

Important Information about the Potential Casino in Nassau County

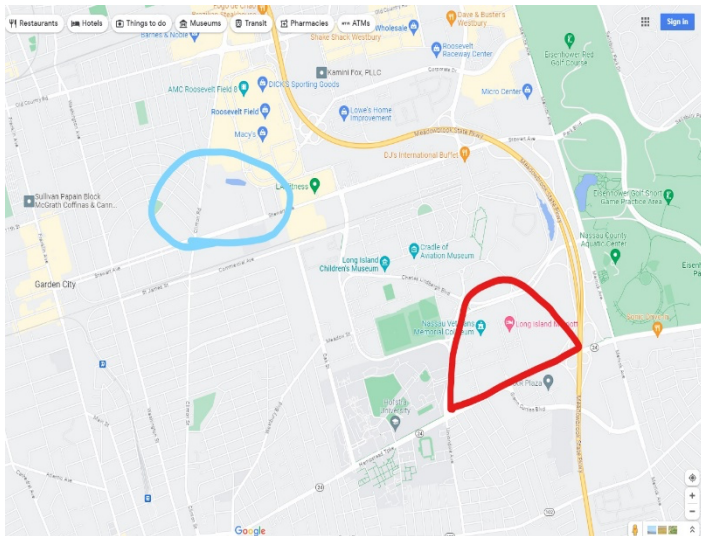
Overview

On May 22, 2023, the Nassau County Legislature voted to grant Las Vegas Sands (“Sands”) a 99-year lease to develop the 72-acre area around Nassau Colliseum in Uniondale.¹ “In a statement after the approval, Sands Chairman and CEO Robert Goldstein called it ‘an important step in our company’s efforts to secure a New York gaming license and ultimately develop a world-class hospitality, entertainment and gaming destination...we are proud of the widespread coalition we have built with our new neighbors across Long Island. We are grateful for the trust they have placed in us and look forward to continuing to collaborate with the community.’”²

Sands is seeking to get one of three gaming licenses that are being made available in New York State. It is largely expected that existing gaming locations with slot machines in Queens and Yonkers will be receiving two of the three licenses, leaving the last one up for grabs.³

Facts About the Casino

- As shown in the map below, the proposed casino (circled in red) would be only 2.1 miles from Stewart School (circled in blue) and an approximately 8-minute drive to town.
- For each gaming application, a local Community Advisory Committee (“CAC”) will be formed to hold public hearings and issue a formal finding of how much community support the proposed casino has.
- Nassau’s Community Advisory Committee will be chosen by our Governor Kathy Hochul, State Senator Kevin Thomas, our State Assemblymember Edward Ra, our Town Supervisor Don Clavin, and our County Executive Bruce Blakeman.
- The Town of Hempstead still needs to approve new zoning and oversee the environmental process for the site.



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¹ <https://www.nbcnewyork.com/news/local/nassau-county-approves-99-year-lease-for-las-vegas-sands-casino-around-nassau-coliseum/4357490/>, last visited 10/18/23.

² *Id.*

³ *Id.*

➤ ***Community Support is a significant factor for consideration for the Gaming Board.***

Sands claims they have community support already:

Ron Reese, the VP of Communications for Las Vegas Sands, recently told the Patch that he “believes the clanking of the slot machines has a good chance in Uniondale.” He specifically said, ‘I think it’s going to, most likely, offer the most amount of jobs. It’s going to produce the most ...revenue for the local municipalities and the state. We’ll make a very compelling bid.’ He also said that “if a chorus of ‘Nos’ was the prevailing sentiment, ‘Of course we wouldn’t be there.’ Instead, ‘we found quite the opposite camp,’ he said.”⁴

➤ ***At least two-thirds of the CAC must approve of the project before state regulators begin evaluating the application.***

The Gaming Facility Location Board (“GFLB”) values each community’s opinion on the casinos hoping to join that community and the board’s request for applications (RFA) requires applicants to receive approval from the CAC before the GFLB will begin to evaluate the proposal. “So a casino proposal getting bad press from local leaders and residents speaking out against the plan isn’t just tarnishing the proposal’s reputation. It could impact the applicants’ odds of securing a casino license if the [CAC] hears the public pushback and decides a gaming facility isn’t right for the area.”⁵

➤ ***In addition to youth gambling, traffic and crime remain significant concern.***

“In February, PlayUSA, an online gambling hub, published an article detailing rankings of Walk Score that reported the Nassau County Hub is the least traffic-friendly site in the New York City metropolitan area for a casino.” The article noted that “...Sands patrons would be nearly entirely dependent on their cars to reach the planned casino, so traffic congestion would be expected to increase in the area if a casino were built there.”⁶

In her written testimony for Hofstra’s lawsuit against the Nassau County Planning Commission, Hofstra University President Susan Poser noted that, “We have evidence nearby on Long Island of how crime can jump with the introduction of gambling. In and around Jake’s 58 Casino Hotel – which involves only electronic gambling and is of a much smaller scale than the proposed Las Vegas Sands casino – the reporting of criminal incidents soared more than two-fold in the year after that casino opened in 2017. Armed robberies and drug distribution, along with thefts and harassment, increased after Jake’s 58 opened.”⁷

➤ ***Sands has a concerning history and are already asking for Tax Reductions and Exemptions.***

Las Vegas Sands is now asking for sales tax exemptions and other tax reductions and breaks from Nassau County related to their lease and the proposed Casino.⁸ Additionally, in her written testimony for Hofstra’s lawsuit against the Nassau County Planning Commission, Hofstra University President Susan Poser, stated, “Controversy follows Las Vegas Sands.” Her testimony noted, that, “In its most recent foray into a community, Las Vegas Sands developed a casino in Bethlehem, PA and then sold it 10 years later. And just two years ago in 2021, Las Vegas Sands sold its Las Vegas properties and claimed to be exiting the U.S. market in order to focus on Asia. Las Vegas Sands then promptly refocused on the United States and spent tens of millions of dollars in Florida in a hotly contested and ultimately unsuccessful effort to bring casino-style gambling there.”⁹

⁴ <https://patch.com/new-york/gardencity/sands-make-very-compelling-bid-state-gaming-license>, last visited 8/1/23.

⁵ <https://www.playny.com/community-reaction-downstate-ny-casinos-proposals/>, last visited 10/18/23

⁶ <https://longislandadvocate.com/report-nassau-hub-is-least-traffic-friendly-site-for-a-casino/>, last visited 8/1/23

⁷ Hofstra University v. Nassau Planning Commission, 606293/23, Exhibit AA to Memorandum of Law in Reply filed July 27, 2023, available at https://iapps.courts.state.ny.us/webcivil/FCASeFiledDocsDetail?county_code=ktDMctEj7f0ERal_PLUS_SwY9BQ%3D%3D&txtIndexNo=1%2FhvF3rqdpdyTalpHaFVng%3D%3D&showMenu=no&isPreRji=N&civilCase=0fal88kjBbkxYg2PeFzG7Q%3D%3D

⁸Id. (<https://www.casino.org/news/opposition-emerges-to-sands-long-island-casino-tax-requests/>), last visited 8/1/23

⁹ See, Hofstra Lawsuit reference in Footnote 7.