



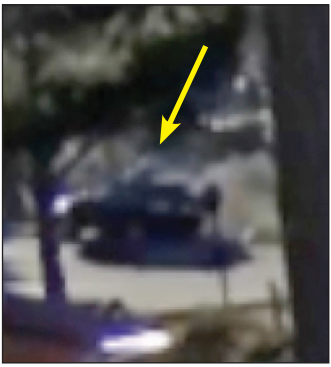
The Carmel Pine Cone

Volume 111 No. 51 <https://carmelpinecone.com> December 19-25, 2025
TRUSTED BY LOCALS AND LOVED BY VISITORS SINCE 1915

Video shows crash that killed 17 Mile Drive bicyclist

By MARY SCHLEY

SOON AFTER the story regarding the tragic death of Cal State University Monterey Bay professor Seth Pollack broke last week, several Pine Cone readers wrote to object to the characterization of the Dec. 5 collision provided by the California Highway Patrol. But the state agency is



SCREENSHOTS FROM SURVEILLANCE VIDEO

Still frames from a video of the Dec. 5 crash that killed Seth Pollack show what happened: In the top photo, Pollack and a dark-colored SUV approach each other on 17 Mile Drive near the Pebble Beach golf course. In the bottom photos, while the bicyclist continues straight ahead, the SUV turns left onto Crespi Lane, striking Pollack, who ends up on the SUV's roof. Pollack was pronounced dead at the scene.

sticking with its original statement.

California Highway Patrol officer Jaskaran Bhaurla reported Pollack, 66, was cycling westbound on Crespi Lane in Pebble Beach as a 62-year-old Pebble Beach resident was turning left onto the street from southbound 17 Mile Drive in her Toyota SUV, and “for reasons still under investigation, the rider of the bicycle crossed into the eastbound lane and crashed into the Toyota SUV.”

But others insist that’s not what occurred — and footage from a nearby video camera appears to prove them right.

“The initial report that Seth ‘crossed into the eastbound lane and crashed into the automobile’ has been modified by CHP. There has been an updated investigation by CHP that finds no blame or error on the part of Seth Pollack and that in fact he was riding on the proper side of 17 Mile Drive when he was struck and killed by the automobile,” Pine Cone reader Mitch Winick wrote several hours after the paper was published Thursday night.

‘Front-page error’

“Your misreporting and mischaracterization of blame is a public demeanment (sic) of Seth Pollack as an experienced and respected bike rider and a beloved member of our community. Your front-page error deserves an equally prominent retraction, correction, and an apology.”

David Awerbuck similarly wrote that Pollack was on 17 Mile Drive, not Crespi, at the time of the crash and was not at fault.

“I realize that you were probably given false information and the blame is not on you, but on the CHP media department or spokesperson who made a gross error,” he said.

Finally, Deborah Hall said she’s aware

See **BICYCLE CRASH** page 23A

Commission: Shucks should identify as restaurant

By MARY SCHLEY

IF IT walks like a duck and quacks like a duck, its city-issued operating permit should identify it as a duck. That’s essentially what the Carmel Planning Commission

decided last week when it said the use permit for A.W. Shucks on Ocean Avenue should be amended to identify it as a restaurant. Currently, it is classified as a bar — one of just three in town.

The owners of A.W. Shucks, Karen and Randy Basi, don’t want to change their permit, and neither does their landlord, John Plastini, and while planning director Anna Ginette said they’re within their rights to continue operating as they are, others disagreed.

The Dec. 10 meeting marked the commission’s second hearing on the topic, following its October discussion of how A.W. Shucks is classified, which has been murky for decades.

Internal conflicts

The current use permit identifies the business — which previously operated under the name Maxwell McFly’s — as a drinking place providing limited food. It was issued in 1993 to Murray Weaver and Paul Elliot, who were planning to buy the bar but wanted to amend the permit “to include a seafood menu to be served at an ‘oyster bar.’”

“The permittee shall not be authorized to establish a full kitchen with stove, grill or oven,” the permit states. “Food service shall be limited to a microwave oven, steamer, soup preparation and refrigeration facilities. No takeout food shall be allowed.”

However, in the years that followed, the city nonetheless approved building permits for outfitting and then renovating a commercial kitchen at A.W. Shucks, which offers an extensive menu and provides takeout. And in 2023, the Basis received a license from the city identifying their business as a “full-line restaurant,” with “drinking

See **RESTAURANT** page 18A

County seeks \$225K more for ‘illegal’ Car Week event

■ Attorney: ‘This has become a crusade’

By KELLY NIX

AN ATTORNEY for the owners of a Carmel Valley home who were forced to pay more than \$750,000 for allegedly violating county vacation-rental rules during Car Week called Monterey County’s pursuit of the fine this week a “crusade” against his clients. His statement was made the same day that a county official demanded an additional \$225,000 from the homeowners.

Monterey County issued the massive citation in August during Car Week after supercar company McLaren held a VIP, invitation-only, weeklong promotional event at a home owned by Fidji Simo, the CEO of applications for OpenAI, and Remy Miralles, who rented it to the car company. County officials said nobody obtained a short-term rental permit for the event on the Scarlett Road property, which McLaren dubbed “Château McLaren,” nor a special event permit, which were required under county rules.

Simo and Miralles were forced to pay the \$761,975 fine before they could appeal it. At a hearing Tuesday conducted by an independent officer, their attorney, Ron Fisher, blasted the county for the “excessive” fine — the largest in county history.

See **HUGE FINE** page 16A



SCREENSHOT FROM COUNTY HEARING

During a Zoom meeting Tuesday, a hearing officer, county officials, and lawyers debated the validity of a huge fine imposed on the owners of Carmel Valley home used for an exclusive Car Week party.

City to post address map

By MARY SCHLEY

WANT TO see what your house number will be? Curious whether the city knows if your corner house faces one street or the other? In its effort to implement a system of standardized street addresses, the City of Carmel will roll out an interactive map next month that allows residents and business owners to glimpse their potential number assignments and provide feedback, assistant city administrator Brandon Swanson said Wednesday.

“We’re trying to warm people up to the idea that it’s going to happen,” Swanson said.

A committee consisting of councilman Bob Delves, administrative analyst Emily Garay and a trio of residents spent months researching how a new address system might be developed and implemented, and the council learned Dec. 2 that a model is ready for testing.

Soft launch

Buildings on the streets’ west and north sides will have odd numbers, while those on the east and south sides will have even numbers, and the numbering will originate at the city’s northern and western boundaries. Each assessor’s parcel number, of which there are around 3,300, will be assigned one number.

Because the blocks running north-south tend to be longer — typically containing 10 lots apiece — their numbers

See **ADDRESS MAP** page 25A

Capitol Access

By CAITLIN CONRAD

will offer up laws to be reviewed. From there, hearings and community meetings will be held, giving Californians an opportunity to provide input. After that, representatives will announce what they learned, and what, if any, changes need to be made.

“Passing laws is only the first step. The real test is ensuring they work. Gone are the days when laws can be

See **SCRUTINY** page 20A