

MILFORD LIVE

photo link: Marcia Reed

 MilfordLive

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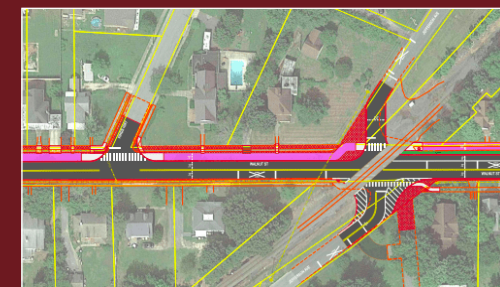
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October 3, 2023
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Ladybug Music Festival a Huge Success for Milford



South Walnut Report Approved



Cross Country Solid

HEADLINES



photo link: Scott Evers



BY TERRY ROGERS

At a recent meeting, Milford City Council approved a conditional use request from Helmick Fast Food that could bring Chipotle to Milford. The request was a renewal of a conditional use that was approved in 2022 but expired. Initially, when asked who the tenants would be in the new building which would include one fast food and one drive-thru business, Tom Schreier of Hillcrest Associates, stated that there was no potential tenant known currently. Councilman Andy Fulton asked if there were plans in place to prevent the approval from expiring this time like it did after the last approval.

“I know the last one, unfortunately, we let it expire due to some lease negotiations that fell through,” Schreier said. “My client is currently negotiating with some potential tenants and has decided to just move forward and get those approvals with or without those leases.”

Councilman Brian Baer asked if the new building would also include improvements to the parking lot in the theater and surrounding area. Schreier stated that there were plans on adding new curved islands, additional landscaping and better circulation around the former Wendy’s site. When asked if there was anyone

CONDITIONAL USE APPROVAL COULD BRING CHIPOTLE TO MILFORD

who wished to speak in favor of the application, Art Helmick, owner of the property as well as the Milford Movies 9, spoke.

“I’m the property owner. And all I want to say is that we did have some trouble with lease negotiations before and our attention was to move faster than what we have. The site was under some type of reconstruction at the time when the previous owner passed away and left it to his wife. She no longer wanted to follow through. And it was a hazard and that was the reason we tore it down. I guess you would say we tore down because we were doing the movie theater right there and due to the fact that we couldn’t keep people out of it. There was holes dug in, there was a lot of things going on there,” Helmick said. “We didn’t plan on putting Wendy’s back. I think what held us up before was that we were working with a tenant before, Chipotle, and you have to meet their timeframes. And if you don’t, the ball gets dropped. So, they’re back at the table. We have others as well. But we are inches away from signing. I was hoping tonight that we actually could have said we have this thing signed, but it takes a little bit more than we thought but we’re gonna move forward because we’re getting a lot of activity because people want to be here.”

see page 4

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from page 3

No one during the public hearing spoke against the request. Council expressed significant support for the possibility of new food options in Milford.

“I vote yes on the motion on reason that this is a site that I think has been ready for a food establishment,” Councilman Jason James said. “When council approved this before, many constituents were anticipating some type of business like this, and I am glad it is back to the table and it will be good for the entire city.”

Councilwoman Katrina Wilson agreed, stating that she liked the fact that “Mr. Art” was working forward rather than waiting for signed leases.

“I vote yes,” Councilman Todd Culotta said. “I like Chipotle. But seriously, I commend Mr. Helmick for actually mentioning that prior to being completed. I am excited about it going in there.”

Council approved the request with a vote of 6 to 0 as Councilwoman Nirmal Samaroo was not present.



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LADYBUG FESTIVAL A HUGE SUCCESS FOR MILFORD

BY TERRY ROGERS

Downtown Milford Inc. (DMI) and Gable Music Ventures presented an outstanding music festival in Milford on Saturday, Sept. 30. The all female-led musicians kept crowds entertained all evening, performing cover songs as well as original music.

“Wow! What a night!” Gable Entertainment posted on social media on Sunday. “Thank you so much to everyone who came out to support these incredible artists, this community and our mission of highlighting women in music!”

Ladybug Music Festival is the largest concert in the country featuring a 100 percent female-fronted lineup. The festival, which began as a downtown block party, has grown to become one of the most popular events in southern Delaware.

