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50¢

Planning and zoning

• Commission softens conditions for log home co.

By Kristen Salamon
Staff Reporter

After extensive conversation at the September Planning and Zoning Commission meeting and even more debate at the Sheridan County Commission meeting Tuesday, Wyoming Log Homes in Ranchester successfully softened the conditions placed on its conditional use permit.

"Trying to put all of these restrictions on us makes it a little awkward to work with," Wyoming Log Homes Manager Bob Szewc said.

The conversation surrounding the CUP focused on uses of the land and what kind of business can actually occur there.

Szewc argued that the company has been a manufacturing and construction firm from the onset and should continue to be able to operate as such, storing its equipment and materials on-site.

Szewc also hoped to forgo future CUP requests by including the company's plans to construct additional buildings under the current permit.

"All of these CUPs are a cost to me, a hassle," Szewc argued.

Melissa Butcher, who owns Rendezvous Trading Co. in Ranchester, spoke on behalf of Szewc and the Log Homes company.

"It is a very well-maintained property and I have seen continuous steady improvement," Butcher said. "But the (permit) conditions we're talking about don't pass the reasonableness test."

Please see **Zoning, Page 2**



The Sheridan Press/Michael Sullivan

The "Bozeman Scout" sculpture by Barry Eisenach looks out over Main Street this morning. According to The American Planning Association, Sheridan's historic downtown and nearby area, which reflect a mixture of influences, trends, and developments—from Sheridan's frontier period to Main Street buildings constructed in the 1980s, Wood said.

Downtown a 'Great Neighborhood'

By Vida Volkert
Staff Reporter

The American Planning Association has designated Sheridan's "historic downtown and nearby area" as one of America's "10 Great Neighborhoods" for 2008, city Associate Planner Elizabeth Wood announced today.

"This is big," Wood told The Sheridan Press. "The American Planning Association is the profes-

sional authority representing the field of city and regional planning in the United States."

Sheridan was chosen because of its historic downtown and immediately surrounding residential area, which reflect a mixture of influences, trends, and developments—from Sheridan's frontier period to Main Street buildings constructed in the 1980s, Wood said.

Wood added the APA chose Sheridan as an example of one of the best places where people can live

and work while enjoying a quality life. She said in Sheridan people can walk to work and shop in downtown, and there's always a friendly environment because it is a community-oriented neighborhood.

According to W. Paul Farmer, executive director and CEO of the American Planning Association, Sheridan is a "role model of good planning for communities around the country."

Please see **Neighborhood, Page 2**

Subdivision resolution

• Commissioners approve changes

By Kristen Salamon
Staff Reporter

Sheridan County commissioners approved changes to the county subdivision resolution Tuesday after tabling the issue at their

September meeting to give the public more time to comment.

"This has been talked about and publicized, it has been out in the public for quite awhile," Commissioner Terry Cram said.

The changes focus on the development of large-acreage subdivisions, requiring permits for land between 35 and 80 acres to be subdivided.

Citizens have raised concerns about taxing agricultural lands within the subdivisions, and Planning and Zoning Commission Chairwoman Billie Little expressed concerns about use of the land at yesterday's meeting.

"I think the 35 acres creates a lot of problems," Little said. "The space is too small for grazing animals and it is too big for people to mow, so a lot of these lands have turned into ghettos for animals."

Please see **Resolution, Page 2**



Terry Cram
County Commissioner

Commission candidates agree on issues at forum



The Sheridan Press/Michael Sullivan

County Commission candidates (from left) Terry Cram, Vicki Taylor, Tom Ringley and Mike Nickel participate in Tuesday's forum hosted by the Sheridan Jaycees at the Holiday Inn.

By Kristen Salamon
Staff Reporter

"I am not the candidate who will say that I don't have a hidden agenda, but I will say that after having informed myself, there are concerns — of course I have concerns," county commissioner candidate Vicki Taylor said after Tuesday night's Jaycees political forum.

Following the forum, several audience members said the County Commission candidates are not distinguishing themselves.

