

INSIDE



Mall subcommittee makes public presentation

By CHRISTOPHER SOUTH  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY – At a presentation by the mall subcommittee of the Revitalization Advisory Committee, last week, Skip Laughlin compared the mall to an old suit of clothes. “You don’t wear the same clothes all the time,” he said. “The mall is an old worn out suit.” Laughlin and the other members of the subcommittee gave a presentation to a standing room only crowd in City Hall last week, saying

the mall upgrade could be done for \$2.75 to \$3 million. Councilman David Kurkowski introduced the subcommittee and said he walked the mall recently and felt it had fallen into disrepair, and was a hodge-podge of designs. This is on top of utility problems that exist under the mall surface. Kurkowski said the city and council acknowledged they were moving too fast last year, and as a result formed numerous commit-

tees consisting of community members with diverse background and skills. “Members of the committee didn’t always agree but worked hard to build a consensus,” he said. Kurkowski said the city facilitated the community

with open access to meetings and further involved the mall merchants. The result he said was a compromise plan. Some of the goals identified by the group were to maintain a streetscape, remove obstacles, and to improve safety. According to subcommittee member Hilary Pritchard, another specific concern was the trees. Planted 30 years ago, the roots are lifting the pavement. Another specific concern is the transformers, which

Atlantic City Electric said would cost the city \$1 million to remove. The company could downsize the transformers for about half the cost, or the city could dress up what exists at a minimal cost. Subcommittee member Jim Wyatt said the existing transformers are only about half as useful as they were when installed in the 1970s, and he believed the citizens of Cape May should push the electric company to replace them. “They don’t think you care. Get on their back a little bit,”

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“The mall is an old worn out suit,”  
Skip Laughlin, mall subcommittee member.

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	LOW		HIGH	
	am	pm	am	pm
19	10:09	10:30	3:57	3:55
20	11:02	11:22	4:51	4:45
21	11:59		5:48	5:40
22	12:19	1:01	6:48	6:40
23	1:21	2:09	7:52	7:46
24	2:27	3:18	8:56	8:55
25	3:34	4:22	9:57	10:01

Spared from the brunt



By CHRISTOPHER SOUTH  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY COUNTY – Although Cape May County did not receive the brunt of the recent nor’easter, effects were felt around the county as strong winds caused the cancellation of high school sporting events. The Cape May County Park and Zoo was also

closed Monday due to high winds and downed trees. Cape May County communications director Lenora Boninfante said crews from Atlantic City Electric had to remove a tree that had fallen on a power line near the park entrance. Park and zoo employees continued to work to clean up the facility after the weekend storm. Boninfante said the only severe flooding occurred on

Sunday night in Wildwood causing the George Reading Bridge to be closed from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. Also, Ocean Drive (CR619) between Ocean City and Strathmere was closed for several hours due to downed utility poles. By Tuesday, all Cape May County parks and zoos were open. “All the problems we

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Christopher South/Cape May Star and Wave  
Shore birds faced the fiercest winds which were along the beachfront. Birds can be seen in and around the surf seeking shelter in the rock jetty as a sandpiper, above, is doing.

CM Point residents get updated on historical survey

By CHRISTOPHER SOUTH  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY POINT – Professor David Ames from the University of Delaware gave residents an update on a process that could eventually lead to the establishment of a Historic Preservation Commission in the Point. Amid growing concern Cape May Point was going to lose its history if steps are not taken to prevent it, the borough commissioned Ames and his staff to prepare a historic survey of houses in the borough. Ames’ survey found that of the 600 homes in the

