

MY VIEW

# Adelaar would bring economic benefits along with tourism

BY SCOTT B. SAMUELSON

There's something about knowing a place. You have a feel for the roads, you understand the people and you want to make a difference. Monticello Raceway and Empire Resorts has had a long standing relationship with our community. Monticello Raceway opened in 1958 and 10 years ago Empire Resorts established Monticello Casino & Raceway. Over the last three years they've partnered with EPR Properties, one of the country's premier real estate investment and recreation companies, to develop a four-season resort destination on the former site of the Concord Hotel. As noted by the Gaming Facility Location Board, local support is an important component in the site selection of a casino. EPR and Empire have been working on that for years.

The comprehensive plan was presented in front of a packed house at a town hall-style meeting at Bethel Woods recently where it was met with positive feedback.

As EPR and Empire seek approval from the state for this new resort and casino, it's important to discuss the positive impact this will have for Sullivan County, its residents and the community. After all, we have been waiting decades for this type of resort to return to our region. Empire and EPR have been listening; they know we need a development that will provide a wide range of choices that will attract people year-round, that will respect the environment and that will work with other community businesses and organizations.

I can speak from experience that this has been a terrific working relationship from the start, as Adelaar's team has worked closely with community stakeholders for more than three years, helping to position this project so that the team can take this vision to market quickly once it receives approval from the state. In fact, construction workers would be able to break ground within 30 days of receiving selection

from the state, something quite rare in the development industry. It will ensure that within weeks, the region will begin feeling the economic impact of Adelaar.

The total \$750 million construction effort is expected to generate about 2,550 construction jobs in Sullivan County. Full- and part-time labor crews will provide a tremendous boost to our local economy through patronage of local shops, restaurants, taverns and hotels. For small business owners, construction of Adelaar means more customers, increased profits and the overall strengthening of the local economy and greater long-term sustainability. Once completed, the resort will create 2,200 permanent full-time and part-time jobs.

Adelaar will also include a fully financed waterpark, one that will fit seamlessly with its natural surroundings and be built and operated by Aquatic Development Group, a leader in the field. The developers of Adelaar have also

formed key partnerships with local entertainment venues so that more businesses and organizations can benefit from the influx of visitors to the region.

By teaming up with local educational institutions to create training programs, Adelaar will help ensure Sullivan County retains its educated workforce and stems the migration of graduates. When the governor came to Bethel Woods to announce the state's gambling initiative, clearly intended as an economic engine for upstate, he made it very clear that casinos were intended to spur more significant development. That's what Adelaar does. We are honored and grateful that Adelaar is one of the proposed casino resort sites in Sullivan County that will submit their application for one of four casino licenses that are being offered in this round by New York state.

GUEST COLUMNS

We welcome longer submissions of readers who have particular expertise on an issue or news event. These My Views columns receive much more scrutiny than a typical letter to the editor because of the bigger play that they are given. We generally require that a My View be written by an expert in a particular field, unless the point is very well made and fully supported. You may submit a My View one of three ways. You can e-mail it to letters@th-record.com, fax it to 845-343-2170 or mail it to Letters to the Editor, Times Herald-Record, P.O. Box 2046, 40 Mulberry St., Middletown, NY 10940. Our policy states My View submissions be between 400-600 words and include your full name, home address and telephone number for verification.

Scott B. Samuelson is the chairman of the Sullivan County Legislature.

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District Seven Legislator

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SULLIVAN COUNTY LEGISLATURE  
SULLIVAN COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER  
100 NORTH STREET  
PO BOX 5012  
MONTICELLO, NY 12701

June 2, 2014

Ms. Gail P. Thorpe  
Supervisor of Contract Administration  
New York State Gaming Commission  
Contracts Office  
One Broadway Center  
Schenectady, NY 12301-7500

Dear Ms. Thorpe:

The \$750 million EPR Properties and Empire Resorts project is positioned to become a great force for economic improvement, job creation and community engagement. A four-star resort and gaming destination, the project is sure to attract a wide variety of visitors from across this region of the U.S and possibly nationally and internationally. The resort will be built on a 1,700-acre site in the Catskills, one of the most accessible and striking areas of New York State. It has been designed to offer a diverse array of experiences, from indoor and outdoor recreational activities to fine dining, shopping and gaming.

The Sullivan County community will benefit greatly from construction. The boom in tourism will positively impact local businesses, while the resort itself will offer thousands of permanent jobs to area residents. By the end of the construction period, the resort will have created about 2,200 new permanent jobs, resulting in \$60 million in annual employee compensation. These jobs will go a long way toward reducing Sullivan County's unemployment rate.

