LOCAL LAND USE AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATIONS WITH GAMING

Laura Scott

UNH Adjunct Faculty, MPA Program

Community Development Director, Windham NH

HOW DOES A MUNICIPALITY PROPERLY PLAN FOR GAMING IN NH ?

It requires coordinated land use, transportation and development policy along with physical investment in infrastructure. It challenges the local municipalities to adopt complementary standards that enable the community to provide a comprehensive, holistic and sustainable atmosphere for development that complies with the local vision.

HOW DOES A MUNICIPALITY PROPERLY PLAN FOR GAMING IN NH ?

- In other words, it can't just happen with a stoke of a pen or a vote at the State House.

- Municipalities need to proactively plan for this type of development and those associated land uses that inevitably follow.

- Different levels of planning, study and investment are required for new gaming facilities as opposed to the reuse of existing facilities.

WHAT LOCAL LAND USE REGULATIONS ARE INVOLVED?

- Zoning Ordinance

- Site Plan Regulations

- Building, Fire, and Life Safety Codes

WHAT LOCAL BOARDS/COMMITTEES WILL BE INVOLVED?

- Planning Board

- Zoning Board of Adjustment

- Conservation Commission

- Historic District/Heritage Commission

- Technical Review Committees

- Regional Planning Commissions

- Others

SPECIFIC ZONING CONSIDERATIONS

- Are Gaming facilities allowed per the Municipal Zoning Ordinance?
  - New Use Allowed
  - Expansion/Change of Existing Use
- Are Mixed Use Developments Allowed?
  - More than just gaming facility on parcel – hotels, restaurants, conference centers, recreational uses
- What are Zoning Regulations in areas abutting gaming facility location?
  - Do they allow for uses that are compatible to gaming operaitons
  - Proximity to uses that might find this objectionable – residential, churches, govt uses, schools, cemeteries

INFRASTRUCTURE CONSIDERATIONS

- Water
- Wastewater
- Transportation Networks
- Police
- Fire
- Ambulance
- Electric and gas
- Telecommunications and internet
- Solid waste and recycling
- Site Design and Architecture

WATER

- Well, municipal, regional or private water source?

- Is there water capacity there for expanded facility/new facility?

- Is there adequate water for a fire suppression system?

- Does the existing infrastructure need to be updated in order to meet the anticipated needs of gaming facility, as well as additional growth due to gaming facility?

WASTEWATER

○ Septic, municipal, regional or private wastewater treatment facility?

○ Is there treatment capacity there for the facility to be expanded or a new facility to be built?

○ Does the existing infrastructure need to be updated in order to meet the anticipated needs of gaming facility, as well as additional growth due to gaming facility?

TRANSPORTATION NETWORKS

- Considerations with Existing Facilities
  - Can existing road networks handle anticipated increase in traffic and use?
  - Does infrastructure need to be updated? Is it possible?
  - Are there alternative roads or areas that can be used to access the site?
- Considerations with New Facilities
  - What are the logical access routes?
  - How should access be designed? Cars only or multi-use? Peak demand or average usage?
  - How can the site be accessed without causing concern and negative issues with abutting land uses along the routes?

TRANSPORTATION NETWORKS CONT.

- Employees
  - Incentivize ride sharing, carpooling, and shuttles
  - Provide opportunities for walking and biking to work
  - Off-setting work shifts from peak commuter times
- Visitors
  - Highlight shuttles and tour buses
  - Incentives for carpooling
  - Demand Management for peak times (lane shifting, parking areas, access points to/from facility)
- Facility Operations
  - Deliveries during off-peak times
  - Onsite employee traffic kept to a minimum and utilization of walking, biking, and alt fueled vehicles

STORMWATER

- Increasingly stringent regulations at the Federal and State level

- Is infrastructure at existing sites able to manage the anticipated increase?

- New facilities can incorporate this into the overall design for site

- Innovative technologies and methods available to manage stormwater but need to be explored

POLICE, FIRE AND AMBULANCE

○ Will gaming facilities have own protective services or rely on municipal services as primary source?

○ Need to ensure that Departments are part of initial planning for facility to trouble-shoot any issues that may arise in site layout.

○ Impact Fees can be used to help offset increase in services doe to growth but that needs to be established in advance

ELECTRIC AND GAS

- Does the current infrastructure in place allow for the expansion of existing facilities ?

- Is infrastructure expansion possible?

- Is there infrastructure in place in areas where new facilities are being considered that meet the needs?

- If not, is it possible to extend the infrastructure, at what cost, and what timeframe is needed to properly plan and build?

TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND INTERNET

- More of a consideration in the northern part of New Hampshire

- Businesses want reliable coverage that meets the needs of their business customers and employees

- State, Gaming Industry, and local municipalities should partner with service providers in order to plan for and build infrastructure

SOLID WASTE AND RECYCLING

- Where is solid waste and recycling from facilities going to go? What about the anticipated increase from the other developments?

- Needs to be addressed in a cooperative way with the Gaming Industry, non-profits, and local Boards/Committees
  - Reduce, reuse, recycle
  - Avoidance of single-use products
  - Composing
  - Public education of visitors and staff

SITE DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE

- Site design and architecture is what makes or breaks any development

- It is hard to define and even harder to regulate unless standards are already in place

- Public usually is more concerned with how a building looks and how it sits on the site then what is in the building or site

SITE DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE CONSIDERATIONS

- Buildings and parking areas that are to scale
- Public art
- Landscaping
- Signage (on site and off-site)
- Lighting
- Pedestrian-friendly (sidewalks & walking trails)
- Man-made infrastructure and buildings that work with the site and fit
- Open/Green Space
- Natural Resource Protection

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Is there staff at local level that have the ability to participate in this process – planning, community development, fire, police, assessing, highway???

- Local housing options for workers

- Local child care options for workers

- Fear of gaming encouraging communities to become a "one horse town" for local revenue sources and the employment base

BIG PICTURE

- Civic engagement is KEY

- Planning for Gaming Facilities needs to be integrated as part of a larger community vision

- There needs to be a stated vision and goals of the host communities towards gaming facilities and associated development

- Local land use regulations need to be in place prior to any development being submitted for approval

- Development impacts are regional but benefit is largely local (property tax) and state (gaming licenses, taxes, and fees)

THANK YOU

Laura Scott
603-520-5772
scottlaura_@hotmail.com