

MEETING MINUTES OF THE
PALMER CITIZEN CASINO IMPACT STUDY COMMITTEE
GENERAL GROUP MEETING 22
PALMER TOWN BUILDING, MEETING ROOM I
DECEMBER 12, 2008 – 6:30 PM

Meeting opened at 6:45 pm by Gerald Chudy, Chair.

ATTENDANCE

PRESENT Rocqueline Blazejowski, Charlotte Burns, Gerald Chudy, Anthony Dimitropolis, Joseph Mastalerz, George Roy, Stephen Sears, Michael Swiatlowski

ABSENT CathyAnn Gehlhausen, Mickey Ghosh, Carol Sugrue, Paul Wisnewski

OTHERS PRESENT Jim Ammann (Palmer Water District #1), Mike Callahan (Palmer Water District #1), Ken Somerville

MINUTES APPROVAL

No minutes under review.

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION WITH JAMES AMMANN

Mr. Ammann gives introduction on his history as Superintendent of Palmer Water District #1. He states that he was also involved on a scoping document with Hollywood Casinos in the 1990's which was a much smaller project than the current proposal. He has shared a document of his current studies that was worked on until March of 2008 when the casino issue was taken off of the table by the state legislature.

Mr. Ammann states that there is talk in town that he is against a casino in Palmer, but explains that his stance is neutral and he treats it as a business proposal. The figures he was originally given by Mohegan Sun/Northeast Realty were for a water usage of 750,000 gpd with 3,500 gpm for fire-flow. He states that these are the same numbers for the proposed casino in Middleborough. He also comments that in order to provide the site with this amount of water, his proposal includes using a feed from the Quabbin Reservoir. Jim Ammann estimates the cost to be \$30 to \$50 million for the proposed water connection plans.

Mr. Ammann has met with Beals & Thomas Inc, which is the land engineers hired by Mohegan Sun/Northeast Realty. He questioned where they came up with the 750,000 gpd number and they were unaware of this estimate. They suggested that the usage would be much lower, perhaps 500,000 gpd.

Mr. Ammann describes the various water sources in the district, from the high-yield site off of Salem Street which is currently contaminated to the reservoir and water tanks. He is working with and would like to see all four water districts in town put together a cohesive package deal that involves tying into the Chicopee Valley Aqueduct off of Rt 181. He believes this is the most cost effective plan for the proposed site. There is a verbal agreement between the Town Manager and Superintendents to document the ancillary growth and record it for the town.

Mr. Ammann would like to know what the total footprint for water and sewage would be at the last stage of build out. Preparing for the maximum stage of development will be the goal. He asks if there are plans beyond phase one? Plans into the Sherman Property and off of Breckenridge? Not everything may be built at once but

we should be prepared for future concerns.

Mr. Ammann also discusses water related impacts from non-casino owned businesses such as a large commercial laundry. When he asked Beals & Thomas about these subjects, he notes that he was surprised that they weren't prepared to answer some of the questions.

Mr. Ammann takes the committee through a map of preliminary water system infrastructure which points to the location of existing water supply and proposed location for various holding tanks and pipelines.

Mr. Ammann does not know what the water usage for Mohegan Sun is in CT and has not had a face to face meeting with them.

S. Sears states that our committee has asked Northeast Realty and Mohegan Sun about satellite parking and Mohegan Sun has denied any other expansion plans. Northeast Realty has made mention of a hotel site. S. Sears asks where the figure of 500 new residences comes from in the report? Mr. Ammann states that figure came from Richard Fitzgerald as a guideline.

Mr. Ammann does not feel it is possible for Mohegan Sun to dig large enough wells on their property. He also questions their comments on the possibility of using blue-water toilets which recycle waste water through the site. He states that it sounds like a good idea, but they would need a separate facility to do this and the cost savings may not be effective. He states those types of facilities are located where water availability is problem.

A. Dimitropolis asks about a rumored underground river off of Harvey St. Mr. Ammann does not know the full geology of Thorndike but is aware of studies that show little evidence of a large flow of water.

G. Chudy asks that if Mohegan Sun's estimate shows a maximum use of 1 million gallons a day, how much is the district able to produce right now? Mr. Ammann answers that at max capacity, they can supply 1.5 million gallons on a peak day but that is without the impacts of a casino.

A discussion is had regarding how the Quabbin would sell water to District #1 in a wholesale agreement. Mr. Callahan simplifies the language to explain that water is the product that is sold to an end user, which then could be supplied to the other districts in town or even other towns. Mr. Callahan also explains that Palmer Water District #1 does not represent the entire town. Three Rivers and Bondsville each have their own water supply and Thorndike buys it's water from Bondsville.

A strong point is made that the casino would be located in District #1, but it's impact would certainly be felt throughout town. The discussion continues and the committee would like to input from the other water districts.

Mr. Ammann would like to stress that as part of a host agreement with Mohegan Sun, the construction costs should be built into the contract as it is the biggest commitment. The entry fee to connect with the Quabbin should be based on a max usage plan. He also states that Palmer would keep it's current wells.

Mr. Callahan points out that with the connection to the Quabbin, the additional water supply would be available to all 4 districts. District #1 could establish meters to monitor the usage. This could be a useful secondary source if needed.

A motion was made by S. Sears to invite the 3 other water districts to our meeting on January 7, 2009. G. Chudy seconded. The vote passes (7:0).

Mr. Ammann continues with his earlier discussion regarding merging the data from all four water districts into a final town water-needs document. He states that whatever may happen in the coming year, time must allow for a complete study before the residents can vote as a host community. He states that documents such as these do not happen overnight and would need more information from Mohegan Sun. The support infrastructure needs to be ready on day one of (casino) business.

S. Sears asks who would pay for a formal study like this? Mr. Ammann believes the developer would have to put up the money. No one should support or oppose a proposal like this without the proper documentation. Mr. Ammann adds that the town has a chance to do this study only once and it should be done correctly.

UPCOMING MEETING SCHEDULE

January 7 – Meeting with all Water Districts
January 21 – General Meeting to plan Final Report

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by A. Dimitropolis to adjourn meeting at 8:45 pm.
R. Blazejowski seconded. The vote passed (7:0).

MINUTES SUBMITTED BY MICHAEL SWIATLOWSKI.

APPROVED – JANUARY 21, 2009