City to seek acknowledgment of affordable-housing plan

By JACK HICHER
Cape Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — The city will file a declaratory judgment suit in Superior Court making a declaration showing Cape May’s housing plan is valid and provides a “reasonable opportunity” on fair market terms for the purchase of owner occupied, low- and moderate-income housing.

At a July 7 City Council meeting, City Solicitor Tony Bashaw said the city is to file a declaratory judgment action due to a Supreme Court decision in March using all municipalities that received Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) certification with a review of their fair share housing plans.

Monzo said it was necessary to file the suit to get the approval of the new housing plan.

In 2008, council approved an ordinance requiring all housing rentals in Cape May to have an affordable-housing unit for every five residential units that they build and one unit for every 14 jobs produced by a 1,000-square-foot or larger office building. The city is trying to achieve an affordable-housing unit ratio of 150 that would have to be reviewed by the New Jersey courts, he said.

Mayor Edward Mahaney said he would concur with the city’s Planning Board and the state Legislature of Municipalities on the action. He said the city had done a declaratory judgment action in 2008 and was now void because of having to once again negotiate with the fair share housing organization. The mayor said he negotiated for three years in order to get an affordable-housing plan approved.

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There’s an ongoing traffic problem there,” he said. “I have a problem with traffic, I’m concerned about the flow of traffic, I’m concerned about the noise.”

Wright said the city’s planning board can solve every parking problem and “everybody is bigger than this.”

“Your problems are bigger than this,” Mahaney said. “You are not going to solve every parking problem in Cape May. You are not going to solve every noise problem in Cape May.”

Bashaw said he did not think the scheme would work.

“Cape May Haven’t couldn’t have been asked to add extra parking problem in Cape May and run it can be asked to do the same things on Few Avenue,” Mahaney said.

The project will provide funds to upgrade heating and air conditioning at the school, he said.

Wright said the convenience stores would not open past 8 p.m.

“City council did not think the project would worsen existing traffic, conditionally approved it,” Mahaney said.

“As long as a project doesn’t increase traffic, the city council will give it the green light,” Mahaney said.

Bashaw said that the resident commented that the gas station plan would not be open past 8 p.m.

Bashaw said that he has friends in business from 200 parking spaces at City Hall to 700 guests, half of which may never enter the park.

You park the cars in your driveway and you shop there,” Mahaney said.

Wright said everyone in a recent town meeting they have a parking problem and “everybody wants to fix it”, said the resident.

A resident would like to see the restaurant removed from the project.

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