

May 26, 2006

Mr. Thomas Decker, Chairman
Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board
PO Box 69060
Harrisburg PA 17106-9060

Dear Chairman Decker:

I am a resident of the Hill District neighborhood in Pittsburgh. My community is one of the proposed sites for a gaming facility. After carefully considering all of the available information, I am writing to let you know that **I DO NOT WANT A CASINO IN THE HILL DISTRICT.**

There are a number of potential problems with a casino located in such close proximity to a residential community. They include:

- **Morality.** I do not believe that gambling, in any form, is the appropriate way to bring jobs, opportunities and investment to the area.
- **Social Challenges.** I believe the current plan, which calls for a \$1 million investment, is woefully inadequate. If you think about the potential negatives of gaming (addiction, financial challenges, homelessness, the necessity of bolstering our physical and social infrastructure) you will agree that it requires a larger financial commitment.
- **Public Safety.** A great deal of consideration has been given to the needs of the facility and other developments in the Lower Hill. However, I do not think much thought has been given to the kinds of safety issues that we will face such as prostitution, drug dealing, panhandling, loitering, etc. No one has satisfactorily laid out a plan to provide the necessary police officers to patrol the area above the proposed site
- **Traffic.** The increased traffic will overwhelm the community. None of the traffic studies address the inconvenience that will be visited upon the community.

In the 1950's, thousands of Hill District residents were displaced and a huge portion of the neighborhood was annexed to Downtown Pittsburgh because of urban renewal efforts. The community did not benefit from the re-investment in the Lower Hill District. We lost people, places, significant relationships and businesses. The current plan to place a casino in the Hill District seems like a 21st century version of urban renewal. I urge you to keep a gaming facility out of the Hill District.

Respectfully,


Signature

Signatory Information:

Full Name: Latonia N. Devers

Address:

Phone #:

Email:



May 25, 2006

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Harrisburg PA 17106-9060

Dear Chairman Decker:

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- Award the license to the **best plan, not the most influential plan**. The best plan is the one that will have the **least impact on residential communities** and the most impact on economic development.
- Award the license to the applicant **that offers the community both redevelopment dollars AND redevelopment "sense."** The large dollar amounts that applicants bandy about become small dollar amounts when spread widely across a large city. Choose a plan that strategically directs the dollars to the communities that will be the most adversely affected by gambling.
- Ask for a **commitment**. Find a way to insure that promises made by applicants to communities are promises kept.
- **Use your power** to impact lives. The granting of a gaming license is, of course, on many levels a business decision. But it is also a people decision. The Hill District is a rebounding community that will face significant challenges with a gaming complex located at its doorstep. Please use your power to assure that the negative impacts of gambling are minimized for our community.

If you've never been, I hope that you visit the Hill soon. In our heyday we had world class jazz spilling onto the streets; a future Pulitzer Prize winner scribbling urban poetry on napkins; and, the now world famous photographer Teenie Harris capturing images of a vibrant, sweet time in our history. We have been home to the Irish, Italian, Jewish, Syrians, Greeks and Poles and now African American.

And, if not Pittsburgh's most historic neighborhood, we are certainly its most resilient. The Hill District survived one of the nation's most destructive urban renewal projects in the late 1950s which displaced 8,000 residents and severed the neighborhood economically from Downtown Pittsburgh.

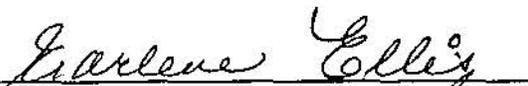
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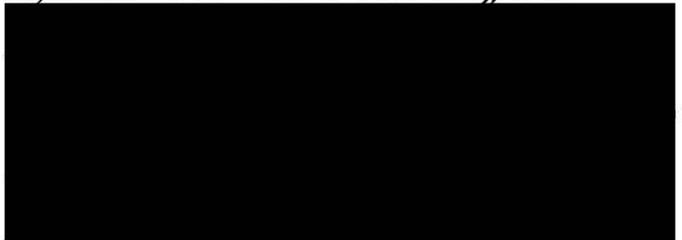

Signature

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Full Name:



Address:



Phone #:

Email:

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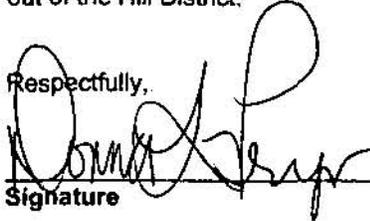
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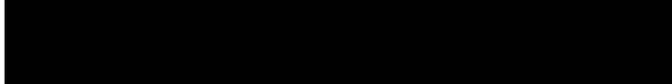
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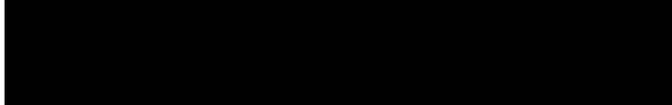

Signature

Signatory Information:

Full Name: Donna L Pryor

Address: 

Phone #: 

Email: 

HILL DISTRICT GAMING TASKFORCE



DATE: May 31, 2006

TO: Mr. Thomas Decker
Chairman

FROM: Evan Frazier, Co-chair, Hill District Gaming Taskforce
Marimba Milliones, Co-chair, Hill District Gaming Taskforce

SUBJECT: Letters from Hill District Residents Regarding Casino

Enclosed are letters from Hill District residents expressing their concerns regarding the Hill District being a proposed site for a gaming facility. They clearly express their concerns about the reinvestment plan and many of them state that they do not wish to have gaming in the Hill District at all. We hope that the letters will be shared by the entire gaming control board.

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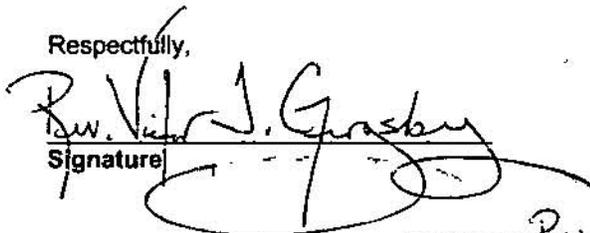
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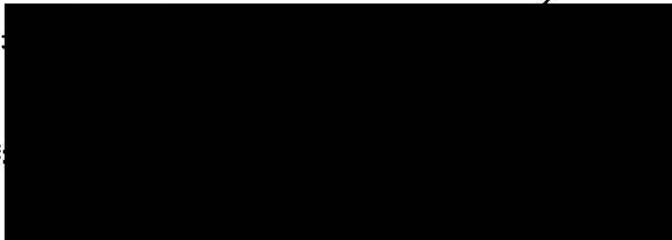
Signatory Information:

Full Name: REV. VICTOR J. GRIGSBY

Address:

Phone #:

Email:



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Full Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone #: _____

Email: _____

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Dear Chairman Decker:

I am writing to let you know how important your licensing decision is for the Hill District community located in Pittsburgh PA. Please share my letter with your colleagues on the Gaming Control Board.

For many years we have worked to rebuild one of our state's most important communities, the Historic Hill District. However, we are gravely concerned about our future because we have not received the commitments needed from the gaming applicants to ensure a prosperous future.

We need your help here in the Hill District. Please do not allow gambling to devastate our community; we need strong policy and adequate reinvestment dollars to balance this possible devastation. Please guarantee that the Hill District receives the needed resources to offset social and economic development ills that gambling will certainly bring by forcing applicants to address communities that will be directly impacted by their facility.

Please do not let us down, we need your help!

Respectfully,

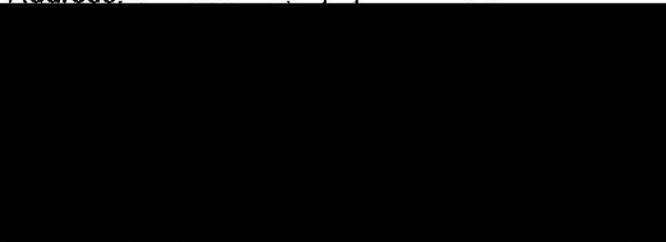
Rosezella J. Dreishacht
Signature

Signatory Information:

Full Name:

Rosezella J. Dreishacht

Address:



Email:

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Respectfully,

Mildred Davis
Signature

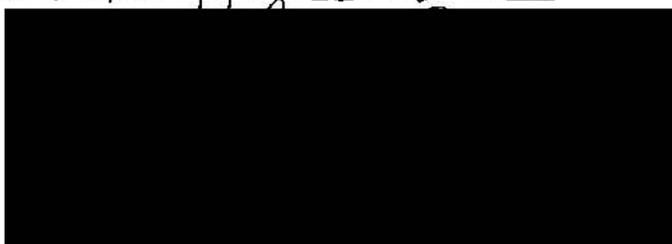
Signatory Information:

Full Name: Mildred Davis

Address:

Phone #:

Email:



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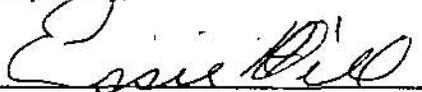
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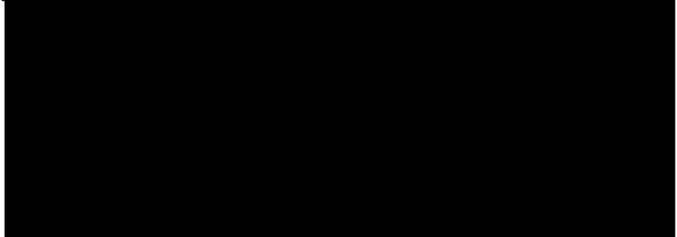
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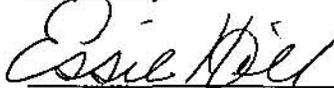
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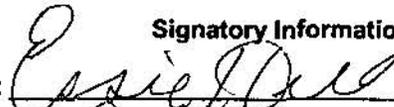
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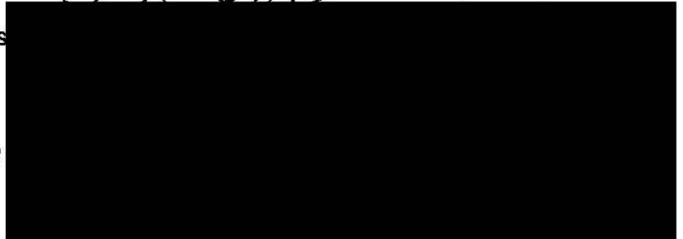
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Signature

