



HPC tables city's application to raze AME parsonage

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House of the week

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168th YEAR NO. 29 CAPE MAY, N.J. Serving America's National Historic Landmark City WEDNESDAY, JULY 27, 2022 \$1.00



Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

A ribbon is cut July 22 dedicating a giant monarch butterfly sculpture at the Nature Conservancy's Garrett Family Preserve. From left are meteorologist Sam Champion, Nature Conservancy Director Barbara Brummer, artist Rubem Robierb and Cape May Mayor Zack Mullock.

Work of art worthy of a queen

Nature Conservancy unveils monarch butterfly sculpture

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

COLD SPRING — It could be called an unhappy coincidence — the week the International Union for the Conservation of Nature added the monarch butterfly to its endangered species list, the Nature Conservancy unveiled a sculpture of a monarch at the Garrett Family Preserve.

Under a blazing sun, a crowd gathered July 22 at the preserve at the end of Wilson Street off Seashore Road in Lower Township for the unveiling of the "Dream Machine Monarch," a giant orange-hued sculpture created by artist Rubem Robierb.

Barbara Brummer, state director of the Nature Conservancy, said loss of habitat is one of the main reasons the monarch butterfly is endangered. She said the organization purchased the Garrett Family Preserve in 1999 and saved it from becoming a 24-unit housing development.

"If you stand in front of this sculpture, you become part of nature," she said. "You become a monarch. You become a symbol of nature and people together, and the Nature Conservancy prizes the fact that we can bring people and nature together to thrive."

Robierb said the sculpture is stainless steel covered in fiberglass. He used automotive paint, which is highly resistant to weather. He said the monarch is part of a series of sculptures of "believing the dream."

"I invite the viewers to place themselves between the wings and make a wish and imagine themselves in a place where dreams come true," Robierb said.

The color of the sculpture reflects the many orange hues found on monarch butterflies, he said. The color appears different depending on the time of day.

Sam Champion, weather anchor for New York's WABC 7 and former meteorologist for "Good Morning America," said fewer monarch butterflies are seen during migration, with some estimating the population has decreased by as much as 70 percent.

"When you share the message of what that sculpture means and the message and the story of the monarchs, we can save them and you can save them with a partner like the Nature Conservancy," he said.

Champion, Robierb, Brummer and Cape May Mayor Zack Mullock participated in a ceremonial ribbon-cutting.

Champion said he is concerned with weather conditions around the world.

"I'm watching glaciers slide as if they were just crumbling and falling apart," he said. "I'm watching long-duration, large-area, multiple-time heat waves."

While some may say that it's hot every summer, it hasn't always been record-setting heat every summer, Champion said.

"We need to sound the alarm," he said.

Everything the science community predicted in climate change 30 years ago is happening now, Champion said.

"We need to just say, 'How do we fix it, how do we solve it?'" he said.

Champion said with the burning of fossil fuels, "we're powering our modern lives the way cavemen powered theirs." He said it is time to move forward with solar, wind and wave power.

"Whether you want to argue it or not, just think about the world you want your kids to be in," Champion said.

Brummer said the Nature Conservancy would continue to look for opportunities to combine art and nature.

Taxpayers group wants temporary construction ban

Cites high demand for water, need to upgrade desal plant

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — Citing the need for upgrades to the city's water desalination plant, the Taxpayers Association of Cape May (TACM) is recommending a moratorium on new construction and installation of lawn sprinkler systems and swimming pools.

During a City Council meeting July 19, TACM President Jules Rauch said the increasing number of swimming pools is becoming a problem and questioned how pools are factored into determining maximum lot coverage for homes.

"Because of our need for a desal plant, we think it would be in the city's best interests to create a moratorium at this point, right now, to limit any new construction, to also limit any new swimming pool being served by water and any new sprinkler systems," Rauch said. "We need to conserve our water. We're going to need more of it

this month and next month, and to ask the state for approval and grant money for a new plant and we don't have a moratorium, seems to me to be a bit of a disjunction."

He said he met with Mayor Zack Mullock following the association meeting to discuss several items.

Rauch said the most pressing issue was their request to amend the occupancy tax ordinance to return its original intention that in any given year, the amount of the occupancy tax received by the city that exceeds the sum of \$1 million is placed into the Tourism Utility.

Last month, council passed an ordinance to allow revenue exceeding \$1 million collected from occupancy tax to be used in the city budget for items other than the Tourism Utility, which was established to pay for the operation of Convention Hall as well as the city's Department of Tourism, Public

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Diamond Beach owners want answers on DEP's beach protection plans

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

DIAMOND BEACH — The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers was scheduled to begin a project in 2023 to build dunes and berms on the beach from Hereford Inlet to Cape May Inlet to protect against hurricane and storm damage but the project has been delayed by a year.

When completed, it would provide protection to 25,000 linear feet of coast in North Wildwood, Wildwood, Wildwood Crest and the Diamond Beach area of Lower Township.

During a Lower Township

Council meeting July 18, Tim McKenna, a resident of The Grand at Diamond Beach condominiums, said the complex has been maintaining and building its own dune. He said if the state delays the project any longer, it would not have to build a dune because enough sand will have accumulated on its own.

"The point we've been making consistently is that the property owners like us and Seapointe (Village) have basically been managing the beach effectively for a long time now," he said. "We pay for it and the state

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Council tables liquor license transfer for use by Southern Mansion vendor

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — City Council wants more information before allowing a liquor license transfer to a vendor for the Southern Mansion.

Council tabled the resolution and voted to resume the hearing next month for a person-to-person and place-to-place liquor license transfer from the Merion Inn to the New Jersey Farmer's

Cooperative Group LLC for use at the Southern Mansion at 720 Washington St.

During a meeting July 19, solicitor Chris Gillin-Schwartz said the city received a letter from neighbors objecting to the transfer.

Attorney Marcus Karavan, representing New Jersey Farmer's Cooperative, said the liquor license would be used at the Southern Mansion, a bed and break-

fast inn and event facility.

He said the license would not allow a bar open to the public, but would allow alcohol to be served to guests at weddings and other events. Karavan said he supplied an extensive list of conditions that arose following discussions with the state deputy attorney general.

Karavan said Hamilton Wilde is the sole and manag-

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