“It was amazing to see everyone downtown enjoying the music,” Shelby Nash DiCostanzo, president of DMI,

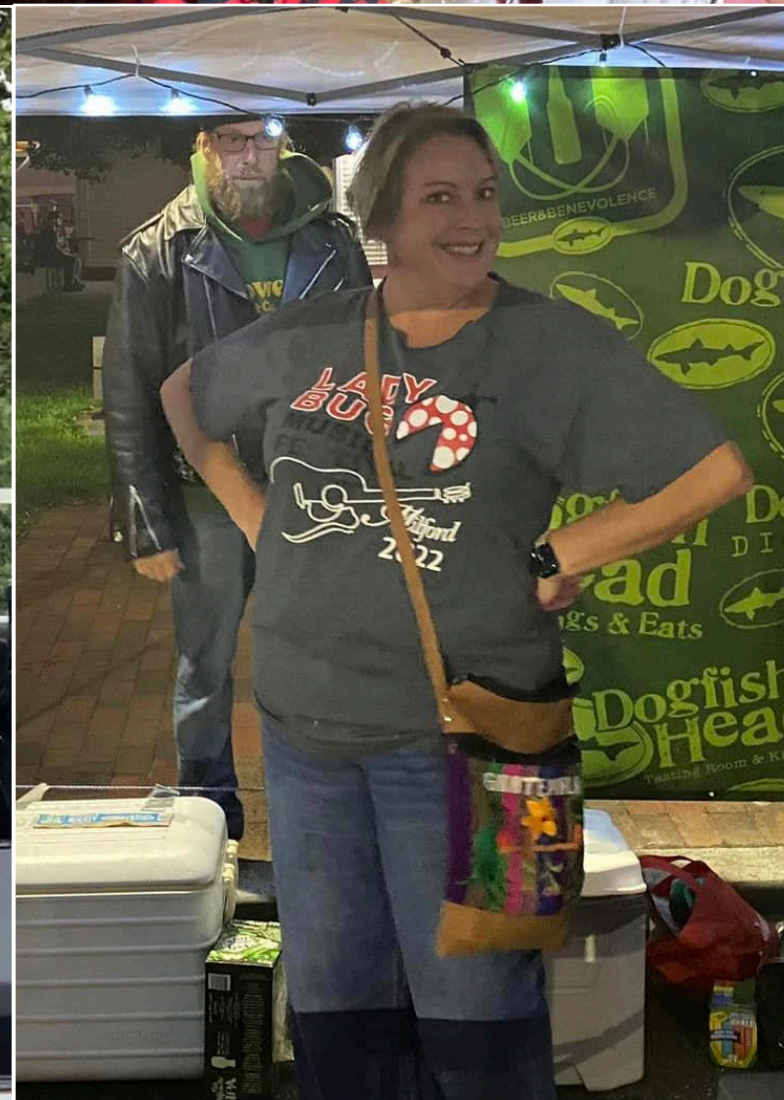
said. “This is such a popular festival and we are so excited to bring it to the downtown area. The fact that it is designed to empower female artists is just icing on the cake.”

Stages were set up on Walnut Street, at My Sister’s Fault, on the LaHacienda patio, the library amphitheater, Gallery 37 and inside at the Music School of Delaware. Bands included Fuzaholics, Lena Daitz, Kerry Hallett and the concert headliner was Nitro Nitra.

DiCostanzo stated that DMI is always looking for new and exciting events. “We are currently looking for volunteers who would like to help us bring more events to Milford,” DiCostanzo said. “In addition, we are seeking board and committee members who can help us draw even more attention to downtown.

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CULTURE



photo link: [Downtown Milford Inc.](#)



DOWNTOWN DESSERT TOUR RETURNS

BY TERRY ROGERS

In celebration of National Dessert Day, several downtown merchants have teamed up for Milford's Downtown Dessert Tour on Saturday, Oct. 14. Participating bakeries include Fortunata's, Rosita's Bakery, Dolce and My Sister's Fault.

"This began before COVID," Angie Robles of My Sister's Fault, who is spearheading the event, said. "We could not wait to bring it back. We reached out to local bakeries and they were so excited to do it."

The event is a self-guided tour of downtown Milford. Participants can stop in at any of the participating bakeries. Simply visit each bakery that day and make a purchase to receive a stamp at the register on the flyer.

"Make sure to get the flyer stamped," Robles said. "Once you complete the tour, drop off the flyer at any of the locations for a chance to win prizes. The winners

will be announced on Facebook Live."

All the bakeries are asking that people follow them on social media to find out what their hours are and what prizes are available to win.

"This is a great way to sample some of the delicious items available in downtown Milford," Robles said. "We are all working together to promote the deliciousness in our town and we are so excited to bring this fun event back to Milford."

The event is being marketed as a "Foodie Treasure Hunt," and encourages participants to stroll through Milford in celebration of fall. In addition to the Dessert Tour, other businesses plan to partner as part of the event, and those details will be announced on social media as the event draws closer.



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TRICK OR TREAT SCHEDULED FOR OCT. 31

BY TERRY ROGERS

Milford City Council voted to approve Trick-or-Treat on Tuesday, Oct. 31. The event will take place between the hours of 6 and 8 p.m. Based on the City Charter, council must approve the date that Trick-or-Treat may take place.

