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MAC offering Candlelight House Tours
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Public safety building may top \$12 million

Architect presents three plans to City Council; site still not established

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — Architect Robbie Conley presented three possible plans for construction of a new public safety building to house the city's fire and police departments during a meeting of City Council on Nov. 21.

Conley said he met with the city's Public Safety Building Advisory Committee on several occasions for its members' input. He said he has been involved in emergency services for 35 years, spending 10 years as chief of the Woodbury Heights Fire Department, and served 29 years as an architect. Conley is currently mayor of Woodbury Heights.

architects on the East Coast on emergency service building design," he said.

If a new public safety building were constructed at the site of the current firehouse, a lack of parking spaces is an issue, Conley said. He said police departments typically have a secure parking area for both police and personal vehicles, something that does not exist in Cape May. A total of 55 parking spaces are located behind the current firehouse.

Conley said 37 parking spaces would be available in the design of solution one. The firehouse and police station would be housed in separate buildings with a connector between them, with the police station facing Washington Street, he said. The structures would be

two stories, he said.

The two buildings would share stairs and an elevator, according to Conley. The first floor of the police station would include a detective area, a processing area, a sally port to unload prisoners, holding cells, bicycle storage for officers, evidence processing and interview rooms.

Conley said the second floor would contain mostly administrative and general offices along with file storage, lockers and showers. The building would measure 14,200 square feet with construction costs estimated at \$3.5 million.

"We're figuring a ballpark (figure) of about \$500,000 in site

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Architect Robbie Conley presented City Council with three different plans for construction of a public safety building. Solution one, above, would have police and fire in separate buildings with a connector.



Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

Matt Szczur, a Lower Cape May Regional High School graduate who plays for the San Diego Padres, spent a day at Cape Fitness promoting the Be the Match bone marrow donor program with which he became involved at Villanova University.

Szczur heads home urging bone marrow cell donation

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

NORTH CAPE MAY — San Diego Padres outfielder and Lower Cape May Regional High School graduate Matt Szczur returned home Nov. 22 to Cape Fitness, not to talk baseball but to recruit bone marrow donors.

Volunteers were signing up local residents to swab the inside of their gums for a DNA sample to test as potential bone marrow donors, a proce-

"Our families are from here, I was raised here, so this is where I want to be."

—Matt Szczur on continuing to live in Lower Township

cedure that could save the life of someone suffering from blood cancer such as leukemia or lymphoma.

In his freshman year at Villanova University, Szc-

zur became aware of an organization called Be the Match through head football coach Andy Talley. Be the Match is a national bone marrow registry. Each incoming Villanova freshman has their gum and cheek swabbed for a DNA sample to test for a possible bone marrow match.

Be the Match found Szczur's match on the other side of the world, a 15-month-old girl

Bone marrow, Page A3

City panel to study seawall, promenade improvements

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — City Council approved the creation of a Seawall/Promenade Improvement Advisory Committee following much debate about its necessity.

The enabling resolution states hurricanes Jose and Maria in 2017, Sandy in 2012, Irene in 2011, Floyd in 1999 and Gloria in 1985 have either had direct impact on Cape May or could have had catastrophic results had they taken a slightly different path. The committee is tasked with exploration of the pros and cons, funding resources, timetable and options for reinforcing the existing seawall and if the Promenade should be extended.

Members of the committee are Chairman Dr. Scott Maslow, Secretary Heather Bruno, Jerry Inderwies Jr., Larry Hirsch, Mike Jones, Joe Schlitzer, Louie Bruno, Gus Andy and Councilwoman Patricia Hendricks as liaison to City Council.

The resolution states the committee shall review simi-



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lar coastal improvement projects in Virginia Beach, Va., Staten Island, N.Y., Galveston, Texas, Seattle, Wash., and Charleston, S.C. It notes the committee will coordinate with the city's Beach Safety Committee, Environmental Commission, Planning Board, Historic Preservation Commission, Master Plan Review Committee, Bikes and Pedestrians and Parks committees.

During a City Council meeting Nov. 21, Councilman Roger Furlin said he received a call from a member of the Buildings and Property Advisory Committee shortly after the meeting's agenda was posted.

"They're concerned. The Buildings and Property Committee feels that this is an item that they should be look-

ing at," he said. Furlin said the committee assumed anything else that is not be examined by a specific committee was under their purview and a new committee was being created to address the Promenade, which they had already started to view. He said the committee was looking at city-owned buildings on the Promenade.

The committee's concern is with the seawall and with the bulkhead between the seawall and Beach Avenue, Furlin said. He said the committee has set up meetings with the county engineers to discuss the bulkhead since Beach Avenue is a county road.

At a previous meeting, Furlin voiced his objection to creating a Master Plan Review Advisory Committee when it was the purview of the Planning Board.

"I think it's a bad business practice to be creating two entities that are reporting on the same issue to City Council and it is more appropriate for the committee that's be-

See **City panel**, Page A2

City settles whistle-blower lawsuit

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — City Council approved a \$125,000 settlement with former firefighter Timothy Gay.

According to City Solicitor Frank Corrado, Gay filed a Conscientious Employee Protection Act lawsuit, also known as a whistle-blower suit, against the city. Corrado said the lawsuit was mediated with a recommended settlement.

He said Gay would receive a payment of \$125,000, of which \$57,000 will come

from the city of Cape May and \$68,000 paid by the Joint Insurance Fund.

"Mr. Gay will abandon any claim that he wants to be reinstated and will not seek any further employment with the city of Cape May," Corrado said. "The city will take no position with respect to any effort by Mr. Gay to adjust his Civil Service status and the parties will exchange mutual releases."

Council's approval of the settlement ends the litigation and relieves the city of any obligation to reinstate

Gay, he said.

During a City Council meeting Sept. 15, 2015, Gay alleged Fire Chief Alex Coulter created a new guideline Aug. 17, 2015, that forbid ponytails or buns for male firefighters but allowed them for female fire personnel. At that meeting, Gay said he had been a firefighter for seven years, graduated from fire academy and participated in major rescues with his hair often long in length. Gay claimed the new hair-length

See **Settlement**, Page A4

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