Signatory Information:

Full Name: Adrienne J. Commodore

Address:

Phone #:

Email:

member

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Respectfully,

Arnellia R. Hall
Signature

Signatory Information:

Full Name:

Arnellia R. Hall (Member 5)
Centipede Proj

Address:



Phone #:

Email:

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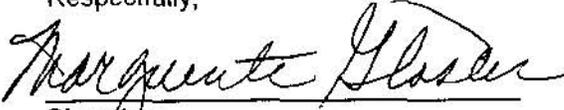
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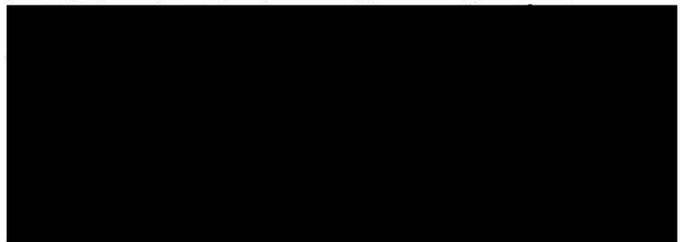
Signatory Information:

Full Name: MARGUERITE GLOSTER

Address:

Phone #:

Email:



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Respectfully,

Deborah Rice
Signature

Signatory Information:

Full Name: Deborah Rice

Address:

Phone #:

Email:



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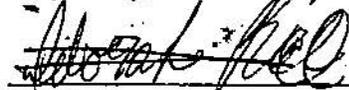
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Respectfully,



Signature

Deborah Rice

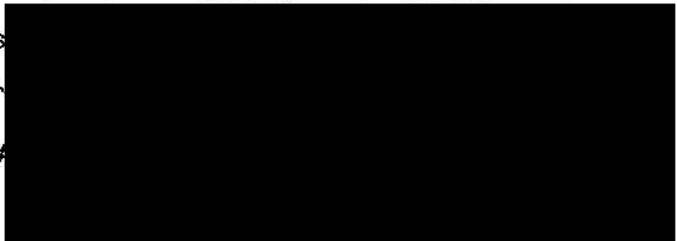
Signatory Information:

Full Name: Deborah Rice

Address:

Phone #:

Email:



May 25, 2006

Mr. Thomas Decker, Chairman
Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board
PO Box 69060
Harrisburg PA 17106-9060

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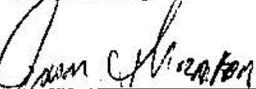
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- **Use your power to impact lives.** The granting of a gaming license is, of course, on many levels a business decision. But it is also a people decision. The Hill District is a rebounding community that will face significant challenges with a gaming complex located at its doorstep. Please use your power to assure that the negative impacts of gambling are minimized for our community.

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Please help insure that history is not repeated for the Hill District. Thank you for making community reinvestment an important part of your decision to grant a gaming license in Pittsburgh.

Respectfully,



Signature

Signatory Information:

Full Name:

Jason William Thornton

Address:

Phone #:

Email:



May 25, 2006

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Harrisburg PA 17106-9060

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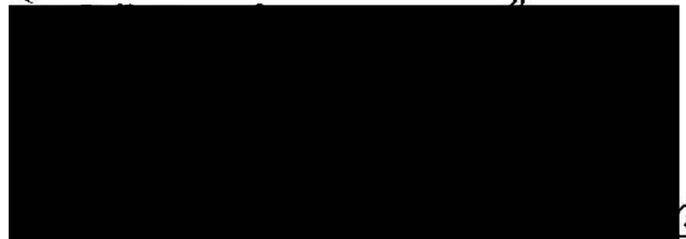
Full Name:



Address:

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May 26, 2006

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PO Box 69060
Harrisburg PA 17106-9060

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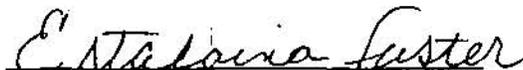
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Signature

Signatory Information:

Full Name: Estalaina Foster

Address:

Phone #:

Email:



May 25, 2006

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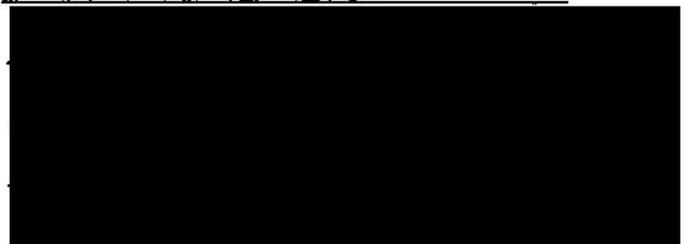
Signatory Information:

Full Name: Marvin B. Prentice

Address:

Phone #:

Email:



May 26, 2006

Mr. Thomas Decker, Chairman
Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board
PO Box 69060
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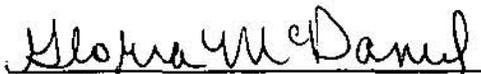
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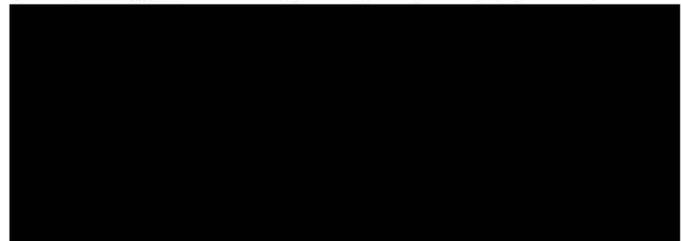
Signatory Information:

Full Name: Gloria McDaniel

Address:

Phone #:

Email:



May 26, 2006

Mr. Thomas Decker, Chairman
Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board
PO Box 69060
Harrisburg PA 17106-9060

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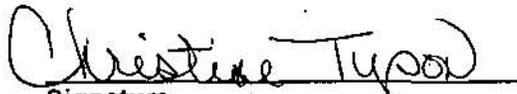
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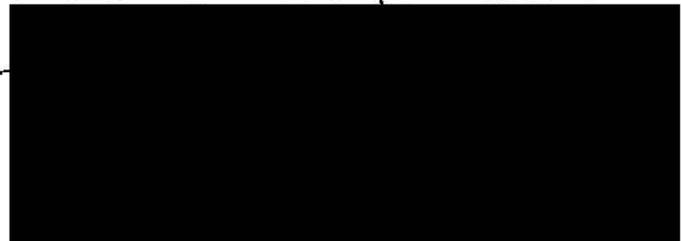
Signatory Information:

Full Name: Christine Tyson

Address:

Phone #:

Email:



May 26, 2006

Mr. Thomas Decker, Chairman
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PO Box 69060
Harrisburg PA 17106-9060

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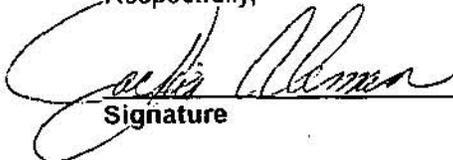
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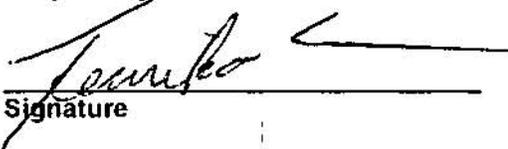
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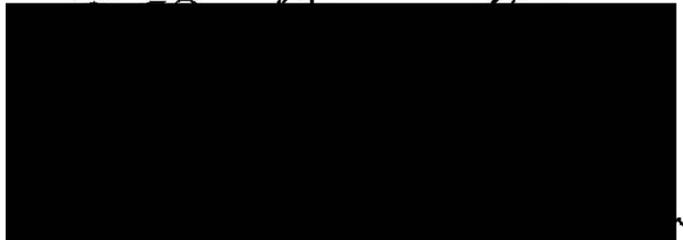
Signature

Signatory Information:

Full Name:

Temika Green

Address:



Phone #:

Email:

u

May 26, 2006

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Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board
PO Box 69060
Harrisburg PA 17106-9060

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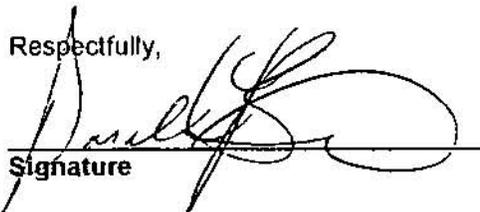
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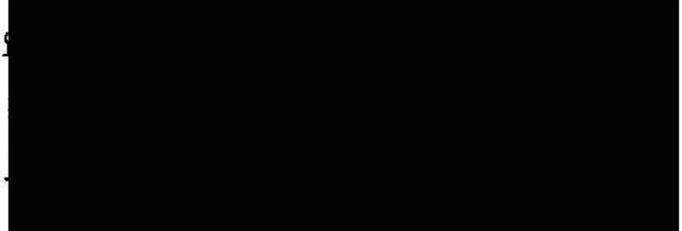
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Signature

Signatory Information:

Full Name: Darnell Bonner

Address: 

Phone #:

Email:

May 26, 2006

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Harrisburg PA 17106-9060

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For many years we have worked to rebuild one of our state's most important communities, the Historic Hill District. However, we are gravely concerned about our future because we have not received the commitments needed from the gaming applicants to ensure a prosperous future.

We need your help here in the Hill District. Please do not allow gambling to devastate our community; we need strong policy and adequate reinvestment dollars to balance this possible devastation. Please guarantee that the Hill District receives the needed resources to offset social and economic development ills that gambling will certainly bring by forcing applicants to address communities that will be directly impacted by their facility.

