

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Lily Haight with local news for February 2, 2022.

Jefferson County Public Health reported 27 new cases of COVID-19 yesterday. This brings our total case count, since the beginning of the pandemic, up to 2,643. There are currently 215 active cases in isolation and four Jefferson County residents are hospitalized. The Washington Department of Health put out a report on Monday that found between August and December of 2021, there were 500 COVID-19 outbreaks at K-12 schools, accounting for a total of 4,446 cases in K-12 schools across the state during that time period. For the latest case information, and info on how to get your COVID vaccine, visit the Jefferson County Public Health website (<https://www.jeffersoncountypublichealth.org/1466/Case-Information>).

Cook Avenue, the site of a large home building development project called the Trailcrest Development, will be closed to through traffic between Peary and Elmira streets until February 18 this month, so that the street can be rebuilt and resurfaced. Bruce Seton and Seton Construction will be doing this work voluntarily, according to a post on the city's Facebook, which stated that while rebuilding the road is not a requirement as part of the permitting completed in 2011, Seton determined that rebuilding it would be the right thing to do for the neighborhood and the city.

Those who live nearby or who have driven on Cook Avenue recently may be surprised by the fact that rebuilding the road was not a condition of the permit for the building development, as it has slowly eroded away the road as building has gone on over the past six months. Right now, a section of Cook Avenue near the development is down to one lane, and with a new sidewalk being installed, looked for a time as if the road would never expand back to two lanes ever again. The Trail Crest Development Project is in the second phase of a three-phase development project. The first phase of development included building Trail Crest road and 14 parcels to build on. The road sat empty for some time, until last year when the first house went up. That house sold for over \$700,000.

The second phase of the project is a bit further up the hill on Cook, where Richmond American Homes owns three 5-acre parcels. Richmond is a homebuilding company that operates in over a dozen states across the country. Recently, the company has received negative press for poor reviews from homebuyers, who say the homes are built cheaply, and sometimes left unfinished. In this most recent phase of the project, construction crews have cut into the side of the bluff along Cook Avenue, and started to build a new sidewalk in just that one section of the road. For the last several months, the road has been open to one lane traffic only, with an automated traffic light installed to guide vehicles through the construction zone. The rest of Cook Avenue, like many of the streets in Port Townsend, is riddled with potholes, and has no shoulder, making it a dangerous place for bikers or walkers.

It is unclear from the city's Facebook post whether Seton Construction will be rebuilding the entirety of Cook Avenue, or if they plan to rebuild just the section that has been destroyed by the construction project, and as of the time this news segment was created, no city officials could be reached for comment. But stay tuned to KPTZ as we continue to update you on this project, which has caused much alarm for residents of the Cook Avenue neighborhood.

Just in time to get us through the end of the winter months, the Port Townsend Public Library announced its Community Read for 2022 this week. This year, the library selected two books for the community read, which library staff hopes will appeal to children, teens, and adults. Head to the library now to pick up your copies of

Wishtree, by Newbery Medal-winning author Katherine Applegate, and *The House in the Cerulean Sea* by New York Times bestselling author TJ Klune. *Wishtree* is a novel about an oak tree and a crow who help their neighbors embrace their differences. *The House in the Cerulean Sea* is a fantasy novel about a case worker who is in charge of keeping tabs on magical children in government sanctioned orphanages. Books are available at the library now, and the month of March will be dedicated to reading and discussing these books, as well as enjoying a variety of programs inspired by the books and hosted by the library. Readers will have a chance to meet both authors at two virtual events – one with Katherine Applegate taking place on March 17, and one with TJ Klune on March 31. To see a whole list of events taking place throughout the month of March, visit the library website (<https://ptpubliclibrary.org/library>).

And that's it for today's local news. KPTZ 91.9 FM brings you local news at noon Monday through Saturday and at 5pm Monday through Thursday. You can contact us through news@kptz.org. I'm Lily Haight. Thanks for listening.