

# West Cape HPC recommends adding Fourth Avenue homes

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

WEST CAPE MAY — Late last year, the borough's Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) recommended expanding the historic district to include more of Fourth Avenue and Stevens Street. A more recent recommendation from the HPC encompassed more properties on Fourth Avenue.

The HPC recommended three extensions to the historic district on Fourth and Sixth avenues and Broadway, plus a noncontiguous extension a block farther north on Broadway as well as a Stevens Street district.

Borough Commission honored the request of the Rea family to exclude their farm building, a former home, from any historic district expansion. The Rea farm is in the state Farmland Preservation Program.

On Feb. 2, Mayor Carol Sabo said when Borough Commission received the recent amended survey from the HPC, it included some properties added from Fourth Avenue. She said

Borough Commission wanted to know how the homes were selected.

Deputy Mayor Peter Burke said when Borough Commission received the proposed amended list, there was nothing to identify what was a new addition.

"We realized there was something on there that hadn't been there before," he said.

HPC Commissioner Loretta Saggimo said properties were added from the other side of Fourth Avenue. She said she did not know why the properties were not included in the earlier survey.

HPC Commissioner Jim Barnes said the HPC reviewed the proposed extension and discussed the "kind of random" properties located on different streets. He said Fourth Avenue has more historic properties.

Saggimo said the original historic district includes both sides of all of the streets on the west side of Broadway. Barnes confirmed the HPC felt the north side of Fourth Avenue contained historic structures that were not

originally included in the survey.

Burke said two of the houses on Fourth Avenue are brand new, so only one house could be applicable. The remainder of Fourth Avenue is vacant lots that may not be buildable due to wetland issues.

Saggimo confirmed the extension of the historic district on Fourth Avenue would cover both sides of the street to Atlantic Avenue.

"If your house lies in that block, there would be a determination of whether its contributing or not contributing," Sabo said.

She said the historic district is contiguous with some exceptions. Sabo said a property owner, as well as the zoning office, needs a method to look up their property to determine whether it is in the historic district.

Burke said a very old home on Sixth Avenue was not included in the survey as well as the Douglass house at Pond Creek Lane.

Barnes said in order to have a contiguous historic district, a couple of the

houses on Fourth Avenue were included but were probably non-contributing in order to maintain a district. After reviewing Stevens Street, the HPC felt what was selected was the most appropriate.

"We didn't want to be picking and choosing individual homes," Barnes said.

Sabo said she wondered if the house on Sixth Avenue could be included in the district or whether that would be considered spot zoning.

Borough solicitor Frank Corrado said Borough Commission had discussed the topic previously. He said the HPC can regulate historic districts and it can regulate historic structures.

The proposal before Borough Commission concerned a historic district, Corrado said.

"In that situation, the HPC has to consider whether any building in the district, whether new or old, if something is done to it, will it change the character of the district," he said.

Corrado said plans for construction of a new house in the historic district would need to be presented to the

HPC. "But because we're dealing with districts here, rather than structures, that process has to be followed for anything that's in the district," he said.

Borough Commission could amend its HPC ordinance to include specific structures. Burke said the historic district on Stevens Street is different than the Fourth Avenue portion.

The ultimate decision on the parameters of the historic district is Borough Commission's to make, Cor-

rado said. Sabo said she was comfortable with the revisions recommended. Corrado said the changes must be made by amending an ordinance following a review by the Planning Board.

He said homeowners in the historic district or residing 200 feet from the district would need to be notified of the change of the classification.

Corrado said he would have an ordinance prepared for Borough Commission's next meeting.

**TIDES: Feb. 9-16, 2022**

DATE	HIGH		LOW	
	A.M.	P.M.	A.M.	P.M.
9	2:10	2:31	8:30	8:19
10	3:08	3:34	9:33	9:13
11	4:05	4:32	10:30	10:07
12	4:57	5:24	11:21	10:56
13	5:44	6:10	12:05	11:42
14	6:27	6:52		12:44
15	7:06	7:31	12:25	1:21
16	7:43	8:08	1:05	1:56

**MOON PHASES**  
Full moon, Feb. 16 • last quarter, Feb. 23

## North Cape woman dies in house fire

NORTH CAPE MAY — A North Cape May woman died in an early-morning house fire Feb. 6 that destroyed the dwelling.

Volunteer fire companies from Townbank, Erma, Villas, Rio Grande and Green Creek responded to the fire at 224 Suzanne Ave. shortly after midnight. Firefighters found the unidentified

woman dead inside the house. The cause of the blaze is under investigation from Lower Township police, the Cape May County Prosecutor's Office and county Fire Marshall's Office.

The fire companies were assisted by Inspira Rescue, which provided multiple rescue units at the scene.

According to county Prosecutor Jeffrey H. Sutherland, an autopsy of the victim was conducted Feb. 6. The preliminary investigation and autopsy have not revealed anything suspicious, he stated.

Some neighborhood residents were evacuated to ensure their safety, due to the proximity of the fire.

## Song

Continued from Page A1

civic involvement," he said.

Hall left the music business while serving two terms as a U.S. congressman. In 2006, Hall was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives representing New York's 19th district and was re-elected in 2008. He chaired the Subcommittee on Veterans' Disabilities and authored the Veterans' Claims Modernization Act of 2008, which passed both the House and Senate unanimously and was signed into law by President George W. Bush, who called it "good government."

Before the bill passed, a veteran returning from Iraq or Afghanistan with an undisputed, disabling injury such as the loss of a limb or traumatic brain injury, was required to provide the Veterans Administration (VA) with a letter from someone who could collaborate their story such as a superior officer or member of their unit.

Often the veteran's commanding officer or fellow troops were still serving and impossible to contact.

"At the time we had an epidemic of suicides, bankruptcies, homelessness and divorces among our returning vets and all of those things could be helped by money," Hall said.

By definition, all those injuries would prevent a person from working, he said. Hall's bill did away with the requirement of presenting a letter to the Veterans Administration.

"You go over there with four limbs and come back with three or two, it's presumed that your service caused that injury, and you get 100 percent compensation from the day you walk into the VA," he said.

He also served on the Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

"It makes sense for people of either major party or no party to think about in what kind of world their kids are going to be living and make whatever sacrifices we need to make now," he said.

Hall said the cheapest energy that's available and has the least environmental impact is the energy we save when insulating a house or using LED lightbulbs.

"Those are things that should be, hopefully, agreed upon across the political spectrum," he said. "It shouldn't be controversial."

Hall rejoined Orleans in 2012 following the death of lead singer Larry Hoppen and has been playing weekend shows with the band since last June. The band has been playing shows along with Air Supply, Pure Prairie League, Ambrosia and Firefall.

Orleans released a Christmas album last year called "New Star Shining." Hall wrote the title track, which was originally recorded as a duet between James Taylor

and Ricky Skaggs.

A video of "Save the March" is available on You-

Tube. Hall's "Reclaiming My Time" album is available on Amazon.

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