In addition, the resort's construction alone will create more than 2,550 jobs. These contributions to the region's economy and tourism industry have positioned EPR Properties and Empire Resorts to achieve the economic investment and tourism goals required from the state in its Gaming Economic Development Act. The lodging options alone will include more than 1,100

Ms. Gail Thorpe

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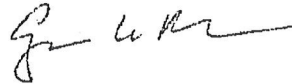
June 2, 2014

hotel rooms in five different venues: the casino hotel, bed and breakfast, resort hotel, adventure hotel and waterpark hotel. The individuals and families being housed at the resort will undoubtedly want to explore the Sullivan County area, resulting in more business for local companies.

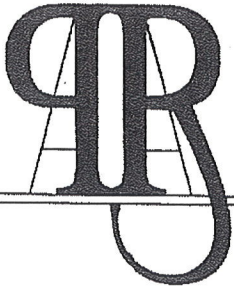
Area businesses will see even greater benefits than a spike in tourism, however. EPR Properties and Empire Resorts are working to form proactive and lucrative partnerships with local companies and entertainment venues. In addition, the organization's upcoming job training program will provide valuable training and many future employment and advancement opportunities for college graduates.

Sullivan County residents and businesses will see tremendous benefits from this project's construction and operation. Increased tourism will boost local businesses, while the resort's temporary construction-related jobs and permanent full- and part-time positions will go a long way in alleviating unemployment rates throughout the county.

Sincerely yours,



Gene L. Benson  
Sullivan County Legislator  
District Seven



*Rouis and Company, LLP*

CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

Paul A. A. Rouis, Jr., CPA  
Jonathan F. Rouis, CPA

August 23, 2012

Honorable Anthony Cellini and  
Members of the Town of Thompson Board

Dear Supervisor Cellini and Members of the Town Board

As a member of the Sullivan County Legislature and Partner of Rouis and Company LLP CPAS's, I am writing to express my strong support for the Entertainment Properties Trust (EPT) Concord Resort. I believe this project is uniquely positioned to drive significant economic growth, tourism and job creation in our community.

The planned resort will include up to 1,800 hotel rooms in several different hotels; an indoor waterpark and spa, and a renovated Monster Golf Course among a host of other amenities. With over 900,000 square feet of commercial space including retail and recreation, plus approximately 45% of the site devoted to open space, the EPT Concord Resort will also benefit local residents and generate tens of millions of dollars in tax revenues for our communities and schools.

Additionally, it will trigger private investment in Sullivan County, drive private sector growth in local businesses and encourage new business development while leveraging and protecting the County's natural resources.

Sullivan County is eager to reap the economic benefits a project of this scope can provide. I urge you to act in support of this extraordinary opportunity which promises an investment of hundreds of millions of private dollars and the creation of approximately 2,600 FTE jobs.

I commit my support to the EPT Concord Resort project and ask for you to join me. Together we can help create a strong, vibrant Sullivan County.

Sincerely,

  
Jonathan Rouis  
Sullivan County Legislator  
Partner, Rouis and Company, LLP CPA's

**RESOLUTION NO. 131-14 INTRODUCED BY THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE SUPPORTING THE SITING OF THE FIRST TWO CLASS III GAMING CASINO DESTINATION RESORTS IN THE CATSKILL REGION STRICTLY IN THE COUNTY OF SULLIVAN**

WHEREAS, the exceptional efforts of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature brought about the enactment of the Upstate NY Gaming Economic Development Act, which included an amendment to the New York State Constitution to allow Class III Gaming in New York State,

WHEREAS New York State will now develop up to four casinos in upstate New York; and

WHEREAS, on November 5, 2013, the voters of the State of New York voted for and supported the enactment of the constitutional amendment authorizing Class III Gaming in New York State,

WHEREAS on November 5, 2013, the voters of Sullivan County provided the largest plurality of votes for such enactment of the constitutional amendment authorizing Class III Gaming in New York State,

WHEREAS, the passage of said constitutional amendment and the concurrent legislation authorized the establishment of four destination gaming resorts in three distinct regions (Regions 1, 2 and 5), in Upstate New York, with a maximum of two projects to be located in any one Region

WHEREAS, Sullivan County is located in the Catskill/Hudson Valley Region 1, and

WHEREAS, Sullivan County has been recognized as the premiere vacation destination in New York State for generations and has historically served as host to some of the world's most famous destination resorts; and

WHEREAS, Sullivan County was home to multiple destination resorts which contained thousands of hotel rooms and accompanying amenities such as retail, entertainment, and sports attractions.

