



House of the week

Page B1



Group raising funds to raise sunken boat

Page A3



Many question intent of Beach Drive sidewalk

Residents say they fear commercialization; officials deny that's in plans

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

VILLAS — Some residents of North Cape May remain suspicious of the motives of Lower Township Council in constructing a sidewalk along Beach Drive, saying they are concerned that the area could be commercialized.

The project includes beach modifications as well as curb, sidewalk and drainage improvements on the west side of Beach Drive from Lincoln Boulevard to Fernwood Road and replacement of outfall

pipes at Washington Boulevard from Beach Drive to the outfall replaced in January 2013. Curb and wheelchair ramp improvements would be made on the east side of Beach Drive from Whittier Avenue to Emerson Avenue.

In May 2014, more than 200 homeowners, many who are summer residents, crowded Township Hall for a special Saturday meeting. No hands were raised at that time when then-Deputy Mayor Norris Clark asked the audience how many thought the sidewalk was a good idea.

The project calls for a 6-foot-wide sidewalk with a raised curb that would include marked crosswalks and drainage, as well as Americans with Disabilities Act improvements.

In June 2014, Township Council voted 3-2 not to apply to the county for funding to construct a sidewalk along 1.5 miles of Beach Drive. The sidewalk project was designed to get pedestrians out of the southbound traffic lane and offer easier beach access.



The sidewalk, as seen in this conceptual image, would be located along 1.5 miles of the west side of Beach Drive in North Cape May.

See Beach Drive, Page A4

Accident kills two on cycle in Lower

ERMA — Two people were killed Sunday when a Cold Spring driver crossed the centerline of Seashore Road and struck their motorcycle.

Lower Township police responded to the report of a motor vehicle crash at about 5:30 p.m. July 9 in the area of Seashore Road and Earl Drive.

Preliminary investigation revealed a black sport utility vehicle operated by Daniel W. Cluff, 76, was traveling south on Seashore Road, crossed the centerline and struck a northbound motorcycle operated by Dominick Cione, 54, of Port Norris. Cione and his wife, Carol Cione, 50, were thrown from the motorcycle. They were both transported from the scene to Cape Regional Medical Center, where they were pronounced dead.

A second motorcyclist, Thomas Kendorski, 46, who was riding alongside the Ciones, was able to avoid the collision and suffered only minor injuries. Cluff was uninjured.

This is an ongoing investigation, according to police. Anyone who witnessed this collision is encouraged to contact the Lower Township Police Department at (609) 886-2711.



Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

Cape May SuperAthalon

Cape May Beach Patrol lifeguard Rob Moran fights choppy seas Monday evening during Cape May's SuperAthalon. The defending champion placed seventh in the 36th annual competition consisting of a 2.2-mile run, a 1.5-mile row and a 600-yard swim. Longport Beach Patrol's Tim Schwegman took first place with a time of 48:54. He won in 2015 with a time of 42:50.

City hopes to rake scarps away

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — The city is hoping the state Department of Environmental Protection will allow it to remove scarps on the beach with a simple raking operation.

A scarp is a line of cliffs

produced by faulting or erosion or a low steep slope along a beach caused by wave erosion. Sharp drop-offs in the surf zone have been blamed for injuries to swimmers under rough surf conditions.

During a Town Hall meeting July 8, Councilwoman Patricia Hendricks

said the city filed its 2017 beach management plan application with the DEP, which is currently reviewing the plan.

"The significance is that unlike past years, the city does not believe in relying on costly emergency

See Raking, Page A3

More parking proposed for Lafayette park

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — City Council is considering two design alternatives for Lafayette Street Park that would offer more parking spaces but retain all the recreational uses from a previous plan.

In 2015, then-City Manager Bruce MacLeod said the park would have 40 to 48 spaces. Proposed alternative designs would increase parking to 90 to 100 spaces.

Grants consultant James Rutala told City Council on July 5 that phase one of the park was completed. He said the city has Green Acres funds for renovation of Dellas Field and county Open Space money for the remainder of the site from south of Dellas Field to St. John's Street.

"In relooking at this, we weren't really looking at reallocating the uses but more so just looking at the orientation and how it may better serve the community," Rutala said.

He said Dellas is actually a Little League baseball field not built for adult use and

perhaps should be increased to regulation size. Rutala said expanding the ballfield would affect the earlier parking design. Other recreational uses for the park in the original plan include basketball courts, a potential for pickleball courts, a dog park and off-street parking.

Rutala said Concept A expands the size of Dellas Field for all types of baseball with basketball and tennis courts fronting Lafayette Street. Parking would be moved to the back of the park and accessed from St. John's Street with no entrance or exit to Lafayette Street, he said.

Concept B would also expand Dellas Field and provide access to parking on the property in a straight line from Jefferson Street in an "L" shape configuration along St. John's Street, Rutala said. The dog park and sports courts would be provided, he said.

He said the next step would be to hire professionals to create plans and specifications.

"During that time you're

See Parking, Page A4

Franklin Street School may become community center

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — City Council is considering a proposal to restore the historic Franklin Street School for use as a community/senior center. A redesign would include building a second-story addition to the school's gymnasium.

According to Councilman Roger Furlin, the Center for Community Arts (CCA) signed a 25-year lease with the city in 2002 and began a restoration project.

"Fifteen years into the

project, they have accomplished quite a bit toward that end but still there is much left to do," he said at a council meeting July 5.

Furlin said he presented a concept of a combined community/senior center for the school to CCA Director David Mackenzie. Furlin said the CCA has remaining grant money but needs additional funding to complete the project. He said Cape May has a population of about 3,700, of which two-thirds are over the age of 60. He said many have expressed the

desire for a local community/senior center.

A concept plan prepared to be submitted with grant applications proposes building a second floor above the existing gym to create more recreation space for seniors. The school's gym is still in use for city activities.

Mackenzie said the new concept is a major departure from initial plans. He said the commitment to use the building as a community center available to many groups has not changed.

The CCA has raised about

\$1.4 million with \$450,000 of the total from local individuals and businesses, according to Mackenzie. He said the New Jersey Historic Trust provided \$770,000 and Department of Housing and Urban Development \$90,000. In addition, \$50,000 in funding came from the state and \$40,000 from Lowe's Home Improvement Centers.

Mackenzie said about \$600,000 of the state Historic Trust grant is unused. It was received on a one-to-one match basis.

"For every dollar of state

money we spend, we have to spend a dollar of other money, not state money," he said.

Between \$700,000 and \$800,000 of work has been completed on the school with \$79,000 of environmental remediation, Mackenzie said. He said the building leaked for years.

Mackenzie said rehabilitation work to date totaled about \$610,000 to replace structural steel, lintels and masonry.

"What's remaining is re-

See Franklin, Page A10

INSIDE

Veterans Affairs representative says more enrolled veterans could mean more services for Cape May County.
Page A2

WASHINGTON INN

Open Daily at 5 PM

THE WINE BAR
Five for Friday

\$5

glasses of wine
appetizers specials