



Caper Tiger boys basketball starts season 5-0

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House of the week

B1



169th YEAR NO. 1 CAPE MAY, N.J. Serving America's National Historic Landmark City WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 4, 2023 \$1.00



Werner Tedesco/Special to the STAR AND WAVE

Sun sets on 2022

One of the final sunsets of the year illuminates the skyline of Cape May.

Changes clog up stormwater management rules

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — City Council amended a proposed ordinance to strengthen the city's stormwater regulations for developers and property owners following suggestions from the Planning Board and is expected to reintroduce it later in the month.

A public hearing for the ordinance was scheduled for Dec. 20 but changes required the ordinance to be republished and reintroduced. The ordinance provides minimum stormwater management and grading requirements for development in the city and regulation of nuisance causing conditions.

City solicitor Chris Gillin-Schwartz said the ordinance was examined twice by the Planning Board. Initially, council the stormwater management requirement would be applicable to additions to any existing structure or site improvements which increase impervious coverage by more than 200 square feet.

He said the Planning Board recommended changing that figure to 5 percent of lot area.

"On a bigger lot, 200 square feet is going to be less meaningful, on a smaller lot it will be more meaningful," Gillin-Schwartz said. "If you do it based on a percentage, it's going to be more equitable to different size lot owners."

Gillin-Schwartz said the Planning Board recommended the requirements come into effect when a driveway is constructed as well as adding a swimming pool or detached garage.

In addition, the Planning Board suggested the city view a property as vacant when a new single-family home is to be constructed but for any other type of development, such as a pool or garage or driveway, the applicant would be required to compensate for the change in drainage caused by the development, he said.

Outgoing Deputy Mayor Stacy

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DEP land swap ruling delaying Lafayette park

Cape May wants to use a part for site of new police station

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — Vince Orlando, the city's contracted engineer, described the Lafayette Street Park project as "kind of in a holding pattern" due to a proposed land swap that would allow the city to build a police station on St. Johns Street.

At a Dec. 20 council meeting, Orlando said his firm, Engineering Design Associates, has been looking at some conceptual ideas for the park. He said he would present the ideas to council in the first quarter of the new year.

The city wants to use land at St. John and Lafayette streets that was originally intended to be a portion of Lafayette Street Park. The city proposed a land swap with the state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) for use of the parcel, which was placed in the Green Acres program to be used as parkland.

Use of the lot for a police station would require the approval of the commissioner of the DEP and the State House Commission. In compensation for use of the quarter-acre lot, the city would dedicate 4.8 acres of land in the Sewell Tract as parkland.

DEP has not rejected the

proposed location of the police station in a section of Lafayette Street Park but asked whether the city considered using the Jackson Street parking lot.

Outgoing Deputy Mayor Stacy Sheehan said the city formerly had a Lafayette Street Park Advisory Committee that "put a lot of time and effort into the designs."

"I wonder if they should be brought in on some of these ideas only because there was a lot of issues brought up just with the design of the how the dog park was laid out," she said.

Sheehan said some of the design problems could be solved before they resurfaced.

Orlando said he told Mayor Zack Mullock that a meeting with a small committee was advisable because of the many thoughts and ideas about the park.

"These people spent years on the designs and there were also some issues brought up about a fountain being put in the park and it was supposed to be paid for by (county) Open Space..." she said.

At this point, Open Space will pay only a small portion of the cost of the fountain, Sheehan said. She said installing a fountain incurs

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YEAR IN REVIEW 2023: CAPE ISLAND

Higher room tax boon for city, Franklin St. School sees revival

JANUARY

CAPE MAY — In a 3-1 vote, City Council renewed Mike Voll's \$135,000 contract as city manager for 2022. Deputy Mayor Stacy Sheehan, who cast the dissenting vote, argued the city should advertise and interview candidates for the job.

CAPE MAY COURT HOUSE — Cape May County recorded nine more deaths the week of Jan. 5 attributed to the surge of COVID-19. As of Jan. 5, there were 262 fatalities attributed to COVID-19 in the county, including 157 among residents and 105 in long-term care.

