

Cape May Star and Wave

164th YEAR NO. 1

CAPE MAY, N.J. SERVING AMERICA'S NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK CITY

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 3, 2018 75¢



House of the week
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MAC helps fill shelves at food closet
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CAPE MAY: 2017 YEAR IN REVIEW

New mayor means new era for city, businesses

January

Chuck Lear was sworn in as the city's new mayor on New Year's Day. In addition, Patricia Hendricks became the city's newest member of City Council. Councilman Shaine Meier received his oath of office as the city's new deputy mayor. Frank Corrado was appointed solicitor and Patricia Harbora deputy city clerk during Cape May's annual reorganization.



LEAR



HENDRICKS

A strong coastal storm dropped as much as 10 inches of snow on the area Jan. 7. The fluffy snow did not cause power outages because it did not stick to branches or power lines.

Jersey Central Power and Light (JCP&L) received a state Land Use Regulation Permit from the Department of Environmental Protection Jan. 9 allowing a contractor

for the utility to continue remediation of the former coal-gasification plant. The project excavated contaminated soil and installed a second underground containment wall to create a barrier to prevent contaminated groundwater from flowing into adjacent wetlands.

A nor'easter brought strong winds and high tides Jan. 23 but paled in comparison to Winter Storm Jonas, which struck the area one year prior. A wind gust of 63 mph was recorded in Cape May. Ferry crossings were canceled. Surfers enjoyed the rough ocean.

The city contracted with two music promoters, Robert Rose and Michael Kline, to handle entertainment bookings for Convention Hall's summer season. All contracts with entertainers were to be approved by City Council with the city handling advertising and promotion.

Convention Hall was filled Jan. 27 with more than 350 fans and supporters of then Chicago Cubs outfielder Matt Szczur. The second annual "Scz-the-Day" benefit for the Andy Talley Bone Marrow Foundation was hosted by Lower Cape May Regional High School and Villanova University alumni.

February

Deputy Mayor Shaine Meier proposed creating a temporary parking lot for the summer season at the site of a staging area for Jersey Central Power and Light's (JCP&L) remediation of the former manufactured gas plant off Lafayette Street. A vote on discussing the option tied in a 2-2 vote at a Feb. 7 City Council meeting. Meier estimated 100 cars could have been parked on parcel. JCP&L was to wrap up its work by Memorial Day.

Cape May Point's 2017 budget contained no tax increase for the fifth consecutive year. The local purpose tax remained at 25.8 cents per \$100 of assessed value.

The second phase of construction including structural repairs and other improvements to the Lafayette Street Bridge over Cape Island Creek began Feb. 13. The first

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Redevelopment hearing Jan. 9

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — The city's Planning Board will hold a public hearing Jan. 9 as part of an investigation of whether the block from Franklin to Ocean streets, bounded by Lafayette and Washington streets, qualifies as an area in need of redevelopment.

The Planning Board will then make its recommendation to City Council, which has the option of declaring the block an area in need of redevelopment and offering incentives for new development.

The city has specified such a declaration would not include the power of eminent domain to acquire properties in the redevelopment area. Planning Board Engineer Craig Hurlless, of Polistina Associates, prepared a "Determination of Need Report."

"The primary purpose for this effort is to help strengthen the city's economic base by improving the conditions and redevelopment opportunities in the commercial zoning districts. The lots in Block 1059 are underutilized and offer the city opportunities for an economic revitalization and an opportu-

nity to effectuate the goals of the city's commercial zoning districts," states the report's executive summary.

