

## STOLEN PURSE RETURNED AFTER POLICE CRACK CASE

By MARY SCHLEY

SIX HOURS after Carmel City Councilman Hans Buder’s wife, Meghan, reported her purse had been stolen from their car late last Sunday night, police identified,



PHOTO/CPD

Carmel Police tracked down a man suspected of breaking into numerous cars, including a city councilman’s, and arrested him with the help of Capitola P.D.

found and arrested the thief, according to an announcement from Buder during the July 1 council meeting. The alleged thief, later identified as 38-year-old Israel Perez from Capitola, had broken into several cars in town around that same time, police said.

Buder and his family live at Mission and 11th, and their car was parked about 10 feet from his bedroom window, he said.

“I went to bed around 11 on Sunday night, and the first fraudulent charges started showing up around 2:30 a.m.,” he told The Pine Cone. The thief “started going through and trying to charge things on my wife’s cards — everything from charges in Poland and Mexico to a late-night snack at Jack in the Box up in Watsonville.”

Not yet aware that his wife’s purse was missing, Buder said he initially thought the middle-of-the-night fraud alerts were the result of one of his employees’ company cards being stolen. “It wasn’t until later that morning that I realized it was actually Meghan’s personal card,” he said.

### Quick work

After she and her husband figured out what was going on, Meghan Buder reported the theft to Carmel police about 10 a.m. on June 30. That afternoon, Police Chief Paul Tomasi interrupted the council’s closed session meeting to tell Buder his officers had identified a suspect.

“During the six or seven hours after our report, the police gathered information from us and our neighbors, identified the suspect, located where he lives, went up to Santa Cruz in an unmarked car, took him into custody, and recovered most of the stolen property,” Buder said.

One of the other victims had golf clubs stolen from his car, and an officer knew of similar thefts committed by Perez. So he started reviewing video from the city’s license-plate-reading surveillance cameras to see if a car

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## Supervisors reject Mehdipour house again

### ■ She calls ordeal ‘extreme injustice’

By CHRIS COUNTS

IN THE latest chapter of Massy Mehdipour’s lengthy saga to build a home at 1170 Signal Hill in Pebble Beach — she says she’s been before the Monterey County Board of Supervisors eight times — supervisors unanimously voted Tuesday to reject the latest design of her proposed home because it’s too big.

### Disrepair and destruction

The effort by Mehdipour to build a house has been embroiled in controversy since 2010, when she first proposed replacing a residence designed by noted architect Richard Neutra and constructed in 1958. The home had fallen into disrepair and was later torn down, upsetting preservationists, some of whom accused her of vandalizing her own home to make way for a new one.

This week’s vote comes three months after the Monterey County Planning Commission approved a plan by

Mehdipour to build a two-level, 8,290-square-foot residence on the site, which overlooks Fanshell Beach. The proposal was scaled back from an earlier one that included a three-level, 11,933-square-foot home. But the approval by the planning commission was appealed by two parties opposed to the project. Mehdipour also objected to the commission’s requirement that she establish a conservation easement over the land she’s not building on.

### Too big?

At Tuesday’s hearing, attorney Tony Lombardo, representing a neighbor, said the home Mehdipour wants to build is simply too big. Lombardo cited language used by District 2 Supervisor Glenn Church at a hearing in June “which required the home be the same size and in the same location” as the old house, which he said was “4,124 square feet and 22 feet high.” He contended the

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## Architect’s contract OK’d for library remodel

### ■ Board appointment delayed again

By MARY SCHLEY

IN A major step for the planned \$20 million interior renovation and seismic retrofit of Harrison Memorial Library, which supporters hope will be completed in time for its centennial in 2028, the Carmel City Council last week approved a contract with Moore Ruble Yudell Architects, a Santa Monica-based firm “nationally recognized for its expertise in historic preservation,” according to the city.

At the July 1 meeting, city attorney Brian Pierik said he, lawyers and representatives of the firm and the Carmel Public Library Foundation — which has pledged to raise the necessary funds via private donations — spent considerable time hammering out the contract over the last few months.

“The foundation will fund the Harrison Memorial Library Centennial Restoration Project to upgrade

## Council all in on smaller rebuilt CPD station

By MARY SCHLEY

A NEW police station providing almost everything Carmel’s officers need might actually be smaller than the one they have now, according to an analysis presented to the city council by Police Chief Paul Tomasi last week. Among other major changes, space could be saved by getting rid of the firing range and the permanent emergency operations center — requiring officers to practice shooting elsewhere and setting up the EOC in a conference room as needed.

The line-by-line review followed discussions in the spring in which the council balked at plans detailing a larger complex to accommodate the needs of a modern police department and decided to form another committee



PHOTO/CPD

Police officers use the firing range in Carmel P.D.’s basement for training, qualifications and practice, but the council is considering building a new station without one in order to save money.

to tackle the topic. In the months since, Mayor Dale Byrne, councilman Jeff Baron, Tomasi and others have met numerous times to develop a realistic list of needs.

Their combined square footage totals less than half of what consulting architecture firm Indigo — which specializes in designing police stations — recommended.

### ‘Most productive’

“Out of all the ad hocs I’ve been on, this was probably the most productive,” Tomasi told the council July 1. “There are a lot of changes we’ve made — we rolled up our sleeves on this.”

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PHOTO/PINE CONE FILE

The Richard Neutra home on Signal Hill Road in Pebble Beach owned by Massy Mehdipour before it was demolished.

primarily the interior,” he said, but to also update structural and seismic elements, basic infrastructure, ADA accessibility, and technology and systems, at an estimated cost of \$15 million to \$20 million.

### Many cooks

While the City of Carmel-by-the-Sea owns the nearly century-old building at Lincoln and Ocean and funds its staffing and maintenance, an independent board of trustees appointed by the city council oversees the library’s operations, and the nonprofit library foundation raises money for its materials, programs and services.

Last August, the city requested proposals from architectural firms interested in handling the remodel and received a half-dozen, Pierik said. After selecting two finalists, in January, the foundation announced that a 19-person selection committee had unanimously chosen Moore Ruble Yudell.

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