"They share a lot of the same opinions, and there really isn't one factor that puts one ahead of the others," Sheridan resident Christina

Hoskinson said. "I will have to do more research on things they didn't have time to talk about tonight to find out what separates them. If I can't find anything, I'll vote for who I know."

The candidates appeared to agree on all policy issues discussed at Tuesday's forum. Each cited the need to support organizations protecting wildlife and ranchlands, the need for the city and county to work together more closely, the need for the county to develop an environment friendly for developers to build affordable housing, and the need to address growth through the county's Comprehensive Plan.

While Taylor said afterward there are issues such as the county's

conditional use permit process, management of Lake DeSmet, and county support of nonprofits that she is sure separate her from other candidates, Mike Nickel and Tom Ringley said they saw their experiences as what separate them, not issues.

"Being a business owner, a construction business owner, I think it really what separates me," Nickel said. "We have a lot of construction projects going on, and having the knowledge of how all of that works from being in the industry I think would be a valuable asset to the commission."

Ringley said he is running on his experience and record of community service.

"I'm not running against anybody," Ringley said. "I don't think any of us have any big disagreements with each other."

"I have a record of doing things in the Sheridan, both on the employment side and volunteer side — that's my strength," Ringley said.

Taylor also saw her experience as a valuable distinction between her candidacy and those of Ringley and Nickel.

"I am the self-made candidate, it was a self-motivated learning process that did not come through board memberships or committees," Taylor said.

Please see **Commissioners, Page 2**

Mayoral candidates address housing issue

By Vida Volkert
Staff Reporter

Mayoral candidates Glen Wright and incumbent David Kinsky addressed about 50 people Tuesday at the Holiday Inn, and while both candidates agreed the lack of affordable housing is one of Sheridan's critical problems, their strategies to address the issue differed substantially.

Wright, a retired Sheridan police officer, stressed leadership in every answer he gave and advocated greater cooperation within the city.

"Citizens feel best when they are listened to," Wright told the audience, adding he is open-minded and willing to take responsibility to lead the city in the "right direction."

"I have spent 25 years as a police officer listening to people. I can continue to do that," Wright said. Then he said when Teddy Roosevelt sent his troops to war, "he did not send them up the hill, he led them up the hill."

Wright praised the current administration for its efforts to



Dave Kinsky
Sheridan Mayor



Glen Wright
Mayoral Candidate

alleviate the housing problem and said he is willing to continue encouraging growth and the expansion and repair of roads, but he stressed that "local government does not have funds to build houses, nor should it."

Citing newspaper sources and the U.S. economic turnaround, Wright said there are about "700 houses for sale in Sheridan and prices are starting to come down." He added those houses might eventually become affordable.

About the housing problem, Kinsky said "the market is your best solution, but the market can't do it alone."

He cited his administration's "success" in the past four years, which he said includes supporting the Sheridan Housing Action Committee, a nonprofit organization that helps raise grant money to assist prospective buyers with downpayments and other expenses related home purchase.

Please see **Housing, Page 2**

Sagebrush pupils visit Sheridan Fire-Rescue

By Vida Volkert
Staff Reporter

Firefighter Jerry Johnston, dressed in bunker gear, put on his heavy helmet Tuesday, and more than 30 children who were sitting on the floor of the Sheridan Fire Station held back in awe.

Then Johnston began to talk with an amplified voice through the breathing mask in his helmet. "You sound like Darth Vader," a child told Johnston, and he cracked up, followed by a chorus of children's laughs.

It is national Fire Prevention Week, and the Sagebrush Elementary pupils were visiting Sheridan Fire-Rescue as part of the department's efforts to raise awareness of the week and show children that firefighters are their friends, according to firefighter/EMT 1 Brooks MacRae.



The Sheridan Press/Vida Volkert

Firefighter Jerry Johnston, dressed in bunker gear, talks Tuesday to Sagebrush Elementary School pupils. The children were visiting Sheridan Fire-Rescue as part of Fire Prevention Week activities.

