



House of the week

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Salvatores honored as Unsung Heroes

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165th YEAR NO. 46 CAPE MAY, N.J. Serving America's National Historic Landmark City WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2019 \$1.00

Mullock: Show me the money for restoration

Freeholders, Library Commission committed to turning Franklin Street School into library

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — The city has a commitment for \$4 million of county funding to restore the Franklin Street School and convert it into a new library branch, as well as the possibility of more funding from the state.

At a Nov. 8 City Council meeting that lasted nearly five hours, Mayor Chuck Lear said the county Board of Chosen Freeholders and county Library Commission

both have signed shared service agreements to work with Cape May to provide funding for the restoration. The freeholder board would provide \$2 million and the Library Commission would provide another \$2 million for the project, estimated to cost a total of \$6 million, he said.

Councilwoman Stacy Sheehan asked if an agreement were in place with the Center for Community Arts (CCA), which holds a lease on the school from the city, to restore the building for

a library branch. Councilman Zack Mullock asked if CCA's lease could be amended before council's Nov. 18 meeting, when a public hearing will be held for approval of a \$2 million bond from the city for its share of the project. He said it was important the city have all the details in writing.

Executive Director David McKenzie said the CCA is ready to amend its lease.

Mullock said he previously had an issue with going forward

with the \$2 million bond before agreements with the county were completed.

"And I now have that agreement in my hand and I appreciate that," he said.

City solicitor Frank Corrado said the state had recently approved new rules for a new Library Construction Bond for which Cape May can apply. He said originally the state would pay \$200 per square foot for renovations but that has been increased to \$350 per square foot.

"Which means, if we are successful in obtaining this library grant, it will be considerably larger than what we had anticipated," Corrado said.

Deputy Mayor Patricia Hendricks said for the rehabilitation or renovation of a building registered as a New Jersey or federal historic site, the maximum cost per square foot is now set at \$500.

Sheehan suggested making the Franklin Street School a commu-

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Testa, Simonsen, McClellan claim legislative seats

Thornton, Hayes re-elected to county freeholder board

By ERIC AVEDESIAN
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY COURT HOUSE — Republicans swept the legislative and freeholder races in the county on Nov. 5, according to unofficial results from the Cape May County Clerk's office.

Mike Testa, a Vineland attorney, ousted incumbent Democratic state Sen. Bob Andrzejczak with 15,840 votes to 13,167, or 54 percent to 45 percent.

The GOP also won two Assembly seats, defeating their Democratic incumbents.

Lower Township Mayor Erik Simonsen and Ocean City Councilman Antwan McClellan triumphed over Democratic Assemblymen Bruce Land and Matt Milam, brining the two Assembly seats under Republican

control for the first time in a decade.

Countywide, Simonsen received the most votes with 16,121, while McClellan garnered 15,338 votes. Land netted 12,247 votes and Milam got 11,886.

Andrzejczak, of Lower Township, a U.S. Army veteran who was wounded in Iraq, was first elected to the Assembly in 2013. He became a senator after former state Sen. Jeff Van Drew was elected to Congress in 2018.

Milam previously served as assemblyman from 2008 to 2013. He returned to the Assembly in January 2019, taking Andrzejczak's seat.

During the campaign, the Republican candidates criticized mailers sent by the General Majority PAC, a dark money group with sus-

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Bob Post/Special to the STAR AND WAVE

Fire destroys home in Villas

Police, fire and EMS were dispatched to a home at 2727 Bay Drive in Villas at 11:08 a.m. Nov. 12. Lower Township police found the residence fully engulfed in flames and determined that it was vacant. Neighbors were requested to evacuate due to the quick-spreading fire, in addition to propane or natural gas hazards. Investigators from the Cape May County Fire Marshal's Office were on scene and are investigating the cause.

Lower man charged in sex assault of juveniles

CAPE MAY COURT HOUSE — A North Cape May man has been charged with four counts of sexual assault involving multiple juveniles.

Albert M. McCarragher, 19, of Bayshore Road, was arrested Nov. 4 on sexual assault charges.

The Lower Township Police Department was alerted to a 14-year-old girl who stated she had been sexually assaulted by McCarragher during the first week of November. Detectives from the Lower Township Police Department and the Cape May County Prosecutor's Office Special Victims Unit immediately initiated an investigation.

During the course of the investigation, two other girls provided statements alleging they were sexually assaulted by McCarragher. A 14-year-old girl stated she was sexually assaulted in October and an 11-year-old girl said she was sexually assaulted during the first week of November. All three girls are acquaintances of McCarragher, according to the county Prosecutor's Office.

McCarragher was charged with four counts of sexual assault of a juvenile and three counts of endangering the welfare of a child. He was lodged in the Cape May County Jail pending court proceedings.

Public safety building on firehouse property 'dead issue': Mullock

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — Councilman Zack Mullock made it clear at a Nov. 6 City Council meeting he would not offer a vote to approve a bond to construct a new public safety building on the site of the current firehouse.

A bond for the building project would require four councilmembers to vote in the affirmative.

"At this point, I think, frankly, the public safety building is a dead issue,"

he said. "It is very costly, it does not have the support of council and the question we should be asking ourselves on council is 'how do we move forward?'"

"How can we give our firefighters and police officers the facilities that they need at the price the taxpayers can afford?" Mullock continued.

He presented a slide presentation at the meeting featuring photos of fire stations built in other cities. He showed a proposal for a

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MULLOCK

HPC wants dedicated enforcement officer

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — The city's Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) is asking City Council to consider creating the position of an HPC code compliance officer. Projects approved by the HPC don't always end up following the regulations and conditions of the commission.

At a Nov. 6 council meeting, Mayor Chuck Lear said

if council agreed to the idea, it would need to create a job title and description, salary and how it would be funded.

Deputy City Manager Jerry Inderwies said the HPC gives approvals for building designs and streetscape.

"The issue we have is the Construction Office can only enforce the UCC (Uniform Construction Code)," he said. "The construction official cannot enforce HPC

rulings."

City solicitor Frank Corrado said HPC compliance is actually a zoning compliance issue.

Inderwies said a weak point has been discovered in a number of the construction projects throughout town, as far as compliance, and being able to enforce HPC compliance. He said it would take someone well-versed in topics such as windows and other items for historic homes.

It's been a matter of honesty with homeowners complying with HPC rulings, Inderwies said, adding that projects sometimes go in a different direction than what was approved.

Inderwies said an HPC compliance officer would need to be an expert in historic preservation and be able to visit a work site and put a homeowner on notice they are in violation

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CONGRESS HALL

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