

City of Cape May
Planning Board and the Historic Preservation Commission
Wednesday, December 9, 2015 - 1:00 PM
Special Meeting

Opening: The Special meeting of City of Cape May Planning Board and the Historic Preservation Commission was called to order by Chairman William Bezaire at 1:00 PM. In Compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, adequate notice of this meeting was provided.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Roll Call

Planning Board:

Mr. Bezaire, Chairman	Present
Mr. Shuler, Vice Chairman	Present
Mr. Jones	Present
Mayor Dr. Mahaney	Present
Mr. Elwell	Absent
Dr. France	Absent
Councilman Meier	Present
Mr. Winkworth	Absent
Mr. VanDeVaarst	Present
Mr. Macciocchi	Absent

HPC:

Mr. Coupland, Chairman	Present
Mr. Fontaine, Vice Chairman	Absent
Mr. Carroll	Absent
Mr. Clemans	Present
Mr. Cogswell	Absent
Mr. Connolly	Absent
Mrs. Pontin	Present

Also Present: Craig R. Hurless, PE PP, CME, Board Engineer
Bruce MacLeod, City Manager
Dan Shustack, Purchasing Agent
Edie Kopsitz, HPC Secretary
Erin Burke, Planning Board Secretary

Presentation: Phase I of the Lafayette Street Park Project

Mayor Dr. Mahaney and Councilman Meier recused themselves as Planning Board Members and Mr. Jones as a City Official in compliance with City procedures regarding City Projects.

Mayor Dr. Mahaney gave a brief description of the four (4) phase plan for the Lafayette Street Project. He indicated that Phase I is fully funded for 1.5 Million by the New Jersey Economic Development Authority. Phase I is located west of the Elementary School between Lafayette Street and the tree line that incorporates entrances on the side of the school. Phase one also includes the improvement on the current playground and creations of a multipurpose field.

City Manager Bruce MacLeod informed all that there have been several public meetings throughout the years regarding the project with the most recent being June 22, 2015 at a special meeting of City Council purposefully to discuss this project.

Joseph R. Cairone, of Cairone & Kaupp, Inc. Landscaper Architecture Civil Engineer, whose office is located in Philadelphia, was present with a power point on Phase I of the project.

He expressed his pleasure at having the opportunity to work on a local project with great implications for the City. He explained that the Lafayette Park Project is grounded in history and ecology, with positive social impacts for the City.

The slides Mr. Cairone presented in his Power Point presentation detailed the following:

1. Cover Slide
2. Park Location
3. Existing Conditions
4. Phase 1 Project Scope
5. Perspectives:
6. View from southern gate portal along Lafayette Street
7. View from southern entrance into playground area facing school
8. View from outdoor classroom looking southwest
9. Phase 2 Project Scope
10. "Thank You"
11. Master Plan

Mr. Cairone detailed the adapting of current playground equipment for ADA accessibility to bring it to present code requirements. The playground will be integrated into a park-like setting with benches, walkways, areas to view sporting events, and age-appropriate play equipment, all for year-round use.

Mr. Cairone stressed that the park is designed as "green" and environmentally sensitively as possible, with no drainage or run-off issues. The use of native flora and plants within the park will provide continuity with City landscaping and natural habitats, and compliment the "feel" of the City.

Security of the park was discussed in detail, specifically regarding the safety of school children at Cape May Elementary during school hours. Phase 1 of the park will only be available to students and staff during school hours, with an outside classroom area being proposed for the school's use. Six (6) foot exterior and interior fencing and guard houses at all entrances will control access to the park and provide security to the school children and staff. Members raised questions concerning fencing parameters, aesthetic, and longevity (specifically the possibility of rusting) and discussion ensued. Helicopters/Medivacs and emergency vehicles will have accessibility to the park.

Planning Board Member John VanDerVaarst questioned if the proposed soccer field in the park would be regulation size. Mayor Dr. Mahaney and Mr. Cairone assured that it would be to regulation. Councilmember Meier expressed his desire to have leagues and local teams use the soccer field. Discussion regarding field size ensued.

Questions were raised by members regarding the proposed gas lamp fixtures in the park. Mayor Dr. Mahaney requested that Mr. Cairone make certain that the proposed lamps are no higher than the existing gas lamp fixtures around the City. Mr. Cairone agreed. Questions were also raised about the type, maintenance, and longevity of the proposed benches in the park. Discussion ensued.

HPC Chairman Warren Coupland and HPC Member Dave Clemans questioned the use of stone throughout the park versus brick. Mistery Coupland and Clemens voiced their opinion that brick would be more complimentary to the historic accuracy of Cape May, with stone being more of a contemporary material. Discussion was undertaken. Mr. Clemans asked Mr. Cairone to consider the use of brick instead of stone, voicing his belief that it is the proper material to use in this case to maintain continuity within the City.

Councilmember Meier then asked to read a statement that he had prepared, citing statistics detailed in the Master Plan. In this statement, Mr. Meier highlighted the need for additional parking within the City, and suggested that a portion of the open space designated for the Lafayette Street Park be turn into metered parking spaces in order to get cars off of Lafayette Street and increase revenue for the City. Planning Board Chairperson Bezaire echoed Mr. Meier's statement and emphasized the need for a substantial parking facility within the City. Mayor Dr. Mahaney explained that the way the City purchased and acquired the land comes with a deed restriction related to parking. He agreed that there is a parking issue in the City that needs to be addressed, but that the site of the proposed Lafayette Street Park is not the location to address it. City Manager, Bruce McLeod, echoed the Mayor's statement that in looking at the ownership and restrictions, particularly regarding Green Acres and Blue Acres, public parking would not be permitted where Councilmember Meier suggested. He detailed that the park plan includes the creation of approximately forty (40) or more parking spaces to support the park. Discussion was undertaken and Mayor Dr. Mahaney suggested the formation of a Parking Committee to address the parking issue.

Motion for adjournment was made by Chairperson Warren Coupland, seconded by Mr. Elwell, with all in favor at 2:05 pm.

A verbatim recording of said meeting is on file at the Construction/Zoning Office.

**Respectfully submitted: Edie Kopsitz – HPC Secretary
Erin Burke – Planning Board Secretary**