“Whereas the children of Milford are free to enjoy the fun and festivity associated with the observance of the Halloween Trick-or-Treat custom of traveling with friends and family, going door-to-door in their neighborhoods, displaying their costumes and gathering treats,” the resolution read. “Parents are urged to join in the festivities by accompanying their children throughout their journeys in celebrating Halloween Trick-or-Treat.”

Residents are asked to indicate their willingness to participate by keeping a porch or exterior light on so

that children are aware who will be handing out treats. A darkened porch or no outside light should indicate the residents are not participating.

“Costumed celebrants will be permitted to engage in Trick-or-Treat,” the resolution read. “All celebrants are to refrain from committing acts of vandalism or destruction and motorists are asked to be ever watchful of our youngsters making these annual rounds.”

No age limit was placed on children who may participate in Trick-or-Treat in Milford. The resolution passed with a vote of 6 to 0 as Councilwoman Nirmala Samaroo was not in attendance at the meeting.



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MILFORD CONVERSATION TO FEATURE KENT-SUSSEX INDUSTRIES

Steele, who recently took over the group from John Huntzinger, explained that there would be no meetings in November or December. Milford Conversation will return in January with a revised purpose, as the dynamics of the group have changed somewhat since it began several years ago.

Milford Conversation began as an informal group of Milford citizens and leaders who wanted to create a forum to promote the city and to brainstorm ideas that could benefit businesses as well as non-profit organizations throughout the town. Guest speakers provided information about the many good things happening in Milford. During the pandemic, the group took a break, returning to in-person meetings in October 2021.

The meetings are free to attend and are held in the library of the church. Parking is available in the lot behind the church off Pearl Alley where those interested can enter through the back door (marked with a handicapped sign) and come through the kitchen into the library.



BY TERRY ROGERS

The Milford Conversations Group will be meeting, Thursday, Oct. 5, at 8:30 a.m., at the First Presbyterian Church at 101 S. Walnut Street. The speaker for this meeting will be Alicia Hollis of Kent-Sussex Industries.

“This is an informal group made up of those who are interested in learning more about the city of Milford as well as those who work to promote the city,” Erin Steele, coordinator of the group, said. “We take a few minutes at each meeting for those present to give their ‘elevator speech’ about what is happening with their business or organization prior to the guest speaker. After the speaker, there is a question and answer session as well. We try to keep the meeting to one hour each month.”

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photos by Gervasio Ruiz This organization is supported in part by a grant from the Delaware Division of the Arts, a state agency, in partnership with The National Endowment for the Arts. The Division promotes Delaware arts events on www.delawarearts.com Delaware Division of the Arts

BUSINESS



photo link: [Marcia Reed](#)



ABOVE EXPECTATIONS OPENS IN HARRINGTON

BY TERRY ROGERS

The Chamber of Commerce for Greater Milford, friends and family recently celebrated a ribbon cutting with the owners of Above Expectations at their location at 321 Delaware Avenue, Harrington.

“Every person deserves the chance to reach their full potential,” Sherri Robinson, owner, said. “This started as a vision of mine as I cared for my two special needs children until they passed away. I envisioned a more compassionate community where children with special needs would be viewed as individuals and experience a better quality of life. After they passed, I was determined to make this a reality.”

Above Expectations provides individualized solutions for people seeking alternative living arrangements and

residential habilitation services. Their professional and compassionate approach helps their clients feel confident and at peace. Their mission is to enhance independence and promote person-centered choices through empowering individuals to their fullest potential. The company assists caregivers of those with a disability or those with disabilities who are seeking better accommodations for themselves. They offer a person-centered plan that allows each resident the freedom and safety to manage their activities on a daily basis and works with them to achieve personal goals.

“Some come to us wanting a more independent environment,” Robinson said. “We work to help them reclaim their own identity and enjoy their lives. We want them

to feel at home and comfortable. Above Expectations provides basic needs and accommodations with bedroom sets, televisions as well as remote-operated queen beds plus much more.”

For more information on how Above Expectations can assist you, please give them a call at 302-786-2912 or visit their [website](#). For information about the Chamber of Commerce for Greater Milford call 302-422-3344, visit our website <https://www.milfordchamber.com/> or find us on Facebook.





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STAFF REPORT

The Chamber of Commerce for Greater Milford, friends and family recently celebrated a ribbon cutting celebration with Shawn Harris of Escapades Travel, LLC.


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Together, they grew the business into such a success, they opened locations in Rehoboth, Wilmington and Lewes. Escapades Travel LLC is the latest expansion for the company.

“Stop adding to your bucket list and start making reservations!” Harris said. “I am ready to help you start checking things off that bucket list and start seeing the world!”

For more information on how Escapades Travel, LLC can assist you, please give her a call at 856-506-6250 or visit www.accentontravel.com. For information about the Chamber of Commerce for Greater Milford call 302-422-3344, visit our website <https://www.milford-chamber.com/> or find us on Facebook.

