

# Mall

From Page 1

upgrades also; they've just been trying to work through financially packaging their improvements."

The agreement will help the mall raise \$6,165,000 which is set to be used for parking lot improvements, demolition of a soon-to-be vacated section of the mall to construct a courtyard, exterior entrances for individual stores, interior shop improvements and the creation of two outlots for new tenants.

City Commissioner Nathan Johnson, who covered previous deliberations on an agreement as a reporter with the *Press & Dakotan*, said the big difference this time is in how the funds would be raised for improvements.

"The main difference between this proposal and those discussed in 2008 and after is the funding mechanism," Johnson said. "Namely, discussions in the first incarnation of the mall renovation proposal revolved around creating a \$1.1 million tax-increment financing district (TID). Under that scenario, the property tax would be expected to rise with improvements to the property."

Johnson said the previously proposed method was met with some uneasiness.

"However, that increase in property taxes would go toward bonds that would pay for approved infrastructure expenses," he said. "Government entities would not see an increase in property tax collection until the bonds are paid. City officials questioned whether the change in property tax valuation would be enough to pay off \$1.1 million — and then the \$1.5 million

TID Dial Properties sought starting in 2010."

Mingo said another sticking point centered on the types of TIDs each side was comfortable with.

"They were trying to work through a request for the city to approve a tax increment district for their project," he said. "The way that was packaged didn't really fit the model that we as a city are comfortable working through. It was based on a different foundation for creating the increment than we're used to — we're more comfortable with the land-value increase methodology of creating an increment for creation of the (TID) and they were going off of a revenue based method of creating that increment. ... It just never got to a point where we were comfortable with using tax increment financing as a tool to see changes."

Terry Clauff, CEO of Dial Properties Management, LLC which owns the Yankton Mall, told the *Press & Dakotan* that progress was slowed by another factor well outside of the control of either entity.

"We tried to put together a presentation based upon similar façade improvements," Clauff said. "We were, at the time, in a recession and banks were not eager to refinance and or assist us. We had to let it ride until after 2012 and we started reorganizing at that time."

Johnson said the new proposal would only levy a higher tax on the property itself.

"The new proposal uses a special assessment, wherein Dial Properties requests a voluntary tax levied only upon its property," he said. "The city and other government entities do not give up any new property tax revenue, and concerns about whether a TID will work disappear."

Mingo said this doesn't put any additional burden on the city or taxpayers.

"Really, it's a self-assessment," he said. "It has no impact on anyone else in the community. The agreement will hold the city harmless, so it's really a way the city can help them help themselves. By doing the façade easement and special assessment associated with that, we can help them leverage private sector financing rather than just a small piece of it."

He expressed confidence that renovations will move forward as laid out in the agreement.

"The tool we've come up with is very site-specific," he said. "I'm much more confident that this is the correct tool for getting the project done."

Johnson said the agreement creates a positive situation for the city.

"This is a large step forward," he said. "During the first round of proposals, city officials really struggled with wanting the project to happen but not thinking the financial formula would work. Now, that concern is laid to rest. Additionally, the city is held harmless by this process. It's a win-win situation from a city perspective."

Clauff said he's seen positive reception for the proposal.

"The support from the community has been outstanding to see these improvements done, not only for bringing it up to a look for today's standards, but also attracting new tenants and retailers for the property."

Hopes are to begin work on the project as soon as Dunham's Sports moves to their new location in the mall later this year.

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# Mussel

From Page 1

However, this week's discovery quickly erased any doubts the mussels have established their presence in Lewis and Clark Lake, he said.

The initial search of two boats found a zebra mussel on one craft and 12-20 mussels on the other one, he said. "That almost instantly elevated (our classification) from suspect to infested," he said.

The findings became even more pronounced during Wednesday's snorkel survey of the marina, Van Meeteren said. "Of 111 boats, 34 percent had at least one mussel attached to them," he said.

The discovery of mussels came after extensive outreach efforts, including the Clean Boat Event at Lewis and Clark Lake, said Paul Lepisto with the Izaak Walton League of America.

"It's very disappointing to hear the news," he said. "When I heard about it, it was like I was being kicked in the gut. We wanted to make sure this (infestation) didn't happen, and then it did."

Zebra mussels reproduce rapidly, as each female lays a half-million to a million eggs a year, Lepisto said. The first mussels to hatch can mature quickly enough to start reproducing the same season.

State and federal agencies are determining the extent of

the infestation, Lepisto said. "Once it's in Lewis and Clark Lake, it can spread all the way to Fort Randall Dam (at Pickstown)," he said.

Many craft owners have been very conscientious in the fight against invasive species, but others have not, Lepisto said.