WHEREAS the local infrastructure of Sullivan County was always sufficiently able to handle all economic, social and environmental direct and indirect impacts of the many destination resorts; visiting tourists, and the employees who worked in these facilities; and

WHEREAS, Sullivan County's tourist economy was one of the cornerstones of vibrant, middle class that comprised many of its towns, villages, and hamlets;

WHEREAS, the intent of the enabling legislation is to spur economic development and job creation to revive upstate New York's economy; no more important is the revival of Sullivan County's once vibrant economy

WHEREAS, Sullivan County, has experienced a significant downturn in its tourist economy over the last half century and stands now as one of the most socio economically challenged areas in New York State;

WHEREAS Sullivan County's working class and small businesses, as well as tax ratables, have significantly suffered from this downturn;

WHEREAS, Sullivan County ranked last in New York State in year 2013 job creation and was the only area in the Hudson Valley that experienced a year-over-year decrease in private-sector employment, and as one of the highest unemployment rates in New York State, and

WHEREAS, Sullivan County, through its local and state officials and local business community has historically sought the legalization of Class III Casino Gaming for more than four decades, and

WHEREAS, gaming, as a single component within a destination resort, will provide the much needed catalyst to stimulate further economic growth in Sullivan County; and

WHEREAS the current proposals in Sullivan County are for sustainable resort destinations that will comply with New York State's environmental regulations to mitigate all environmental impacts, and

WHEREAS, the development of destination gaming resorts and the siting of TWO Casino Gaming Destination Resorts would bring thousands of much needed quality jobs and economic growth to Sullivan County that now already exists in neighboring counties that are in the Catskill Region I; and

WHEREAS, the establishment of destination resorts in Sullivan County will provide financial support for education and desperately needed property tax relief for Sullivan County taxpayers and communities statewide; and

WHEREAS, the establishment of destination resorts will stop the flow of revenues for tourism and gaming crossing our borders into neighboring states and keep those dollars in Sullivan County and New York State

WHEREAS, the establishment of destination resorts in Sullivan County will meet the intent and spirit of the enabling legislation and revive and rebuild our history and economy; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that Sullivan County enthusiastically supports the siting of TWO Class III Gaming Destination Resorts in Sullivan County to meet the intent and language of the constitutional amendment authorizing Class III Gaming in New York State.

**Moved by Mrs. LaBuda, seconded by Mr. Steingart, put to a vote with Mrs. Gieger opposed, resolution carried and declared duly adopted on motion March 20, 2014.**

**RESOLUTION # 20****CLASS III GAMING CASINO**

On motion by Councilperson Grund, seconded by Councilperson Nearing, the following resolution was

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WHEREAS the local infrastructure of Sullivan County was always sufficiently able to handle all economic, social and environmental direct and indirect impacts of the many destination resorts; visiting tourists, and the employees who worked in these facilities; and

WHEREAS, Sullivan County's tourist economy was one of the cornerstones of vibrant, middle class that comprised many of its towns, villages, and hamlets;

WHEREAS, Sullivan County, has experienced a significant downturn in its tourist economy over the last half century and stands now as one of the most economically challenged areas in New York State;

WHEREAS Sullivan County's working class and small businesses, as well as tax ratables, have significantly suffered from this downturn;

WHEREAS, Sullivan County ranked last in New York State in year 2013 job creation and was the only area in the Hudson Valley that experienced a year-over-year decrease in private-sector employment, according to Johnny Nelson, labor market analyst for the state, and

WHEREAS, Sullivan County, through its local and state officials and local business community has historically sought the legalization of Class III Casino Gaming for more than four decades, and

WHEREAS, gaming, as a single component within a destination resort, will provide the much needed catalyst to stimulate further economic growth in Sullivan County; and

WHEREAS the current proposals in Sullivan County are for sustainable resort destinations that will comply with New York State's environmental regulations to mitigate all environmental impacts, and

WHEREAS, the development of destination gaming resorts and the siting of TWO Casino Gaming Destination Resorts would bring thousands of much needed quality jobs and economic growth to Sullivan County that now already exists in neighboring counties that are in the Catskill Region I; and

WHEREAS, the establishment of destination resorts in Sullivan County will provide financial support for education and desperately needed property tax relief for Sullivan County taxpayers and communities statewide; and

WHEREAS, the establishment of destination resorts will stop the flow of revenues for tourism and gaming crossing our borders into neighboring states and keep those dollars in Sullivan County and New York State; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that Sullivan County enthusiastically supports the siting of TWO Class III Gaming Destination Resorts in Sullivan County to meet the intent and language of the constitutional amendment authorizing Class III Gaming in New York State.

**ADOPTED: AYES: 3 NAYS: 1** Councilperson Richardson, and Councilperson Story absent  
Supervisor Maas

Councilpersons: Grund and Nearing  
I, Hollye Schulman, Town Clerk,  
Hollye Schulman

certify the above resolution is true and  
accurate as passed by the Town Board  
3/12/14