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photo link: [Marcia Reed](#)



FOOD BANK SIGN REQUEST APPROVED BY COUNCIL

BY TERRY ROGERS

At a recent meeting, Milford City Council approved a request from the Food Bank of Delaware for a conditional use related to signage for the new location in Independence Commons Business Park. The Food Bank was requesting a conditional use for specific signage on the loading dock as well as an electronic message center monument sign. On Sept. 11, based on this request, council agreed to change deed restrictions related to signs in the park.

“Food Bank is seeking approval under the social service organization criteria. The applicant is also seeking a comprehensive sign plan approval for the construction of building and on-site directional signage that doesn’t comply with the general requirements for commercial signage within district,” Rob Pierce, city planner, said. “This is the large property owned by Food

Bank of Delaware on Veterans Boulevard within the Independence Commons Business Park. The applicant has provided an overall site plan with a legend or some images showing the different types of directional signage their sizes locations, along with some proposed signage for donor signs. Also, the proposed location for the electronic message center monument sign at the entrance.”

Pierce stated that the Planning Commission approved the request with a vote of 7 to 0 with the condition that the Food Bank mitigate any negative impacts related to the electronic message center sign on residents of the Delaware Veteran’s Home. Chad Robinson, vice president of External Affairs for the Food Bank of Delaware, provided additional information.

“It’s feeling rather homey here at this podium for the

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times that I’ve been here, but we are excited the construction project is moving along as Rob indicated, and now to the point where we’re looking at signage,” Robinson said. “The long story short, is we want to make sure that as guests come to our facility, they’re coming for various purposes. They might be volunteers. They might be folks that are in need of food assistance. They might be visitors to our administrative offices, they could be volunteers out in the garden space. We want to make sure they all get to the right locations.”

Robinson provided graphics that showed signage plans that would achieve those goals.

“The dock signage that will be on the rear of the building, large numbers to make sure that we can direct

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truck traffic into the right dock. So having the numbers there above each of those docks will provide the ability to do that,” Robinson said. “As Rob mentioned, the electronic message center sign, we did have a conversation about that at Planning Commission last week, as you’ll see it is on the end of our driveway on the south side of the driveway across from the Delaware Greater Milford Boys and Girls Club.”

Robinson reached out to the Delaware Veteran’s Home and provided an email from that organization which indicated they approved the electronic signage as long as the side that faces the Veteran’s Home remained stagnant with no electronic display on that side. The electronic messaging would be on the side of the sign facing Airport Road.

“If you think about coming into Independence Commons, everyone whether they’re heading to the Veteran’s Home or hospice center, they will pass that sign going back to that space, so there’s really no need for the backside of that to have a message center as well, because folks will pass it on their way,” Robinson said.

Councilman Andy Fulton asked if the signage would also be beneficial to first responders.

“Absolutely, councilman. You can see on the legend there and the image that Rob has on the screen the red signs. There at the end of the driveway, if you will, yep, that’s the one. And so that will again help folks, particularly our first responders get to the right location,” Robinson said. “And again, you’ll also see in the upper part of that page, the decal lettering on the exterior up

see page 20

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to the top there that image right there. Those images as you see will be in the various spots. There's two by the main entrance right there and the middle and then one on the north side I guess of the building. That will help again as first responders have arrived and are now looking to get to the right place. They'll see that exterior lettering there to make sure that they're coming into the right place."

There was no public comment during that portion of the presentation, either online or in person. Council approved the request with a vote of 6 to 0. Councilman Brian Baer voted in favor as he feels the Food Bank is a valuable resource in the community. Councilwoman Katrina Wilson agreed, stating that the sign request met with current guidelines.

"I vote yes," Councilman Andy Fulton said. "The signage will direct not only customers, but suppliers and also provide direction to first responders if needed to respond to such a larger facility that we were blessed with. I vote yes."

Councilman Mike Boyle felt that the signage was a well thought out plan for visitors who need direction. "Oh yes, I think the sign is necessary for the size of their facility. I think it's about 11 acres," Councilman Dan Marabello said. "I just want to thank them for coming if you're everyone recalls the first applicant for that location was for a storage unit. This is far better than a storage unit and I thank you for the nice design they made."





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SOUTH WALNUT STREET REPORT APPROVED BY COUNCIL

BY TERRY ROGERS

After tabling the measure several times in order to obtain additional public input, Milford City Council approved a report created by Century Engineering that would add traffic calming measures as well as a shared bicycle and pedestrian path along South Walnut Street between Maple Street and McCoy Street. The report was approved in order for staff to begin the design and funding phase of the project.

