

Development may get more costly

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zoning boards who indicated a lot of time and energy was spent trying to recoup those dollars and often the liability sits on the city's books waiting for payment to be made to the city engineer and board solicitor.

"Some of these fees are going up pretty drastically and I think that was my sticker shock," Deputy Mayor Lorraine Baldwin said.

She said she understood escrow fees, but the ordinance proposed \$100 to \$550 for an informal review. Baldwin said she would like to have the city's Municipal Taxation and Revenue Advisory Committee (MTRAC) examine the proposed ordinance.

McDade said the city has data from other municipalities and the board secretary, which she would share with MTRAC.

Mayor Zack Mullock said he looked at the county average of development fees and those from Avalon, Cape May Point, Lower Township, Middle Township, Ocean City, West Cape May and Wildwood Crest. He said he had the same "sticker shock" when he looked at some of the fees.

"What is clear is the county averages are pretty close to the application fees that we are implementing in this ordinance," he said.

He called the change in escrow fees a "no-brain-

er." McDade suggested development fees be examined every two years.

Councilman Mike Yeager called the development fees for applicants a "drop in the bucket compared to all their other expenses."

Mullock suggested council introduce the ordinance but asked for two volunteers to work with the city manager and MTRAC. He said council could make amendments to the ordinance at its next meeting.

The proposed ordinance raises informal review fees from \$100 to \$550 with the escrow fee increasing from \$150 to \$1,000.

The minor subdivision application fee, no more

than three lots, would be raised from \$125 to \$500 with the escrow increasing from \$500 per lot to \$1,000.

The preliminary site plan application fee would be raised from \$325 to \$600 with the escrow fee changing from \$500 plus 2 percent of the estimated cost of construction to \$1,500.

The final site plan application would be increased from \$325 to \$500 with the escrow fee the same as a preliminary site plan. A full review from the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) would rise from \$300 to \$500 with the escrow fee from \$100 to \$2,500 at the discretion of the HPC.

An HPC review of an application for demolition

of a key or contributing property would increase from \$300 to \$750 with the escrow fee of \$100 to \$3,500 at the discretion of the HPC.

The fee for a request for reapproval or extension of time would be \$250 plus \$1,000 escrow. For HPC review of a request for reapproval or extension, the fee would be the same as the fee of a new application and there would be no escrow fee.

When development

plans are deemed incomplete by the Planning Board or Zoning Board Review Committee, the applicant would pay an additional fee of \$350 and an escrow fee of \$575 when submitting revised plans.

The ordinance in its entirety is available on Cape May's website.

A public hearing for the ordinance is scheduled for City Council's meeting at 5 p.m. Oct. 1.

City proposes hike in mercantile license fee

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — City Council introduced an ordinance to raise licensing fees, which have not been updated in 20 years.

At a Sept. 3 meeting, City Manager Paul Dietrich said the city looked at recommendations for raising the fees from the Municipal Taxation and Revenue Advisory Committee (MTRAC) and consolidated and removed eight to nine codes and

added two to three activities that needed mercantile licenses.

An analysis of licensing fees was conducted based on five years of the cumulative Consumer Price Index to determine where the fees should be raised, he said.

Councilwoman Maureen McDade said City Clerk Erin Burke was very helpful in portraying the time, energy and effort of processing mercantile licenses. She said the City Clerk's Office

processes a large volume of licenses.

City solicitor Chris Gillin-Schwartz said the city should not lose money in processing the licenses.

"They have to be updated from time to time in our code and many other towns update these on an annual basis," he said.

Cape May's license fees are "right on the money" compared to other municipalities, Gillin Schwartz said.

Burke confirmed the fees have not been updated

in at least 20 years. She said the changes would take effect in 2025.

Mercantile fees on average would increase \$50 to \$75, Burke said.

McDade said the city should examine license fees every two years.

West Cape, Point to buy vacuum truck, sweeper

By JULIA DIGERONIMO
For the Star and Wave

CAPE MAY POINT — The borough received funds that will be used to meet state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) stormwater permit requirements through a shared services agreement with West Cape May.

During a Sept. 12 Borough Commissions meeting, Commissioner Catherine Busch said the borough received a \$69,952 Local Efficiency Achievement Program Grant (LEAP) from the state Department of Community Affairs.

"I'd like to commend Public Works Manager Bill Gibson for working with West Cape May's finance assistant, Lauren Vitelli, for shared services for Cape May Point to help cover the cost of the vacuum trailer to clean out storm drains," Busch said.

Cape May Point was also awarded a \$191,000 grant that Busch said

would be used to buy a street sweeper.

"Both pieces of equipment are to be shared between the two municipalities and will help us both comply with the new state DEP stormwater permit requirements in a cost-effective manner," Busch said.

Public Works has begun using the vacuum cleaner to clean out water meter pits.

"This is a necessary step for us to comply with DEP requirements regarding lead service lines," she said.

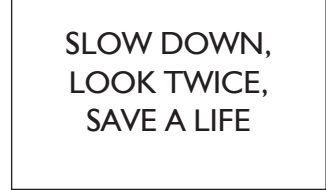
The DEP requires water and sewer utilities to inspect all service lines between meters and dwellings to be checked for possible lead. Anything besides copper or plastic is considered lead. Public works will be checking all service lines across the town; property owners will be notified if a noncompliant service line is detected.

In other business, Mayor Robert Moffat said beach tag revenue was

down this past year.

"They had a good crew this summer and were able to cover all entrances throughout the summer," Moffat said. "However, earnings are down as far as beach tag revenue."

Moffat said that daily and weekly tag prices will stay the same but seasonal prices will increase to make up for the drop in sales this past summer. Along with this, beach patrol and tagger wages will be increased for next summer.



735 Seashore Road
Cape May, NJ 08204
www.HCSV.org

Upcoming 2024 Events

- 9/28 - Fall Barn Sale
- 9/28 - Levi, the Village Horse's Birthday Celebration
- 10/12 - 31st Lower Twp. Rotary Club Pumpkin Festival
- 7th Annual HCSV Ghoul Spring Village - 10/18 & 10/19
- BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND Candlelight Walk - 11/2
- Wassail Day - 12/7

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TIDES: Sept. 18-25, 2024

DATE	HIGH		LOW	
	A.M.	P.M.	A.M.	P.M.
18	8:40	9:03	2:17	2:38
19	9:27	9:51	3:01	3:29
20	10:14	10:40	3:44	4:21
21	11:04	11:33	4:30	5:17
22	11:58		5:20	6:19
23	12:31	12:56	6:15	7:24
24	1:32	1:58	7:14	8:31
25	2:40	3:06	8:17	9:40

MOON PHASES
Full moon, Sept. 18 • last quarter, Sept. 24

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