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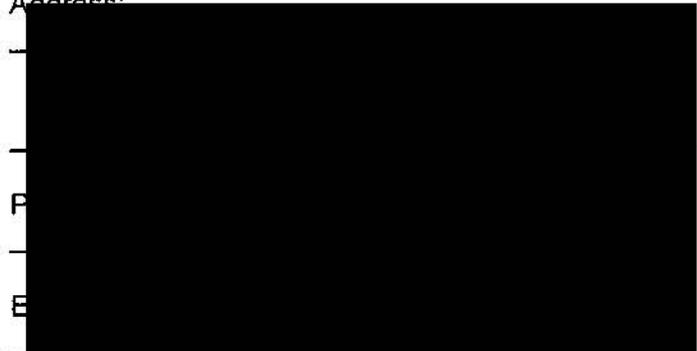
Martell Lane
Signature

Signatory Information:

Full Name:

Martell Lane

Address:



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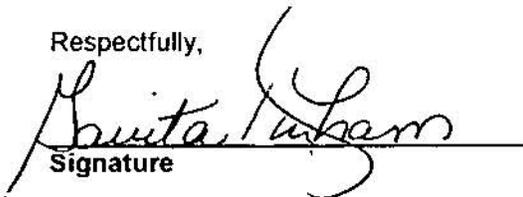
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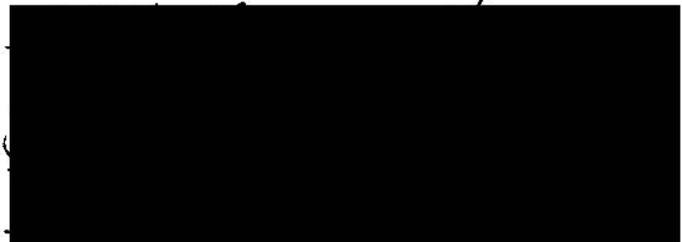

Signature

Signatory Information:

Full Name:

Garita Durham

Address:



Phone #:

Email:

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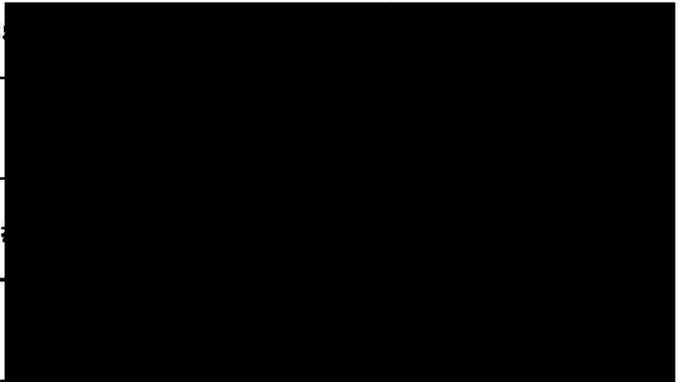
Full Name:

Brandon Pamplin

Address:

Phone:

Email:



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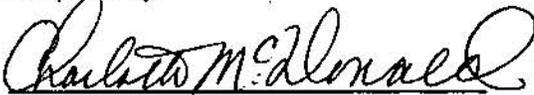
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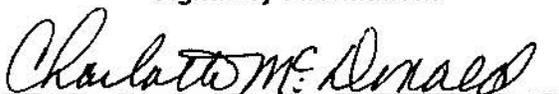
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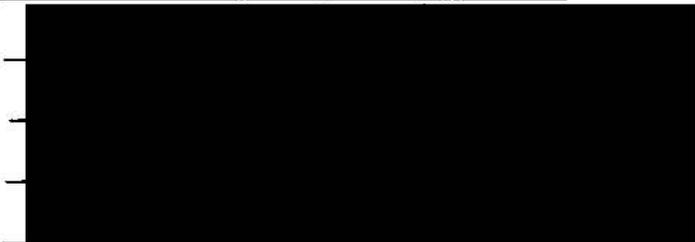
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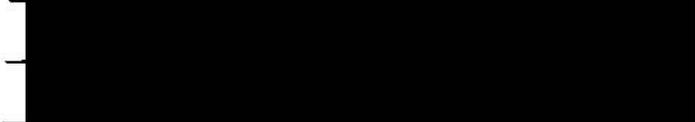
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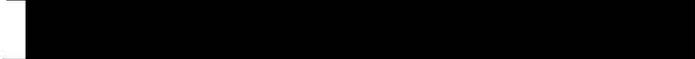

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Address: 

Phone #: 

Email: 

May 26, 2006

Mr. Thomas Decker, Chairman
Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board
PO Box 69060
Harrisburg PA 17106-9060

Dear Chairman Decker:

I am a resident of the Hill District neighborhood in Pittsburgh. My community is one of the proposed sites for a gaming facility. After careful considering all of the available information, I writing to let you know that I **DO NOT WANT A CASINO IN THE HILL DISTRICT.**

There are a number of potential problems with a casino located in such close proximity to a residential community. They include:

- **Morality.** I do not believe that gambling, in any form, is the appropriate way to bring jobs, opportunities and investment to the area.
- **Social Challenges.** I believe the current plan, which calls for a \$1 million investment, is woefully inadequate. If you think about the potential negatives of gaming (addiction, financial challenges, homelessness, the necessity of bolstering our physical and social infrastructure) you will agree that it requires a larger financial commitment.
- **Public Safety.** A great deal of consideration has been given to the needs of the facility and other developments in the Lower Hill. However, I do not think much thought has been given to the kinds of safety issues that we will face such as prostitution, drug dealing, panhandling, loitering, etc. No one has satisfactorily laid out a plan to provide the necessary police officers to patrol the area above the proposed site
- **Traffic.** The increased traffic will overwhelm the community. None of the traffic studies address the inconvenience that will be visited upon the community.

In the 1950's, thousands of Hill District residents were displaced and a huge portion of the neighborhood was annexed to Downtown Pittsburgh because of urban renewal efforts. The community did not benefit from the re-investment in the Lower Hill District. We lost people, places, significant relationships and businesses. The current plan to place a casino in the Hill District seems like a 21st century version of urban renewal. I urge you to keep a gaming facility out of the Hill District.

Respectfully,

Tamica Hunter

Signature

Signatory Information:

Full Name:

Tamica Hunter

Address:

Phone #:

Email:

9

May 26, 2006

Mr. Thomas Decker, Chairman
Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board
PO Box 69060
Harrisburg PA 17106-9060

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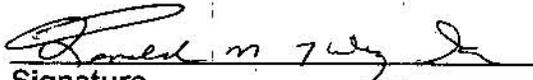
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We need your help here in the Hill District. Please do not allow gambling to devastate our community; we need strong policy and adequate reinvestment dollars to balance this possible devastation. Please guarantee that the Hill District receives the needed resources to offset social and economic development ills that gambling will certainly bring by forcing applicants to address communities that will be directly impacted by their facility.

Please do not let us down, we need your help!

Respectfully,


Signature

Signatory Information:

Full Name:

RONALD M HELVY SL

Address:

[REDACTED]

P

Email:

May 25, 2006

Mr. Thomas Decker, Chairman
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PO Box 69060
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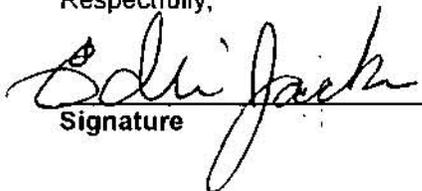
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Please help insure that history is not repeated for the Hill District. Thank you for making community reinvestment an important part of your decision to grant a gaming license in Pittsburgh.

Respectfully,



Signature

Signatory Information:

Full Name: Edwin Jackson

Address: 

Phone #: 

Email: 

May 26, 2006

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Harrisburg PA 17106-9060

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Respectfully,

Momar Millones

Signature

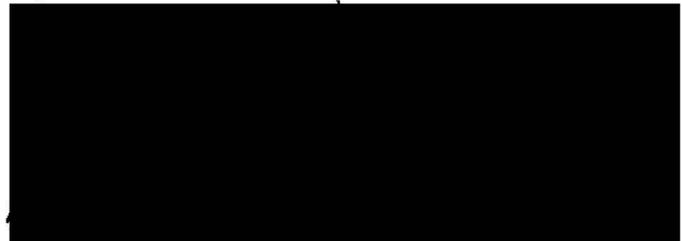
Signatory Information:

Full Name: Momar Millones

Address:

Phone #:

Email:



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Signature

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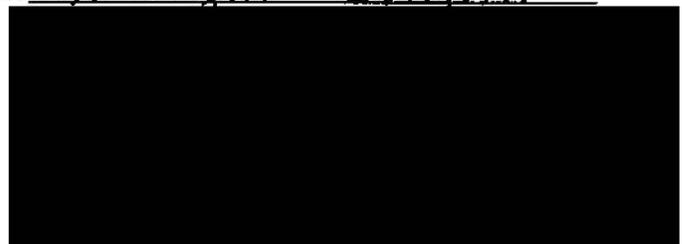
Full Name:

LAURRETTA COMANS

Address:

Phone #:

Email:



May 26, 2006

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Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board
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Harrisburg PA 17106-9060

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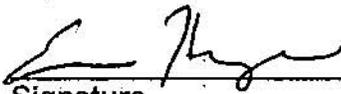
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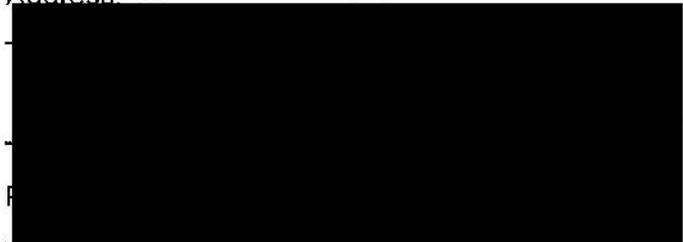
Signature

Signatory Information:

Full Name:

ERIC HOWZB

Address:



Email:

May 26, 2006

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Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board
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Harrisburg PA 17106-9060

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Signature

Signatory Information:

Full Name:

FATIMA F. BASKIN

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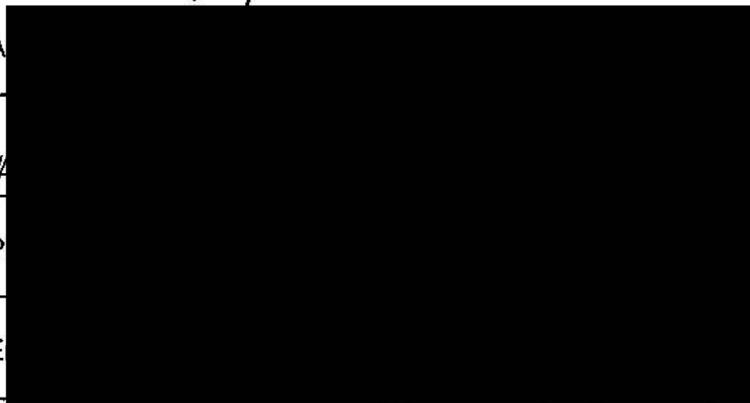
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Respectfully,



Signature

Signatory Information:

Full Name: Kerry Allen

Address: _____

Phone #: _____

Email: _____

May 26, 2006

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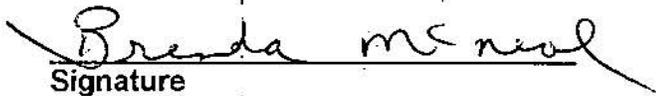
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Respectfully,


Signature

Signatory Information:

Full Name: BRENDA MCNEAL



Email: _____

May 25, 2006

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Respectfully,

Tomia Mitchell-Haas
Signature

Signatory Information:

Full Name:

Tomia Mitchell-Haas

Address:

Phone #:

Email:



Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board



WRITTEN COMMENT TO BE INCLUDED IN THE EVIDENTIARY RECORD OF THE PUBLIC INPUT HEARINGS

I request that the following comments be made part of the public input hearing record and considered by the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board prior to awarding licenses for slots operators:

Name: Jeanne McNutt

Address: [Redacted]

Telephone: [Redacted]

Organization, if any: _____

Employer: Soho Invention Inc.

