

Cape May Star and Wave

161ST YEAR NO. 30 CAPE MAY, N.J. SERVING AMERICA'S NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK CITY WEDNESDAY, JULY 22, 2015 75¢



HOUSE OF THE WEEK

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COUNTY ZOO RANKED FIFTH IN NATION

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Whole-house room tax again issue in Cape May

City administration revisits idea after amendment in Jersey City extends its levy

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — In April, Jersey City adopted an amendment to its hotel/motel room tax ordinance redefining the term “hotel,” allowing whole-house rentals to be included in collections of room taxes. Cape May takes in about \$1 million per year from room taxes collected

from hotels, motels and bed and breakfast inns, but whole-house rentals, condos and seasonal apartments are exempt from the tax. Resident Jules Rauch brought City Council copies of the Jersey City ordinance amendment. He said the Taxpayers Association of Cape May was requesting council pass a motion requesting City Solicitor Tony Monzo review the Jersey City ordinance

amendment and determine if the same application and procedure could be considered by the city of Cape May. The amendment reads, “Hotel shall mean a building or portion of it which is regularly used and kept open as such for lodging of guests, whether or not meals are served and also includes but is not limited to an apartment hotel, bed and breakfast, motel inn, boarding house, rooming

house, condotel, a home, apartment, house, condo or dwelling irrespective of whether there is a permanent resident residing in the building and any other sleeping accommodations that are available to the public on a transient basis.” The Taxpayers Association believes this would be a step in the right direction to have equal and fair financial participation of sharing

the increasing operating costs of our tourist-driven city, Rauch said. Mayor Edward Mahaney said for several years, Cape May was the only city in the county that wanted to move forward with legislation to include whole-house rentals in the occupancy tax. He said such an amendment would put all of the accommodations

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Kim Royster/Special to the CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

Pirates pillage, plunder on Promenade

Maddox, Logan, David and Krysten Ulmer joined in the fun as pirates landed on the Promenade in Cape May on July 19 for the 52nd annual Captain Kidd Treasure Hunt. Participants followed Captain Kidd to the beach between Perry and Congress streets to dig for buried treasure.

Gas station/restaurant plan raises concerns

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

WEST CAPE MAY — A closed Shell gas station at 110 Sunset Blvd. stands like a missing tooth in the smile of a redeveloping neighborhood that supports five restaurants, a liquor store, a birding store, a honey store, a clothing bou-

tique and an art gallery. Cape Resorts owner Curtis Bashaw and Exit Zero publisher Jack Wright have big plans for the property if they can get the necessary variances from the West Cape May Planning Board. Plans call for a gas station, convenience store, golf cart rental, 62-seat restaurant, of-

fices and a 1,800-square-foot retail store for Exit Zero on the property in two buildings that would resemble the barnlike gas stations of the 1930s and 1940s found on rural routes. Bashaw and Wright's initial visit to the Planning Board on July 14 resulted in the application being tabled due to too many absent board members.

Attorney Louis Dwyer, representing the applicants, explained only five board members were in attendance to vote and since a D variance was needed for the parking, he wished to delay a vote until the next meeting in anticipation of a full board on hand.

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Lower Twp. again attempts to limit dogs on beaches

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

VILLAS — Lower Township Council in a 3-2 vote Monday introduced a new ordinance that would ban dogs from township beaches from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. during the summer season. Council's three Republicans voted for the ordinance, while independents Mayor Michael Beck and Deputy Mayor Norris Clark cast “no” votes. Two weeks ago, Judge Allen J. Littlefield maintained an injunction that prevented the township from putting a previous beach ordinance into effect, according to Township Solicitor David Stefankiewicz. He said Littlefield set a trial date of Nov. 12.

At issue was a possible substantial change made in the ordinance between the first and second readings, a portion deleted that referred to watercraft, Stefankiewicz said. He said it made no sense to “ramp up” for a trial in November that may not produce a decision until December. “The judge expressed no criticism whatsoever of the content of our ordinance, he just wondered whether or not we may have committed a misstep in changing the ordinance by deleting watercraft between the first and second

Florida dog park, beach has 10-year history of success.
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reading,” Stefankiewicz said. The previous beach ordinance was “stricken and replaced” by the new ordinance. Before the vote, Beck suggested council wait until fall to revisit the ordinance. He said the new ordinance would not take effect until the last two weeks of the summer season. “My advice would be that we sit on this thing and literally let sleeping dogs lie and wait until the fall and then go back into it at some point and take a closer look and see if there's a happy medium, something that can be done that pleases both sides,” he said. He said the Public Works Department put up signs at beach entrances explaining the dog ban that had to be taken down when the judge issued an injunction and now would have to be reinstalled. Beck said he did not support the ordinance and suggested the township enforce laws

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Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

Jersey fresh in West Cape May
Farmers Diane and Les Rea sell their wares Wednesday during the West Cape May Farmers Market. See more photos on A8.

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