

Cape May creates parking committee in 3-2 vote

By JACK FICHTER

Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — In a 3-2 vote, City Council approved the creation of a Municipal Parking Advisory Committee to review traffic flow and parking issues in the city.

The enabling resolution states an inventory and assessment of the city's traffic flow and parking spaces is needed. It notes three areas of concern: beachfront, residential and business/commercial.

The advisory committee consists of people representative of business interests including dining, lodging

and shopping areas joined by interested residents, according to the resolution.

The committee consists of Chairman Robert Lamendola, Vice Chair Bonnie Cassels and members Mark Asher, Andrew Bares, Robert Elwell, Mark Kulkowitz, James Testa, Laura Shaddock, Harley Shuler, Timothy Walsh and Councilwoman Patricia Hendricks as liaison to council.

During a meeting May 15, Councilman Roger Furlin, who voted against establishment of the committee with Councilwoman Bea Pessagno, said originally the Buildings and Prop-

erty Advisory Committee was tasked with examining parking. He said earlier Mayor Chuck Lear told him he wanted to form a separate committee. Furlin said he stopped the efforts of the Buildings and Property Committee involving traffic and parking. He said the mayor met with the committee and again assigned to the buildings committee to the project but now a committee was being formed to handle the work.

"It's going back and forth and I don't quite understand why, although the mayor thinks this separate committee would be more effective," Furlin said.

He asked who selected the members of the committee.

Lear said he reached out to the people who are now members of the committee. Pessagno said she and Furlin did not have input on selecting members of the new committee. She said in the past year, they had not been asked to add one person to any committee.

"When a committee is formed, every single one of us should give names in and that has not happened," Pessagno said.

She said that was anti-theoretical to the Faulkner Act,

which guides Cape May's form of government.

"I've been approached by many people who are feeling that these committees are not diverse enough," she said. "Some people serve on two or three committees and they have not been asked to serve on any."

Pessagno and Furlin are subject to re-election this November.

According to the enabling resolution, the committee is tasked with reviewing available traffic and parking studies, the city's master plan and related documents. The committee should understand the park-

ing concerns of year-round and seasonal homeowners, beachgoers, hotel owners and innkeepers and staff and mall merchants.

Exploring the availability of grant money and other funding to create additional parking spaces and making improvements to existing surface parking are stated as the committee's mission as well as reviewing parking meter policies.

The committee will review and make recommendations on parking-related plans in the master plan and its current update. Public comment will be sought.

Empty lot eyed for parking

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to JCP&L.

During a City Council meeting May 15, resident Christine Miller asked if the large, empty lot used by JCP&L could be used for parking.

"If we gave up a grant or whatever, could that whole surface that is there and empty be used as a surface parking lot?" she asked

Miller questioned where cars would be parked for a

new public safety building and a new library in the Franklin Street School. She said the empty space off Lafayette Street could accommodate hundreds of cars.

Councilman Roger Furlin said parking for the Franklin Street School could be provided by parking spaces near St. John Street in Lafayette Street Park. He said the Municipal Buildings and Property Advisory Committee was

also looking at city-owned land along the railroad tracks in the vicinity of the Welcome Center.

Deputy Mayor Shaine Meier, who serves as council's liaison to the Lafayette Street Park Advisory Committee and Public Safety Building Advisory Committee, said some of the fenced-in space at City Hall currently used as a sally port by the police department could be used for parking.

Meier acknowledged Cape May is dense and it is difficult to find new parking spaces. Sea Isle City placed parking spaces underneath its public safety building, he said.

Miller suggested the police station remain in City Hall with an addition built over the sally port area.

Meier said council has

'Moving forward, we know that if we're going to have free parking in that area, people that work in town, work at City Hall or other places, will be parking in that area.'

—Deputy Mayor Shaine Meier

been trying without success to allow parking on unused railroad tracks at the Welcome Center. He said the Lafayette Street Park Advisory Committee has agreed parking should be consolidated where contaminated land is located.

"Last year when the clean-up company left for the summer, I had asked City Council if we could look at that area and have it temporary, free parking space between the time they were going to be gone and coming back,"

he said. "We never moved anywhere with that."

He said the park committee was discussing a number of facilities including soccer, baseball, tennis/pickle ball, basketball, bocce, nature trails and event space. Meier said there was a prescribed amount of parking spaces needed for each of the activities.

Part of the park funding is from the county Open Space Board. He said he did not believe the county would allow more parking in the park to satisfy

a deficit of parking spaces elsewhere.

"Moving forward, we know that if we're going to have free parking in that area, people that work in town, work at City Hall or other places, will be parking in that area," Meier said.

He said there were issues with the former Vance's Bar section that was purchased with Blue Acres and Green Acres funding, which allows very limited use. Meier noted due to contamination, excavation could not exceed 2 feet below the ground's surface. He said Viasant offered to help with excavation for light poles or buildings.

Miller suggested giving back a grant and having a large surface parking lot at Lafayette Street Park.

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24	4:37	5:21	10:45	11:13
25	5:35	6:13	11:36	
26	6:28	6:59	12:09	12:24
27	7:15	7:42	1:00	1:07
28	8:00	8:22	1:47	1:49
29	8:42	9:00	2:31	2:28
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