

OOB museum parking lot easement faces opposition

By DINA MENDROS

Staff Writer

OLD ORCHARD BEACH

The question of whether to approve an easement agreement between the Harmon Museum and the Old Orchard Beach branch of Saco & Biddeford Savings Institution, to make way for a parking lot, will be on the ballot Tuesday.

The two buildings sit on adjacent lots on Portland Avenue. If the parking lot were built, it would provide 13

spaces, including a handicap-accessible spot. Three of the spaces, including the handicap spot, would be reserved for the museum, which currently doesn't have a parking lot, and the remainder would be used by the bank, which has expressed a need for extra spaces in the busy summer months.

Proponents of the plan, like town historian Dan Blaney, say a yes vote would be a "win-win" for the bank and the town. He said it would save taxpayers

the expense of building, plowing and maintaining the lot, for which the bank would pay. The bank would also pay for a handicap-accessible ramp at the front entrance to the museum, as well as other improvements to make it compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Not everyone is in favor of the plan, however, as evidenced by opposition flyers that have been palced on vehicles around town. Museum abutter Paul

Dornan has been involved in distribution of the flyers in an effort to make more people aware of the issue prior to next week's vote.

Dornan said he does not believe giving an easement to the bank is in the town's best interest, and he noted that Blaney, who has been advocating for the lot, is a corporator of the bank.

"This is not only a conflict of interest, it is also unethical," said Dornan.

The flyer states that the easement agreement "benefits the corporate interest of the Saco Biddeford Savings Institution" and "is predicated on a false premise that the Harmon Historical Museum does not have a driveway to access parking on its property."

It claims the museum has a driveway that can be used to access a lot that could be built by the town. The flyer gives an alternative to the proposed plan, which would be for the

town to build a parking lot and ADA-compliant handicap ramp. According to the flyer, the estimated cost would be \$20,000.

Dornan has also cited personal concerns with the parking lot proposal, such as loss of privacy at his home, which would face the lot. Building the lot will require the removal of four apple trees and the lawn,

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Biddeford to vote on polling place plan

By DINA MENDROS

Staff Writer

BIDDEFORD

On Tuesday, the city council discussed whether to consolidate the city's three polling places to a single location, and the mayor said he intends for the council to vote on the issue soon.

Councilors expressed mixed feelings on consolidating the polling sites for the city's seven wards to a single place: the Tiger Gym at Biddeford High School. This was the recommendation of a committee appointed by Mayor Alan Casavant earlier this year.

In May, City Clerk Carmen Morris noted that the three polling places now used for voting all have problems. The public access center, where residents of Wards 1 and 2 vote, is too cramped and the parking lot is in disrepair, she said. Lack of parking and displacement of activities are problems related with voting at the J. Richard Martin Community Center, the polling place for Wards 3, 4 and 5, said Morris. And handicap accessibility is problematic at the Rochambeau Club, where those living in Wards 6 and 7 cast their votes, she said.

While there would still be some parking issues at the Tiger Gym, said Morris, a parking plan worked out with the school administration and police department would mitigate most of that concern.

On the plus side, she said, there would be adequate space for voters for all seven wards at the Tiger Gym; consolidation would be more efficient for her office and the department of public works employees who set up the elections; and it would be easier for candidates to congregate in one spot.

Some councilors weren't in favor of consolidation, however.

"I have no problem voting at the" public access center, said Councilor Michael Swanton, but he added that he'd like to have voters from Wards 6 and 7 vote at the high school, where they had voted prior to being

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"It's nice to get outdoors and help out the community. It's a lot of fun."

Tony LeBlanc, United Way volunteer

Michelle Masters, an employee at Unum, trims vegetation lining the front of the YMCA building in Biddeford Wednesday as part of the United Way of York County's annual Day of Caring. Below: Dave Lachance, an employee at Hannaford's corporate office, dumps dirt into a wheelbarrow while digging a rainwater ditch at the YMCA as part of the volunteer effort.

JEFF LAGASSE/Journal Tribune

Lending a caring hand

United Way volunteers spruce up area nonprofits

By JEFF LAGASSE

Staff Writer

BIDDEFORD — One thing about United Way volunteers: They keep coming back.

Take Tony LeBlanc, for instance. Through his employer, Saco & Biddeford Savings Institution, LeBlanc has been volunteering for the United Way of York County's Day of Caring for about the last 10 years, rarely missing the chance to help out

a local nonprofit.

This year, LeBlanc and several of his coworkers could be found at the YMCA in Biddeford, helping out with various projects on the organization's campus: clearing trails in the woods, installing mulch on the playground and digging trenches to catch rainwater — an especially appropriate activity

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Town of Wells seeks resident buy-in to combat climate change

By TRACEY COLLINS

Special to the Journal Tribune

WELLS — According to a new scientific report sponsored by the New England Climate Adaption Project, the Town of Wells faces several risks over the next century due to climate change, the most notable being the risk of increased flooding from intense precipitation events, coastal storm surges and

rising sea levels.

