

## **Council gets tough with innkeepers**

**By Jeanne Davant**

A frustrated Manitou Springs City Council learned Tuesday night that another deadline has expired in its ongoing efforts to get the owners of Red Craggs Bed and Breakfast to pave their driveway and parking area.

Kevin Maddox, CEO of the company that owns Red Craggs, said his contractor has not been able to chip seal the driveway because temperatures have not been high enough and materials have not been available. The company also owns Rockledge Country Inn and Onaledge and Bed and Breakfast at Historic Onaledge.

Planning Director Dan Folke said the contractor had sent him a letter saying that the material for the project would not be available until May and possibly not until September.

Paving the driveway was a condition adopted when Red Craggs' conditional use approval was granted in 2006, Folke said. Council gave the owners 90 days to comply with the condition.

The owners put in a gravel driveway in 2007, which they believed met the condition, Folke said, but it did not meet the requirement and drew noise and dust complaints from neighbors.

The owners subsequently proposed chip sealing the driveway and were given several extensions to complete the work. Council granted the most recent 90-day extension in December; it expired March 16.

"The condition has been very clear from the beginning," said an obviously irritated Folke. "He's asking you to reconsider that again, or a lesser project. If Mr. Maddox wants to propose that, he needs to give us something in writing."

Folke said that both the owners and the contractor had assured the Planning Department and Council in December that they could get the work done before the deadline.

Maddox said he and co-owner Brett Maddox had decided not to use concrete on the driveway after having trouble with a heated concrete driveway at Rockledge.

He said the brothers wanted to preserve the historic character of the properties.

"We made the erroneous assumption that rocks were OK" as a surface for the driveway, Kevin Maddox said. "Concrete is not the way to go, and asphalt would be hideous there."

Chip sealing combines a bed of asphalt with a layer of fine aggregate, or chips. It is widely used on road surfaces because of its stability and lower cost.

Manitou Public Works Director Bruno Pothier confirmed that local asphalt plants have lowered production and that chip sealing requires higher air temperatures to install than asphalt alone.

But Mayor Marc Snyder stressed that the work still has to get done.

"We worked hard to get the good will of the neighbors," Snyder said. "We are in danger of losing that." Several neighbors showed up at the December Council meeting and urged Council to force the Maddoxes to do the work or revoke their bed-and-breakfast permit.

"It's a very fine line we have to walk," Councilman Matt Carpenter said, "but it almost falls into an act of God. I would have a hard time forcing somebody to do this. There hasn't been a lot of good weather."

Councilwoman Ingrid Richter suggested tougher measures.

"I would like to have them post a bond or a letter of credit of \$25,000 until this is done," she said. "If it is not done by June, put a hearing on the agenda" to revoke the permit. "This is a complete waste of our time, and I'm tired of hearing about it."

Folke bristled at a suggestion from Maddox that the Planning Department contact the contractor about doing the paving.

"I don't know when the weather's right," Folke said. "By no means do I want to make this call... You've had four years to propose an alternate surface. Give us a plan in writing and we'll review it. I'm a little tired of this at every meeting."

Snyder asked Maddox to keep Folke informed as to when the materials would be available.

"If we get to mid-May and no meaningful progress is being made, we could suspend the conditional use within two weeks," Snyder said.

## **Plan for community garden hits snag**

A plan for a community garden at Higinbotham Flats has run into a problem with obtaining water, but proponents think it can be overcome.

Council approved the plan in January for a green space where residents could grow food on their own plots. Save the Flats and Manitou Springs Community Garden Organization are sponsoring the project.

The groups had planned to tap into a water main that serves the storage units owned by Bethesda Management Co. But Folke discovered an agreement that would require a cost recovery fee of more than \$26,000 for anyone who taps into the line.

The agreement is designed to help the owners recoup the costs of putting in the main.

"We don't have the money to pay the recovery fee," Folke said. There also are legal questions about the agreement, and no one is sure exactly where the main runs and whether it is located where the agreement says it is.

The gardeners have a backup plan that would involve installing some water storage tanks and a solar pump, but they would first like to approach Bethesda about waiving the fee agreement.

Richter agreed to help them.

"I truly believe they would be willing to do that for us, because they are (a) benevolent (association)," Richter said.

The city also will request that Bethesda provide any documentation about the location of the water main.

"We still need to locate the line," Folke said.

## **Volunteers will improve Web site**

Manitou Springs' Web site could get more user-friendly thanks to the efforts of a volunteer committee.

Council gave a thumbs-up Tuesday to a Special Committee Regarding the City of Manitou Springs Web Site.

"We're trying to get citizens more involved by being more timely aware of what's happening," Committee member Clint Lewis said. "We would like to stop posting things just on the front of City Hall."

The committee wants to include information from all city commissions and committees, which could easily upload documents to the site.

The bolstered Web site would be of value to both residents and tourists, Lewis said. In the future, District 14 and other interests could link up with the city site.

Lewis said the group has already done a lot of research and is ready to find funding for its work. There will be no cost to the city.

"A few dedicated volunteers is how things change," said Carpenter, a sponsor of the committee. "One of the things we can do is create an environment where good ideas are allowed to take root and flourish. I hope this will encourage many similar efforts."

## **In other business, Council...**

- Officially appointed Donna J. Kast as City Clerk.
- Heard a report from Snyder that Bestway Disposal has been selected as the sole provider of trash collection and recycling services for Manitou Springs residences.

The services will be provided to all single-family residences and multi-family projects with seven or fewer units. Snyder said the city is drafting letters explaining the program, which will be the subject of a public meeting on April 14. "In nearly all cases, there will be savings," Snyder said. "The long-term prospect is to significantly reduce the cost of trash and recycling service in Manitou Springs."

- Approved on second reading, without discussion, a 90-day extension of the moratorium on medical marijuana businesses.

- Approved on first reading an ordinance updating the city's building code to conform with the Pikes Peak Regional Building Code.

- Approved an agreement with Nolte Associates for on-call services.

Approved a renewal agreement with Colorado Springs Utilities for sewage treatment and disposal.

- Gave the Planning Department a go-ahead to submit a grant application for restoration of the chapel building at Crystal Valley Cemetery.

- Approved the use of Memorial Park for the Hill Climb Vintage Auto Show on June 26.

- Approved proclamations designating March 21 Single Parents' Day and April as Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

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