



'Guys and Dolls' take the stage at LCMRHS

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House of the Week

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170th YEAR NO. 10 CAPE MAY, N.J. Serving America's National Historic Landmark City WEDNESDAY, MARCH 6, 2024 \$1.00

Public wants info on plan for cannabis

Retailer seeks support for WCM grow facility

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

WEST CAPE MAY — Despite nothing on Borough Commission's agenda concerning cannabis farming during a meeting Feb. 28, a couple of dozen members of the public filled the room and a few asked questions about a proposal from Shorehouse Canna to grow marijuana and hemp at the Rea's Farm.

The owners of Shorehouse Canna, the county's only cannabis dispensary, visited Borough Commission on Feb. 14 seeking a letter of support to the state to allow it to grow marijuana and industrial hemp on the 100-year-old farm property.

To allow the growth of high-THC marijuana on the farm, Borough Commission would have to change an ordinance or have the Zoning/Planning board grant a variance to allow the growth within 1,000 feet of residences.

In addition to cultivating marijuana, a manufacturing barn would be constructed on the farm.

The borough's ordinance requires 5 acres of land for a grow facility while Shorehouse Canna is seeking to farm just 1 acre.

On Feb. 14, Patrick Kepple, a volunteer at the Rea's Farm, said allowing the crop may help sustain the farm for the next 100 years.

"We have been a lima bean, a strawberry and tomato farm for the last 25 years. Before that it was primarily lima beans, but I'll be honest with you, it's really hard to make a living selling lima beans," he said.

During the meeting Feb. 28, resident Mary Clark asked if Borough Commission had written the letter Shorehouse Canna was seeking.

Mayor Carol Sabo said no letter of support for cultivation or manufacturing has been written because the commission does not have a formal proposal for Shorehouse Canna to do so.

Clark asked if organic methods would be used for the manufacturing of cannabis on the farm, saying that could be harmful to the environment. Sabo said she did not have that information.

Resident Joe Hutton asked what next steps would be taken by Shorehouse Canna for a farming operation. Sabo said anything that needed to be addressed as a commission would be discussed in an open public meeting.

She said the commission would discuss the need for an ordinance amendment, if necessary.

"If there was nothing required, then it would simply go through our zoning office," Sabo said. "So, if there's a discussion about any ac-

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Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

Preparing for takeoff

Dr. Joseph Salvatore, co-founder of the Naval Air Station Wildwood Aviation Museum with his wife, Anne, helps prepare the museum for another season of visitors to the National Historic Landmark. The vehicle is a 1941 Ford Super Deluxe Sedan, used as a staff car to carry high-ranking officers during World War II.

Lower working on beach access paths, parks

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

VILLAS — Lower Township is undertaking multiple capital improvements projects, including upgrades to Diamond Beach Park and Rotary Community Park, as well as designs for beach access paths and extension of outfall pipes into the bay.

Engineer Will Hanson, of DeBlasio and Associates, said construction has begun at Diamond Beach Park. He said the site has been cleared and is being graded. Piling will be installed to support construction of a restroom building. The project has substantial funding from the

county Open Space Board.

As part of the reconstruction of Wildwood Avenue through the state Department of Transportation (DOT) Municipal Aid Program, Bay Drive from Mallory Road to Wildwood Avenue has been added to the scope of the work by the township, Hanson said. The projects are being put out to bid separately and final designs are complete, he said.

"Wildwood Avenue has been awarded two separate NJDOT grants totaling over \$340,000," Hanson said.

Bids were opened Jan. 31 for the beach access pathway project along Delaware Bay. The lowest bid was submitted

by Fred M. Schiavone Construction of Franklintonville in the amount of \$379,810.

Proposed work for renovation of Rotary Community Park on Bayshore Road includes new playground equipment, shade structures, a single-use restroom, parking areas and ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) access. Hanson said the project would be completed in two stages, with stage one currently under way.

He said the site has been cleared and graded, and concrete and playground equipment have been installed.

"Our office has submitted the final wetlands permits and is awaiting approval for

that to commence phase two of the project," Hanson said.

Proposed work for extension of outfall pipes into Delaware Bay includes the design and obtaining permits to extend 12 outfall pipes to improve drainage of township streets. He said the project is in the design phase. His office is preparing to submit permit applications to the state Department of Environmental Protection and the Army Corps of Engineers.

Designs for the outfall pipe extensions are nearly completed.

Ridgewood Avenue will be repaved from Bayshore

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DRBA approves \$5.5 million for building at county airport

ERMA — The Delaware River and Bay Authority (DRBA) approved \$5.5 million for the construction of a third multi-tenant light industrial building at the Cape May County Airport.

The building will join two similar structures that are fully leased and occupied, according to a news release. Construction is expected to begin next month and is anticipated to last until late spring 2025.

"During the past 10 years, the Cape May Airport has been a hub for economic expansion," DRBA Executive Director Thomas J. Cook said. "Working hand in hand with our Cape May County partners, we're focused on creating an environment conducive for businesses of all types to be successful. We continue to see strong demand from the business com-

munity for space at the airport."

The new building will be built on Ranger Road across from its predecessors. It will be 15,000 square feet and contain 10 units.

Since assuming operational control of the airport in 1999, the DRBA has made significant capital investments at the general aviation facility.

The DRBA embarked on a new airport terminal building located at the end of Hornet Road in May 2023.

The airport is home to Cape May Brewing Co., the Naval Air Station Wildwood (NASW) Aviation Museum, the Flight Deck Diner and multiple retail outlets.

Call (302) 571-6482 or email michelle.griscom@drba.net for information on business opportunities.

Cape May supports dark skies initiatives

Environmental Commission hopes more residents comply

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — Too many lights on homes and commercial buildings disrupts wildlife, harms human health, wastes money and energy, contributes to climate change and blocks the view of the universe, according to Darksky.org.

Artificial light can cause birds that migrate or hunt at night and navigate by moonlight and starlight to wander off-course and toward the dangerous nighttime landscapes of cities. Every year, millions of birds die colliding with needlessly illuminated buildings and towers, the website states.

Migratory birds depend on cues from properly timed seasonal schedules. Artificial lights

"To be effective, I think we need to start with an education program to bring a lot more ground support for it, because otherwise it's going to die."

— Cape May City Manager Paul Dietrich

can cause them to migrate too early or too late and miss ideal climate conditions for nesting, foraging, and other behaviors, according to the Dark Sky initiative.

City Council approved a light pollution ordinance in October to deal with nuisance lighting for property owners. The measure prohibits light spilling over

onto adjacent properties in residential zones.

Homeowners would have to report a light pollution issue to code enforcement. The city will not have a roving patrol checking lights.

The ordinance states all artificial lighting shall be equipped with shielding or be arranged in such a manner as to not cause light trespass on adjoining properties. The ordinance states decks and patios should be illuminated only when in use and not after 11 p.m.

The city's Environmental Commission discussed a dark sky ordinance for the city at its Feb. 27 meeting. City Councilman Mike Yeager said the commission looked at a dark skies

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