

Dining room gets a makeover at Christian Conference Center

Board asks for more windows street-side

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CANNON BEACH — Thousands of visitors flock to Cannon Beach each year to spiritually recharge and retreat at the Christian Conference Center. Next year, they may be able to do so — at least at mealtime — in a brand new building.

Construction of a new dining hall is expected to start this fall.

“This is a substantial new building replacing a smaller, old building,” City Planner Mark Barnes said at a Design Review Board meeting in September.

A 20,177-square-foot structure will replace the existing one built in 1948. The building is “rotting” and doesn’t meet current codes, Christian Center Executive Director Jeff Carlsen said.

The building is also too small for increasing crowds.

“Unfortunately the dining room and kitchen have not been increased to match the times,” Carlsen said.

The hall was designed for 150 guests with a maximum



Submitted Photo

An artist rendering of the Christian Conference Center's new dining hall.

capacity of 300. The new one will seat about 425.

The project is an estimated \$3.4 million, but Carlsen said volunteer labor will help cut down costs.

The “first big step” is finalizing engineering plans, he said. Construction will then proceed as money is donated.

“This is a huge project,” Carlsen said. “A lot of detail is involved.”

The new building will feature four guest rooms along with a larger kitchen and dining room. It was designed to “fit in” with the Conference Center’s other buildings, though it

will introduce more stone into its design, like that around the bell tower.

“One of the things our guests love is what we call the bell tower,” Carlsen said. “We actually have a plan to move that and bring it back into play as we do the landscaping.”

Design Review Board Chairman Mike Morgan said he would like to see the lawn preserved, but added he understands there is limited land.

Board member Sandi Lundy said the building was designed to be beautiful on the inside without much consideration for what Cannon Beach residents

will have to see on the outside. The back of the building facing town will have few windows, “like the back of a restaurant, where deliveries would take place,” Lundy added.

Anything center staff “can do to break up the wall will make a big difference,” Morgan said.

The board approved the design with a request for more windows.

“I think it’s a well-thought-out plan,” board member Todd Rowley said. “I understand your (Lundy’s) concern, but I think with these renditions, it will be nice looking.”