COMMENTS: (Please use reverse side if more space is required)

As a resident, property owner, and business owner in Uptown, my husband and I are very concerned about very potential negative impact of a casino in our community. Uptown is in the midst of building a strong community-based organization* with a keen interest in developing intelligent, incremental economic development that serves the residential base of our community (which we plan to expand). Reports conducted by the City and private developers attest to the fact that Uptown already has too many surface parking lots. Our concern is that the casino will require parking in our community.

Consume valuable real-estate that could serve us better. (Housing, mixed-use, retail that counts!

We are also concerned about collateral businesses such as Pawn Shops, Quick-Cash Shops, etc. that will not be permitted within a specific distance of the Casino - but can be located farther down 5th Avenue. Storage is also a concern - billboards in Uptown and the Hill, causing visual pollution.

We do not feel that the traffic studies have been fully or adequately addressed for the impact it can have on Fifth, and possibly Forbes Avenues.

Additionally, Uptown is part of the Hill District and as such we are in solidarity with the concerns of our neighbors above - who have been impacted the most by the original hockey arena and will be affected greatly by the Pittsburgh development poised in their front & back yards. Therefore, we support the Hill District Gaming Task Force's key principles, as attached.

Primarily, that representatives of our Hill District neighborhoods be involved in the dissemination of development dollars in the Hill. And that appropriate levels of community reinvestment is insured. (Isle of Capri's annual investment proposed is sadly inadequate.)

I, Jeanne McNeil

verify that the information contained in this written comment is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

May 25, 2006

* Note:

The organization we are rebuilding is the Uptown Community Action Group, which lost its leadership last year, when the director left the office.

HILL DISTRICT GAMING TASK FORCE

Ten Key Principles

Through community feedback, the Hill District Gaming Task Force has identified 10 Key Principles that will be critical to the Hill District as it relates to gaming in Pittsburgh.

1. Reinvest in Hill District development above Crawford Street
2. Insure appropriate levels of community reinvestment. And insure greater levels of community reinvestment when a gaming complex is located, in or adjacent to, a residential neighborhood
3. Insure that thirty percent of all employment opportunities would go to minorities of color (And at all levels – service, supervisory, managerial and executive)
- * 4. Commit to having neighborhood representatives, including members of the Hill District Gaming Task Force, involved in the dissemination of development dollars in the Hill District
5. Guarantee thirty percent of procurement dollars to minority contractors
6. Develop the social service infrastructure to address gambling addiction
7. Develop a strategy to respond to collateral developments that could arise from gaming (zoning for pawnshops, signage, etc.) and provide adequate funding to address other social impacts (public safety, capacity building, expansion of services, collaborations, training, outreach, data collection and education)
8. Develop responses to environmental/health issues (parking, pollution)
9. Provide adequate funding for research on the social impacts of gaming
10. Support the development of a Community Improvement Fund to address broader community issues

WV

April 19 2006

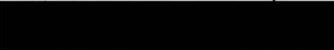
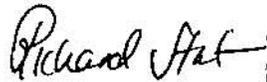
Dear Sirs,

The Pittsburgh Penguins have won approximately 36% of their games over the last 4 seasons. Even the 1985 Pirates, sometimes called "the worst team ever" in baseball, won a higher percentage of their games. A team as bad as the Penguins has no business asking anything of the City of Pittsburgh, the County of Allegheny, or the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

I hope that in considering proposals for a slots license in the City of Pittsburgh, the commission does not regard money for a new arena, to be principally used by the Penguins, as an asset to the proposal. Such an arena is undeserved, and not needed should the Penguins leave town.

As a homeowner in the city I would much rather see money spent on property tax abatement and development of the Hill District.

Yours Sincerely,
Richard Statman

[REDACTED]
May 31, 2006

Office of the Clerk
Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board
PO Box 69060
Harrisburg, PA 17106

To the Board:

I would like to thank you for the courtesy that you showed me when I testified in Pittsburgh on April 19th at the public input hearing, and I want to add a final thought for the record before the input deadline passes.

No one who knows me can say I'm not a loyal Pittsburgh sports fan. I root for the Pens and support them in their effort to get a new building that will steady their future, and which will serve as a state of the art facility for all the family oriented events that Mellon Arena has hosted over the years. But we all recognize now that we have the viable option of building a new arena complex through the Plan B that's supported by the governor, the mayor of Pittsburgh and the county executive of Allegheny County. So the Penguins know that if they want to stay and play in Pittsburgh, no matter who wins the license for the slots gaming casino, the Penguins will be able to play in a brand new, amenities-filled arena.

My biggest remaining concern is that the redevelopment of our neighborhoods and their business districts is done so that it suits the unique nature of our community, and is not destructive of our historical values and residential nature. I really admire that State Representative Jake Wheatley is willing to stand by the family oriented nature and values of the Hill District in calling for the separation of a new arena from any slots casino operation. Rep. Wheatley and the Hill District Gaming Task Force have recently asked for an appropriate reinvestment in the Hill that preserves the community as a place to go to church and school, and where families can safely walk to visit their nearby friends. It's time to redevelop the Hill as promised when the first Civic Arena went up 40 years ago. But we should not put the public's trust in one group that can't get its story straight about how it paid for the crowd that it put together outside the William Penn Hotel during your April hearings. The entire Pittsburgh community should expect and demand that this project be done in a common sense, family friendly, and honest way.

Regards,

Walter Rush

Walter Rush

Kirk D. Rice

[REDACTED]
(412) 969-0694

Pennsylvania State Gaming Board
P.O. Box 69060
Harrisburg, PA 17106-9060
(717) 346-8300

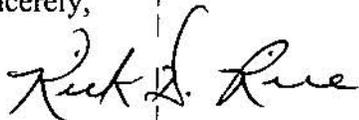
To Whom It May Concern:

Having testified before the Pennsylvania State Gaming board here in Pittsburgh, I feel compelled to write this follow up. In my testimony, I brought to light the under handed, and devious scheme being perpetuated on the board and taxpayers of the City of Pittsburgh by the Isle of Capri and Pittsburgh Penguins.

Now comes the perfect proof buttressing what I've been saying all along in the form of an article printed in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (May 28, 2006 "Many who rallied for casino were paid") detailing the under-handed ways in which the Penguins and Isle of Capri are implementing in their attempts to procure a slots license.

This is certainly a portent of worse things to come should the City of Pittsburgh be saddled with the likes of the Isle of Capri, if this board awards the slots license to this less than truthful entity.

Sincerely,



Kirk D. Rice

May 26, 2006

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Respectfully,


Signature

Signatory Information:

Full Name:

BARBARA C. MURPHY

Address:



Phone:

Email:

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Respectfully,

Barbara C. Murphy
Signature

Signatory Information:

Full Name: BARBARA MURPHY

Address:

Phone #:

Email:

May 25, 2006

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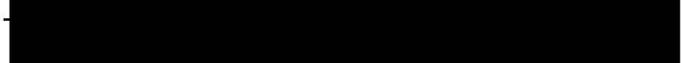
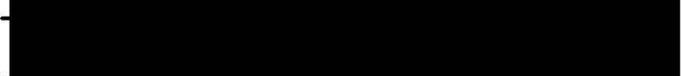
And, if not Pittsburgh's most historic neighborhood, we are certainly its most resilient. The Hill District survived one of the nation's most destructive urban renewal projects in the late 1950s which displaced 8,000 residents and severed the neighborhood economically from Downtown Pittsburgh.

Please help insure that history is not repeated for the Hill District. Thank you for making community reinvestment an important part of your decision to grant a gaming license in Pittsburgh.

Respectfully,


Signature

Signatory Information:

Full Name: BARBARA MURPHY
Address: 
Phone #: 
Email: 

HILL DISTRICT
GAMING
TASK FORCE



June 1, 2006

Mr. Thomas Decker
Chairman
Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board
PO Box 69060
Harrisburg, PA 17106

Dear Mr. Decker:

When Pennsylvania adopted gaming as a method to offset property taxes for residents, it was clear that there would be a considerable number of factors to consider other than taxes. As time passed and prospective applicants came forth, some of those factors could be measured more accurately.

As such, The Hill District Gaming Task Force (a coalition of residents, development, faith-based, and human service organizations) focused on such factors for the Historic Hill District community located in the heart of Pittsburgh PA. As you may know, this important community will be considerably impacted by all of the proposed gaming sites. Due to our central location, we will be heavily impacted regardless of who is awarded the license, in fact one of the applicants is proposing a site right here in the Hill District community. Thus our interest in this matter is truly at stake. **No other residential community is proposed for a casino site in Pittsburgh.**

Since urban renewal displaced over 8,000 residents for a redevelopment project including the Mellon Arena in the 1950's and 1960's, the Hill District has faced many struggles. Over the past several decades, there have been many attempts to redevelop the neighborhood into a place that our state could cherish as one of its most legendary communities. We are making great progress, but we still have much work to do.