The scientific report was shared with approximately 40 Wells town officials and stakeholders at a May 27 public input workshop, held at Wells Reserve at Laudholm Farm.

"We know what the science says and what the adaptation options are, but we needed to hear from the people of Wells about what steps the town

should consider going forward," said Town Manager Jonathan Carter, who presented at the workshop.

A scientific team of researchers at MIT, the University of New Hampshire and the National Estuarine Research Reserve System authored the report.

They predict that Wells could see a significant increase

in the occurrence of extreme heat events, with the worst case climate projections indicating that Wells could experience more than 10 times as many days over 90 degrees Fahrenheit per year by the end of the century.

The report also included detailed maps predicting sea levels in Wells could climb by as much as five feet by 2085,

greatly impacting Wells' barrier islands and the homes that have been built there.

"It's alarming to see that a significant portion of the Wells coastline will be under water by the end of the century, especially since beach tourism and marine habitats are fundamental to our local economy and

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Michaud talks hunger during visit to Biddeford library

U.S. Rep. Mike Michaud, pictured at left, speaks to members of Partners for a Hunger Free York County during a visit to McArthur Public Library in Biddeford on Wednesday.

Michaud heard concerns from group members about the problem of underfed and malnourished individuals in southern Maine, and said more needs to be done to help people end their dependency on welfare and food assistance programs.

"Maine is number one in New England in terms of food insecurity issues," said Michaud. "The way our leaders talk, they put even more shame on these people."

Michaud, who is campaigning as the Democratic candidate for governor, said he wants to change the way people talk about poverty, "to get people thinking about it in a different tone."

JEFF LAGASSE/Journal Tribune

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- Ralph Morin, Saco
- Jeannette Paradis, Biddeford



U.S. hottest spots of warming: Northeast, Southwest

By **SETH BORENSTEIN**
AP Science Writer

WASHINGTON — The United States is warming fastest at two of its corners, in the Northeast and the Southwest, an analysis of federal temperature records shows.

Northeastern states — led by Maine and Vermont — have gotten the hottest in the last 30 years in annual temperature, gaining 2.5 degrees on average. But Southwestern states have heated up the most in the hottest months: The average New Mexico summer is 3.4 degrees warmer now than in 1984; in Texas, the dog days are 2.8 degrees hotter.

The contiguous United States' annual average temperature has warmed by 1.2 degrees since 1984, with summers getting 1.6 degrees hotter. But that doesn't really tell you how hot it's gotten for most Americans. While man-made greenhouse gases warm the world as a whole, weather is supremely local. Some areas have gotten hotter than others because of atmospheric factors and randomness, climate scientists say.

"In the United States, it isn't warming equally," said Kelly Redmond, climatologist at the Western Regional Climate Center in Reno, Nevada. "Be careful about extrapolating from your own backyard to the globe."

For example, while people in the East and Midwest were complaining about a cold winter this year, Redmond's Nevada and neighboring California were having some of their warmest winter months ever.

To determine what parts of the country have warmed the most, The Associated Press analyzed National Climatic Data Center temperature trends in the lower 48 states, 192 cities and 344 smaller regions within the states. Climate scientists suggested 1984 as a starting date because 30 years is a commonly used time period and 1984, which had an average temperature, is not a cherry-



AP WIREPHOTO

In this June 27, 2013 file photo, tourists walk close to misters to keep cool as they walk along The Strip during a heat wave in Las Vegas. An Associated Press analysis of federal temperature records shows the U.S. is warming fastest in the Southwest and Northeast.

picked year to skew a trend either way. The trend was calculated by the NCDC using the least squares regression method, which is a standard statistical tool.

All but one of the lower 48 states have warmed since 1984. North Dakota is the lone outlier, and cooled slightly. Ten states — Maine, Vermont, New Jersey, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Delaware, New Mexico, Connecticut and New York — have gotten at least 2 degrees warmer in the past 30 years.

Since 1984, 92 percent of the more than 500 cities and smaller regions within states have warmed and nearly two-thirds of them have warmed by at least a degree. The regions that have warmed the most have been New York's St. Lawrence Valley, northeastern Vermont, northern Maine, the northeastern plains of New Mexico and western Vermont, all of which have warmed by more than 2.5 degrees.

Cities — where data is a tad more suspect because they are based on a single weather station and readings can be affected by urban heating and development — see the greatest variation. Carson City, Nevada, and Boise, Idaho, are the cities that have seen the most warming — both year-round and in summer — since 1984. Both

cities' average annual temperatures have jumped more than 4 degrees in just 30 years, while Dickinson, North Dakota, has dropped the most, a bit more than 2 degrees.

