

Park committee looking at courts, parking, restrooms

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — The city is continuing to firm up plans for future phases of Lafayette Street Park that will continue to honor sections of the park named for local residents.

Councilwoman Bea Pessagno updated the public during a Town Meeting on Sept. 27 on the activities of the Lafayette Street Park Advisory Committee. She said since the committee last reported in July, a short hiatus took place in the process because part of the park

was being viewed as possible site for a new Public Safety Building.

"But after much research, the property is out of the running as there are too many environmental restrictions and at last it will become the park which so many of you have wanted for so long," Pessagno said.

She said several months ago, she, committee co-chair, Deputy Mayor Shaine Meier met with City Manager Neil Young and grants consultant Jim Rutala to discuss upcoming phases of the park formerly referenced as phase two, known as Del-

las' Field and phase three, known as Wise-Anderson Park.

"It was our intent to maintain the basic integrity of the park, a recreation area which includes playing fields, tennis courts, basketball courts, pickle ball facilities etc.," Pessagno said. "I want you to know both the deputy mayor and I are very dedicated and committed to basketball courts as it is the chief source of recreation for many of our young people."

She said Rutala was told the city wanted to increase the amount of parking at the

site while maintaining the greenery and tranquil atmosphere. Pessagno said the basic blueprint, structure and uses of the park would remain in place.

"But now is the time, while we await the completion of the remediation and while we are applying for permits, to arrange the topical design in a manner which is most practical and desirable," she said.

Pessagno said it must be determined where various playing courts would be located, what plan is best for parking and what is the best location for restrooms. She

asked if the courts should be closer to Lafayette Street or St. John Street.

Plans for additional phases of the park are in a conceptual phase, she said. Pessagno said a public meeting would be held in order to obtain a consensus.

"As we are committed to keeping the basic integrity of the plan, we are also committed to the families for whom various sections of the park are named and dedicated," she said.

Pessagno said members of the Dellas, Wise and Anderson families have committed to serve on the committee.

"This is a community park and you the public have ownership and input," she said.

Two weeks ago, Rutala sent details of the scope of the work to the city's contracted engineering firm, Mott MacDonald. Pessagno said the city was waiting for a proposal from Mott MacDonald. After it is received, a committee meeting would be scheduled.

Meier said some contamination from the former coal-gasification plant on the site remains and as soon as Jersey Central Power and Light receives permits, it would be completed.

Veteran charged with threats

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formed a well-being check on Brodie in his home when the VA Clinic was unable to contact him, according to the complaint.

Troopers returned to Brodie's trailer Aug. 24 after

the clinic requested another well-being check when Brodie missed an appointment. The complaint alleges Brodie "appeared to be aggravated that the troopers were on his property."

A civilian cooperating witness told authorities

Brodie may be suicidal and owns eight guns. The witness stated to law enforcement that on Sept. 19, Brodie stated that before he would kill himself, he intended to have a "blood-bath" and kill everyone in the congressman's office in New Jersey, including the congressman.

The cooperating witness told authorities Brodie was planning "suicide by cop" and would "take out all of the responding cops" who came to his residence.

"When the troopers arrived, they observed Brodie attempting to hide in his trailer. Brodie ran from one end of his trailer to the other before exiting out the

front door with a Russian SKS .763 X 39-style assault rifle," the complaint states. "Brodie began yelling phrases such as, in sum and substance, 'I don't want to shoot you!'"

According to the complaint, troopers instructed Brodie to drop the weapon. Instead of complying with the trooper's commands, Brodie dropped to his knees, put the barrel of his rifle into his mouth and pulled the trigger. The weapon was not loaded with ammunition and didn't fire.

Brodie was initially arrested by State Police and charged by the Cumberland County Prosecutor's Office

with weapons charges.

The cooperating witness told authorities Brodie suffers from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and was angry at the VA and a member of Congress "because Brodie thought they had not treated him well and had failed to act on Brodie's behalf."

Brodie allegedly called LoBiondo's chief of staff and became "highly agitated" and responded to the chief of staff by saying "you're a dead man," according to the complaint.