The primary focus of the Task Force has been centered on facilitation and education. We held numerous meetings to educate ourselves and the community about the impacts of gaming. Our most important forum was held on May 4th where we invited Hill District residents and stakeholders to meet and learn about the gaming process and hear about the proposed reinvestment plans from Pittsburgh First, Harrah's Station Square, and PITG Gaming, LLC. At the culmination of this forum, the attendees completed a survey which rated the reinvestment plans as unacceptable, acceptable, or exceptional.

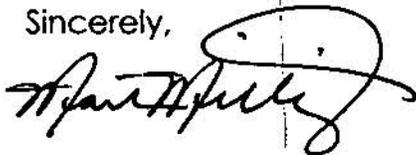
The overall response was that this community does not want a gambling facility in the Hill District. Since this is the only residential location for consideration, it should not be selected for a slots parlor without reinvestment significant enough to address the challenges that come along with gaming. As you will see from the materials provided, reinvestment in this community by the gaming applicants is grossly inadequate.

Attached are the proposals sent to each applicant to encourage greater reinvestment in the Hill District. Also enclosed are select articles including: press releases, survey results from the community and news stories covering gaming and the Hill District. You will also find "Ten Key Principles" that the Hill District embraces as imperatives.

Previously, we forwarded letters from Hill District residents regarding their concerns about having a gaming facility in this neighborhood. Please distribute this letter and its contents to the entire Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board.

We urge you, please do not allow one of our State's most promising communities to be exploited.

Sincerely,



Marimba Milliones
Co-chair
Hill District Gaming Task Force



Evan Frazier
Co-chair
Hill District Gaming Task Force



**GREATER HILL DISTRICT PROPOSAL TO
CITY OF PITTSBURGH GAMING APPLICANTS**

-- Submitted: Tuesday, April 11, 2006

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY OF PROCESS3

- Facilitated a discussion where by stakeholders and residents could gain a technical understanding of gaming in the State of Pennsylvania3
- Informed stakeholders and residents of the specifics of each gaming applicant's proposal4
- Engaged, informed and surveyed residents on challenges, needs, recommendations and expectations4

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS.....5

- Community Development5
- Business Development5
- Individual Opportunity6

SOCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS7

- Research7
- Help Center7
- Infrastructure7
- Training8
- Community Improvement Fund8
- Environmental Impacts8
- Parking8
- Signage8
- Banks/ATM Machines8
- Public Safety8
- Community Identity9
- Gentrification9

COMMUNITY SURVEY 11

SUMMARY 11

- Hill District Requests / Pittsburgh Penguins and Isle of Capri12

SUMMARY 13

- Hill District Requests / Station Square Gaming LP Enterprises and P.I.T.G. LLC13

INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY OF PROCESS

In order to arrive at community consensus around the City of Pittsburgh gaming issue and its impact on the Greater Hill District community, the Hill District community assembled a consortium of stakeholders and enacted a process to study, analyze, and summarize the impact of gaming on the community and the current and anticipated needs of the Hill District.

This task force grew out of a committee that was and remains primarily focused on Hill District development. The group designated two representatives to move forward on managing and organizing the gaming task force: Marimba Milliones, Chair – Hill Community Development Corporation and Evan Frazier, President/CEO – Hill House Association and Hill House Economic Development Corporation. To ensure that our focus was comprehensive in nature and not just development focused, additional stakeholders were convened and immediately assumed leadership roles in this effort.

Our initial meetings provided us with a clear basis by which we were able to group concerns into three primary areas around which committees were formed. One additional committee ensured consistent contact with residents and a technical education of gaming.

Our Committees were as follows:

- Economic Development and Housing
 - Co-Chaired by:
Richard Taylor, CEO, Macedonia Development Corporation
Elbert Hatley, Development Director, Ebony Development
- Residents and Community
 - Co-Chaired
Edna Council, Hill District Resident and Business Owner
Carl Redwood, Hill District Resident and Convener of the Hill Consensus Group
- Social Impact
 - Co-Chaired by:
Terri Baltimore, Director of Neighborhood Development, Hill House Association
Larry Demarzo, Executive Director, House of the Crossroads
- Education/Community Process
 - Chaired by:
Saeed Hudson, Legislative Assistant, State Representative Jake Wheatley's Office

Each committee was charged with researching issues and developing a position that would be fair, factual and of benefit to the Hill District. At the conclusion of several group meetings, each committee formulated and submitted their findings and recommendations to the larger group for further analysis and comment.

Through a simultaneous and coordinated effort, State Representative Jake Wheatley, Jr.'s office led a community/educational process in which the following activities were conducted:

- **Facilitated a discussion where by stakeholders and residents could gain a technical understanding of gaming in the State of Pennsylvania:**
 - *February 17: Hosted an educational forum featuring the following:*
Sanford Rivers – Gaming Control Board Member
Mike Edmiston – Director of Hearing and Appeals, Gaming Control Board
Audrey Powell – Director of Policy for Representative William Deweese

- **Informed stakeholders and residents of the specifics of each gaming applicant's proposal:**
 - *March 3: Hosted an information forum featuring the following:*
Forest City/Harrah's – Presenters: Abe Naparstak, Glenn Mahone, Esq.
P.I.T.G. Gaming (Majestic Star) – Presenter: Don Barden
Isle of Capri – Presenter: Reverend James Simms and David Morehouse
- **Engaged, informed and surveyed residents on challenges, needs, recommendations and expectations:**
 - *March 10 – March 30: Hosted neighborhood meetings throughout the Hill District community.*
March 10th Christopher Smith /Milliones Manor
March 16th Oak Hill and West Oakland
March 22nd Uptown/Fifth Ave.
March 30th Crawford Square / Irvis Tower

The information herein is based upon the outlined process and collective work of the Hill District community and its stakeholders. We ask that you review this document and respond accordingly.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Economic Development Committee's recommendations seek to address three broad categories of development in the Hill District: Community Development, Business Development, and Individual Opportunity. The Committee recognizes that in order to implement several of its recommendations, there are a number of details that would need to be further developed and negotiated with the community's gaming partners. This summary, therefore, is only designed to provide a broad overview of the Committee's recommendations. Each category will be discussed in turn.

Community Development:

In evaluating the impact of gaming on the Pittsburgh community, the Committee noted that there will be significant investments made in the City, but at great cost to the residents of the Hill District, based on demographic profiles of Hill District residents and expected patrons of gaming venues. In order to bring greater balance to this equation, the Committee examined how gaming partners could act as a catalyst for expanding development of the Hill District community.

Two of the greatest barriers to development in the Hill District are the significant number of vacant, abandoned and dilapidated properties, and the great number of properties encumbered by delinquent tax liens. In order to address both of these issues, the Committee recommends that the successful gaming applicant provide sufficient funding to acquire the 927 vacant, abandoned, and dilapidated properties in the Middle Hill District and those in the Uptown section, as well as the delinquent tax liens associated with those properties. These investments and assets would be placed in a land bank or land trust controlled by the Hill Development League or similar community-based entity so that the community can attain site control over these problematic assets, and is better equipped to guide its revitalization. In addition, provision must be made to cover the holding costs for these assets, such as the taxes, insurance, and upkeep of the properties until they are developed.

This land bank/trust will be a catalyst to the transformation of the Hill District. As the land bank/trust is being established, the community will develop a comprehensive development plan for the Hill District. After it is established, the community will petition City Council to take two important actions: 1) to codify uniform development standards and parameters for the Hill District, and 2) to enact legislation directing the City and the URA to set aside all properties owned by those entities in the Hill District such that individual properties will be transferred to the land bank/trust once development plans are approved by the community and consistent with the community-wide development plan.

A related issue is addressing the need for competent and experienced professionals to help direct the community's revitalization efforts. To this end, the Committee recommends that our gaming partners fund at least half of the salary and benefit expense for a professional development executive and staff for the Hill District.

In addition, the Committee identified a clear need for general support of ongoing community development initiatives.

Business Development:

It is critically important that minority contractors be involved in the planning, construction, and operational phases of any gaming site's operation. While the Committee recognizes that there are a number of approaches that can be utilized to address this complex issue, it also recognizes that if the approach chosen is not tailored to the actual business model of the successful gaming

applicant, there can be a host of negative, unintended consequences. Therefore, the Committee recommends that each gaming applicant provide a strategy to accomplish this end that will be effective in the context of their operations. The community can then better understand their operations, and suggest strategic improvements, if necessary. In any event, the Committee believes that each applicant's strategy should be designed to achieve the goal of having 30% of their procurement dollars spent with minority contractors.

Individual Opportunity:

One of the most obvious benefits of the advent of gaming in Pittsburgh is the associated employment opportunities. In order to be certain that all of Pittsburgh's communities share in these opportunities, the Committee recommends that each of the gaming applicants commit that 30% of their employees including entry-level, supervisory, management, and executive job categories be minorities, which is roughly equal to the percentage of minorities in the total Pittsburgh population. In addition, the percentage of Hill District residents employed should be, at a minimum, equal to the percentage that Hill District residents represent in the total population of the City of Pittsburgh. Further, the gaming applicants should provide training and development programs to provide meaningful advancement opportunities for employees generally and minority employees specifically.

SOCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Social and Residential Committee recommendations seek to address the broad social implications gaming would have on the Hill District community. The recommendations from the Social and Residential Committee focus on: Research, Social Services and Community Improvement. The recommendations listed below reflect the feedback collected from eight neighborhood input meetings conducted throughout March 2006.

Research:

We need longitudinal studies with research design that addresses the complexity of the issue. Existing literature on the topic is contradictory, ambiguous, and difficult to analyze because, whether pro or con, most offer valid arguments that are quite persuasive. This has resulted in studies that usually raise more questions than they answer. This recommendation is neither cheap nor easy. It will require time, expertise and resources to collect useful data. We believe such research would have applicability far beyond this region. It could serve as a template for other communities contemplating how to pro-actively respond to the challenges and opportunities that gaming presents. We ask for annual funding to: hire a research, two part-time graduate students and the necessary equipment to undertake the work.

