

This is KPTZ FM 91.9 in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Rachel Perkins, bringing you news and commentary from the Jefferson County *Beacon* for Wednesday, September 3, 2025.

If you've been frustrated by the parking situation at Quimper Plaza, it turns out you're not alone. Mark D. Hall, President and CEO of Hall Equity Group, who owns Quimper Plaza, is also frustrated. Recently, Hall testified at an appeal his company filed against the approval of a project that would allow a hotel to be built across the street from Quimper Plaza, where the Sanderling building is currently located. The project has received conditional approval from the city, and the appeal hearing on August 25 highlights the need to strike a balance between the city's parking policy and its impact on commercial property owners, such as Hall Equities.

Due to relatively new city parking regulations that do not require new buildings to provide off-street parking, the hotel slated to be built at the current Sanderling site has only ten parking stalls for hotel guests of the future fifty-room hotel, four of which will be designated for electric vehicles, and two for ADA compliance. Hall is concerned that this will overflow the parking on three blocks on both sides of the street and that people will simply park in the Quimper Plaza lot.

Historically, the Quimper Plaza property has struggled with non-shoppers using the lot for ferry parking, shopping elsewhere, dining in other parts of downtown, or staying at area hotels. Mr. Hall said Hall Equity Group's initial efforts after acquiring the property were to simply do a better job of managing the lot with a few more signs and stricter reinforcement. "It didn't work as well as we hoped," Hall testified. In talking to local tow companies, Hall's organization learned that in the state of Washington, tow companies are required to give the tow-ee a notice within 24 hours after a tow occurs. They also could not find a tow company that was willing to police the Quimper Plaza lot.

As a result, they deployed a paid parking program as a deterrent but are not happy with the specific one they chose. Mr. Hall said, "We did implement that paid parking program earlier this year. It wasn't very successful. We made some mistakes in the rollout of that, and we have since discontinued that program, but we are about ready to introduce a new paid program on the lot." In a letter to Hall, Quimper Mercantile, the Plaza's largest tenant, expressed strong support for Hall Equity Group's objection to the hotel project, saying they have struggled with a lack of parking for their customers for years.

Public parking lots like those on Fillmore Street, the primitive lot on Tyler Street next to the bluff, and the Monroe Street park adjacent to Point Hudson all tend to be full during peak hours. Like the Quimper Plaza lot, the private Security Bank lot also implemented a mobile app-driven paid parking system this year for tenants, employees, and customers.

It is likely that the new hotel will contribute significantly to both peak demand and cumulative demand for downtown parking. Most visitors use a car to reach Port Townsend, which creates significant congestion, particularly during the summer. As for on-street parking, overstaying posted time limits is rampant. Downtown businesses have long maintained that parking turnover is essential to maintaining a smooth flow for both businesses and customers. With 91% occupancy during peak times, the hotel's parking deficit could strain available on-street spaces. The appeal hearing will continue on September 10 at 9:00am (<https://cityofpt.us/calendar>).

Reporting on this story by Angela Downs.

In other news, the Port Townsend High School Scholarship Foundation is accepting applications for Continuing Education Scholarships. Over \$30,000 in scholarships will be awarded to PT High School graduates who have completed one or more years of post-secondary education, including vocational or technical programs.

Applications may be found on the web at <https://washboard.wsac.wa.gov/login.aspx> or by postal mail at:

The Port Townsend High School Scholarship Foundation

PO Box 1658

Port Townsend, Washington, 98368

The deadline for applications is October 31, 2025.

KPTZ 91.9 FM brings you local news at noon and 5 Tuesday through Thursday, partnering on Wednesdays to bring you stories from jeffcobeacon.com. This is Rachel Perkins. Thanks for listening.