

# Council OKs lead-based paint inspection for rentals

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — City Council passed an ordinance to implement state-mandated lead-based paint inspections for long-term rental units.

The ordinance does not require inspections of short-term rental units but council did not rule out such inspections in the future.

The state is imposing the obligation on every municipality.

Councilwoman Maureen McDade chaired a subcommittee to research the issue and how short-term rentals could be included. At a June 18 meeting, she said short-term rental inspections could possibly begin in 2025.

"We want to be able to offer accommodations in the city for visitors that are safe, regardless of the duration, and we felt it was important to set that standard in this community," she said.

City solicitor Chris Gillin-Schwartz said the city's fire inspector would conduct the inspections. If chipped paint is discovered, the property owner would receive a notice to do some sanding and painting, he said.

"Usually, nine times out of 10 that's going to be the extent of it is the information the fire inspector shared with us," Gillin-Schwartz said.

A lead-free certificate can be obtained as well as a

lead-free certificate. To obtain lead-free certification, a property needed to have had rehabilitation down to the studs or have the building tested.

By 1978, lead-based paint was off the market and houses built after 1978 would be exempted from the inspections.

At an earlier meeting, City Clerk Erin Burke said the city's fire inspector identified about 465 rental properties, long-term and short-term, that were built

before 1978. She said the city was trying to identify the number of properties that are only long-term rentals built before 1978 which is estimated at about 150 properties.

City Manager Paul Dietrich said the fire inspector would look for compliance and seek a working relationship and was not aiming to close down long-term rentals with a lead-based paint issue.

"It's going to be a process, I don't think it's going to be

a hindrance for them," he said.

McDade said a component of the inspections was to protect young children in an environment of lead-based paint. She said council had time to work on short-term rental inspections over the next six months.

Mullock said the subcommittee was likely to hold additional meetings.

Gillin-Schwartz said a fee of \$20 per unit would be charged for the inspections which is sent to the state.

## Lafayette Street Park

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both this application and the trails we're hoping to get to the county for Open Space money."

Phase two of the park project would be the easterly portion of the site consisting of the softball field, the dog park and the bocce courts, which is estimated to cost about \$500,000, Orlando said.

That section of the proposed park is not affected by a settlement agreement with Jersey Central Power and Light (JCP&L) or a land swap to construct a police station in the park.

From 1853 to 1937, a manufactured gas plant operated on the site leaving widespread underground contamination. JCP&L inherited the property through a series of mergers.

Cape May signed an access and remediation agreement with JCP&L in 2009 agreeing the remediated properties would only be used as a park and stipulating use cannot involve occupied buildings.

"I think it moves a project that has been hampered with delays, it at least does something," he said.

Orlando said the two phases could be put out for bid in August, the city could award a contract and start construction before the end of the year, which would secure the \$500,000 loan with the DEP. He said phases one and two would be put out to bid at the same time.

"We currently have a

pending application for the Harborview Park with Open Space that is going to be heard in July," Orlando said. "My game plan would be to get both these applications into the county for the nature trail and phase two for funding from the county."

Mayor Zack Mullock said he was in favor of "starting something at Lafayette Street Park plus the nature trail."

Orlando said that portion of the park project did not require a CAFRA (Coastal Area Facilities Review Act) permit from DEP since it was greater than 150 feet from the mean high-water line and does not entail any parking spaces.

He called the project "soft construction" in reference to impervious coverage since it involves only a couple of pavilions and a small concrete walkway around the bocce court.

Councilman Shaine Meier said Lafayette Street Park has been an unfinished project for the entire nine years that he has served on council. The first phase was dedicated in 2016 and included multipurpose athletic fields, a garden and playground area that connects to Cape May City Elementary School.

City Manager Paul Dietrich said the city has funding in its capital bonds for both the main part of the park and the nature trail. He said the cost for the nature trail was estimated at \$2.6 million.

"We're looking to apply for county Open Space money, use the Green Acres money as the match money and try to get that project all completed starting this fall," he said.

The city has all neces-

sary permits to construct the nature trail, Dietrich said.

The trail will be accessible by a path from St. John Street as well as a locked gate behind the school for use by students.

### TIDES: June 26-July 3, 2024

DATE	HIGH		LOW	
	A.M.	P.M.	A.M.	P.M.
26		12:17	5:58	5:59
27	12:31	1:13	6:49	7:02
28	1:26	2:09	7:39	8:07
29	2:24	3:09	8:32	9:16
30	3:27	4:12	9:27	10:25
1	4:34	5:11	10:24	11:29
2	5:36	6:06	11:19	
3	6:33	6:59	12:29	12:13

### MOON PHASES

Last quarter, June 28 • new moon, July 5

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