

City working to lower federal flood insurance cost

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — The city is hoping to increase its score with the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) to get greater discounts for homeowners.

The Community Rating System (CRS) is a voluntary program of the NFIP. Through CRS, communities that are undertaking flood plain management activities that exceed minimal requirements get a reduction in NFIP premiums for residents, according to City Building Subcode Official

Jason Dilworth.

At a July 5 City Council meeting, he said Cape May has a class six CRS rating on a scale of one to 10 which gives residents a savings of 20 percent on their insurance policies if they're in a Special Flood Hazard Area. The remainder of residents receive a 10 percent discount. Dilworth said he looked at the city's 2007 calculations for CRS.

"I believe if we submitted exactly what we did back then today, we'd probably drop a class, it would be hard to maintain a six with what we did back then," he said.

Dilworth said the city was not negligent but because the NFIP restructured the point system and made it difficult for communities to get insurance breaks. He said through effort the city could maintain a six rating and possibly get a five rating.

New initiatives from CRS emphasize open space and natural flood plain preservation, Dilworth said.

He said in 2007, the maximum points were 900 but in 2017, the maximum amount of points are near 2,900, a 200 percent jump in points.

For open space and flood plain preservation, Cape

May had 219 points from a possible 900 points.

Tax Assessor Louis Belasco said he made a rough calculation of the some of the city's wetlands just using Kiwanis Park, which is in a flood zone, open space and the Special Flood Hazard Area which totaled 490 points.

"We need to do a more thorough open space inventory and look at what sort of other properties we can entail and also a more in depth analysis of the Special Flood Hazard Area..." he said.

Belasco said new rules do not allow the city to

score points for its drainage system.

Dilworth said the city can gain points through a public education program such as signs and information mailed with tax bills. He said the city has saved about \$630,000 for residents through CRS.

"If we work to get to a five, it would jump to \$785,000," Dilworth said.

Belasco said the city would get its annual recertification visit Oct. 15 from the program. In 2018, new CRS regulations would be in place.

City Manager Neil Young

said the 2018 recertification could change the city's class.

Dilworth said the city needed to maintain a data base of flood elevation certificates in the construction office. Young said the city had six months to formulate a plan to attempt to improve the city's CRS score to a five.

Belasco said no municipalities had reached a rating of "four." He said four municipalities in the county had reached a rating of "five," Avalon, Ocean City, Sea Isle City and Stone Harbor.

PA system on Promenade

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the ocean. He asked if the clarity of the PA system would be affected if the beaches were experiencing 20 mph south winds.

Trombitas said some attenuation would be experienced from the wind. He offered a rough estimate of a 15 percent sound loss from a south wind. He said each horn would produce 200 watts continuously, with 400 watts of peak power.

Garrison said his company's design was targeting an audio power of 90 decibels from the system.

The city initially is looking to install the system from Second Avenue to Convention Hall with an extension to Poverty Beach to follow. Garrison said the length of the PA system would be 13,000 feet.

DeSatnick asked how long the PA system would last. Trombitas said the speakers would last much longer if they were removed from the poles at the conclusion of the



Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE
Cape May officials, including Mayor Chuck Lear, center, and Police Chief Tony Marino, right, check out the sound system test from the beach July 12.

beach season. Garrison said the speakers could

be quickly removed in the event of an approaching hurricane.

Police, the fire department and the Beach Patrol would have access to the system by using a phone, Garrison said. Amplifiers for the system would be

located in Convention Hall with cables using conduits or traveling underground along the Promenade to the speakers, according to Garrison.

DeSatnick said he was impressed with the demonstration.

Leadership program applications available

CAPE MAY COURT HOUSE — Applications are now being accepted for the 2017-18 Leadership Cape May County program.

Leadership Cape May County is designed to develop informed, committed business, community, government and civic leaders. The program engages existing and emerging leaders in a nine-month program that broadens their knowledge on community issues and expanding leadership abilities. It is a comprehensive program held from

September through May 2018, meeting the second Wednesday of each month.

Participation is limited to 20 people and requires a tuition fee and time commitment. Applications and additional information is available online at cape-may-county-chamber.com/leadership. Applications from interested individuals are due by Aug. 15. Anyone with questions can contact Vicki Clark at vicki@cmcc-chamber.com. Two partial scholarships are available to qualified applicants.

Police Youth Camp July 25-27

LOWER TOWNSHIP — The Lower Township Police Department with host a Police Youth Camp for students who just finished sixth, seventh or eighth grade. The camp is set for July 25-27, with a graduation July 27 at Cape May County Park.

The camp is designed to foster a positive and healthy interaction between police officers and youth. Young people attending the camp will focus on building self-esteem, teamwork, good decision-making, communication skills and educational lessons focused on life skills. The camp will consist of

various police-type activities and field trips to the police academy to use the police simulator training. It will also include SWAT and K9 demonstrations, physical fitness training, crime scene investigation and a block of instruction on interactions with police.

Openings are still available and will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis. Contact Patrolman Bill Barcas at barcas@lower-township-police.com or (609) 600-7417 or Steve Selby at steve@capeassist.org or (609) 522-5960 for registration information by July 19.

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Cape May Star & Wave
CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE (ISSN 519-020)
Volume 163 Number 29
Published weekly by Sample Media, Inc., 801 Asbury Ave., #310, Ocean City, N.J. 08226
Published Weekly (52 times a year)
SUBSCRIPTION PRICE: By mail for \$39 a year; \$70 for two years; \$20 for six months. Periodical Postage at Cape May Court House, N.J. and additional mailing offices.
POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to the Cape May Star and Wave, P.O. Box 2427, Cape May, N.J. 08204.
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TIDES : July 2017

DATE	HIGH		LOW	
	A.M.	P.M.	A.M.	P.M.
19	4:34	5:13	10:28	11:30
20	5:40	6:13	11:28	
21	6:41	7:09	12:30	12:27
22	7:39	8:03	1:26	1:23
23	8:34	8:55	2:20	2:18
24	9:27	9:45	3:11	3:12
25	10:18	10:34	4:01	4:04
26	11:09	11:23	4:50	4:57

MOON PHASES
New moon, July 23 • first quarter, July 30

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