

# City seeks grants for tennis courts, beach access

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

Disabilities Act (ADA).

CAPE MAY — City Council approved applying for state grants to remove mobility barriers and improve beachfront access at Poverty Beach and the Cape May Tennis Club that hinder access for handicapped persons and the elderly.

The 2023 grant project, beach mats that run parallel to the Promenade, is nearly completed which will include additional beach wheelchairs. He said part of the grant is being used to reconstruct the Mount Vernon Avenue beach access ramp.

At a Nov. 18 meeting, Mark Blauer, a grant writer with Blauer Associates, said each year the city has an opportunity to apply for \$400,000 through the state Department of Community Affairs (DCA) which is funded by U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD.) The funding is known as the Small Cities Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG).

“We’re purchasing the materials out of the grant and using our own staff in the offseason to do the reconstruction,” Blauer said.

He said HUD gives grants to each of the 50 states with the states deciding how to manage the program on behalf of non-entitlement communities. Large cities such as Atlantic City and Trenton receive a direct grant from HUD each year and certain counties with a population in excess of 200,000, most counties in the state, fall into that category except Cape May, Cumberland, Salem, Warren, Hunterdon and Sussex counties which are classed as non-entitlement.

“So, if I propose something with citywide benefit in Cape May, I run the risk of being turned down cold because you didn’t qualify,” he said.

If Cape May was located in Gloucester County, it would receive a share of the county’s annual entitlement, Blauer said.

During public comment, former city councilwoman Stacy Sheehan suggested a pavilion be constructed at Poverty Beach, similar to the structure at cove beach. Blauer said it was possible to build projects in phases, requesting funds each year and building upon what has been accomplished in previous years. He said the grants require a 10% match from the city.

“We have an opportunity to compete for a portion of \$6.5 million,” he said. “I’ve been working for the city since 2008, most of the years, if not all those years, we applied, most of those years we won.”

The 2020 census changed the status of Cape May, it is no longer primarily low to moderate income citywide, Blauer said, the census showing the city is 45% low to moderate income.

The 2021 grant was used to create a redundant water transmission main, he said.

For the tennis club project, he said the DCA was not measuring the number of persons who play tennis but if the city has a facility that is not accessible to the handicapped, its out of compliance and needs to be brought into compliance.

Blauer said the 2022 grant was used for making Kiwanis Park compliant with the Americans with

“Perhaps, somebody wants to accompany somebody to the tennis club whose themselves handicapped or can’t play tennis but needs to use the restroom,” Blauer said. “They have to have an ADA com-

plaint facility to use.”

Resident Bill Seeger asked in the city’s post office qualified for grant money for accessibility

renovations Blauer said the federal government was responsible to make their facilities ADA compliant.

“If you have a facility that is federally owned that you don’t think is ADA complaint, you might want to call your congressman,” he said.

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|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|      | A.M.  | P.M.  | A.M.  | P.M.  |
| 4    | 9:36  | 10:05 | 2:50  | 4:00  |
| 5    | 10:22 | 10:58 | 3:35  | 4:50  |
| 6    | 11:14 | 11:55 | 4:30  | 5:42  |
| 7    |       | 12:09 | 5:34  | 6:34  |
| 8    | 12:54 | 1:08  | 6:41  | 7:27  |
| 9    | 1:56  | 2:12  | 7:51  | 8:23  |
| 10   | 3:00  | 3:19  | 9:03  | 9:19  |
| 11   | 4:00  | 4:21  | 10:09 | 10:13 |

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