

FAQ on the Proposed Casino Siting in Schenectady

The Coalition for Schenectady's Future

Is there still time to give input? YES. Any letters will become part of the record until decisions are made. As just announced, this is likely to be the last week in October.

How can I give input? Emails can be sent to Gail P. Thorpe: info@gaming.ny.gov; letters can be sent to Gail P. Thorpe, NYS Gaming Commission, Contracts Office, One Broadway Center, Schenectady, NY 12301-7500. All will become part of the written record up to the time of decision; those sent by 9/29 will be part of the hearing record. The legislation indicates that public support is a part of the siting location decision-making process.

What are the competing proposals? The four Capital District proposals in the running are the ALCO Site in Schenectady (Mohawk Harbor), and sites at Howe Cavern, Renssalaer, and East Greenbush. The Schenectady site is proposed by Rush Street Gaming, which operates casinos in several locations in other parts of the country. See <http://gaming.ny.gov/gaming/casinos.php> and click Applicant Materials.

What was the result of the recent public hearing? The 5-member location board gave no indication. Media reports indicate that they now realize the people in Howe Caverns really want a casino and that many in East Greenbush do not. There was very little comment on the Renssalaer proposal. There were many who spoke in favor of the Schenectady proposal and very few in opposition; *Daily Gazette* coverage did not mention any opposition.

Are there concerns about Rush Street Gaming? The hearing had testimony both from workers who see Rush Street as an excellent employer and others as a poor employer. Websites searches of Rush Street's record in various places such as Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, and Worcester show contradictory evidence.

What about 'Slots for Tots?' There is well-researched evidence indicating that Rush Street Gaming has invested in Ruby Seven Studios. Ruby Seven develops and markets casino games such as slots and poker through social network and smart phone 'apps' that expressly allow children as young as 13 to play without any age or identity verification. Ruby Seven games include cartoon characters and animals such as 'Cats vs. Dogs Slots' featuring big-eyed cartoon cats and dogs "a FREE to PLAY slots game with the cutest puppies and kittens, hourly bonus coins, and realistic slot machines." This comes from a report issued 9/9 by a major hospitality and casino worker union, Unite HERE entitled "Betting on Kids Online" and available at www.noslotsfortots.org. Rush Street also works hard to attract young gamblers (e.g., creating a simplified craps game for them), and the Schenectady Casino would be a short walk from Union College.

How can I get more information? All the proposals as presented by the developers are available through the Location Board and give their estimates of the values of their proposals to their communities. The web site developed by a Stockade resident, StoptheSchenectadyCasino.com has a thorough statement with attachments that provides their analysis on why the disadvantages outweigh the advantages.

Why is this important? There has been relatively little public opposition voiced on the casino. Yet if chosen, this will effect our community for decades to come. Now is the time.

Rev. 9/27/14