Help Center:

We need to develop a "Help Center" to provide a coordinated response to an anticipated increase in demand for social service. The Center would serve those with gambling addictions and their families. The Center would: (1) house three knowledgeable case managers and a coordinator to handle referrals and provide direct access to a system of care providers; (2) operate a help line to provide information to callers (and the possibility of follow-up with the consent of the caller); (3) serve as a centralized data collection site; (4) have a web-based component that is internet-based so that people seeking assistance can go to a site, gather information, and have the choice to interact with a counselor or gather information on a real-time basis; (5) co-locate other human services on-site to respond to the complex needs of gamblers and their families; (6) house a marketing specialist to develop educational and public awareness campaigns; and (7) employ an outreach worker implement community educational programs and identify those individuals in need of services.

Infrastructure:

We recommend that community- and faith-based providers are included in all aspects of a comprehensive integrated system of service delivery.

In order to ensure the best outcomes for gamblers and their families, we must have a multi-disciplinary response (including universities, health care providers, treatment facilities, law enforcement, the corrections system, researchers, and evaluators).

Funding must be available to assist community- and faith-based providers to properly prepare the staffs and facilities for those with gambling addiction. No program in southwestern Pennsylvania has a license to treat those with gambling addiction.

There also has to be an inclusive and transparent process for the design, implementation and evaluation of treatment protocols.

There has to be a reasonable re-imbusement rate for treatment services.

The licensee has to match, dollar for dollar, the funds directed to the state's Compulsive Problem Gambling Treatment Program Fund. Under the current configuration, the fund is woefully under-capitalized to meet the anticipated demand for gambling addiction treatment.

As the demand for treatment increases, there has to be adequate support for the expansion of treatment programs (i.e. facilities, equipment and staffing.)

Training:

We strongly recommend that community- and faith-based organizations be full partners in the development of training procedures and standards and licensure. Service providers should actively partner in the development and implementation of training and education programs for the venue operators

Community Improvement Fund:

Gambling addiction does not exist in a vacuum. Addictions are accompanied by a host of related problems. The Community Improvement Fund would provide the dollars necessary to address the collateral social needs of the Hill District such as substance abuse, youth services, family support, housing assistance, domestic violence, mental health, physical health, financial counseling and other co-occurring disorders and issues.

Environmental Impacts:

We need to have the appropriate mechanisms in place to monitor, measure and mitigate the environmental impacts associated with the increased vehicular traffic in the community – noise and air pollution. The information collected through studies must be written in clear language and presented to the community. The data will be used to update applicable codes. Proposals for addressing those issues must include neighborhood residents and groups.

Parking:

The community recommends permit parking in the area immediately adjacent to the proposed site for Isle of Capri. All parking regulations will be uniformly enforced.

Signage:

We propose that all signage and printed materials related to the gaming site contain disclaimers about the dangers of gambling. We want the language to be straight forward and to have a tone similar to the warnings on cigarette packages.

Banks/ATM Machines:

All of the ATM machines located in the gaming facility, near the facility or around the community, should carry messages that warn about the dangers of gambling. The banks which own the machines should be willing to make investments in the community and to support neighborhood-based human service agencies.

Public Safety:

The licensee and the community will work together to assure that the extra public safety personnel are in place to respond to the increased need for police, fire and emergency medical services.

Community Identity:

The Hill District is a cultural icon in Pittsburgh and in the United States. Great care must be taken in how the community is identified. Hill stakeholders have to participate in any discussions about re-naming sections of the neighborhood, streets or important structures. We must be included in any talks about identifying historic sites. Critical conversations about the reconnection of the former street grid and the development of passive green space must also involve Hill District stakeholders.

Gentrification:

Hill District stakeholders must be involved in any discussions about new housing developments. We understand the need to attract a diversity of people and businesses into the neighborhood. We just want to minimize possible displacement of residents, property owners and entrepreneurs as the social, racial and economic patterns change in the Hill.

See Chart Below

Issue	Recommendations	Cost Analysis
SOCIAL/RESIDENTIAL IMPACT		
Research	Develop infrastructure and capacity to conduct a cross cost analysis of revenue generated from gambling & revenue expensed on social needs. Develop infrastructure and capacity to conduct longitudinal studies with research designs that address the complexity of the issue(s).	\$100,000 annual 1 FTE researcher
Outreach (Marketing) Education, Primary & Secondary Prevention	Develop infrastructure and capacity for a competitively funded and comprehensive public awareness, education and prevention campaign.	\$750,000 annual coordinator; 1 FTE managers; 1 FTE receptionist; 1 FTE
Social Services	<p>Develop infrastructure and capacity for an integrated community based and oriented collaborative approach to service delivery that provides innovative <i>service alternatives</i> to provide a variety of options for individuals seeking help for gambling problems. Referrals for services would originate at a community-based Help Center</p> <p>Develop the infrastructure to provide treatment on demand</p>	<p>costs</p> <p>\$4.2 million annual state funding) (agency(s) would services.)</p>
Community Improvement Fund	<p>Build the infrastructure to specifically meet the needs of those with a gambling addiction (i.e. facilities, training, etc.)</p> <p>Create a fund to enhance and expand programs to serve the community's most vulnerable citizens, create and sustain children and youth programming, support residential associations, senior programming and various community initiatives</p>	<p>\$250,000 annual</p> <p>\$3.5 million annual</p>

COMMUNITY SURVEY

At each of the community meetings convened by State Representative Jake Wheatley's Office, a survey was conducted to determine the most critical concerns for residents. Items on the survey were extracted from the data each committee provided.

The results listed below are ranked in order of most important to least important. A total of sixty-four surveys were collected.

Social Impact

1. Prevent Excessive: Crime/Economic Loss/ Addiction **(43%)**
2. Increased Need Should be Addressed by Increased Service Delivery **(32%)**
3. Warning Gamblers of Potential Addiction via (Signs, Disclaimers on printed material) **(18%)**
4. Share Banking Profits (ATM) with Community / Suffers of Addiction **(7%)**

Residents & Community

1. Violence, Noise and Cleanliness **(29%)**
2. Development Must Extend Beyond Casino Site **(24%)**
3. Loss of Neighborhood Identity **(18%)**
4. Parking (metered Parking is a Concern) **(15%)**
5. Air Pollution **(14%)**

Economic Development and Housing

1. Minorities Benefit from Job Creation **(31%)**
2. Assurance that Economic Impact is not limited to the site below Crawford Square (Lower Hill) and that Resources be committed to community-controlled Hill District agency that will ensure competent and progressive development **(31%)**
3. Development at the Melody Tent Site, Uptown and other areas below Crawford Square within the (Lower Hill District) should respect, include and improve the Greater Hill District as is determined by Hill District stakeholders **(27%)**
4. Residents receive additional benefits from real estate and economic development outside of property tax relief and distribution of funds to the City and other government agencies **(11%)**

SUMMARY

Hill District Requests / Pittsburgh Penguins and Isle of Capri

The reinvestment requests outlined below represents the collective expectations of a broad array of stakeholders which includes residents, community organizations and key institutions. We are requesting the following commitments of support from the Pittsburgh Penguins and Isle of Capri. The requests are based on the notion that the risk associated with having gaming directly connected to our residential neighborhood is very high in that there will be significant negative consequences and social concerns. Therefore, in fairness to our community, greater reinvestment is required to assure that there are sufficient resources to address the concerns and to ensure that our community benefits rather than merely bearing the burden for the entire region. There are two reinvestment options that will meet the community's expectations.

Reinvestment Option #1

The first is an option presented by the Hill District Consensus Group that requires 10% of the money invested in building a new arena go directly to the Hill District in a fund through a group that we are creating called the Greater Hill Development League (or other Hill District institution that we might select as fiduciary). The total investment for the arena is projected at \$290 million; therefore 10% would be equivalent to \$29 million. This would be in addition to a minimum of 1% of annual revenues and the existing \$1 million per year commitment through Pittsburgh First.

Reinvestment Option #2

The second option would be to contribute \$10 million upfront and 1% of gross annual revenues from the gaming operation to the Greater Hill Development League. These funds would be used for residential land banking, business and economic development. In addition to this commitment, we are requesting that 2% of gross revenues from the gaming operation go to the Greater Hill Development League or other established entity to develop infrastructure for prevention, research, treatment on demand, social services, and Hill District programs.

In addition to the financial requests listed above, non-financial requests include the following:

- 30% of employees in entry-level, supervisory, management, and executive job categories be minorities of color.
- Significant community representation and inclusion on boards, teams and committees related to development and distribution of funds.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) would need to be drafted and signed by both parties, followed by a legally enforceable Community Benefits Agreement (CBA).

SUMMARY

Hill District Requests / Station Square Gaming Enterprises LP and P.I.T.G. LLC

The reinvestment requests outlined below represents the collective expectations of a broad array of stakeholders which includes residents, community organizations and key institutions. Given the proximity of the Hill District community to your gaming site and the anticipated demographic profile of your clientele, the Hill District will clearly bear a disproportionate burden from the introduction of gaming to our region. Therefore, we request adequate reinvestment back into the Hill District community from your organization to sufficiently address the impact of your operation on our community.

Specifically, we are requesting \$5 million once your site is selected and .5% of gross annual revenues from the gaming operation. These funds will go towards developing a residential land bank as well as economic and business development investment pool. In addition, 1% of gross revenues should go to the Hill District community to support addiction prevention, research, treatment on demand, social services, and Hill District programs. All funds should go through a group that we are creating called the Greater Hill Development League (or any other institution that we select as fiduciary).

In addition to the financial requests listed above, non-financial requests include the following:

- 30% of employees in entry-level, supervisory, management, and executive job categories be minority.
- Significant community representation and inclusion on boards, teams and committees related to development and distribution of funds.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) would need to be drafted and signed by both parties, followed by a legally enforceable Community Benefits Agreement (CBA).

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Orlana Darkins
[REDACTED]

Hill District Hosts Community Gaming Forum

Gaming Applicants Asked to Provide Hill Reinvestment Plan Details

May 4, 2006 – The Hill District Gaming Task Force, will host a community forum on Monday, May 8 from 6 – 8 p.m. at the Hill House Kaufmann Auditorium, 1835 Centre Avenue.

The forum will include information about the gaming process, task force activities and include a formal feedback process that will allow residents and Hill District stakeholders to take part in shaping the overall Hill District response to gaming. The Hill District Gaming Task Force will then share the feedback with the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board and the community at large.

