City withholds mall lighting funds pending HPC OK

BY JACOB RUDOLF Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — City officials paused a proposal that would have provided funds to the Washington Street Mall and boardwalk to pay for a portion of the cost to install 3,000 LED lights on the length of the boardwalk.

The project was approved by the city’s Historic Preservation Commission (HPC).

Washington Street Mall merchants stated they believed the mall to be too dark and that more lighting would increase the foot traffic to the boardwalk.

But at that meeting, the HPC found it had more questions than answers on the project.

City Manager John Carlisle said council could decide to still approve the project, but it would have to be a majority vote.

“If members of the public were to attend that would be a disservice,” he said.

The council is expected to discuss the project at the Oct. 26 meeting.

“I feel most of Cape May’s business are not motivated by the lights and there are no operational conflicts of interest,” Senator Dennis DeSatnick said.

DeSatnick said the current system could light up the mall, said phase one of the project was approved, but there is no further work until the HPC is satisfied.

“I’ve heard that the lights would be strung over 24 inches apart,” said DeSatnick who stated the same type of lights would be used.

He said he loved the idea if there were two open seats available on the HPC, he would like to serve.

Baldwin said council could decide to approve the project, but it would have to be a majority vote.

“This is the mall’s 50th anniversary, we’re trying to find a way to use it as part of our capital improvement,” she said.

Finally, she said she was not the lighting expert, but she said the lighting would be able to move forward.

Coupland asked if considering was given to adding more gaslights to the mall.

Baldwin said there is a member of the BID, said “This is the mall’s 50th anniversary, we’re trying to find a way to use it as part of our capital improvement.”

She said when the data and the HPC Commissioner, HPC Commissioner Peter Voll was concerned if the proposed lights and make the brightness of the 3,000 LED lights on the mall to properly illuminate the trees that did not have a specific plan was submitted to the HPC to receive the required information which the HPC works in an advisory role to City Council for projects on city-owned property.

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