

Park

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"Even though they're old and ugly, we've got 'em," he said.

East End residents have said the meters are unsightly and ruin their view of the beach. They said the meters are out of character with a residential area and would serve to lower property values. They said the meters are also incongruous with the historic appearance of the area, which is part of the Historic District. They said the meters would have a chilling effect on tourism, and would not result in raising the desired revenue. Some residents called for a parking study to be completed with a cost/benefit analysis to determine whether it would be worth-

while to install and maintain meters in the East End.

Residents also said the meters would only result in pushing the parking to the next block, New Jersey Avenue, where beach-goers and visitors would seek out free parking.

Councilman David Kurkowski said he was not convinced the parking meters would raise the desired revenue, and didn't like what meters would do to the essence of the neighborhood. He said when the idea of putting meters on Columbia was raised the notion was dismissed summarily, and he didn't see why the East End wasn't given the same consideration.

Favre said while parking has been a conundrum the

city has wrestled with for the nearly eight years he has been on council, he said there are new concerns over revenue.

"There is a new, 700-pound gorilla in the room - the state budget," he said.

Favre said the state is making cuts to municipal aid and the city can't go to real estate taxes to make up the difference. At the same time, he said, there is concern about maintaining services at their current level.

"We looked at ways of raising revenue. We looked at the new (parking meter) technology, and I wish we had the money to pay for it," he said.

Mahaney said the council listened to various points of view and kept an open mind, but said the fees the city col-

lects, such as from parking meters, provides the services property owners have become accustomed to.

"It's becoming progressively more difficult to fund budgets with the level of services you expect," he said. "Burdens will be placed on municipalities that the state used to provide."

He also told part-time residents the council does not feel less responsible to them than it does to full-time residents.

With Councilwoman Linda Steenrod absent, council voted 3-1 to pass Ordinance 200-2010 to create new metered areas, which includes Beach Avenue from Third to Wilmington, and Wilmington on both sides from Beach to New Jersey.

Other metered areas would include Madison, Pittsburgh, Baltimore and Brooklyn in the block between Beach and New Jersey.

The city council also passed Ordinance 201-2010, which creates back-in angled parking on Beach Avenue and on the east side of Gurney.

Kathleen Wilkinson, representing the Cape May Cottagers Association, voiced opposition to both ordinances. She said the concern with back-in parking was it would be a danger to bicyclists. Kurkowski said the back-in was just the first maneuver of parallel parking. He said once parked, there were more safety benefits, including the ability to see better when pulling out.

Terry Shields questioned

where vehicles would stop on Gurney. He said some vehicles, when their tires touched the curb, would be blocking the sidewalk.

Jay Schatz told council he was afraid people would be backing into meter posts, utility poles and trees.

Council approved the Ordinance 4-0. An earlier ordinance, 199-2010, also passed 4-0. It approved the removal of certain 15-minute parking spaces and changed loading zones to make them effective from 6 a.m. until noon. After noon they would become regular, metered parking spaces.

Save

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woodwork to do this together," Gillin-Schwartz said.

Mullock said most of the credit goes to Save Wildwood Catholic board members such as Richard Bischoff, Joe Catanoso, Carol Pantalone, Megan Gillin-Schwartz and his son Zach.

"They were pretty much the heart of Save Wildwood Catholic," Mullock said.

He also named David and Claudia Von Savage for doing a lot of work in the beginning of the effort. Mullock said

much of the credit also goes to Joe Bogel, Patrick Rosenello and Bea Passagno, who were working mainly "under the radar" to help come to a solution to keep the high school open.

"I just went along for the ride," Mullock said.

On the other hand, Gillin-Schwartz worked every day for two months. They got the word about the closing on Jan. 5 and on March 5, Fr. Field and Fr. Wallace announced at a fundraiser that they had sent a letter to Bishop Joseph Galante saying

the school should remain open. The bishop gave his blessing to the plan, which was announced officially on March 11.

In two months the foundation raised \$300,000 and pledged to raise the remaining \$200,000 by summer's end. Gillin-Schwartz said \$200,000 is earmarked to cover the deficit over the next four years, and the other \$300,000 would go to staffing and programs to improve the high school, with the end goal of increasing enrollment. Ten years ago the high school had

376 students. In the 2009-10 school year there were 194. Foundation members said the school could accommodate 500 students.

There are approximately 225 students anticipated to attend Cape Trinity Elementary School. Gillin-Schwartz said the elementary students and the high school students would be under one roof, but would be segregated from each other. But even when apart, she said, the high school had a lot of influence on the younger students.

"The high school students

speaking to the sixth, seventh and eighth graders, and that's how we found an interest in the school," she said.

She said it was not only important for the kids to have a school, but a solid, college-prep based education.

Gillin-Schwartz said she always thought school spirit was strong at Wildwood Catholic, but she believes it has increased tenfold since she graduated in 2001.

"We love the school, the sports teams, each other, and that continues after graduation," she said.

Gillin-Schwartz said there has been a big outreach to alumni and the foundation is establishing an endowment so it can continue to offer scholarships to new students. Part of the plan for saving Wildwood Catholic is to offer \$1,000 scholarships to new students. Gillin-Schwartz said this is important in hard economic times, when the tuition at Wildwood Catholic is around \$6,000 per year.

Cape May budget and tax rate are introduced

By CHRISTOPHER SOUTH
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY - Cape May City Council introduced the 2010 municipal budget. It includes about a 4-cent reduction in the local tax rate.

This was done while the total budget has increased by 1.58 percent.

Cape May's 2010 budget, as introduced, is \$15,224,244.06, an increase of \$237,505.92 from 2009.

Municipal Auditor Leon Costello said the city is bound by state statute not to exceed

a 4 percent increase in the budget or the tax levy in any year.

"You are not spending more money than allowed, in fact you are under both caps," he said.

Costello said the old approach to budgeting was to figure out how much the municipality wanted to spend, figure out how much it needed, and set the levy.

"Now it's how much you can levy, and that's what you can spend," he said.

Costello said there has been a lot of news reported about municipalities laying off personnel. He said a lot of the public thinks it's because they are trying to reduce taxes.

"No," he said, "it's because they are trying to get under the levy cap. Cape May's levy has been under the cap for the last two years which means having your own money is important."

Costello was referring to the city's ability to raise revenue through fees, parking meters and beach tags. The city also takes in around \$1 million per year from a room tax. As a result, Cape May raises only about 43 percent of its revenue from property taxes. Costello said other towns need to raise about 67 percent of appropriations from taxes.

On Tuesday, Gov. Chris Christie proposed legislation capping property tax increases to 2.5 percent a year.

Costello advised the city to be careful how it uses local revenue sources and to be careful not to let them erode.

In terms of state aid, Costello said Cape may was

already receiving very little. The 2010 budget includes \$433,744 in state aid, down slightly from 2009. Salaries and wages rose 1.43 percent from last year.

City Manager Bruce MacLeod said there were some adjustments - small increases - to police, fire, buildings and grounds, and the streets department, involving overtime. The city increased the budget in these areas in the event of more unforeseen expenses, such as the winter storms it experienced in 2010. The heavy snow cost the city more in overtime, salt, and for contracting snow removal. To meet the need in those departments the city decreased appropriations in other department line items, for a net increase of zero.

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26	35°	27°	.07/2.1"
27	42°	31°	
28	42°	33°	

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She's Out of My League R: 12:45, 3:00, 5:15, 7:30, 9:45
Percy Jackson & The Olympians PG: 11:40, 4:45
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