

# More traffic spurs call for more speed limit signs

By **RACHEL SHUBIN**  
Special to the Star and Wave

WEST CAPE MAY — The Board of Commissioners is considering installing more speed limit signs. Mayor Pam Kaithern stated that there has been an increase in traffic in the borough.

"It was brought to our attention that Stevens Street has one speed limit sign going down towards Bayshore Road and nothing coming in the other direction," Kaithern said. "With a multitude of events and visitors coming to the farms, more speed limit signs would be helpful."

Streets that are being considered to have additional speed limit signs include Stevens Street, Sixth Av-

enue, Leaming Avenue, Park Boulevard and Central Avenue at West Perry Street to Broadway.

Cape May Police Chief Anthony Marino told the board that the municipality has discretion as to how many speed limit signs are placed in town.

"The municipality decides how many signs and how far apart they go. For county roads, it is up to the county or state to justify signage," Marino said.

Borough engineer Ray Roberts said the board should consider electronic speed limit signs. Kaithern said that the board needed to look at their budget constraints but at least will start with conventional signs.

The borough is also considering a speed unit that collects data wirelessly and is mobile, so it could be moved throughout town. Roberts stated the board would have to fill out a report for the state Department of Transportation and receive approval.

Roberts' engineer report included the submission of two applications ahead of deadline. A municipal aid application will include a request to reconstruct Leaming Avenue and put in a bike path and sidewalk on one side of the street. The sidewalk will be on the north side of Leaming and will cross over Cape Island creek and connect with the sidewalk installed by the city

of Cape May.

"The two opportunities here are to secure dollars for the sidewalk or complete package which we have been asking for several years," Roberts said. "Normal award time is in April. We took pictures during the Tomato Festival and there are always cars and bikers in the picture which we can point out to the reviewer."

Residents as well as Marino provided a letter of support for the municipal aid package. Deputy Mayor Peter Burke also suggested they submit accident reports from the area.

The borough is taking the next steps for the National Flood Insurance Program's (NFIP) Community Rating

System (CRS). The next step is for compliance with the regulations for the borough to be in the system.

"We have to send out more letters and hold a workshop, but we are still a while away," Municipal Clerk Suzanne Stocker said. "These steps have to happen before flood insurance for the borough is lower. You have to spend money to save money."

Kaithern suggested formulating a plan and examining what Lower Township has done for its homeowners and if there are any seminars that can be held jointly.

Burke reported Public Works completed the renovation of the fire company exterior and has now begun work on Borough Hall. The

project is moving along and is expected to be done in a timely manner, he said.

Kaithern discussed a new internet-based mapping program called Conservation Blueprint.

"It's a compilation of work put together by over 20 conservation and interested parties in New Jersey done in conjunction with Rowan University," Kaithern said. "It's an interactive map that shows the open space, critical habitat, preserved areas, targeted areas. It includes five million acres of land in New Jersey and 1 million acres left to be developed. It's a great tool for our staff and commission to use and it goes back all the way to 1930."

## School

Continued from Page A1

conditioned upon passing a screening. In this school year, the school has 58 Choice students but the school is funded for only 41. The state Department of Education (DOE) questioned the number of sibling applications for additional seats in the Choice program, Savio said.

"Since we had never classified anybody as funded or unfunded, they came down and did that," he said.

The DOE noted the school had only 41 funded Choice school seats and set out to determine which 41 students were funded, noting any student over that total would be considered "non-resident" and "non-tuition," Savio said.

"So you're accepting them and you're paying for their education but you're not getting any funding from the state, just so you understand that," he said he was told. "I responded we understood this all along, we've been doing this for several years this way and we understand what you're saying."

Savio said initially 30 Choice students were accepted by the school, rising to 32 and with sibling dispensation, the total increased to 41 students. He said some parents received letters informing them their children were unfunded as Choice students.

The DOE does not recognize the term "unfunded," so the students in excess of the approved count of 41 students became "non-tuition" and "non-residents," according to Savio. He said those students do not enjoy the protection of Choice status, so if they have siblings coming along after the child moves through the system, they do not get guaranteed slots.

"We cannot apply for sibling dispensation for those students who are siblings of unfunded students," Savio said.

He said the school is responsible for the cost of educating students accepted above the 41 who are funded. Savio offered a resolution to the board that noted once a student is accepted as Choice student, the school is obligated to retain the student until graduation from the school or until the student voluntarily withdraws.

The school is rescinding an appeal to the state Commissioner of Education regarding an additional funded seat for the 2017-18 school year.

The school received an Application for State School Aid (ASSA) audit going back four years, he said. According to Savio, each Oct. 15, the school files a report with the state of how many students are in the school, how many students the school receives and the number of Choice students.

"Those counts go up to the state and they run a funding formula based on those numbers," he said. "However, the funding formula, as you probably have read, has never been fully funded."

"Even though the funding formula shows how much aid you should get, they have flat funded districts throughout the state over the last seven years," Savio continued.

West Cape May Elementary School has received Choice aid that overrode Stabilization Aid the school received in the past. He said Choice aid exceeded what the school was getting in Stabilization Aid. Savio

said the school needed to tighten up data in its student records management system so each student is properly classified in available categories.

School Board President Robert Cwik said unfunded Choice students did present incidental costs to the school.

"This is something that never should have happened. There was a mistake and that's why we're in the fix we're in," he said.

He said no one seemed to want to accept blame for the mistake. He said incidental costs from unfunded Choice students would continue because the school is keeping all the students.

"However, they are not going to be eligible for siblings to come in, only the people that are Choice are going to be allowed for siblings," he said.

Cwik said if there were an opening for a Choice seat, a lottery would be held to accept a sibling.

Board member T.J. Belasco questioned when the

school would hold a lottery when its goal was not to have 17 unfunded Choice students. Cwik said it would be held only in the Choice student population fell below the funded number.

The board tabled the resolution to enable confusing language to be eliminated covering the use of a lottery for siblings even though they have preferred status. The resolution states: "The board agrees that it will reduce the number of non-resident-non-tuition students through attrition by not approving future Choice applications from students who are not siblings of current Choice students and will fill slots of withdrawn students only with siblings of current Choice students and will hold a lottery if the number of sibling applications is fewer than the number of slots available from withdrawn students."

During public comment, a parent suggested rather than take new Choice students in kindergarten,

allow the non-funded students to become Choice students. She said for the

last five years, she did not know if her child could return to the school in the fall.



Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

### Lower Township honors Kiwanis Club

The Kiwanis Club of Cape May sponsors the Builders Club at the Richard M. Teitelman School. Lower Township Council recognized the organization Monday for its work in the restoration of the Civil War-era Union Bethel Cemetery and providing scholarships for students. Mayor Erik Simonsen presents Cape May Kiwanis Club President Kim Ford with a certificate of appreciation.

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\*\*American Made (Thurs Premiere) R [7:00, 9:40]  
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