

**SPECIAL MEETING
OF CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CAPE MAY, NJ
Tuesday, July 27, 2010 – 1pm**

The Special meeting of City Council of the City of Cape May was called to order by Mayor Mahaney 1:00pm Tuesday, July 27, 2010, in the Cape May City Hall Auditorium. The Clerk called the roll and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited..

Present: Councilmember Deanna Fiocca
Mayor Edward J. Mahaney, Jr.
Councilmember William H. Murray
Deputy Mayor Jack Wichterman
City Attorney Andrew Catanese
City Manager Bruce MacLeod
City Clerk Diane Weldon
Deputy Clerk Louise Cummiskey
Also Present: Martin Kimmel, Architect
Absent: Councilmember Terri L. Swain

City Clerk Diane Weldon reads a statement from Councilmember Swain.

Mayor Mahaney announced that under the Open Public Meetings Law, notice of this meeting was sent to the Cape May Star and Wave and The Press and a copy of the agenda was delivered to each Member of Council and was posted on the City Hall Bulletin Board.

Minutes do not reflect the actual order in which the events occurred.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

DISCUSSION: Convention Hall project

Mr. MacLeod begins the meeting by advising that we must develop a plan to build a new convention hall to fit within the budget. He has prepared an agenda and itemizes the topics that must be discussed. For the purpose of developing the calendar, Mr. MacLeod has backed into the dates by working in reverse and then explains the time line.

As to the building itself comments Mr. MacLeod, we need to decide if it should remain in the same footprint, whether it will expand to cover the solarium and whether it will be one or two stories. In order for the proposed calendar to work, Mr. MacLeod advises we have only six weeks to make every decision regarding the new building and give those conceptual ideas to the Architect so that he may prepare the drawings. Mr. MacLeod also advises that there may be issues that will cause us to deviate from the proposed calendar, issues which are not known at this time.

The previous design, advises Mr. MacLeod, called for a 32,000 square foot building with two stories and the first subject for discussion today is whether we want to stay on the same footprint, expand to include the Solarium, and/or construct a one or two story building.

Councilmember Murray comments that functionality is a constraint that we must consider, as well as the dollar constraint. These two items are inter-related advises Mr. Murray. Mr. MacLeod agrees. Mr. MacLeod describes the shape and amenities in the existing building. He then asks if the new building should take up the space of the solarium.

Deputy Mayor Wichterman advises that he would like to see the new building remain on the footprint of the present building with a second story, if possible. He would also like to fix the Solarium at a later time.

Councilmember Fiocca agrees with Mr. Wichterman.

Councilmember Murray agrees with Mr. Wichterman and Ms. Fiocca. He believes we may have some latitude to enlarge the convention center by building further east and west. He also wants to point out that the time lines outlined by Mr. MacLeod are firm and must be strictly adhered to.

Deputy Mayor Wichterman asks Mr. MacLeod if we can build sideways and there is much discussion regarding that possibility.

Deputy Mayor Wichterman comments that no decisions can be made today and nothing can be considered until we get recommendations from the project team and get costs as to our “wish list.”

Mayor Mahaney believes that we need to try to erect the best building for the citizens of Cape May with the amount of money on hand and thinks that backing into that amount will aid us in planning this new convention center.

Mr. Murray believes the building that will be erected will be determined by the needs of the people of Cape May.

It is determined that the project team should be selected and Mr. Murray advises that there should be two members of City Council on the team. He thinks those two members should be Deputy Mayor Wichterman and Mayor Mahaney. Councilmember Fiocca agrees with Mr. Murray.

Mr. MacLeod asks if council will get back to him by the end of the week with their individual recommendations for the project team. He further advises that the team will need to meet weekly or bi-weekly on Wednesdays or Thursdays.

Councilmember Murray asks that the decisions reached at the meetings be published and/or posted on the city’s website.

There is further discussion about how this matter will proceed.

PUBLIC PORTION: Those wishing to publicly comment shall come forward, give their name and address and speak into the microphone. Each speaker will be limited to five (5) minutes.

John Fleming, 1484 Washington Street, Cape May, NJ asks if the new building will cost 10.5 million less the owners budget, furniture, fixtures, etc. and Mr. MacLeod affirms. Mr. Fleming asks if there is any possibility that the CRDA will withdraw their promise of some funding. Mr. MacLeod advises that we may lose that source of funding.

Charlotte Todd, 651 Hughes Street, Cape May speaks for the Cape May City Environmental Commission and advises that the Revitalization Committee has been encouraging grants to afford a Convention Hall that is as green as possible. Ms. Todd asks about any progress that has been made in obtaining grants so green features are subsidized for our new Convention Hall. She also asks about prior projects for which funding was received.

Mr. MacLeod responds that the City applied for three solar projects back in 2008. Two have been completed and are in operation and the third was for the existing Convention Hall building. Once the existing building was deemed unfit, the City failed to meet a build out period of twelve months. Mr. MacLeod advises that the City will continue to apply for grants for the new Convention Hall building.

Opal (last name unknown), 8 Osbourne Court, Cape May, NJ addresses the functionality of the new building. She asks about ADA access and also about whether it will be used in the winter for the residents to use for roller skating and a wooden floor for ballet. Mayor Mahaney responds to her questions.

Harry Bellangy, 511 Pearl Street, Cape May compliments Mayor and Council on what they have done to date.

Jeanne Powick, 401 Clay Street, Cape May also compliments mayor and council. She suggests very strongly a documented financial plan. Ms. Powick has an MBA in finance and offers her services. In regard to the next group of drawings for the new hall, Ms. Powick believes we need more than just one.

Christine Miller, 535 Bank Street, Cape May suggests we ask the DEP if we could place bore holes in the dunes, instead of under the convention center, to lessen the cost of installing a geo thermal system.

Paul Andrus, 285 Windsor, Cape May asks if we will consider removing the existing roof and walls of the current Convention Center and start using the deck for open air concerts, craft shows, etc.

Councilmember Murray asks if we are going to demolish Convention Hall after the season. He would like to take the building down as soon as possible after the tourist season.

Councilmember Fiocca does not remember seeing demolition costs in the bids and asks if they were included.

Mr. MacLeod advises that there was a separate component in the bids.

Mayor Mahaney advises that we may need the building in order to obtain the CAFRA permit, especially if we will apply for “permit by rule.”

Janice Sims, 1201 New Jersey Avenue, Cape May, thanks everyone for all their work over the years. She comments that this meeting has been very positive and thanks Mr. MacLeod for his efforts in compiling the calendar. She is glad of the scaled down the building and would like to keep the Solarium. She would like to see a second floor and do it bare bones and then complete it at a later time.

John Murray, 124 4th Avenue, West Cape May advises that he is a summer resident. He asks what will happen to the plans made today if an initiative is placed on the ballot in November. City Solicitor Catanese responds that would be a decision for Mayor and Council.

Bob Biehn, 315 Franklin Street, Cape May has concerns about the time line and rushing into this project.

Motion made by Deputy Mayor Wichterman to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at approximately 2:45 P.M.

Edward J. Mahaney, Jr., Mayor

Jack Wichterman, Deputy Mayor

Deanna Fiocca, Councilmember

ABSENT

Terri L. Swain, Councilmember

William H. Murray, Councilmember

Diane L. Weldon, City Clerk