

Pilot

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With 62 pilots and 10 aircraft currently serving at Air Station Atlantic City, Powell said the workdays are much shorter as well.

"We have more pilots here than we did people at my unit in Canada, so we were on call all the time," he said.

Kroll said the Air Station works essentially like a firehouse with personnel having 24-hour shifts, so a flight

crew is always on standby if there is a rescue call. He said while SAR technicians and rescue crews are still necessary, search and rescue missions have decreased dramatically in recent years due to technology and a drop in recreational boating.

"It's quieted down a lot since Hurricane Sandy. A lot of people lost their boats in the storm, so recreational boating has gone down," Kroll said. "The equipment

boaters use like GPS, cell phones and all that technology keeps the number of missions down too."

Powell said he has been involved with four rescue missions since being with the Coast Guard. His most recent mission on Jan. 14 involved rescuing three hunters who were stranded at night on Shelter Island, near Beach Haven after their 18-foot boat became grounded during a hunting trip.

"We got a call to assist the Jersey State Police. There were a few hunters stuck on an island out near Barnegat. Their boat was stuck - they had been there all day and it was one of those really cold days," he said. "Luckily, they were well prepared, well dressed, so it was just a simple 'go and get them' scenario before things got worse."

According to Powell, his flight crew made the 15-mile trip to the island in seven

minutes. He said it was also the first Coast Guard mission in which he served as the aircraft commander.

"Of all the rescue missions I've flown, it was the first time I was able to actually meet and talk to the people who were saved, so that was pretty cool," he said.

Powell has about a year and a half left with the Coast Guard before he will be returning to Canada. While he and his wife Melanie are

both Canadian, their year-old daughter has American citizenship since she was born in Mays Landing, where they currently live. Powell said he will have 15 years military experience by then end of his stint with the Coast Guard, but hasn't yet decided if he will reenlist when he gets home.

Sewell

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develop roughly 26 acres of the tract. The proposal consists of seven different development concepts ranging from 65 to 85 units, Cape May City Solicitor Tony Monzo said.

Monzo said the area being proposed for development is in the northwest quadrant of the tract, on the south side of Pennsylvania Avenue, which the NJDEP has considered not to be uplands rather than wetlands. He said the area also does not need an Army

Corps of Engineers permit.

Monzo said even though the city is not part of the litigation, Cape May has worked closely with the NJDEP, ECMA and the American Littoral Society, which has interceded in the suit, to resolve the matter.

Cape May Mayor Ed Mahaney has remained adamant about preserving the tract as open space, with walking trails and observation decks installed as part of a nature preserve.

Monzo said if this proposal were accepted by ECMA, the

city would still be responsible for infrastructure costs in the development. Mahaney said depending on which of the seven concept designs is chosen, it could cost as high as \$15 million, which he said the city simply does not have.

"Should (ECMA) agree to this offer, the city of Cape May would be pursuing, with the New Jersey DEP and also East Cape May Associates, that we are adamant about being relieved of the infrastructure costs of this particular agreement," Mahaney said. "Even though we're not

a party to the suit, we feel that resolving the suit in that matter is necessary because that obligation would be detrimental to the city and its residents."

The city is currently waiting for a response from East Cape May Associates. Monzo and Mahaney both believe the NJDEP's offer will not be accepted by ECMA.

"In the city's opinion, it is probably very unlikely that East Cape May Associates will accept this offer from the DEP because it's not nearly as an attractive offer as a pre-

vious offer a couple of years ago," Mahaney said.

In 2010, an offer would have allowed the 85 units, 14 of which would be affordable housing, in exchange for approximately 20 acres of wetlands at the former Ponderlodge Golf Course in Lower Township. Cape May would have then controlled 80 acres of the tract for open space.

More than 150 residents, led by Charles Hendricks and James Testa, under than name "Concerned Citizens of East Cape May," oppose the

DEP's ruling and cite their reasons in a 33-page letter submitted to the agency. Testa and Hendricks claim there has been no independent study or analysis of the tract to conclude whether it is wetlands or uplands. They also claim the NJDEP has a conflict of interest in making a ruling on this matter, as it is being sued by ECMA.

Hendrick's noted that there was no public hearing on the new offer held prior to Jan. 17, when the public comment period ended.

'Event House' ordinance going to city council Feb. 4

By CAIN CHAMBERLIN
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY - A committee charged with making recommendations to city council regarding "event homes," which are homes primarily used for hosting large functions, finished drafting an ordinance for submission on Thursday.