Point, the biggest period of construction occurred between 1921 and 1940. Ninety-seven of those homes exist today. Ames generally identified homes as being constructed in 20-year periods including: Pre -1920 (59); 1901-1920 (47); 1921-1940 (97); and 1941-1960 (94). Later construction is labeled as “post 1961.” Ames said the first step in a historic preservation process is to identify what you have. In that regard, homes are labeled as historic if they are at least 50 years old and have some historical integrity; that is, haven’t been overly modified. Homes are also historic

if they can be identified with a historic trend. Ames said the structure may be considered historic if it can be associated with an important person or event, or if it represents historic U.S. architecture. Historic properties may be eligible for listing on the National or New Jersey Register of Historic Places, which Ames said is entirely honorific. Ames said once the survey is completed, which it should be in June, the borough must then decide what to do with the information. “You will decide if you want to form an HPC, a historic

district, etc.,” he said. He said the benefit of forming historic districts and listing homes on national and state registers is there may be grants available down the road. Ames said his work will yield four things the borough can use in its consideration of historic preservation: 1. An updated historic survey report. 2. A historic narrative. 3. Photographs of each building. 4. A GIS map. Ames’ staff photographed every structure in the Point in January and has created the GIS map. The survey

process is continuing and the narrative will become part of that report. Ames also gave what he called an Architectural Styles 101 lecture, outlining various styles and forms of home construction in the Point. Ames said they identified a single federal house in the borough, but feels it may have lost its historic integrity because it was moved. Residents in attendance told Ames moving homes was a historic trend in Cape May Point due to threats from the sea. A number of homes in Cape May Point incorporated classic styling with “beach” features, such as porches. Open

or screened porches maintain of the historic integrity, whereas closed off porches have less integrity. Ames said craftsman or bungalow style homes became popular in the 20th Century because they were practical and affordable. In the late 20th Century there was a trend toward the contemporary beach house and a neo-colonial look. Ames said the community has grown by infill, so there is a lot of mix in architectural styles throughout the borough. The borough will have to decide what to do with the

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Christopher South/Cape May Star and Wave  
Scaffolding surrounds Our Lady Star of the Sea Church as part of a project to clean and restore the facade. The scaffolding is expected to be taken down around Memorial Day.

Star of the Sea undergoing structural improvements

By CHRISTOPHER SOUTH  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY – As indicated by all the scaffolding outside the church building, Our Lady Star of the Sea Church is undergoing a major renovation. According to parish business administrator George Gershefski, the renovation is expected to take about one year and cost nearly \$2 million dollars. “Just shy of that,” he said. Gershefski said all the scaffolding is in place because they are actually washing the entire building “to get all the stuff off.” He said they would be pointing all the holes in masonry and painting all the window frames. One major part of the project involves the restoration of the stained glass windows. “Each of the big stained glass windows will be taken out, re-leaded and put back in,” Gershefski said. The window portion could actually take a year and a half Gershefski said. The windows are large and heavy and have to be disassembled. Broken

pieces will be replaced as the windows are being re-leaded. Then the windows will have to be reinstalled. “They have to be very careful. They have to take pictures and have documentation about each window, so in case they are broken they can be replaced,” he said. The interior of the church is also going to be painted. Last year the church replaced the roof. “This is really going to make the place look terrific,” Gershefski said. Gershefski said the scaffolding is expected to remain up until a little after Memorial Day unless the project is delayed by bad weather. As stated, the project is going to cost nearly \$2 million to complete, and according to Gershefski, the church has been taking most of the money out of savings to pay for the renovation. “We may at some point have a capital campaign,” he said. The church also applied for a grant from the New Jersey Historic Trust, but he said in the last round none or very few grants were awarded to

churches. Anyone interested in helping fund the renovation project may send contributions to

the Church of Our Lady Star of the Sea, 525 Washington Street, Cape May, N.J., 08204.

Commission to host speaker on Cape May and global warming

CAPE MAY – We know global warming is a problem, but what can we do about it? Are there actions even a small town like Cape May could take that would make a difference? On Thursday, April 26, at 2 p.m. in Cape May City Hall, Susan Kurkowski will give a presentation to the Cape May Energy Commission addressing these important questions. Kurkowski’s appearance is part of an ongoing series of expert presentations scheduled by the Energy Commission, according to Charlotte Todd, Chairperson of the Committee. “We are fortunate in Cape May to have access to so many experts in the field of energy conservation,” Todd said. Last month the committee heard from Harley Shuler, a local expert on solar energy. Kurkowski’s presentation will focus on two topics. First, Kurkowski will discuss how scientists think global warming will affect Cape May in the future. She will cite data that global warming is gradually increasing the temperature of the earth and its waters, causing glaciers and the polar ice caps to melt, which will lead to increases in sea level. This

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