Following the telephone call, Brodie allegedly sent an email to two of LoBiondo's employees, which read: "I'd love that face to

face with the congressman. If not today, that's fine... I'm still acclimating myself to this Google earth App. See where your office is and how easy it is to find? ... It even shows the environment and surrounding terrain, parking lots, wooded areas, etc., (like the kind a highly trained Combat Infantryman would use)..."

The complaint alleges Brodie sent another email to two LoBiondo staffers demanding LoBiondo fix the VA: "Hell hath no fury ... You have no idea. I just want to remind you ... you and all of your staff, your family, your friends..."

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TIDES : Oct. 4-11, 2017

DATE	HIGH		LOW	
	A.M.	P.M.	A.M.	P.M.
4	7:31	7:49	1:06	1:24
5	8:11	8:31	1:46	2:09
6	8:52	9:14	2:26	2:55
7	9:35	9:58	3:08	3:43
8	10:20	10:47	3:52	4:34
9	11:10	11:40	4:39	5:28
10	12:04	5:31	6:28	
11	12:40	1:06	6:30	7:34

MOON PHASES

Full moon, Oct. 5 • last quarter, Oct. 12

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value of the house, split into the cost of the land and the building. He takes half of that and if the estimated cost of doing the work is less than 50 percent, then they can do the work without changing the height of the house," vanHeeswyk said. "If it is more than 50 percent, then they must raise the house to meet elevation requirements."

Homeowners can visit capemaypoint.org to check their BFE or can review current FEMA maps by visiting the borough office at 215 Lighthouse Ave.

"It is very helpful to come in and speak with John,"

vanHeeswyk said.

FEMA was working on maps of the area prior to Hurricane Sandy in October 2012, but worked at an accelerated pace in its aftermath. Cape May Point had no claims from Hurricane Sandy per vanHeeswyk.

After Hurricane Sandy, FEMA offered the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) to assist homeowners in elevating their primary, single-family residences to comply with flood insurance risk maps. The program was offered only in select counties affected by Sandy, including Cape May.

The HMGP offered reimbursement of as much as \$30,000 for elevations on

existing homes, regardless of whether the properties had been damaged by the storm. The HMGP stopped accepting applications in September 2013.

In 2012, Congress and President Barack Obama passed the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act, which extended the NFIP for five years while requiring major program reform.

In 2014, the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act was passed. This law repealed and modified certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Act and made additional changes that were not previously covered.

"People assume flood insurance is for oceanfront

properties, but people all over the country need flood insurance," vanHeeswyk said. "I always recommend flood insurance. It's a reality up and down the Jersey shore."

The diverse architecture in the borough makes it difficult to get a read on what the flood insurance is block to block. Houses next to each other could have vastly different coverage.

"We have had a lot of people purchase homes in the borough, and with the low taxes they know they can have flood insurance and have a beach house and that's a plus for Cape May Point," vanHeeswyk said.

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Outdoor seats

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Young said the city would be interviewing for the positions of Fire Official and Fire Prevention Specialist.

"The city wants to ensure every business and rental property is safe for those staying and visiting the city of Cape May," he said.

City Council adopted new Federal Emergency Management Agency flood maps for Cape May. A special public meeting is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 11, in Convention Hall. City engineer Tom Thornton will present the new FEMA maps and assist residents to learn how to access site specific maps online, Young said. An insurance professional and other city staff members will be available

to answer questions, he said.

The city is also meeting with beach concession vendors.

"Throughout the summer, we've received many complaints about what rights a concession vendor has," Young said.

Questions remain about vendors on private beaches and who is responsible for clean up, he said. The city will meet in a roundtable discussion with beach vendors on Oct. 6 in Convention Hall. The meeting will not be open to the public.

South Jersey Gas will resume street restoration following the installation of high pressure lines earlier in the year. Young said restoration stopped around July 4 and restoration would resume this week. The work

will take seven working days to complete, he said.

Streets to be restored: Jackson from Perry to Lafayette and Lafayette Street from Elmira Street to St. John, a large portion of Madison Avenue, Sewell Avenue from Franklin to Madison, Wenonah Avenue, Swan Avenue and Cape May Avenue from Madison to Philadelphia Avenue.

A grand opening will be held for Cape May City Elementary School's new swimming pool at 4 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 12. Young said the city anticipates its pool programs will begin Oct. 16. He said a calendar of programs would be available at the grand opening, Convention Hall, City Hall and online.

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