“So what we’re looking for this evening is guidance from council whether they would like to accept the final report. We kind of need some guidance so we can move forward with moving on with formal design of the project and seeking funding for the design and construction of these improvements,” Rob Pierce, city planner, said. “Please keep in mind that this is a result of not only a traffic calming study, but it also looks to implement recommendations from our Bicycle Master Plan, which proposed off street shared-use path along

the west side of South Walnut Street which will tie into the bike paths that are being constructed for The Simpsons Crossing and Milford Ponds projects and tying all that stuff back into town.”

Pierce continued that the project would also fill in sidewalk gaps along the east side of Walnut Street as well as bicycle and pedestrian lanes that would be separated from traffic.

“We also have a slight shift, a slight deflection in the right of way to kind of make you have to navigate a slight bend to slow you down as well. But they’re also showing some crosswalks at McCoy Street at Clarke, where Clarke and Seabury meet Walnut and then again, they also have a proposed realignment of the Jefferson Avenue section there at Walnut at the railroad crossing to kind of bring that into a more traditional four-way perpendicular intersection,” Pierce said. “As a result of some of

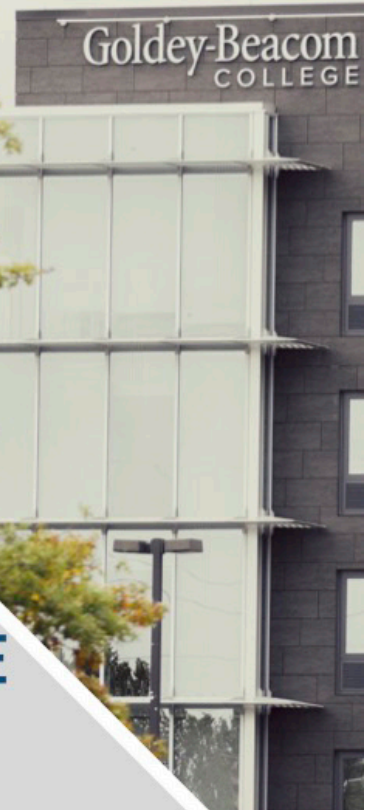
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the feedback we got from the community, south of railroad tracks where you start to get into the historic district where there's some existing brick sidewalk we'd look to replace. We wouldn't put an asphalt path or concrete path, we would we put some sort of rubber stamped concrete that appears to look like brick to kind of keep the character of that area."

Councilman Andy Fulton expressed concerns for those property owners who have improved sidewalks under a recent push by the city, asking if those costs would be refunded if the city tore up the sidewalks to add the shared use path.

"What we're seeking this evening is approval of the concept plan so we can move forward into implementation," Pierce said. "Council would need to decide on whether they would like to refund any of those monies for any repairs that were made on the west side of Walnut Street. I don't know. I'm not sure if Public Works, knows if there's been any work on that side of the street but that would be a decision that council would have to make."

Councilman Todd Culotta echoed the concerns of Councilman Fulton. "Well fundamentally, this council said as it stands now is you're responsible for your sidewalk. So, if we put sidewalks over there, you're essentially saying okay, we're paying for it. We'll put them in there, but you'll have to be responsible for the maintenance and repair them going forward. And so, if I'm the homeowner, I might say don't put a sidewalk here," Councilman Culotta said. "I like the concept, I do think it is nice and maybe we debate this a little bit,

Rob. But is traffic calming as the primary goal? It's an expensive solution, but the improvement to the road and the aesthetics. I don't like that people that currently have parking in front of their house that would be at risk of it being removed. I do like the fact that it's bicycle friendly. And the crosswalks are ideal for safety. But I think we look at the sidewalk policy again or we just look at this in more detail but at this time because this is just a vote to move it forward. I think there's a lot to be discussed."

Pierce explained that there are areas of the city where sidewalks are being replaced as part of infill and in those areas, the property owner retains ownerships and maintenance of those sidewalks.

"It is similar to a home builder or developer constructing that sidewalk before it's purchased," Pierce said. "In areas where we are doing shared-use paths and, Mark (Whitfield) you can correct me if I'm wrong, but we're adding bike paths, those would be maintained by the city for this type of application here where it's required as part of a site plan that would be privately maintained, but we're going to install a shared use path which is above and beyond the typical five foot wide sidewalk. I think city would maintain that long term." City Manager Whitfield confirmed that the city would maintain shared-use paths not installed by a developer, separate from sidewalks.


Pierce stated that the shared-use path currently being installed by Milford Ponds and Simpson Crossing would be maintained by the developer as they were installing them.

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BY TERRY ROGERS

One of the items requested in a recent survey of needs for the downtown area was a public restroom. At a recent meeting, Public Works Director Mike Svaby brought a request before council to approve the purchase of a prefabricated restroom at a cost of \$155,000 that would include two unisex stalls that would be placed in Memorial Park, across from the Milford Public Library.