The Hill District Gaming Task Force, a coalition of residents, community development, faith-based and human service organizations, has been meeting since February to ensure strong representation for the Hill in the ongoing gaming discussions between the Gaming Control Board and prospective casino operators.

In a formal response to gaming applicants several weeks ago, the task force expressed concern over the amount of reinvestment dollars proposed for the Hill, a neighborhood which could be dramatically impacted because of its central location. The task force cited two areas of concern – the amount of reinvestment being proposed and the lack of focus on community development beyond the lower Hill where the impact of gambling might not be seen, but would clearly be felt.

For more information, call 412-608-9643.

###

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Orlana Darkins
[REDACTED]

Hill District Residents Score Gaming Proposals

Express Concerns about Casino Impact on Neighborhood

May 14, 2006 – The majority of Hill District residents who attended a community forum on gaming last week consider the plans of two gaming applicants to be unacceptable. The forum was hosted by the Hill District Gaming Task Force, a coalition of Hill District community development, faith-based and human services organizations.

Of the 120 individuals who attended the forum, 97 completed audience surveys. Fifty-eight percent (58%) feel that Harrah's Station Square plan is unacceptable and 60% feel that Pittsburgh First's plan for a casino in the Lower Hill District is unacceptable. In contrast, 74% of those surveyed felt that PITG's plan for a North Shore casino and \$350 million investment in the Lower Hill District to be acceptable or exceptional.

Harrah's has proposed a community foundation that would provide \$25 million endowment at the Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation to preserve and revitalize the city's historic neighborhoods, including the Hill District. That plan also provides for a \$1 million contribution to communities throughout the region.

Pittsburgh First has proposed a community reinvestment fund with a \$1 million annual contribution dedicated to the Hill District and Uptown communities. The Pittsburgh First plan would redevelop the 28-acre Mellon Arena site with an estimated \$350 million mixed use development project.

Task Force co-chair and Hill House President and CEO reminded attendees that the task force does not plan to endorse any applicant's plan. "Our job is to ensure that the voices of Hill District stakeholders are heard, and that the city's gaming partners remain accountable to the communities that will be affected by gambling, particularly the Hill District."

A number of residents in attendance expressed grave concerns about the impact that gambling could have on the Hill District, a neighborhood that has struggled socio-economically since the lower half of the community was razed to build the Civic Arena in the mid-1950s.

The Hill District Gaming Task Force opened the community forum highlighting some of the recent activities taking place in the Hill to help restore the neighborhood's place in history as one of the most culturally vibrant and influential African-American communities in the nation. It then highlighted the detrimental impact that gaming could have in derailing this momentum.

"The Hill District is one of this state's most important neighborhoods, and everyday the people of this community are working to restore its promise. Whoever is awarded the license, The Hill District including Uptown will be greatly impacted. As such, we require appropriate levels of re-investment below and above Crawford Street. We ask for active support from our public officials and the PA Control Board in this endeavor," said Marimba Milliones, co-chair of the task force and chair of the Hill District Community Development Corporation.

Attendees also received brief summaries that each gaming applicant provided the task force summarizing their individual community reinvestment plans. After reviewing the plans, attendees were provided a survey and asked to score each plan as unacceptable, acceptable or exceptional. The results are as follows:

<u>Total Responses</u>	<u>Unacceptable</u>	<u>Acceptable</u>	<u>Exceptional</u>
Harrah's Station Square	58%	31%	10%
Pittsburgh First	60%	30%	10%
PITG/Majestic Star	26%	41%	33%
<u>Live and/or Work in Hill</u>	<u>Unacceptable</u>	<u>Acceptable</u>	<u>Exceptional</u>
Harrah's Station Square	57%	33%	9%
Pittsburgh First	62%	30%	8%
PITG/Majestic Star	26%	40%	35%

The Hill District Gaming Task Force presented highlights of the survey results during the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board's last public hearing in Pittsburgh on Wednesday, May 10. The task force will now begin an aggressive campaign with the Control Board to ensure that the Hill District feedback is considered as part of the board's decision in granting a gaming license to one of the three applicants. The task force also will continue to work with the gaming applicants to solidify their community development commitments for the Hill District. For more information, call 412-392-4404 or 412-765-1320.

###

HILL DISTRICT GAMING TASK FORCE

Ten Key Principles

Through community feedback, the Hill District Gaming Task Force has identified 10 Key Principles that will be critical to the Hill District as it relates to gaming in Pittsburgh.

1. Reinvest in Hill District development above Crawford Street
2. Insure appropriate levels of community reinvestment. And insure greater levels of community reinvestment when a gaming complex is located, in or adjacent to, a residential neighborhood
3. Insure that thirty percent of all employment opportunities would go to minorities of color (And at all levels – service, supervisory, managerial and executive)
4. Commit to having neighborhood representatives, including members of the Hill District Gaming Task Force, involved in the dissemination of development dollars in the Hill District
5. Guarantee thirty percent of procurement dollars to minority contractors
6. Develop the social service infrastructure to address gambling addiction
7. Develop a strategy to respond to collateral developments that could arise from gaming (zoning for pawnshops, signage, etc.) and provide adequate funding to address other social impacts (public safety, capacity building, expansion of services, collaborations, training, outreach, data collection and education)
8. Develop responses to environmental/health issues (parking, pollution)
9. Provide adequate funding for research on the social impacts of gaming
10. Support the development of a Community Improvement Fund to address broader community issues

COMMUNITY FORUM AUDIENCE SURVEY

STATUS

Resident	45
Employed	16
Resident & Employed	21
Other	13
N/A	2

TOTAL 97

	<u>Agree</u>		<u>Disagree</u>		<u>TOTAL</u>
10 KEY PRINCIPALS	73%	58	28%	22	80

<u>Total Responses</u>	<u>Unacceptable</u>		<u>Acceptable</u>		<u>Exceptional</u>		<u>Total</u>
Harrah's Station Square	58%	52	31%	28	10%	9	8
Pittsburgh First	60%	53	30%	27	10%	9	8
PITG/Majestic Star	26%	25	41%	40	33%	32	9

<u>Hill Residents & Workers</u>	<u>Unacceptable</u>		<u>Acceptable</u>		<u>Exceptional</u>		<u>Total</u>
Harrah's Station Square	57%	43	33%	25	9%	7	7
Pittsburgh First	62%	46	30%	22	8%	6	7
PITG/Majestic Star	26%	21	40%	32	35%	28	8

<u>Other & N/A</u>	<u>Unacceptable</u>		<u>Acceptable</u>		<u>Exceptional</u>		<u>Total</u>
Harrah's Station Square	64%	9	21%	3	14%	2	1
Pittsburgh First	47%	7	33%	5	20%	3	1
PITG/Majestic Star	25%	4	50%	8	25%	4	1

**Hill District Gaming Task Force
Community Forum**

Audience Survey

May 8, 2006

1. Do you believe that the **8 Key Reinvestment Principles** identified by the Hill District C
relevant to the future of the Hill District?

2. Please rate all three gaming applicant's proposals on their reinvestment plans for t

Applicant **Circle Rating and Provide**

Forest City Enterprises Unacceptable Acce

Isle of Capri Casinos, Inc. Unacceptable Acce

PITG Gaming, LLC Unacceptable Acce

Hill residents favor North Shore casino

by Christian Morrow
Courier Staff Writer

Though the sample was small, more than 60 percent of Hill District residents recently surveyed here about the competing casino plans for Pittsburgh found the Isle of Capri plan—the one that would place a \$300-million slot parlor on their doorstep—unacceptable.

So Isle of Capri has upped the ante. In addition to building the casino, building a \$350-million replacement for the Mellon Arena with and spending \$1 million a year to redevelop the lower Hill with new housing, office and retail space, the com-

pany said it may also subsidize the building of a new grocery store for the Hill.

Dave Morehouse, spokesman for the operator's Pittsburgh First alliance, said the company has engaged a consultant to assess the market and will "actively solicit" a grocery developer.

But even with these inducements, for the 100 or so residents who heard the proposal during a May 10 meeting of the Hill Gaming Task Force, the response was "not in my back yard." Don Barden's proposal, which would also pay

SEE HILL RESIDENTS' A5

Hill residents favor North Shore casino

CONTINUED FROM A1

for a new arena and for Hill redevelopment but would place the casino on the North Shore, fared the best with 75 percent reacting favorably. The residents want the development, but not the casino.

Hill House President and CEO Evan Frazier, who also co-chairs the task force, said he found the grocery proposal interesting, but the residents, at least at the meeting, are against a casino in the Hill.

"The only way gaming would be acceptable or tolerated is if the reinvestment is significant enough to address the social challenges (inherent with gaming)," he said.

Several attempts to lure a grocery operator to the Hill District have been promoted, only to fail during the last decade. State Rep. Jake Wheatley, D-Hill, held hearings on the issue in 2003. The following year, Gov. Ed Rendell created a \$10 million fund to develop groceries in underserved area.

But even with promises of \$2 million in public support to construct a building and provide any needed infrastructure improvements, vendors such as Giant Eagle and Super Value declined the offer.

Irv Williams, who built the

Williams Square and One Hill Square office and retail buildings on Centre Avenue, presented a plan for a grocery development that also included retail and apartment space development across Centre Avenue from the Hill House in 2004. The Urban Redevelopment Authority rejected the plan and refused to give Williams site control.

In October, discount grocer ALDI presented a plan to buy a self-financed grocery acre from the Hill House. Residents nixed the idea either because they didn't like the store in the location or they wanted a full-service grocery.

Wheatley said he is encouraged by Isle of Capri attempting to right the wrongs done when the lower Hill was taken for the (now) Mellon Arena back in 1960.

"I'm glad people are focusing on the wrongs perpetrated when the arena was built by the Penguins seeing themselves as partners with the Hill District," he said. "They say a consultant is speaking to residents—they have talked to me. So how solid is this commitment? Until I see something more than PR, I reserve judgment."

(Send comments to cmorrow@pittsburghcourier.com.)

Casino plan worries some Hill residents

By Mark Belko
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

A casino is coming to Pittsburgh, but some Hill District residents aren't too keen about having it in their neighborhood.

