

Fewer Butts in Cape May Beach Sand?

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By Jack Fichter



CAPE MAY — Deputy Mayor Jack Wichterman is suggesting City Council consider designating some non-smoking beaches in the city.

At a Tue., April 5 council meeting, he suggested making every third beach a smoking beach. He said smokers would not have to walk very far if they wanted to smoke a cigarette on the beach. Wichterman said it would not be a good idea to make a stretch of beach non-smoking from Jefferson Street to Grant Street because a number of hotels are located in the area.

“I don’t know how often I’ll sit on a beach and somebody will sit in front of me and I swear the wind is always blowing in my face,” said Wichterman.

When smoking was restricted in restaurants and bars, there was no negative impact, said Wichterman.

He noted the idea of smoke-free beaches has surfaced previously without any action taken by council.

Wichterman said 10 municipalities in the state had smoke-free beaches:

- Point Pleasant
- Lavallette Borough
- Ship Bottom
- Surf City Borough
- Seaside Park
- Burlington Township
- Mount Arlington Borough
- Rockaway Township
- Somer’s Point
- Stafford Township

Non-smoking beaches would be marked with a sign.

“I don’t want Cape May to be called any more than they are now “the city of no,” but I think we are accommodating the vast majority of people within this country who no longer smoke,” said Wichterman.

Councilwoman Deanna Fiocca said Cape May’s beaches are ranked ninth in the world as a destination by Trip Advisor and creating non-smoking areas would only improve the beaches. She noted Cape May is a green city.

“I see people smoking all the time and they put their cigarette butts in the sand,” said Fiocca.

She said smoking beaches could have receptacles, “so they are not putting their butts in the

sand.”

Councilman Bill Murray raised a question of how compliance on non-smoking beaches would be enforced.

“I would think that the people on the beaches would enforce it themselves,” said Wichterman.

Mayor Edward J. Mahaney Jr. asked Wichterman and Fiocca to work with City Manager Bruce MacLeod to research the issue.

“It’s the nicotine committee,” added Wichterman.

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