The Southwest warming, especially in the summer, seems to be driven by dryness, because when there is little water the air and ground warm up faster, said Katharine Hayhoe, a climate scientist at Texas Tech University in Lubbock.

"Heat and drought are a vicious cycle that has been hitting the Southwest hard in recent years," Hayhoe said.

And in the Northeast, the temperatures are pushed up by milder winters and warm water in the North Atlantic, said Kevin Trenberth, climate analysis chief at the National Center for Atmospheric Research. And less snow on the ground over the winter often means warmer temperatures, said Alan Betts, a climate scientist at Atmospheric Research in Pittsford, Vermont.

The Southeast and Northwest were among the places that warmed the least. In the Southeast and Mid-Atlantic, industrial sulfur particle pollutants from coal burning may be reflecting sunlight, thus countering heating caused by coal's carbon dioxide emissions, said Pennsylvania State University professor Michael Mann.

Wells officials, and a public opinion poll of town residents conducted in May of 2013.

"The information was surprising in the number of Wells residents who are concerned about the impact of climate change on their town and homes," Feurt said. "When asked if they felt municipal decision makers should take into account climate change conditions 50 years from now when making decisions, over 65 percent of people surveyed indicated some level of concern, with 46 percent in strong agreement."

From her perspective, Feurt said one of the most interesting outcomes was the reaction by some participants to the predictions of extreme heat and increased precipitation in the rest of the country.

"Many people were wondering: As the rest of the country becomes super dry and super hot, are we going to see more people coming to Maine to escape the heat? And, what are we doing to plan for that?" Feurt said.

The Town of Wells is getting ready to renew its comprehensive plan and the town manager says climate change will be a strong component.

During a workshop breakout session, Carter outlined specific efforts that would support a long-term climate

change strategy. These efforts include upgrading infrastructure and creating higher standards.

"We know there will be more superstorms like Hurricane Sandy and severe weather where more than 40 inches of rain could fall within 40 hours. Official must start working to ensure that culverts, storm water runoffs, and bridges can handle the excess water," Feurt said.

While the report can predict with some scientific certainty what could happen over the next century to the year 2085, Carter stressed that Wells is committed to managing climate change where possible in the short term, too.

"We are looking at purchasing 340,000 cubic yards of sand from the upcoming dredge of the Portsmouth Harbor Turning Basin in 2017 that would be deposited near shore in Wells and help build up the beaches," said Carter. "We are also actively working to obtain proper FEMA Flood Maps for the community."

The complete Wells climate change report and public survey results are posted online on the town's website, www.wellstown.org.

— Tracey Collins is a reporter for the Making It At Home weekly publication of the Journal Tribune and can be contacted via kristenm@journaltribune.com.

Briefly

Man facing 9 charges following N.H. standoff

SOUTH HAMPTON, N.H. (AP) — A New Hampshire man who was the subject of a four-hour manhunt after he was accused of ramming a vehicle into police cruisers is facing nine charges.

Police say 44-year-old Anthony Reardon, who was hospitalized Wednesday with non-life-threatening injuries, is accused of theft, criminal mischief and attempted assault on police.

Police say Reardon called 911 at 5:15 p.m. Tuesday saying he was distraught and needed help. When police arrived they found him in his driveway with weapons that he refused to surrender.

They said Reardon then

tried to get away in an unoccupied Kensington police car, rammed it into two police cars before abandoning it in the woods. Shots were fired but no one was hurt.

Reardon was eventually found back in his home.

Inmates sentenced to death for murder

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — Two inmates at a federal facility in Springfield have been sentenced to death for killing another inmate.

Wesley Paul Coonce Jr., 34, and Charles Michael Hall, 43, both inmates at the U.S. Medical Center for Federal Prisoners in Springfield, were each convicted in May of first-degree murder in the 2010 death of 51-year-old Victor

Castro-Rodriguez in his cell at the facility. Coonce was also convicted of murder by an inmate serving a life sentence.

The U.S. Justice Department said in a release that Coonce and Hall were sentenced to death Monday.

Coonce is serving a life sentence out of Texas for a September 2002 kidnapping conviction. He also was convicted in Gainesville, Texas, in 1998 of assaulting a public servant. Hall is serving 16 years for a 2000 conviction in Maine for threatening a federal judge and a federal prosecutor. He told investigators he wanted to be sentenced to death for killing Castro, according to court documents.

The Springfield facility is one of six federal medical centers and takes federal prisoners at all security levels.

OOB Parking Lot Easement

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which is what Dornan and his wife Cheryl currently view out of their back windows.

"You can see right in our windows from the (proposed) parking lot," he said.

Blaney said he takes issue with a number of the points in the flyer and other statements made by Dornan at a recent public hearing.