During a community forum last night, several people spoke out against the idea of having a casino near their homes, saying it could be another body blow to a neighborhood struggling to right itself.

"You put that thing down there and you've dropped the bomb," resident Cliff Christian told members of the Hill District Gaming Task Force.

The task force, a coalition of Hill District community development, faith-based and human service organizations, sponsored last night's forum at the Hill House Kaufmann Auditorium to find out how people felt about the three bids for the Pittsburgh casino license and the promises being made to the neighborhood as part of that competition.

Two bidders — Isle of Capri Casinos Inc. and PITG Gaming LLC — are proposing at least \$350 million in development near Mellon Arena in the lower Hill. Isle of Capri, which wants to put its casino in the Hill-Uptown area, also is offering \$1 million a year for a community investment fund and \$290 million toward a new arena.

The other bidder, Forest City Enterprises, with a proposed Station Square casino, isn't offering specific reinvestment in the Hill, but is proposing \$1 million a year for a foundation for community development and a \$25 million endowment for neighborhood reinvestment.

Like Mr. Christian, several other speakers were concerned about a slot machine casino close to the Hill. They feared that gambling could bring another plague to a community that has battled drugs and other problems in the past.

"If we let this gambling come in, it will be the worst decision we ever made," one woman said.

Even those resigned to the prospect of gambling felt the bidders needed to up the ante in terms of community giveback.

The task force has said a pledge of \$1 million a year is inadequate, particularly when social costs to the community could total millions of dollars a year. It also wants at least 30 percent of all contracts to go to minority firms and 30 percent of all entry-level,

SEE **CASINO**, PAGE B-2

Casino plan worries some

CASINO, FROM PAGE B-1

supervisory, managerial and executive jobs to go to minorities.

It also is pushing the idea of a development land bank made

up of vacant, abandoned and tax delinquent property in the Hill at a cost estimated at \$100 million.

"If there's gambling, we need to raise the level of reinvestment," said Cliff Christian.

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Legislator from Hill assails casino plans

Says bidder hasn't involved community

By Ed Blazina
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

The Hill District would be better off in the long run if a replacement for Mellon Arena is developed through an alternate plan and a slots casino is built elsewhere, state Rep. Jake Wheatley said yesterday.

Mr. Wheatley, D-Hill District, told the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette editorial board he hasn't been happy that the Penguins and their gambling partner, Isle of Capri, haven't been more willing to work with the community. The Penguins and Isle of Capri want to build a slot machine casino in the neighborhood and have promised to use \$290 million to build a new arena and commit more than \$300 million to additional retail and housing development around the complex.

But Mr. Wheatley said the Penguins and Isle of Capri haven't involved the neighborhood's gaming task force in their proposal. He said they chose developer Nationwide Realty for community development work around a new arena and appointed members of their nonprofit development group, Pittsburgh First, without community input.

Mr. Wheatley said it was "insulting" that the Penguins last week said they would consider a supermarket as part of the project and might be willing to subsidize the project when in the past the team had been approached about that long-term



Rep. Jake Wheatley

community need and offered no help.

Mr. Wheatley stressed he hasn't taken a position on which slots proposal he supports because he wants to wait for more information on diversity plans and whether they have the financial capabilities to carry out their proposals. But he said residents and neighbors like Duquesne University have "compelling arguments why they don't want to see the casino [in the Hill District]."

Evan Frazier, co-chairman of the gaming task force, said his group is leaving the door open for the Penguins because they have "not yet addressed all of the community's interests in an adequate and substantive way."

The two other candidates for the city's one slots license are Station Square and gambling partner Harrah's on the South Side and Detroit businessman

SEE WHEATLEY, PAGE B-2

Lawmaker unhappy with casino plans

WHEATLEY, FROM PAGE B-1

Don Barden on the North Shore. Mr. Barden has said he would commit \$350 million to redeveloping the Lower Hill, and Harrah's has said it would contribute to an arena if the Penguins committed to staying in Pittsburgh.

Out of 97 people who completed surveys at a gaming task force meeting last week, 60 percent said they considered the Penguins' proposal unacceptable, compared with 58 percent for Harrah's and 26 percent for Barden.

The Rev. James Simms, head of Pittsburgh First, and city Councilwoman Tonya Payne defended the community's involvement in casino plans.

"I don't think there's anybody we haven't been willing to involve in our plans," Mr. Simms said.

He stressed that other casino

proposals are promises opposed to the Penguins' plan which already has a development and nonprofit board appointed to push community development. The fact the Penguins have chosen Nationwide Realty should be a positive sign that the team would follow through on development plans, he said.

Ms. Payne said the Penguins had been meeting with community leaders on potential development around a new arena before slots became available.

"I've never heard them say anything other than they want to be a partner with the community," she said.

As to whether a casino would benefit the neighborhood, she said, "Sometimes you have to bite a bullet you don't want to bite to get the result you want."

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The Rev. James Simms
"... not something we
initiated or condoned."

Many who rallied for casino were paid

By Bill Toland

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Last month, dozens of public housing residents from the Hill District joined a daytime pep rally, ostensibly in support of a plan to build a casino and new arena in their neighborhood.

It was an impressive show of community enthusiasm, but it wasn't an entirely sincere one — many of them took part because they got paid.

Pittsburgh First, a local group created by the Isle of Capri and Pittsburgh Penguins to support their proposal to redevelop the Lower Hill, organized a bus trip that day to take residents to the rally. They left from the group's Chatham Center headquarters and stopped along the way at the Bedford Dwellings public housing complex.

The 80 or so Bedford Dwellings residents were among hundreds of people, including Downtown workers and Pens fans, who jammed into Mellon Square on April 18 as Pittsburgh's

SEE RALLY, PAGE A-8



Many who took part in casino rally were paid

RALLY, FROM PAGE A-1

three competing casino proposals were being vetted by the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board.

State Rep. Jake Wheatley Jr., D-Hill District, says the Bedford Dwellings residents were promised \$15 if they got on the bus to join the rally. Mr. Wheatley has recently criticized Isle of Capri and Pittsburgh First for not soliciting enough community input while formulating their plans to remake The Hill.

Neighbors in the community confirmed the payments.

"Some got paid \$15, some got paid less," said Howard Parker, who lives in The Hill and who talked to several neighbors who attended the rally.

A handful of people among the three bus loads driven Downtown actually supported the development plan, and not everyone boarded the bus just to get paid, but "that's the reason why most of them did," Mr. Parker said.

The Rev. James Simms, head of Pittsburgh First, denied involvement.

"I heard similar comments from some people, however, this was not something that we initiated or condoned," he said. "It may have been a tactic used by the coordinators in the field; it was not a tactic that we authorized nor would we have supported."

The Rev. Simms said "transportation coordinators" were given stipends, but that the stipends were not intended to encourage participation in the rally.

But several people involved in the rally told the Post-Gazette that Rev. Simms authorized the payments. They said he gave \$400 to one his coordinators for distribution to Bedford Dwellings residents as they left Mellon Square that day.

"They're trying to keep it real quiet," said one pep rally participant who didn't want his name used in the paper.

"[The Rev. Simms] greeted everybody coming off of the bus," he said.

Alissa Hughes, who lives in Bedford Dwellings and who attended the rally that day, confirmed this version of events.

man named Tony Eaves to offer people \$15 to go to the rally.

"I was right there," she said.

But the \$400 he provided turned out not to be enough, she said. Eighty people, at \$15 a head, comes to \$1,200.

When the \$400 wouldn't cover the tab, some Bedford Dwellings residents complained to Mr. Eaves, and he paid some of them with his own money, according to Ms. Hughes and others who attended the rally.

Mr. Eaves, driven by Ms. Hughes, went to Chatham Center the next day to confront Rev. Simms and recoup his expenses. Eventually, he received an additional \$240, according to Ms.

State Rep. Jake Wheatley Jr., D-Hill District, says Bedford Dwellings residents were promised \$15 if they got on the bus to join the rally.

Hughes. That money was used to provide \$10 apiece to pep rally visitors who didn't get paid on the day of the rally.

The delay in payment caused a stir in the complex.

"The community was really upset," she said. "But because we all live in this community, we have to get along." She also added that her distaste for how the pep rally payoff was handled didn't diminish her support for a Lower Hill casino or a new arena for the Penguins.

When contacted by the Post-Gazette, Mr. Eaves refused public comment. He's a former city employee and remains active in local politics.

But one of the people who received money from Mr. Eaves also pinned blame on Rev. Simms. "He didn't even pay everybody," said Tyrone Gray, who lives in Bedford Dwellings. "He used those people terribly."

When told that a number of Hill residents had said that he and Pittsburgh First were directly involved in paying people to attend the rally, the Rev.

from us. I stipended the field coordinators, and if they made arrangements, they made them on their own."

Les McMackin, the senior vice president of communications for Isle of Capri, said his company wasn't involved. "We have no knowledge of anything like this happening," he said, "and I don't believe that it did happen."

He said community support for the casino and arena development in the Lower Hill is around 80 percent. "There wouldn't be need to incentivize folks to come out and support it," he said.

David Morehouse, Penguin spokesman, also said he doubted the tenants' stories.

"I don't believe people were paid, and I think this is more of a dirty-trick effort" concocted by opponents of the Isle of Capri plan, he said.

The payments came to light two weeks ago when Mr. Wheatley and members of his staff were taking a bus trip of their own. They were traveling to Beaver County with some constituents to support state Rep. Mike Veornu in the Democratic primary election, and someone mentioned the incident, an aide said.

Offering payment for public support isn't necessarily wrong but "you should be open and up front with people" and make it clear who's being paid and who isn't, Mr. Wheatley said.

Cleveland's Forest City Enterprises, which wants to build a casino in Station Square and is competing with Isle of Capri for the lone Pittsburgh casino license, weighed in on the idea of paying public housing tenants to support one plan over another.

"It's not a tactic that we would use ourselves," said Abe Naparstek, company spokesman.

The third competitor for the casino license is Detroit businessman Don Barden, who wants to build a casino on the North Shore near the West End Bridge.

The gaming board hopes to award a Pittsburgh license by the end of December. Public support is just one of many factors the board will consider in deciding between the three proposals.

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