

Point residents question plan to move Public Works

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY POINT — A letter addressed to property owners of Cape May Point from Oak Avenue residents circulated details of a proposal to relocate the Department of Public Works from its current location on Lighthouse Avenue to a site on Sunset Boulevard that would back up to Oak Avenue.

Commissioner Bob Mullock responded to the letter during a Borough Commission meeting Dec. 6.

"The saddest part of that letter was the fact that no one recognizes that we have got to do these things," he said.

Moving the Department of Public Works from Lighthouse Avenue to Sunset Boulevard moves the building into a flood

zone, the letter stated. Presented plans showed a new building requiring floodgates, it stated.

"There were mocking terms like 'floodgates' in the letter," Mullock said. "Up and down the East Coast, cities and towns are looking to install floodgates."

Additional history provided in the letter concerned the borough's purchase of the Inskeep property at 550 Sunset Blvd. The property was purchased for \$305,000 and originally listed at \$500,000. It said within a year's time of that sale, a group purchased a much larger lot on Lighthouse Avenue for \$230,000.

A resident stood after Mullock's statement and said to not point fingers and he felt the statements made by Mullock were directed toward him.

Mullock said sending a letter claiming the borough did not pay a fair price for a Sunset Boulevard property for the project was outrageous.

"I find it so outrageous and can't fathom writing a response until I looked at it calmly," Mullock said. "The sad part of that is not only was that story told, but the other stories weren't told. There were five to eight times we met with Oak residents. Nowhere in that letter was any mention of the fact that we had a very long meeting with attorneys present."

According to Mullock, a public meeting will be held on the topic when plans move forward.

"Another thing that wasn't mentioned in the letter is that these are ideas and proposals that we are looking at and have to plan for the future," Mullock said. "After we get the best ideas and plans, we take them to the Planning Board."

Residents of Oak Avenue were in attendance and spoke during the public

portion. "Initially when this was floating around as a rumor, I emailed the mayor and he didn't know it was happening," resident Joe Mara said. "I think there was something going on not in public domain, if we hear a rumor and the mayor doesn't know about it."

"At a workshop there was an open plan on the table and when we looked at it, Mr. Mullock rolled it up and said it was not for public consumption," Mara continued. "I didn't understand that at all. We weren't children. You could've said 'don't hold us to it' and you immediately rolled it up and hid it."

The location of the dumpsters and a former military vehicle at the proposed new location were also discussed.

"It's almost insidious how it grows," a resident said.

The use of the property is a water tower, pump station, pole barn and public works storage facility, trash and recycling center for the borough and storage

for lifeguard equipment, according to Mullock.

"The only thing we have parked there that is new is the U.S. Army truck," Mullock said. "The reason it's there is because it is a rescue vehicle that can go through 3 to 5 feet of water. It is the one item added to that location in six years."

The vehicle was received through the county and cost the borough nothing, according to Mullock.

"Thirty-five years ago, we had a breach of the meadows and it flooded Sunset Boulevard," Mullock said. "People could not drive through because they could hardly find the road under all the water. It gives us the ability to rescue people."

A question was raised why the emergency vehicle would not be stored in the area of least resistance.

"You can certainly get to the vehicle in advance of the flooding and after the flooding," Mullock said. "The major thing you're talking about is the vulnerability of that area is flooding. We need to protect our

infrastructure, which is that location."

Protecting the water supply could include a wall around it, including floodgates, he said.

"We are making plans for the next period of years," Mullock said. "It may be adopted or may not, it's up to the commissioners and I may not be around at that time."

Mara said some residents are against the proposed project and suggested using the municipal area that is already in existence.

"Why would the borough incur that cost when we already have that area? It's not about the flood protection, it's about the proposed project," he said.

Mullock said at some point in the future, the community will need to decide how to defend the current Public Works site from flooding. There will be public discussion and a hearing.

"I wouldn't mind if it went to the public to vote," Mullock said. "I want the community to be behind it."

TIDES : Dec. 19-26, 2018

DATE	HIGH		LOW	
	A.M.	P.M.	A.M.	P.M.
19	4:49	5:06	10:56	10:53
20	5:35	5:57	11:47	11:41
21	6:22	6:46		12:37
22	7:09	7:36	12:29	1:26
23	7:57	8:27	1:18	2:16
24	8:47	9:20	2:10	3:08
25	9:38	10:15	3:03	4:00
26	10:32	11:14	3:59	4:55

MOON PHASES

Full moon, Dec. 22 • last quarter, Dec. 29

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for all ages
11am Worship Service
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By RACHEL SHUBIN
Special to the Star and Wave

ERMA — The Lower Cape May Regional School District will be conducting a modified reunification drill in preparation for a larger drill to be held in 2019.

A reunification drill

moves students to a location off campus where they are picked up by parents or guardians. Reunification would be utilized in a school emergency such as an active shooter on campus.

"We will be doing a modified reunification drill in the high school and every

student and staff member will participate," high school Vice Principal Peter Daly said. "It's a big endeavor and it's how we are ending our fall semester."

During reunification drills, teachers walk students to pre-determined venues. Once all students are accounted for, the school releases children to parents with photo identification.

The Board of Education highlighted many of the recent activities at the middle and high school.

In the past month, the school district held a Brain Bowl and participated in parades and multiple holiday concerts.

"We had a great winter concert last night," Richard M. Teitelman Middle School Principal Gregory Lasher said. "It is important for the board to know between orchestra and band, 42 percent of our stu-

dents participate in music. Lower Cape May Regional is unique in music education."

It is the beginning of winter season sports. Athletic Director Erik Simonsen reported the swim and wrestling teams were getting started.

A Junior State of America (JSA) chapter was proposed for the high school by Principal Lawrence Ziemba.

"JSA is a national student political-awareness organization that serves as a supplement to social studies curriculum," board member Kathleen Elwell said. "There will be no cost to the district. Ashley Wunder will serve as the adviser to this club."

A Wellness Club was created at the high school. English teacher Thomas Belasco asked to form the program to teach exercise and relaxation techniques.

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