

Loan

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ue their efforts, but city council is not willing to consider selling the Solarium and creating a lease at this time on Delaware Avenue based on a couple of factors," MacLeod said.

The two biggest factors were the time constraints and the ability of a nonprofit group to form and then raise sufficient funds. Additionally, MacLeod said, regulations do not permit them from loaning the full amount projected to complete the project.

"After looking at revolving loan fund, present policy only allows for loans up to \$100,000 and require a five-year payback period," MacLeod said.

Maloney said the group was looking at a five to seven year payback plan.

"With all those things coupled together, council didn't feel comfortable moving forward in committing to this to-be-formed nonprofit on moving the Solarium," MacLeod said.

MacLeod again said the long-term goal of creating a maritime museum is very much supported by the council and they would like the group to continue organizing and to move forward and the

city would consider the site location in the future.

Mayor Ed Mahaney said council deliberated on three factors they were concerned about, none of which were the of the Save Our Solarium group.

The first, he said, was the very restrictive time period between now and Nov. 1, when demolition is scheduled to begin.

"It's just not realistic to subject the group to that process," Mahaney said.

Mahaney said it was also unlikely the city could provide money to fund the project in a timely fashion, and as it turns out, present policy prohibits council from authorizing the amount needed.

"To change that would require an extensive process," Mahaney said. "And the time frame to get money from any source is impossible."

Finally, city council determined the success of the SOS group's proposal depended on a number of variables, any of which could jeopardize the city's decision to open Convention Hall by Memorial Day 2012.

"We couldn't afford to expose ourselves to interminable delay," he said.

Mahaney said the good coming from this denial is that the group does have the city's support and a general agreement to assist with the project, and the group now has a more relaxed time-frame for acquiring support, obtaining permits and getting a financial plan and contracts in place. Additionally, he said the group could now design a building that fits their needs instead of trying to fit the use to the building.

"It will probably be more cost effective to design, build and pay off the building," Mahaney said.

Mahaney said not moving forward would give the city time to iron out another issue.

"Those two lots on Delaware Avenue owned by the city are on the roster for open space inventory (ROSI). If the city agrees to put a building on them we have to replace it with other property to put on the ROSI," Mahaney said.

He said that would not be impossible to accomplish but would take some time.

The city turned down a request for \$350,000 from a \$600,000 Small Cities Block Grant the city maintains for job development, which leaves the group with no funding. At Tuesday's meet-

ing, Councilman Bill Murray asked Maloney if the organization was considering any other sources of funding.

"Are you looking solely at this fund (small cities block grant) to get this \$104,000?" Murray said, referring to the \$107,000 needed for the move.

"No. We're relying on you to make this decision," Maloney said. "We believe at this late hour, this 11th hour, it won't happen without your support."

Murray said he appreciated Maloney being candid, but said council would need to have some sort of guarantee the borrowed amount would be paid back.

Murray's concerns echoed earlier statements by Deputy Mayor Jack Wichterman, who said the city already loaned \$100,000 from the \$600,000 grant to the Beach Theatre Foundation, and was having trouble getting it paid back.

"The most important thing you can do right now is to come up with a payment plan. The worst thing this council could do is approve (a loan) on a by gosh and by wow," Wichterman said.

Wichterman suggested the group look at the financial plan filed by Congress Hall when it borrowed the full

\$600,000, which was paid back with interest - a point made moot by council's decision not to authorize a loan.

Maloney said the maritime museum would enhance, increase and extend tourism in Cape May, providing something new for vacationers who already stay longer than the national average. He said people stay about seven days in Cape May, whereas the national average is 3.5 days.

Maloney said a Cape May Maritime Heritage

Foundation and Education Center would provide education and outreach to the community and its visitors. He said they would strive to make their research, collection and library accessible to learners of all ages. Initially, they would live to work on school programs with the Nature Center, and establish a Sea Scout program. They would include programs for adults such as a wood boat building and antique restoration program. They also pledged to work with local divers like Brian Sullivan to establish a collection of artifacts from local shipwrecks. Maloney said there is a vast area of shipwrecks off the Cape May coast, including a German World War II U-Boat.

"It's amazing what is out there," he said.

However, city council did not seem confident the group could accomplish what they are trying to do in the timeline they have available.

"Is it actually possible to do this?" Murray asked.

Murray said he supported the project but not to the extent where it would delay the city's timeline for demolition of Convention Hall and the Solarium.

MacLeod also highlighted a timeline issue, which appeared to make meeting the timeline nearly impossible. According to Maloney, their attorney said it would take about six weeks to prepare and submit an application to become a 501-c-3 nonprofit organization. MacLeod said if city council authorized the loan it would be to the yet-to-be-formed nonprofit, and demolition of Convention Hall and the Solarium could begin as early as Nov. 1, which is just seven weeks away.

City council listened to a one-and-a-half hour presentation on the Cape May Maritime Heritage Foundation and Education Center, and made their decision in closed session.

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Bank in southern New Jersey, when he had worked with her at Shore Memorial Hospital in Sommers Point, N.J. CMTJS and CCA wanted the proceeds from this event to go to the local branch of the Community Food Bank of New Jersey. So they approached Barham with this idea to try and get the ball rolling and she was pleased because they need the help so

badly.

"Currently in the United States, one third is now living below the standard minimal level of income," Logeman said, quote statics he had received from Barham. "This statistic is just unreal and unacceptable to me."

"This has always been our objective," Ashman added. "We want to make this thing fun for everybody, as big as possible and then give the profits to a worthy local charity."

Support for this event goes well beyond the members of the CMTJS and CCA. The Washington Street Mall merchants have been very supportive of this event. This includes sponsoring a free New Orleans Jazz concert at the gazebo on Friday the 17th from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. The concert will be performed by the Herb Roselle's "Atlantic City Jazz Band" which will feature Herb Roselle trombone, Franny Smith banjo, Bob Ferguson trumpet, Joe Midiri

clarinet, Chuck Harms drums, John McClellan tuba, and Nancy Rawlins keyboard. Also, after finished playing, the band will then perform what is called "A Second Line," or, as it has been called, a funeral march which will go from the gazebo to Cabana's, where the band has to play later on in the evening.

Also, several radio personalities from WCFA-LP, such as Matthews, Ray Reyes, Mike Posternock, and Maurice Porter as well as several other local personalities will be contributing time and talent acting as host/hostess, ticket sellers, security etc. Plus Sturdy Bank made a donation to this event


"It takes more than one organization to run an event like this," Matthews said. "CCA and WCFA-LP is pleased to help out for this project." Even the venues are helping out by giving these bands, who normally wouldn't be able to play in a club or

bar like atmosphere on a regular basis, a chance to reach a newer, younger audience with traditional jazz. "These musicians, who play in other groups or other styles, don't really get a chance to play this music live in a public venue like this. This is such a good time for people who love to play this music in front of a crowd," Ashman said.

The \$20.00 tickets for this event will be sold only at the door of the three venues and at the free gazebo concert. Members of the CMTJS would like to make this a yearly event. "If you've never heard this music live and wish to support a good cause, the sponsors encourage you to attend," Ashman said. "I'm betting once you hear it, you'll love it. Let the good times role!"

For more information, please call CMTJS at 609-846-7667 or CCA at 884-7525.

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