Fire

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very unique buildings. So when checking for hot spots after putting the fire out, we take the experience of our older guys who know these old houses and check everything," Inderwies said.

Given the vintage wooden structure and wind gusts up to 50 mph on Saturday morning, Inderwies said the fire could have been much larger and potentially spread to neighboring homes if the fire department hadn't responded when it did.

"Without that alarm going off to get us there when it did, we would have had a fully involved structure on our hands...or worse," he said.

Kirk said despite the devastation the Bedford Inn sus-

tained, he gave much praise to the firefighters involved. "They did a phenomenal job, getting the fire out and taking the time to recover antiques," Kirk said. "How much they went out of their way to protect things inside, I can't say enough about them."

Kirk said he has been receiving a mass amount of support from family, friends and former guests of the B&B via Facebook, email, text messages and phone calls. He said it's kind gestures like these that make the situation more bearable.

"We're just going to get through it the best we can and rebuild," he said. "We can't thank everyone enough for their support."

For the past several months, the committee has held regular meetings to discuss poten-

tial regulations and boundaries for these destination homes.

City Solicitor Tony Monzo said the ordinance he has drafted is based on the recommendations of the committee as well as public input. The ordinance will be submitted to city council for discussion at the Tuesday, Feb. 4 meeting.

The draft ordinance states event homes will be limited to the C-3 commercial zone, which primarily consists of hotels and motels. The committee was established because many of these large functions led to complaints of noise, litter, parking issues and other issues for neighbors in residential areas.

The draft ordinance includes a \$300 license fee for each event house to cover the

cost of inspections required to set occupancy limitations and perform fire and public safety inspections. It says licenses would be issued and renewable for the licensing year beginning May 1 and ending the following April 30, to coincide with the issuance of mercantile licenses. A \$75 permit fee for each event was also suggested. Each event would require the submission of an event notification form to the city clerk as well, if the ordinance is passed.

The draft ordinance says each event house can host up to three functions per year, however, none are allowed to be held between July 1 and Labor Day.

Occupancy limits would have to be prominently posted inside the premises at a location to be approved by

the city's code enforcement officer and an off-street parking plan shall also be in place for an event.

The committee agreed that 30 guests or more qualifies as a function. The ordinance limits indoor events to a maximum of 50 people and outside events to 125.

For outdoor events, certain property line requirements have been recommended for stages, seating, restrooms, tents and other event equipment, which would be 20 feet from the rear yard and 10 feet on each side yard.

The committee made a recent change to the draft ordinance which would allow a transitional period or grandfathering of events that have already been arranged by a binding contract at rental homes prior to Jan. 1, 2014. These events do not have to be in the C-3 zone, but must still meet inspection requirements prior to the event, with the exception of off-street parking regulations.

The ordinance clearly states that a dwelling unit that is used for such functions and special events by the owners or tenants who occupy the dwelling unit as their residence for a period of more than 90 consecutive days is not considered to be an event house.

And event house function is a special event held at an event house such as, without limitation, a wedding ceremony, wedding reception, celebration, retreat, party, meeting or any other function where the total number of occupants inside and/or outside of the structure exceeds 30 people.

The draft ordinance now heads to city council and the planning board for discussion. City council will address the ordinance at its Feb. 4 meeting and introduce it at the following Feb. 18 meeting. The public hearing and adoption vote will be held March 18.

Point

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the history of having a natural habitat, and the migrant and residential wildlife that it supports. The ordinance says maintaining trees on public and private lands are crucial to the support of a "world-class migration spectacle."

The ordinance goes on to say there are numerous other social, economic and environmental reasons for preserving trees and other vegetation in Cape May Point. It says tress help moderate the climate and reduce energy costs, improve air quality, conserve water and increase property values.

"So as you can see just from the above excerpts, many year and much expertise

went into the Landscape and Vegetation Ordinance," vanHeeswyk wrote. "The most urgent phone calls we get at the Municipal Building are about someone taking down a tree. Everyone here loves the trees and the character they add to our little corner of the world."

vanHeeswyk advised anyone considering landscape work to contact borough zoning official John McGraw before doing any work to avoid problems both with fines and the disdain of other Cape May Point residents.

"If you are going to landscape or cut down trees, go to the zoning office first," vanHeeswyk said.

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