

Historical Seaport Authority Makes Offer to Purchase Aberdeen Sawmill Property

Local News

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Aberdeen — The Grays Harbor Historical Seaport Authority has made an offer to acquire 28 acres of the former Weyerhaeuser sawmill property in South Aberdeen on the Chehalis River. The property is immediately adjacent to 2.5 acres of land, including 320 feet of riverfront, that GHSA has leased from the Washington State Department of Natural Resources just south of the Chehalis River Bridge. GHSA plans to combine these parcels into its Seaport Landing project, a tall ship maintenance facility and regional tourism hub for Grays Harbor County. The former sawmill property includes 380 feet of wharf that will become the permanent home of the Lady Washington, the Official Ship of the State of Washington, and her companion ship, Hawaiian Chieftain. The uplands portion of the property will be used for ship maintenance activities, as well as a campus for hands-on vocational and academic educational programming. Programs will focus on traditional maritime skills, Grays Harbor history, and hands-on activities attracting visitors from around the world.

“The Historical Seaport Board of Directors sees the acquisition and development of this property as a major opportunity to revitalize our community,” said Capt. Les Bolton, GHSA executive director. “Converting this former sawmill into a first-class mixed use maritime center will be the realization of a vision that this community created for itself 25 years ago when the Historical Seaport was formed.” The Historical Seaport is working directly with representatives of the owners. “The Historical Seaport and Weyerhaeuser are in active discussions regarding the sawmill property,” said Weyerhaeuser spokesman Anthony Chavez. “Although discussions are progressing well, a great deal of work is still involved before both parties can reach an agreement. No timetable has been set.” Details of the announcement will be made available at the Grays Harbor Chamber of Commerce After Hours event scheduled for 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, November 9 at the Historical Seaport’s headquarters, 712 Hagara St., Junction City. Aerial images of the property, as well as an image of both vessels at the sawmill wharf, are available at the Historical Seaport website, www.historicalseaport.org. In addition to announcing the offer, the Historical Seaport has officially launched its “500 @ \$500” campaign for the next phase of the Seaport Landing project. The goal of the 500 @ \$500 campaign is to raise local funding to match grants and to prepare the site for public access. Donors can pledge the entire \$500 amount, or pledge in increments of \$50, \$100 or \$250. Historical Seaport staff will be available to accept pledges using the Seaport’s online 500 @ \$500 pledge tool, which is now available at the Seaport website, www.historicalseaport.org.