MacRae said more than 100 children ages 5 to 7 from various schools in the community visited the station Tuesday. More visits

are expected throughout the week, he added.

Please see **Fire, Page 2**

Neighborhood

(Continued from Page 1)

Farmer said the city's founder, John Loucks, "was dead-on about this being the right place to start a new town in the 1880s."

He praised Sheridan's stunning views of the Big Horn Mountains, flowing freshwater from Goose creeks, and fertile land for farming and ranching.

"Of course Sheridan has changed over its 125-year history, yet these characteristics were the foundation for the outstanding community we see here today," he added.

Farmer said this year his organization received more than 100 suggestions for the designation, and the selection process

was commended to a task force of planning experts.

While many of the suggested places were good examples of planning, entries selected for designation illustrate most effectively what it means to be a great place, including design, functionality, sustainability, character, quality, and public participation, according to Farmer.

The other nine neighborhoods selected include: Charles Village in Baltimore; downtown Salem, Mass.; Echo Park in Los Angeles; Greater Park Hill in Denver; Greater University Hill in Syracuse, N.Y.; North End in Boise, Idaho; Old Town in Wichita, Kan.; Society Hill in Philadelphia; and Village of Mariemont in Mariemont, Ohio.

Zoning

(Continued from Page 1)

Szewc and Butcher opposed conditions such as informing the Public Works Department a week in advance of operating hours other than Monday through Saturday 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

"As a business owner, I know that you don't normally know a week in advance that you're going to need to put in some overtime," Butcher said.

The Board of County Commissioners worked with Szewc to amend the conditions on property use to include classification of the company as a general contracting business as well as a log home manufacturing company. This classification broadens the scope of equipment that can be stored on-site.

The amended conditions also allow the company to skip the CUP process when it builds a pole barn and show home, although building permits, inspections and fees will be required.

"I'm really hesitant to put all these little restrictions on here," BOCC Chairman Bob Rolston said.

"It is a unique situation and as such tends to be a bit more onerous," Commissioner Steve Maier said.

The BOCC also approved the Ames Preschool and Daycare CUP Tuesday. The CUP will allow Michael and Jennifer Ames to operate a preschool and day care, including hiring two employees and care for up to 15 children.

The business will be run out of the couple's home in Montano Minor Subdivision.

Kenneth Howe, a representative from the subdivision, had expressed concern at the September Planning and Zoning meeting about increased traffic on the subdivision's roads.

"All we ask is that they ask employees and clients to drive slow, and like any other business that contributes a significant amount of traffic, we ask they contribute extra funds to road fees," Howe said.

The BOCC recognized the extra burden to the roads but did not require the Ameses to contribute additional funds, although Jennifer Ames said the business plans to do so.

"We're very excited about being able to provide quality child care and preschool, because there is definitely a need for it," she said. "I assure you we will contribute more to the road fees."

Housing

(Continued from Page 1)

He said he plans to continue expanding utility services around the city to allow for sewer and electricity in more areas where new development has occurred or will occur.

"The foundation is in place," he said, and recounting lower housing prices, he added, "There is a lot of inventory out there."

A graduate in economics from Harvard University,

Kinskey stressed the importance of experience in understanding and managing large budgets. He said his current administration employs 200 people and manages a budget of \$61 million. Over the next 4 years the total budget, including construction would be close to \$1/4 billion," he said.

Kinskey added his administration has built 40 miles of roads and plans to build "40 miles more of roads."

Zoila Perry, president of Jaycees, the junior chamber of commerce in Sheridan, said the forum succeeded

ed in that candidates provided information on where they stand on issues affecting Sheridan. However, she said she wants to see another forum where the audience can directly question candidates.

At Tuesday's forum, candidates were asked questions prepared by a facilitator, and each candidate got three minutes to answer.

As for who won, Perry said, "I don't think we had any winner."

Fire

(Continued from Page 1)

MacRae and Johnston showed the kids the firefighters' living quarters, trucks, equipment and their firefighting gear: heavy firefighting boots, pants, coat, gloves and helmet that can endure temperatures up to 600 degrees, according to Johnston.

