

Cape May Star and Wave

153rd YEAR NO. 22 CAPE MAY, N.J.

SERVING AMERICA'S NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK CITY

THURSDAY, MAY 24, 2007

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Where is mall revitalization project going from here?

By **CHRISTOPHER SOUTH**

Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY – With the \$3.5 million bond for the Washington Street Mall revitalization project authorized, city manager Lou Corea expects the city could have a renovated mall by this time next year.

According to Corea, the next step in the process is to finalize the design.

"We are pretty much set for

hardscape," he said.

The city would meet with the engineer to complete the design including the landscaping, the trench areas for large tree roots, etc. The next thing, he said, would be to decide on water features (fountains) and the type of lighting fixtures – where they would go, whether they would be gas or electric so the utility lines can be run.

"We will put together bid specs so the project can be put out to bid by the end of

August or the beginning of September. We would like to award the contract and be cranking along by the end of October...the beginning of November," Corea said.

According to Corea there would be some degree of public input at this stage.

"Anything selected would be shown to the public, but we have already gone through lot of conceptuals," he said. "It's now time to put it on paper and go out to bid."

Corea said the city would

consolidate the bids for water, sewer and storm water improvements and award the contract to one contractor for the entire projects. Corea said the infrastructure worked needed to be done before the new mall surface was applied.

"It doesn't make sense to put six inches of concrete and then brick on top of infrastructure," he said.

Corea said the city is also aware there are problems with the existing infrastruc-

ture – water, sewer and storm drains.

Corea said construction would begin depending on how soon the specs are prepared and the bid go out. The project is expected to take 120 days, which actually provides them with ample lead-time for the 2008 tourist season.

Asked about the impact on individual business owners, Corea said they do not expect

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Running strong for 28 years

The Chamber of Commerce of Greater Cape May hosted the "28th Annual Great Cape May Footrace" on Saturday, May 19. Over 250 runners from the east coast including Rachel Harris, Emily Smith and Katy Mastandrea of Richfield, Conn. at top left, participated in the 10K and 5K runs. Trophies and cash awards for the male and female overall winners in the 10K run were given to Budd Coates of Emmaus, Pa. (34:22) and Wendy Blass of Berwick, Pa. (40:25). The 5K overall male and female winners were Courtland Howard of Red Loin, Pa. (19:42) and Kelsey Coates of Emmaus, Pa. (20:26). Councilmember Linda Steenrod, left, not only presented the trophies and awards to the winners, but also helped dole out refreshments. The Cape May Police Department and Fire Police were instrumental in controlling the traffic for the race. Volunteers from local businesses, residents, and the Kiwanis Club helped to create a fun filled morning for all.

Photos by Jennifer Kopp

Thirty-seven cats die in Animal Outreach trailer fire

By **CHRISTOPHER SOUTH**

Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY – Two trailers housing cats being cared for by Animal Outreach burned in the early morning hours, May 18, killing nearly 40 cats being treated or housed there.

According to Marilyn Jones, vice president of the board of directors of Animal Outreach, there were two trailers being used on Canning House Lane at the municipal recycling center. One was leased by the city of Cape May for the Trap Neuter and Return (TNR)

program. Cats would be brought in, be spayed or neutered and released back into organized cat colonies throughout city. The second trailer was the Animal Outreach trailer housing cats on an adoption list waiting for homes. Jones said there were 37 cats – five kittens and 32 adult cats – between the two trailers. The fire totally destroyed the two trailers and none of the cats survived.

"Nothing could have made it out of there. There is one cat that did not go in that night that is missing. He did not come back," Jones said.

Jones has worked with

Animal Outreach for more than 10 years. She said in 2003, their trailer was set up next to the city trailer. She said there is speculation the fire started in the circuit breaker panel in the TNR trailer, but no one from the city has offered any type of explanation to the organization.

"No one from city of Cape May has contacted Animal Outreach," Jones said. "I would know. I'm on board of directors."

Jones said the organization is not dwelling on the cause of the fire, but is forging ahead, attempting to find foster

homes for animals that are certain to come their way in the near future. They are also looking at putting a new facility on a parcel of land they own on Bayshore Road in Villas.

"We are trying to get even a temporary structure on that land until we have the funds to build the right kind of facil-

ity," she said.

Jones said Animal Outreach would need to do fundraising in the very near future, and in fact had a couple of fundraisers already planned. She said the board had an emergency meeting on Friday, May 18, and would be having another today to discuss what needed to be done.

Jones had just visited West Cape May Elementary School on Wednesday, May 16, to accept donations of pet supplies and a \$260 gift certificate to Pet Smart. The fifth grade class organized the "Feed the Kitty" campaign, urging students to contribute

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Boat bill heads to Assembly

By **CHRISTOPHER SOUTH**

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CAPE MAY – A bill designed to allow harbor commissions or municipalities to remove abandoned vessels from municipal waterways has passed the Assembly Transportation Committee and will go to the full Assembly for a vote.

Assembly Bill A-3767 sponsored by Assemblyman Jeff Van Drew passed the transportation committee 10-1, and will now go to the speaker of the Assembly who will put it up for a floor vote.

The bill will give municipalities and/or harbor commissions the authority to remove abandoned vessels and charge the owners with a dis-

orderly persons offense. Guilty individuals will be subject to up six months in jail and \$1,000 in fines. Van Drew said the legislation is aimed at boat owners who have obviously abandoned a vessel and may even have attempted to remove any identification from the vessel.

"This is not meant to target someone who was caught in a storm, or who has become incapacitated and cannot move the vessel," he said.

According to the bill, the municipality or harbor commission would have the authority to remove any abandoned vessel after seven days, or at anytime if the vessel is partially or completely submerged. In addition to the fines, the owner would not be able to renew their

boating license or register another vessel until the fines and costs were paid.

Van Drew said if the bill were made into law would serve two purposes - to make the waterways clear for navigation and to protect the environment.

"Obviously, when there are abandoned vessels, perhaps submerged or half-submerged, it presents barriers to navigation – and this will help remedy that," he said.

Van Drew said the bill would reduce the risk of petroleum products, battery acid, or other chemical s polluting the waterways.

Van Drew said his office received a number of complaints about abandoned ves-

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David Nahan/Cape May Star and Wave

Liam Spain and Rory Makem help open the 18th annual Cape May Music Festival Sunday night at Convention Hall. They are part of the two sets of brothers who comprise The Makem and Spain Brothers group, which performs Irish folk music. For story, please see Page A11.