



## The Avalon Home and Land Owners Association

FEBRUARY 2010 – RITA FULGINITI, CAPE MAY COUNTY CLERK

Rita Fulginiti stated that the County Clerk is one of three Constitutional Officers in the county. The others are the Sherriff and the Surrogate.

The Clerk serves as the County Adjuster, i.e., keeps tabs on county residents that have been committed to mental institutions. Most of these are in short term care centers. In addition the Clerk monitors the medical care of inmates in correctional institutions and the burial of indigents. The Clerk serves on the Board of Social Services.

Other duties of the Clerk, which is an elected position, include recording all election documents; putting together election papers; passports; managing records and the information program as well as the records conservation program.

Near Woodbine is the Records Recovery Center. Data from Avalon will be collected electronically in 2010. The records are managed with an eye to recovery should a catastrophic event occur. An example of the extensiveness of the records is the first mortgage issued in Cape May County in 1692.

Records of Tidelands Grants are also maintained by the County. Tideland situations usually crop up when a property comes up for sale.

Cape May County was formed in 1692. In 1798 the Precincts in the County became Townships. Avalon, which came from Middle Township, was originally used for livestock grazing. It has 5300 residences, most of which are second homes, and 1279 registered voters. The assessed value of the properties is \$8.4 billion.

Recently more home transfers are occurring. In 2009 there were 1500 foreclosures in the County and 177 Sherriff's sales. Of the latter there were 14 in 2005 and 156 in 2008. Short sales are becoming more common. Most of the problems appear to be due to floating interest rates. Recently banks seem to be more agreeable to modify loans.

Mail-in Ballots replaced Absentee Ballots in 2009. If one gets on the list at the beginning of the year ballot forms will be sent to you. Fifty four such ballots have been issued in Avalon. Overall, about 10% of the ballots fall into this category.

Under recent legislation towns that currently hold local elections in May can move them to November. This will save a little money. Towns that hold non-partisan elections may not benefit and Cape May City has decided not to change the date of its local elections.