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Dream Harbor gets approval for Phase 1 of Alsea Village

DreamHarbor Properties LLC has received final approval from the Waldport Planning Commission to develop land on Alsea Bay behind the old middle school.

The plan calls for 12 single-family residential lots and a pedestrian friendly one-way street connecting NW Huckleberry and NW John streets, with an open, public common area and connecting paths to the beach.

DreamHarbor partners Jake Johnston and Carolyn Greenwood presented plans for a three-phased project to the commission in March. They will be requesting tentative approval for the second and third phases at a later date.

At their Sept. 26 meeting, commissioners listened to Johnston and construction/land developer Steve Mustola describe details of Phase 1 and explain the concept of the entire development, which will be called Alsea Village.

“It will be a new urbanist, green community,” said Mustola. “The pedestrian approach in an urban environment is a well proven concept everywhere, from the east to west coasts.”

The reason for making the new street one-way, he said, is to make it more pedestrian friendly. It will include “roundabouts” of pavers to encourage motorists to drive slowly. As part of the “green” concept, the pavers will be permeable to allow drainage to catch basins. A water system will collect water and pump it throughout the village for reuse in irrigation.

“This is an interesting and unusual concept for Waldport and very much needed,” said Commission Chair Sam Balen. “It will enhance the quality of life here.”

The entire property includes the old middle school. The partners have been making improvements to the auditorium and holding regular community concerts there. The next step will be painting the school. They plan to keep the building intact and integrate their project into the Old Town environment.

Johnston said he and his partners would like to revitalize Old Town and all of Waldport, as well as making the beach area more accessible. Alsea Village will give an upscale and friendly welcome to visitors coming over the bay bridge. The entire project is geared toward community and taking advantage of the natural environment, making beautiful places accessible to everyone.

All commissioners enthusiastically voted to approve Phase 1.

“I’m just really excited about the project,” said Commissioner Carol Milligan. “I think it will put Waldport on the coastal map.”