WEST CAPE MAY — Shorehouse Canna applied to the state Cannabis Control Commission for a license to operate a dispensary in West Cape May, where Borough Commission approved retail sales and supported the application.

CAPE MAY — City Council introduced an ordinance that would require registration of all residential rental properties and increase mercantile fees for such rentals based on square footage.

CAPE MAY — Construction of Lafayette Street Park continued to be tied up in legal issues concerning deed notices and under-

ground contamination on the site. The city was waiting for the Cape May Housing Authority to sign a deed notice. From 1853 to 1937, a manufactured gas plant operated on the site leaving widespread underground contamination.

CAPE MAY — After five generations of ownership, the Hirsch family said goodbye to the Montreal Beach Resort after selling the property, including Harry's Ocean Bar and Grille to Madison Resorts.

CAPE MAY COURT HOUSE — The number of active COVID cases dropped dramatically from Jan. 14 to Jan. 21 in the county, but the Department of Health announced eight more deaths. As of Jan. 21, the county had 1,499 active cases, compared to 2,329 cases in the previous week.

CAPE MAY — The Planning Board denied a request Jan. 25 from Cape Jetty LLC to extend site plan approval for construction of a new Jetty Motel. The applicant's site plan approval expired in August 2021. The board voted unanimously against approval for the construction on Beach Avenue, which would have featured a 243-seat restaurant and bar with stacked parking.

FEBRUARY

WEST CAPE MAY — Borough Commission honored West Cape May Volunteer Fire Company Chief Chuck McPherson on his retirement after 27.5 years of service. Mayor Carol Sabo said McPherson joined the fire company in 1976 and had served as chief since 1994.

CAPE MAY — City Council approved a professional services agreement not to exceed \$45,000 with Nancy Zerbe, of ARCH2, for the production of "technically and permissibly correct and sufficient additional documentation to supplement the city's National Historic Landmark status." Zerbe was to provide research on the city's African American history.

CAPE MAY — In a unanimous vote, the city's Zoning Board reversed a decision by the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) requiring a cedar shake roof on an inn on Jackson Street. The HPC had approved the Prince Edward Inn for an asphalt shingle roof in 2019 but when installation started, evidence of a former cedar shake roof was uncovered. The owners were told to stop construction and return to the HPC.

MARCH

CAPE MAY — City Council approved a new contract with International Association of Fire Fighters Local 3495 that made raised starting salaries almost 13 percent.

CAPE MAY — The summer concert series at Convention Hall has lost hundreds of thousands of dollars for the city. On March 1, Director Kacie Rattigan told City Council that she alerted the city manager to the issue when she started in her position. Council approved a new contract with concert promoter Spy Boy Productions in which the city will receive a \$1,500 fee from each show plus \$5 from each ticket sold.

CAPE MAY COURT HOUSE — After two summers with the U.S./Canadian border closed due to COVID-19 travel restrictions, the Cape May County Department of Tourism launched a campaign to recapture the loyal international visitors from the Province of Quebec. The marketing campaign, "Reconnect Canada," was made possible with funding allocated by the county Board of Commissioners via American Rescue Plan funds launched in December.

CAPE MAY — A proposal to build a police station at the corner of St. John and Lafayette streets could force changes to plans for the completion of Lafayette Street Park. Engineer Vince Orlando told City Council on March 15 the city submitted an archeological study of the property to the state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), saying it's the "last piece of the puzzle" so the DEP can decide on phases two and three of the park.

CAPE MAY — The city will continue to offer three-day beach tags despite efforts to eliminate them. City Council introduced an ordinance in February that would have done away with three-day tags and created weekly tags that run from Friday to Friday rather than Saturday to Saturday, but during a public hearing March 15 the ordinance was voted down.

CAPE MAY — Several commercial fishermen claimed survey boats hired by wind farm developer Ørsted inadvertently cut their lines, causing their lobster and conch traps to be lost in the ocean, and were seeking compensation for the lost gear and income.

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