Blaney said he approached the bank with the parking lot easement idea a couple of years ago after he learned a museum volunteer would be needing a wheelchair, and she would require handicap accessibility to the building if she were to keep volunteering. By working with the bank, said Blaney, it would ease the tax burden of local property taxpayers. He said the construction of the lot and handicap accessibility improvements would cost considerably more than the \$20,000 estimated in the flyer.

Bill Kany, senior vice president and director of legal and government affairs for Saco & Biddeford Savings, said at last week's public hearing that the bank has already spent \$20,000 on engineering and surveying alone.

If the town were to make the improvements, said Blaney, "That's going to cost the taxpayers of this town at least \$100,000. If the bank does it, it's going to cost the town zero."

As for the apple trees on the property, Blaney said, two are dead and the other two don't have much life left in them.

In response to Dornan's claim that Blaney has a conflict of interest, Blaney acknowledged that he is a corporator of Saco & Biddeford Savings. However, he said, he has been a bank corporator for about 26 years, but he has been a member of the Old Orchard Beach Historical Society for even longer: 44 years. The historical society owns the museum.

"I have a conflict of interest

for that," Blaney said, of the historical society.

He noted that he didn't sign any agreements with the bank or have a vote on the issue, other than the vote he will cast on Election Day, along with the rest of the town's voters.

Blaney also noted that the parking lot is a permitted use in the zone in which it is located, and that whether the town or the bank pays for it, a parking lot is needed and will be located in back of the Harmon Museum.

If the proposal is approved, Blaney said it would go before the planning board and would have to follow the requirements for setbacks, buffers and other rules, and would try to accommodate abutters to make a parking lot as least disruptive as possible.

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Day of Caring

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given Wednesday's wet weather. It's not just the Y that benefits, said LeBlanc, it's the volunteers themselves.

"A lot of us work inside all day," he said. "It's nice to get outdoors and help out the community. It's a lot of fun."

Each year, the United Way of York County enlists area businesses to lend volunteers for the Day of Caring, with nonprofits enjoying roles as the beneficiaries of those efforts. Last year, more than 1,000 volunteers freely gave their time, and this year saw a similar influx of help; multiple sites in southern Maine were beautified or otherwise improved by the backbreaking sacrifices of those wearing telltale orange shirts, bespattered with the United Way's logo and, in many cases, mud and dirt.

In Lebanon, volunteers from the Portsmouth Naval

Shipyards trekked to Lebanon Elementary School to build "buddy" benches and bat houses; representatives from Central Maine Power did tree work and landscaping at the Springvale Public Library; Cision employees built bunny habitats at the Wells Reserve at Laudholm Trust; and the Kennebunk, Kennebunkport & Wells Water District lent help to Kennebunk Middle School, assisting in work on an outdoor classroom.

Heather Gendron, executive director of the Northern York County branch of the YMCA, said that without the annual contributions of Day of Caring volunteers, certain projects around the campus simply would not get done.

"We would never be able to afford that kind of labor," said Gendron. "Days like today are invaluable. It's about making the Y a great place for kids."

Saco & Biddeford Savings, TJ Maxx, Hannaford, Unum and the Biddeford High School

Interact Club were among those represented at the Y on Wednesday.

"We all live here," said Jeff Roberts of Saco & Biddeford Savings. "We all work here. It's nice to give back to the community."

Local businesses were also given a volunteer boost by AmeriCorps, a program of the Corporation for National and Community Service, drawing volunteers from across the country. Alex Seghieri of Maryland was among them, and said the benefits of the Day of Caring don't stop with the nonprofits.

"It's nice to have a volunteer service that's not the military," he said of AmeriCorps. "It's all civilian. It's nice to say, 'I made a difference.' And you feel a lot better about yourself."

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Wells Climate Change

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way of life," said Dr. Christine Feurt, a professor at the University of New England and a director at the Center for Sustainable Communities Department of Environmental Studies.

Feurt is also the coordinator of the Coastal Training Program at the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve. She explained that the Wells predictive model is one of four laser-focused efforts by the New England Climate Adaptation Project to study at-risk coastal New England communities. The other three communities studied were Barnstable, Mass., Cranston, R.I. and Dover, N.H.

According to Feurt, the findings in the Wells report are similar to those for most of southern Maine. She said the specific purpose and benefit of downscaling complex climate models to a micro level is the ability to identify specific impacts on local communities, allowing local town officials to plan for emergency situations

"We brought everyone impacted together — from the fire and police chiefs, to code enforcement, planning and even the town assessor — to review the findings. Then we led them through a series of facilitated role-play sessions where they were able to discuss a myriad of issues from what types of evacuation plans might be needed and in what order of priority, to the impact of rising sea levels on local wildlife habitats," said Feurt.

Participants also received the results of a March 2014 stakeholder survey of local

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