"Every state around us has been talking about the threat of aquatic invasive species," he said. "Then, to have people not to take the simple steps of clean, drain and dry (their watercraft) when you travel from state to state is a little mind boggling."

GF&P officials have noted a difference in compliance with the stricter watercraft regulations enacted earlier this year to combat invasive species, Van Meeteren said.

"We felt like we had somewhere around 80 percent compliance with fisherman, based on a survey. You drove past and they were pulling their plugs out and doing all the right things," he said. "That wasn't the case with the recreational boaters. I would say they were less than 80 percent (in compliance)."

The zebra mussels would not likely travel upstream by themselves, making watercraft the most likely mode of transporting them elsewhere, Van Meeteren said. The cooperation of boaters has become even more important in stopping the mussels' spread to other parts of Lewis and Clark Lake and to other waterways, he added.

The impact can be far reaching, as boaters using Lewis and Clark Lake have also used their craft in the Great Lakes of Iowa, Pactola Lake in the Black Hills and lakes in northeast South Dakota, Van Meeteren said.

The rapid growth of zebra mussels could affect the health of Lewis and Clark Lake, Lepisto said.

"There could be food chain problems in the future, and where that goes remains to be seen," he said. "It depends on how big the population of zebra mussels become in the lake."

Lewis and Clark's size and moving water makes it unfeasible to treat or clean the lake of zebra mussels, Van Meeteren said.

"Copper sulfate remains a treatment, but it only works in impoundments where no water is released and it's less than 100 acres," he said. "Lewis and Clark Lake has the moving water and covers 33,000 acres."

Lepisto agreed. "Any control measures are not only financially impossible but hydrologically next to impossible," he said.

However, Lepisto doesn't expect anyone to give up on containing, if not eliminating, the zebra mussel. "I don't think the people involved with the whole process are going to wave a white flag," he said.

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# Queen

From Page 1

ance her daily life with the responsibilities of the title made life busy but fun.

While in high school she was active in show choir, dance, vice president of the Vermillion High School National Honors Society and the Jolly JJ's 4-H club.

That schedule will continue this fall as part of the USD Dance team.

She has also volunteered more than 150 hours of her time with the Vermillion Weekend Backpack Program as well as many other programs.

"I haven't tracked community hours, but I got to MC the Clay County Fair princess contest," Hanson said. "I have worked with the backpack club, I got to help with the Miss Amazing Pageant. I think that was my favorite event I got to go to. It was so inspiring getting to talk to the girls and meet them. I have done a lot of parades, but my favorite are where I get to interact with people."

She also noted she enjoyed working with the Operation That's my Dress event in Jacksonville, Florida and Syracuse, New York.

"I got to model Sherri Hill dresses that military daughters, wives and service wom-

en got to try on and possibly take home," Hanson said. "I got to help some of the girls pick out a prom or a date dress that they got to take home with them that day. It was a really empowering event knowing that I helped a girl find her perfect dress and forget about having her father or spouse deployed even if it was just for a while. I also loved getting to hear their stories."

She said she has learned great lessons by being involved and that Vermillion has been key to her success.

"I think I am going to remember to stay involved. The skills I have learned definitely prepare you for the pageant but they also prepare you for real life," Hanson said. "I think because there is so much going on in the area and so many opportunities for us to grow and become strong women, it helps us to win these titles," referencing three reigning title winners at USD.

The upcoming MISS TEEN USA Pageant will stream LIVE from Atlantis, Paradise Island Resort in The Bahamas on Saturday, August 22nd at 7 p.m. on [www.missteeonusa.com](http://www.missteeonusa.com).

However, Hanson said her week actually began this Monday when she and her parents Pamela and Marlon Hanson and sister Ellen began their trip. She noted that events began on Tuesday.

"We will have a get to know you event and get settled in," she said. "Wednesday we will have rehearsals and a welcome party. Then Friday is the preliminary competition. We have our personality interviews in the morning. Then Saturday we have more preliminaries and our final competition. They keep us pretty busy."

Contestants will be judged in three categories: swimsuit, evening gown and interview.

"On Saturday they will take it from 51 girls to 15, from there to 10 and then the final five," Hanson said. "Recently I have been doing a lot of mock interviews getting ready, walking on the stage, getting ready for the swimsuit and evening gown competitions. There has been a lot of preparation."

She said no matter what happens she couldn't have done it without her parents.

"It has been kind of a long road," Hanson said. "There have been some ups and downs along the road, but they have always been there to support me. They are my number one fans. They are always there to work with me, keeping me going."

For more information on the pageant and to learn more about Miss South Dakota Teen USA please visit [www.missteeonusa.com](http://www.missteeonusa.com).

To learn more about the contestants, please view their bios at: <http://www.missuniverse.com/missteeonusa/members/contestants>

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