“Public Works has reviewed alternatives for the purchase including prefab units, as well as standard engineered, designed block buildings and found that the prefabricated unit, the Cortez, manufactured by CXD, is the most economical and effective unit available,” Svaby said. “In addition, finance has reviewed the FY 24 capital budget, as approved by council to confirm the available funding. Finance also reviewed lease terms on the unit offered by the vendor to determine that the outright purchase of the unit is preferred to the lease based on imputed lease rate, compared to alternative use funds. In short, we’re recommending the six-unit CXT unit be purchased for \$155,000 and we’re here for authorization to award that purchase order.”

COUNCIL ASKS FOR ADDITIONAL OPTIONS FOR DOWNTOWN BATHROOM

Councilman Todd Culotta questioned whether two stalls was adequate, especially when events were held downtown.

“What we found is that when we have an event, there’s not a whole lot of options,” Svaby said. “You would think there’s a whole lot of restrooms out there so no one has to stand in line but we’ve talked to Brad [Dennehy, director of Parks and Recreation] about that. But we found that single-standing restroom with two units, two unisex units that can be used at the same time, men’s and ladies would be sufficient. Now, if we had an event downtown, we may put additional disposable restrooms.”

Councilman Culotta stated that he understood that additional temporary restrooms could be added but was not sure a two-stall option was suitable.

“What’s the difference between 20x20 and have a little bit more capacity and I know it costs a little bit more but well, we don’t want to...obviously we just talked about 4,000 people being downtown for an event,” Councilman Culotta said. “We want to have events like that. I mean, we’ve got this event, we got the Ladybug Festival, we have a variety of other events that go on during the year and so it’s a great start. I mean, I like it. If this is what everybody wants. I’m in support of it. I would like to see something a little larger though.”

Svaby explained that they were not looking at the unit for peak use, but more for a bathroom that was available every day for those who are in the downtown area. He

stated that the city would augment with additional temporary bathrooms for events, but this would be for everyday use. Councilman Culotta stated that this was the first time a bathroom was going downtown, and he felt it should be done right from the beginning. Councilman Jason James asked what was discussed as far as capacity when the funds were added to the budget.

“I think I could speak to that, councilman, and initially when they were budgeted, we looked at the Can Do playground with the two stalls out there,” James Puddicombe, city engineer, said. “We had budgeted, I believe, for a two-stall restroom in the first grouping which is what Mike is presenting and there’s another set of two restrooms, I believe it’s next year’s budget as well. So, we had budgeted for a set of two stalls this year, and then two stalls next year, potentially to go closer to like Bicentennial Park or somewhere to be studied down the line.”

Svaby explained that interns worked on the project over the summer, but their primary focus was on where to locate the bathrooms. Based on the floodplain downtown, it was determined that the location in Memorial Park was best suited. Puddicombe stated that they then looked at stick-built options versus self-contained options and found that the self-contained option was the best solution.

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“I think another thing you can run into here, too, is because these are single rooms. I mean first of all, during an event or during busy times, going in there and having somebody beat on the door because they don’t know it’s locked and they want to get in or whatever,” Councilman Culotta said. “Sometimes that’s inconvenient, but also should they go in there and lock themselves in there. It might take an hour for us to figure that out. Whereas you know, public multi-use restrooms are always accessible and still creates all the privacy you could ever need. So back to Councilman James’s point. Right here you have listed \$152,000 for this unit. And you do have \$5,000 in year four, for a connection to the utilities and some other things in here. We create that budget for a reason to give us what we need. Do appreciate this, but I think we’re under designing.”

Councilman Brian Baer recalled that council requested four or five stalls. Puddicombe stated that there were several options discussed as to the number of stalls.

“We went out and did look at a few of the events. The largest event I think the most that I had counted out there was about seven porta potties for the whole event,” Puddicombe said. “This smallest of events, so like the Ladybug Festival, there was only about three. So, with this set of two and an additional set of two, we presumed that would hold most events as in mind for future. Keep in mind that any additional sizing has additional maintenance costs as well.”

Councilman Mike Boyle asked what the life of the prefabricated option was and Svaby stated that it was not clear, but that the building was not made of steel.

Instead, it was created from carved concrete so that it matched with the pump station that was in the same parcel. When it was completed, it would appear to be brick like the pump house. Councilman Dan Marabello asked if the units were self-cleaning.

“Well, we did discuss that with the manufacturer. So we wanted to be able to go in there and sort of hose everything down, right,” Svaby said. “You know, make it really easy to maintain. And so, we’re about to buy what that involves on the inside. So, we went in to do that. But he didn’t want to do it. So, we set that out. So, we could go in there and hose everything down as maintenance. We would buy it as low maintenance.” Councilman Marabello asked if that meant it would need to be hosed down manually or would the unit do it on its own and Svaby stated that Public Works would need to maintain the restroom. Svaby also stated that both restrooms would have changing tables.

