



HOUSE OF THE WEEK

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SECRET GARDEN PERFORMANCE TO RAISE FUNDS

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City will not fix beach slope before season

Cites lack of permits, funds as hurdles to creating safer strand

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — The city has no plans to move sand on the beach to lessen the risk of spinal injuries before the start of the summer tourist season.

Beach Safety Committee member Dennis DeSatnick asked during a meeting May 11, with 16 days remaining before Memorial Day

weekend, what the city intended to do to prevent C-spine injuries this summer from a beach slope in the surf zone. He said the topic has been in discussion for a long time.

“It’s 16 days prior to Memorial Day weekend, what I’m looking for is what are we going to do in the physical plant of the beach?” DeSatnick said. “Do we have a plan in the next 16 days to do something about the berm?”

City Solicitor Tony Monzo said the surf zone is below the high mean water line. He said according to his research and discussion with both federal and state agencies, it is under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The surf zone is defined as the area between the high tide water mark and the low tide water mark.

“DEP (Department of Environmental Protection) regulates to the

high mean water mark, beyond that is regulated by the Army Corps of Engineers,” Monzo said. “However, when you’re shifting sand from one side of the high water mark to another, you’re involving both agencies and they had indicated back in the fall last year, there’s some permitting requirements for that, some type of maintenance permit that could be available through the Army Corps of Engineers and

DEP.”

City Engineer Tom Thornton said the frustration in some towns is having a general permit for beach maintenance that allows only the scraping of one foot of sand in depth.

“The problem is when you’re working below the mean high water mark, you still need to get the Army

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Edward O'Neill/Special to the STAR AND WAVE

Seeking striper, snagging serenity

Chase Bryan casts his line in the ocean in search of striper as the sun sets near Higbee Beach.

Sheehan awaits ruling following final arguments

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — Final arguments were presented May 11 in the third and final session of a disciplinary hearing for Capt. Robert Sheehan, the city’s former police chief who was demoted 14 months ago.

At issue is that Sheehan qualified on the gun range in 2009 at the county Police Academy twice but the qualifications were not separated by the required three-month gap, thus disqualifying him from carrying a firearm by state Attorney General guidelines.

According to Hearing Officer Richard Williams, a retired Superior Court Appellate Division judge, the proceedings were not judicial but an administrative hearing on a disciplinary matter. He will offer a written decision within 20 days of the final hearing.

Former police chief Di-

ane Sorantino returned to the witness chair. Sheehan’s attorney Chris Gray presented emails to Sorantino concerning a shortage of ammunition in the police department during summer 2009. A July 27, 2009, email from Sorantino to Patrolman Doug Henderson, the department’s firearms officer, asked if a time could be set up for firearms qualification on the firing range that week. She said Henderson’s response July 29, 2009, stated that Patrolman Nick Gallaccio, who also served as a range officer at the county Police Academy, was getting two range dates because two squads could not go to the range earlier.

She said the email stated Capt. Sheehan and Lt. Chuck Lear needed to qualify on the firing range and the police department’s ammunition order had not

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McGraw will headline concerts in Wildwood

WILDWOOD — Boardwalk Entertainment Co. announced Tuesday at a news conference on the Wildwood beach that country music legend Tim McGraw will be the headlining performer for a Fourth of July weekend concert series.

Amanda Thomas, owner of Boardwalk Entertainment, said the “Celebrate America Weekend” will feature a Bacon Festival on Friday, July 1, a performance by the Philly Pops on Saturday, July 2, a Battle of the Bands on Sunday, July 3, and the concert Monday, July 4.

The July 4 activities begin at 2 p.m., with multiple acts of bands and DJs performing throughout the day including Hunter Hayes and Maggie Rose. At 8 p.m., McGraw will take the stage. The annual Wildwood fire-

works display will go off promptly at 10 p.m. The concert will continue into the evening with the official after party right on the beach featuring local bands and DJs.

Presale tickets for the concert start at just \$25 and will go on sale at noon today (Wednesday, May 18), via catcounty1073.com followed by open ticket sales starting at noon Friday, May 20.

The event details such as restrictions, layout, sponsors and more can be found on the website wildwood-beachconcerts.com or festivals.com.

“Our goal as a company is to provide entertainment to bring people together at a time they’re driven apart because of technology and

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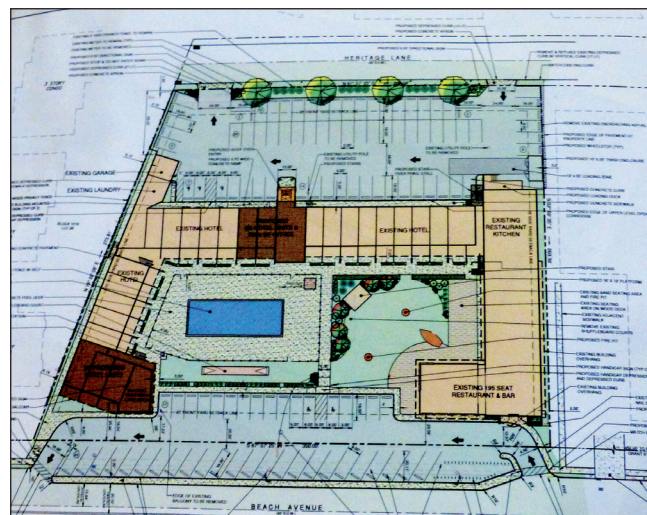
Beach Shack proposes major renovation

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — Attorney Stephen R. Nehmad, representing Cape Coachman Realty LLC and principle Curtis Bashaw, brought an application for preliminary site plan approval to the city’s Planning Board on May 10 for substantial upgrades to the motel. A three-hour meeting concluded at 10 p.m. and with additional testimony to be heard at 7 p.m. May 24.

Nehmad said the hotel would have a small expansion to the existing buildings. Proposed plans call for the addition of 18 rooms. Some rooms would be consolidated, bringing a net increase of 13 rooms, he said.

The Beach Shack’s 66 rooms would be increased to 79 rooms. The Rusty Nail Restaurant and Bar would be unchanged, Nehmad said. Bashaw purchased the



property, then called the Coachman Motor Inn, in 2006. The original plan was to demolish the motel and rebuild it, Nehmad said. At that time, the Planning Board approved a three-story building with parking underneath, he said.

“As we all know, in 2008

we had the worst recession since the Great Depression, lending institutions went on a program of pronounced austerity,” Nehmad said. “Mr. Bashaw and his team began to look at plan B ...”

The building has shortcomings such as concrete bunker-like architecture,

he said. Nehmad said people parking at the front of the motel must back out onto busy Beach Avenue and the spots encroach in the county right of way. Plans call for the motel’s entrance to be moved to the rear of the building on Heritage Lane.

Nehmad said the hotel would have a unique parking plan along the Beach Avenue right of way. The hotel would receive new air conditioning, sprinkler systems, become ADA compliant and sport a new look, he said.

The Beach Shack currently has only 63 percent of required parking, Nehmad said.

The project calls for valet, stacked parking. Bashaw said the Virginia Hotel has used valet parking since 1989 and Congress Hall since 2002. Plans for the

See **Motel**, Page A3



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