"When we put that on, we look very scary to

them," Johnston said. "We try to show them that behind the bunker gear, we are the same person, so that they don't get scared and hide from us in the event that we have to save them in a fire."

Visits to the station are scheduled until Friday, Johnston said, adding that any school interested in touring can set up an appointment by calling 674-7244.

As part of the Fire Prevention Week, the department will conduct an open house Saturday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Johnston said. Lunch will be on the department, and visitors are encouraged to wander around the station alone or accompanied by a firefighter.

"There'll be fire truck rides too," he added.

Commissioners

(Continued from Page 1)

"It is hard sometimes as a question-asker, the opposition voice, because people will tell me, you know, knock it off," she said. "But I ask people to look inside themselves and ask what it is about me asking questions that troubles them."

Incumbent Terry Cram, who is running unopposed for a two-year term on the County Commission, also presented his ideas to voters. Cram's views were consistent with those of the other candidates, although he said a large portion of why he is running is his commitment to enact the county's Comprehensive Plan.

"The only way to get people to buy into the plan is with the zoning resolutions that will have to follow it," Cram said during the forum. "I think it will take two years, but I am committed to getting it done."

Cram added in an interview with The Sheridan Press this morning that he thinks voters may be having a tough time distinguishing candidates, because "they're all pretty good candidates."

"County government has been running pretty smoothly the last three or four years; we're being fiscally responsible, staying on track with a work schedule that is available to the public, and being clear

about our priorities, and I think the new candidates are of the same mold," Cram said.

But Liz Dearcorn, Jaycees vice president of individual development, said she understands voter frustration.

"Some people's questions didn't get asked because we got so many, and I think some of the questions can be more specific," Dearcorn said. "We're happy with how the forum went, but we understand why people would be frustrated."

Denise Canfield, project coordinator for the Center for a Vital Community, said adjustments have

been made to the portions of the CVC forums that are scheduled Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday next week.

"We're doing something a little different with the candidates running for Congress, Gary Trauner and Cynthia Lummis," Canfield said. "We will still have the three-minute introduction and two-minute response to questions, but we will also allow one minute for rebuttals."

Canfield said the County Commission and mayoral candidates will be set up in a similar fashion, allowing candidates to respond to their opponents' views.

Resolution

(Continued from Page 1)

Little asked county commissioners to consider regulating lands between 40 and 80 acres instead of 35 to 80 acres.

Cram acknowledged that county commissioners received a letter asking to extend the maximum above 80 acres as well. He didn't say who wrote the letter.

"This is and will continue to be a work in progress," commissioners' Chairman Bob Rolston said.

In other action at Tuesday's

meeting, commissioners:

- Acknowledged the town of Dayton's Comprehensive Plan;
- Approved the establishment of two additional bank accounts for the County Airport;
- Approved Sheridan Memorial Hospital's purchase of the Niethammer interest in the Medical Arts Complex;
- Acknowledged report of viewers and appraisers in Adsit petition for a private road;
- Approved a letter of support for Sheridan County Conservation

District mill levy initiative;

- Approved conditional use permit for Boyd wind turbine;
- Approved Sween rezoning from agricultural to urban residential;
- Approved agreement with Vista West for \$13,405 for phase one reconnaissance work on Metz, Swaim, Box Cross, Paradise Park and Upper roads;
- Approved 2009 Congestion Mitigation Air Quality project application for 6.5 miles of Upper Cat Creek Road requesting \$471,357 from the Wyoming Department of

Transportation in CMAQ funds;

- Approved quitclaim of county's interest in portion of right of way to Toby Jay and Marie E. Johnson;
- Amended resolution authorizing grant submission by Lake DeSmet Counties Coalition Joint Powers Board to request \$847,962 in grants from the Wyoming Water Development Commission and \$417,653 in WWDC loans;
- Appointed Ed Neiermeier to a four-year term on the Northern Wyoming Mental Health Center Board.

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