“I guess we still haven’t gotten to the root of quantity of what we’re discussing here,” Councilman James said. “What would four stalls costs as opposed to two stalls? Is it double? Is it mean really?”

Svaby stated that he could come back with more options.

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A promotional poster for a 'Cigar Dinner' event. The background is dark with a blurred image of a cigar and a glass of whiskey. At the top, the word 'BENVENUTO' is written in a stylized, golden font. Below it, 'Cigar Dinner' is written in a large, elegant, golden script. Underneath, 'EVENT' is written in a smaller, golden font. The date 'OCTOBER 13, 2023' and time '5:30 P.M.' are prominently displayed in golden text. Below that, 'Special Music by Benny Rosa' is written in a smaller, golden font. The menu items 'Butlered Appetizers, Raw Oyster Bar, Seafood Buffet, Smoked Prime Rib Carving Station, and more' are listed in white text, followed by '\$128 per person'. At the bottom, 'RESERVE YOUR TABLE TODAY' is written in white, followed by the phone number '302.265.2652' and the address '249 North East Front Street • Milford, DE'.

BENVENUTO

Cigar Dinner

EVENT

HIGHLY RATED CIGARS BY TOBACCO FIELDS
WILMINGTON/NEW CASTLE

OCTOBER 13, 2023
5:30 P.M.

Special Music by Benny Rosa

**Butlered Appetizers, Raw Oyster Bar,
Seafood Buffet, Smoked Prime Rib
Carving Station, and more**

\$128 per person

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EDUCATION



photo link: [Milford High School Band](#)

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MILFORD MIDDLE SCHOOL SITE PLAN APPROVED

BY TERRY ROGERS

Milford School District moved one step closer in finalizing plans for the new Milford Middle School. The Lakeview Avenue property is currently under construction with demolition of the newer wings while the original 1929 structure will be preserved. Milford City Council approved a site plan for the project at a recent meeting, paving the way for new construction over the next two years.

“The preliminary site plan has been reviewed by staff and meets the minimum requirements of the zoning ordinance,” Rob Pierce, city planner said. “One thing to note in the packet is a letter from the Tree Preservation Advisory Council, where they discussed the Milford Middle School project at their Feb. 15, 2023, quarterly meeting. They specifically discussed the condition and

status of the cherry trees located along Lakeview Avenue. The advisory council discussed and voted that if the trees were to be deemed healthy enough, they should be saved after inspection by the city arborist and as part of the street modeling effort of the school and incorporate into the overall landscaping plan.”

Pierce continued, explaining that the Planning Commission approved the request with a vote of six to one to with the condition that if the cherry trees are removed, they are replanted in front of the school.

Tim Metzner, registered landscape architect and project manager at Davis, Bowen & Friedel, stated that a new sidewalk was proposed along School Place and Kent Place. Buses will continue to park in the same

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location as the old school. The main entrance to the school will be moved to what was the rear of the building in the past with an entrance off of Kent Place. A gravel parking lot for the athletic fields and track will remain with an entrance farther away from Seabury Avenue due to safety reasons.

“So, we understand that the city’s Tree Preservation Advisory Council had made a recommendation to keep the existing cherry trees in front of the historic building. Although we definitely appreciate and respect their recommendation, I don’t know that they had all the information or all the facts for the circumstances as to why we were proposing to remove the trees,” Metzner said. “It was stated during the hearing these cherries trees have historic value and removing them was just for aesthetic purposes. And I do have Google Earth aerial photos from 1992 that show the trees were not planted at that time. And then also an aerial from 2003 that shows them there. There were modifications to the school bus loop at that time between 1992 and 2003. And at that time, all the plantings were done in that in that timeframe there. So as the trees are today, they were planted between 1992 and 2003. We don’t have the exact timing on that. So as far as the historic value, they’re between 20 and 30 years old and they’re also non-native species with a nuisance root system.”

Metzner provided photos showing the roots of the cherry trees coming to the surface and damaging sidewalks on the school property. He also pointed out that one of the goals of the Tree Preservation Advisory Council was to establish and maintain diversity toward

native trees and he felt these trees were not in line with that goal as they were not native to the area. Therefore, removal of the trees was for more than simply aesthetic reasons. Metzner stated that the project included a 10-foot wide shared use path that would be difficult to create with the trees planted in the same location. In addition, the root system of the trees could infiltrate the city’s drainage systems on the property.

“We have big concerns with that area in front because of the new shared-use path, the existing storm drain line and then the constant problems with the root system damaging the sidewalks. We can plant in other areas along the front, but because that building is pushed so far forward and there’s just not a lot of room in there, those trees unfortunately are a concern to replant them in the exact same location,” Metzner said. “There are also many other native flowering trees that we can propose along the front over by the bus loop, in that small area on the southwest front of the other in front. So, there are other locations that we can plant that also we believe will be more in line with the tree preservation goals for diverse native trees throughout the site. As they say in the landscape industry, right tree right place and in my professional opinion, as a registered landscape architect, I don’t believe the cherry trees are the right tree for this location and would therefore request the condition be modified or removed accordingly.”

