorder to grant a partial waiver if the consumer is eligible.

A waiver of 50% of the monthly base water charge may be considered by the City Recorder based upon written request by the user, and documentation of eligibility for low-income assistance from the State of Oregon. Based on the current base rate that waiver is \$11.50 per month.

If you meet the criteria, and would like your case considered contact the City Office.



It has been suggested that it would make the town a much more pleasant place for everyone if pet owners would clean up after their animals.



### HIGH WATER BILL?

When the City receives a question or complaint about a bill the City Hall staff receives a complaint or question about a bill the first thing that the billing clerk does is check the computer to make sure that it was not a mistake.

If it is not a mistake made in the billing process then the meter is re-read to make sure that it was correct. If the reading was a mistake, then an adjustment is made, the customer is told the correct amount to pay, and the staff offers an apology for the mistake.

If the meter reading appears to be correct then the staff contacts the property owners to let them know that the billing is correct and they try to assist the owner in determining a cause. Some times, in the course of the conversation the customer remembers an unusual event that would account for the large billing. The staff provides them with information about simple things they can do to look for leaks such as putting food color in the toilet tanks and auditing their meter operations.

If the property owner finds a leak that did not go into the sewer system and lets the City know, an adjustment off the sewer portion can be made to the bill.

Meters and the meter connections are checked by City crews if there appears to be a problem, and/or if the property owner requests it. If the meter is old and may be malfunctioning it is replaced.

Any property owner may request to have a meter tested. If the meter tests bad, there is no charge. If the meter tests good, the property owner is charged for the testing.

In all cases, the staff makes every attempt to find and correct a mistake or assist the property owner to determine the cause so that it can be fixed. Sometimes just does not able to find a reason. There may have been a toilet that stuck open just once, there may be a leak that is so small it can not be found, or there may be a leak that is located in an area that has enough natural drainage it never appears on the surface. Sometimes it may be unauthorized use, such as the time neighbor kids were filling water balloons (without permission) and left a faucet on for several days.

For the Budget Year 07-01-06 to 06-30-07  
Reporting Through January 31, 2007

Program	Budget	Year to Date
General Administration	\$707,453	\$527,387
Library	\$17,603	\$8,834
Little Log Church & Museum	\$12,175	\$7,332
Parks & Commons*	\$97,093	\$59,399
Streets	\$129,234	\$62,817
Water	\$473,507	\$235,959
Sewer	\$6,219,536	\$381,861
In Reserve for Future Uses	\$2,056,246	\$1,689,827
Debt	<u>\$134,855</u>	<u>\$90,221</u>
	<u>\$9,847,702</u>	<u>\$3,063,637</u>

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