

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Diane Walker, with your local news and commentary for Thursday, March 12, 2026.

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Flags were lowered to half-staff across Washington state yesterday to honor the Reverend Jesse Jackson, who passed away February 17 and had strong ties to Western Washington.

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A tribal midden discovered while performing environmental studies at Boat Haven will be significantly delaying both the Sims Gateway Project and other Port of Port Townsend projects. According to the *Leader*, representatives of the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe have confirmed the find, saying there is a significant amount of midden consisting of discarded animal bones and shells at the Port. Shell middens allow experts to learn more about the diets of those who lived here previously, said Loni Greninger, the Tribe's culture director and vice chair. Tribe is now working to find ways to care for the resource, while still supporting the Port in moving forward with its projects. They ask that members of the public give space to the staff and the areas in which they are working.

Before the discovery, the multiagency Sims Gateway Project – involving the removal of poplar trees, moving power lines closer to Sims Way and expanding the boatyard – was full steam ahead, and PUD had a contract to remove the beloved Sims Way poplars. But for now, the exact site of the find is statutorily protected, and the work on Sims Way will not be moving forward until the Port can develop an acceptable plan to address any cultural resources the project might affect. Rather than addressing cultural discoveries on a case-by-case basis, the plan will need to provide a clear framework for handling similar situations in the future. Developing a plan that is comprehensive and collaborative will take time, so the Gateway project may end up being delayed to 2027. Port Director Eron Berg commended the Tribe for their efforts, saying that the Port would rather “always be patient and get it right than be in a hurry and do something that we wish we wouldn't have done.”

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The controversial development that was proposed for a 31-acre property that sits west of the Blue Heron Middle School is apparently no longer moving forward, according to city officials. The *Leader* reports that the city was notified on February 23 that the applicant, Trailhead LLC, does not intend to proceed with the project. The city does not know the reason behind the decision.

The project, which was first reported by the *Leader* in December, proposed dividing the property, which lies between Jackman Street and Umatilla Avenue, into up to 119 residential lots for single-family homes. At the time of the report, that application had already been formally submitted, but was not yet complete, as some additional materials were required before the proposal entered into full review. The project was first introduced to nearby residents through mailed notices, but details regarding lot sizes, layout, open space, design specifics and pricing had not yet been finalized. In addition, the application was prepared before the city revamped its comprehensive plan and development code in December.

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Jefferson Healthcare has announced plans to expand its medical services in Port Ludlow in an attempt to improve access to care for residents in south Jefferson County. The organization has purchased the former Kitsap Bank building, which sits across the street from Jefferson Healthcare's existing Port Ludlow clinic and pharmacy. While planning is still in its early stages, the goal is to eventually include specialty services such as

dermatology and imaging services, including MRI. But first the building will need renovations to accommodate medical services, and the timeline for construction and opening remains tentative. The effort is being supported in part by \$1 million in federal funding intended to help support construction and equipment needed to bring imaging services to the area. Hospital officials credited support from U.S. Rep. Emily Randall, who backed the funding request during the federal appropriations process.

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And finally, according to Nextdoor, there's a "large and very healthy looking cougar" roaming the neighborhood near Cape George Highlands. Folks living in that area may wish to keep your cats indoors and your dogs tightly leashed...

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KPTZ 91.9 FM broadcasts your local news Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday at noon and 5pm. You can contact us at [news@kptz.org](mailto:news@kptz.org). I'm Diane Walker. Thank you for listening and have a great weekend.