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CROSS COUNTRY PUTTING TOGETHER SOLID SEASON

BY KEVIN EICKMAN

What they lack in numbers, this year's version of the Milford cross country team more than makes up for in quality. This past Wednesday in a tri-meet at Brecknock Park in Camden, the quality was on full display. While the girls may have suffered their first defeat of the season and the boys' squad their second loss of the campaign, the quality and spirit were on display.

To put the disparity in numbers into perspective, the winner of the meet, Caesar Rodney, boasts squads of 52 and 40 runners. This is in comparison to the Buccaneers, who have 14 boys and just seven girls on their rosters. With senior Faith Mitchell running a 19:25 and being the fastest overall girl of the day, Milford would just barely fall to Rodney, while easily defeating Polytech. Having the opportunity to speak with Mitchell following her run, she was happy, but had hoped for a team win. "It was great to put that time on the board and I am very happy with it. We fell a little short of CR today, but I believe this team still has more to give." the Buccaneers captain continued. "We can and will get better, we have great coaching and spirit. We will have another chance at the conference championships and we will be ready."

While the boys' team was not as close to CR as the girls, they also had a special moment. Senior captain Nathan Waydelis would equal the Milford school record of 16:24, which he now shares with Carl Richardson who ran the same time in 2010. Waydelis was thrilled with tying the record and is strongly encouraged by the direction the team is headed in. "We have a lot of underclassmen who

are getting better fast." Some names to keep an eye on are Eli Parfitt, Avery Richard, Austin Neal-Dickerson and Anthony Nash.

With the girls' team being ranked third and the boys' team on the rise, coach Lance Skinner is thrilled with the teams' direction. "We are the smallest team in terms of runners in Division I, yet we compete strongly every meet. We have some big meets coming up and then we will have another chance at the conference championships to make a statement and possibly win it."

There is more to running cross country than times—for Milford it is about family. While everyone likes to win, sometimes you can't. When asked what Milford needs to do to take the next step, Skinner was quick to answer. "We would love to have greater participation. This sport is not just about winning, it's about teamwork and self-improvement. Anyone that wants to make themselves healthier, be a part of something fun should be out here running." Skinner continued. "We have a lot of fun and all the runners support each other... We will make you a better person and you will make more friends."

Mitchell also echoed this sentiment. "We just love to run and have fun. Someone has to be called a winner, but being a winner can be defined in cross country as running your personal best. A number of our runners did that today and that is what this sport is all about, just getting a little bit better every day."

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BUCS RIDE SENIOR DENNARE HORSEY TO VICTORY OVER CONCORD

BY BENNY MITCHELL

Milford's DenNare Horsey rushed for 161 yards on just 14 carries and scored a pair of touchdowns in the first half to lead the Buccaneers to a 35-0 win over the visiting Concord Raiders. Milford scored on its first possession on a nine-play, 67-yard drive capped off by a six-yard touchdown run by Horsey. Neyson Legros added the PAT kick as Milford took a 7-0 lead with 6:40 left in the first quarter.

"We are proud of the way DenNare ran tonight, that has been our talk with him to just get vertical and stay vertical. He did that tonight, last week he was a little too shifty at times, but tonight it was one cut and go," Milford head coach Jed Bell said.

Horsey found the end zone again just five minutes later,

as he slashed his way through the middle for a 17-yard touchdown run. The PAT kick was blocked as Milford extended its lead to 13-0.

Jahmar Austin struck again for the Bucs on an eight-yard run just four and a half minutes into the second quarter on a three-yard run. Horsey added the conversion run as Milford extended its lead to 21-0.

Tyjere Perry got the scoring started for Milford in the third quarter with his 11-yard run around the right end for a touchdown. Legros' kick was good as Milford led 28-0. Milford rounded out the scoring later in the third quarter when Jack Hudson rolled out and connected with Austin on a 16-yard touchdown pass giving the Bucs a 35-0 lead.



"I was really pleased at the way we played up front tonight. They were bigger, but us being a Wing-T team I think that benefits us at times," Bell said.

Concord falls to 1-3 and returns home Saturday where they host Red Lion with a kickoff at 10:30 a.m. Milford improves to 3-1 and will travel to Wilmington for a noon kickoff with St. Elizabeth for its last non-district game before opening play in Class AA District 3. "It will be our last regular season Saturday noon game, we have had two already so I think we are ready for that and to take on a good St. Elizabeth team and then it's back to our roots starting off ironically with Woodbridge," Bell said.

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Photos courtesy of Marcia Reed and Bryan Shupe

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