

CASINO COUNTDOWN

The players and the odds

Few single days will have as profound an impact on Philadelphia's landscape as this Wednesday, when the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board names the winners of two slot casino licenses in Philadelphia.

The board will also name the lucky winners of six racetrack casino licenses and three other standalone gaming parlors in other parts of the state.

The board has held hearings on the proposals, and Mayor Street has promised to make his views known to the board and other state officials.

Four of the proposed Philadelphia casinos are on the Delaware waterfront. One is at a neighborhood industrial site. Most have outside financial backing and local political allies.

Here are the five Philadelphia applicants at a glance. We presented this information to a frequently consulted Las Vegas oddsmaker who gave us the odds on the chances of each company being picked (our oddsmaker requested anonymity because he does business with casinos, though with none on this list.)



	HSP Gaming LP — SugarHouse Casino	Riverwalk Casino LP	Philadelphia Entertainment & Development Partners LP — Foxwoods	Keystone Redevelopment LLC — TrumpStreet casino	Pinnacle Entertainment Inc.
Site	22.6 acres on Delaware waterfront in Northern Liberties, at Delaware Avenue and Shackamaxon Street.	Former city incinerator site at Delaware Avenue and Spring Garden Street on the waterfront.	16 acres on the South Philadelphia riverfront at Columbus Boulevard and Reed Street.	30-acre former Budd plant site in Nicetown, Fox Street & Henry Avenue.	33 riverfront acres in Fishtown, at Beach Street and Schirra Drive.
Design	Includes a grand pedestrian plaza on the riverfront, environmentally friendly "green roof," retail shops and several restaurants and bars.	Includes a 400-seat theater, a television studio and six restaurants.	Includes a 2,500-seat showroom, waterfront entertainment promenade, restaurants and retail shops.	Includes movie theater, live performance area, Chickie's & Pete's restaurant and retail shops.	Includes multi-screen movie theater, ice skating rink, restaurants, retail shops and a promenade along the river.
Investment	\$550 million	\$500 million	\$560 million	\$395 million	\$350 million
Financial backing	Successful Chicago developer Neil Bluhm, sometimes called "Chicago's Donald Trump."	Planet Hollywood CEO Robert Earl and New York hedge fund manager Douglas Teitelbaum.	Foxwoods Development Co., which owns successful casino in Connecticut.	Donald Trump.	Las Vegas-based Pinnacle Entertainment.
Political juice	Power lawyer Richard Sprague, developer Dan Keating and former state Supreme Court Justice William Lamb.	Several minority investors, led by Willie Johnson, Bill Miller, and former city Solicitor Ken Trujillo. Plus, Mayor Street's endorsement.	Philadelphia 76ers and Flyers owner Ed Snider, developer Peter DePaul.	Daily News publisher Brian Tierney, Pat Croce. Also, Gov. Rendell, who has three picks on the gaming board, once publicly begged Trump to come here.	City union leader Pete Matthews, Convention Center executive Ahmeenah Young, Kobie West, president of West Insurance Co. Site-owner Bill Anderson.
Glitter factor	Not much. Bluhm isn't flashy, and neither is Sprague.	Sylvester Stallone and Bruce Willis did a promotional video and promise to visit.	Record producer Quincy Jones, basketball star Dawn Staley, Sixers general manager Billy King.	Donald Trump.	Black Entertainment Television founder Robert Johnson.
Community Opposition temperature	78°	65°	96°; vocal opposition, sign-waving protesters in hearings.	88°; earliest protests from community groups from Nicetown, East Falls and Tioga, which has quieted down.	62°; some from Fishtown and Northern Liberties community groups and gambling opponents.
Upside/Downside	Smooth sailing during the state hearings. Some neighborhood unrest but not much.	It's the smallest site, but closest to mass transit. Gaming Board seemed confused over financial structure, which had investors putting up most of the money for 49% control (minority group has 51%).	Investor Peter DePaul got tagged with a \$200,000 fine for violating state gaming law ban on political contributions; Foxwoods has successful model in Connecticut and is pledging lots to charity.	Donald Trump.	The northernmost Delaware River applicant, it sits on the biggest site; its design has been most well-received among applicants. The Johnson investment came too late for it to be included in record; hence, Pinnacle is the only one applying without minority investors attached.
Las Vegas says odds are	7:1	5:1	8:1	7:5	7:5

— Chris Brennan & Dave Davies