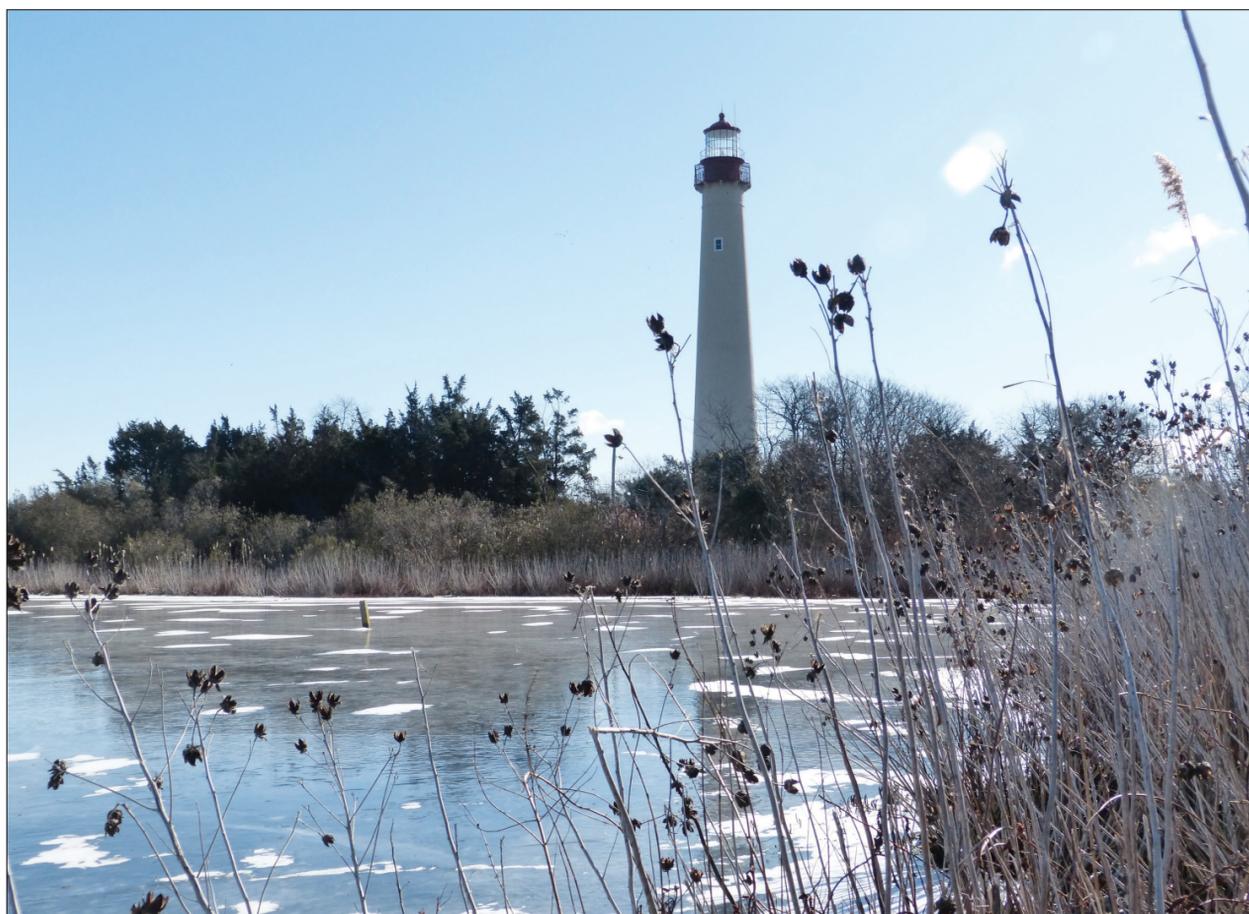
The report states a designation of an area in need of redevelopment permits a municipality to undertake a number of activities to help revitalize and redevelop the study area, activities that would not otherwise be possible. These include the preparation of a redevelopment plan which enables the issuance of bonds for redevelopment projects including leasing or selling property without public bidding, contracts with private entities and the use of various

tax abatement programs.

The study area of approximately 6.5 acres has a total of 12 tax lots and 43 tax parcels including condominium parcels.

A major part of a possible redevelopment area is Washington Commons, shops surrounding by a fee paid parking lot at 315 Ocean St. Some of the stores are owned as condominium units while other are owned by Washington Commons Equities LLC. The parking lot serving the Acme is also owned by Washington Common Equities. That area represents 3.4 acres

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Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

Bitter but beautiful

A frozen Lighthouse Pond creates a picturesque panorama at Cape May Point State Park. An overnight low of 9 degrees ushered in New Year's Day. The overnight temperature is expected to warm up — to a whopping 21 degrees — Thursday but snow is also in the forecast. If it does snow it likely will stick around a while since the overnight low for the weekend is expected to be in the single digits.

Lower, MUA consider sharing services

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

VILLAS — A proposed agreement between Lower Township and the Lower Township Municipal Utilities Authority would share personnel and equipment for a number of tasks from road repairs to snow removal.

During a meeting Dec. 18, Township Council tabled a resolution authorizing an interlocal service agreement between Lower Township and the MUA, but it is expected to

resurface in the new year.

"Whereas the township and MUA perform similar tasks, duties and utilized various equipment to provide service to the residents of Lower Township, where sharing services between parties will result in cost savings by the residents by lower taxes or lower water and sewer utility rates is encouraged by the state of New Jersey," the resolution states.

According to the resolution, the township and MUA would agree to participate in a shared services agreement related to

the daily operations and projects of the township and MUA for such staff employees, services and equipment including but not limited to MUA engineering employees, administrative employees, MUA operation employees, township Department of Public Works employees, MUA operation services, Department of Public Works services, equipment purchases and use, equipment maintenance, road restoration and leaf and brush operations.

Upon prior approval of the township manager and MUA

executive director, the township and MUA may share resources for certain projects and daily operations.

The agreement has 26 conditions and terms. The agreement states township and MUA employees may be cross-assigned from one to the other for specific projects and the cost of each said employee cross-assigned shall be reimbursed from one to the other in accordance with the actual cost of salary incurred by the paying party.

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