

ATLANTIC COUNTY DEVELOPMENT BRIEFS

-- FALL 2011--



CASINOS

- ❖ **Upscale upgrades put a shine on Golden Nugget in Atlantic City, Oct. 2011:** Four months after Landry's Inc. purchased the Trump Marina Hotel Casino and renamed it the Golden Nugget, changes made by the new owners are evident.
- ❖ **Updated casinos succeed with nightclubs, pools, spas, Oct. 2011:** For many years some casinos were little more than warehouse like structures filled with slot machines and table games. Plenty of dead space was left over. Now, virtually every inch of casinos must be transformed into exciting attractions to get customers to spend money.
- ❖ **Harrah's to introduce Pool-side gambling as new way to attract customers, Oct. 2011:** The climate-controlled atmosphere in the dome-covered Pool at Harrah's is a balmy 82 degrees. The Pool at Harrah's, already a thriving nightclub, has installed some gaming tables with eventual plans to expand to a full mini casino.
- ❖ **Tropicana installs first gaming machines in The Quarter, Nov. 2011:** Tropicana Casino and resort is installing two \$5 and \$10 blackjack machines in The Quarter as part of an initial test phase that if successful could see gaming expanded to additional areas of the shopping and dining location. Eight penny slots will also be added. All are expected to be ready for gaming beginning Black Friday, November 25.
- ❖ **Owners of former Atlantic City Hilton announce plan to keep casino out of foreclosure, Nov. 2011:** Parent company Colony Capital LLC and a group of lenders have reached a deal to keep the Boardwalk casino open and give it a \$24.3 million cash infusion.
- ❖ **New Jersey OKs sports betting at casinos and race tracks by wide margin, Nov. 2011:** New Jersey residents want to bet on the Super Bowl, the World Series, the NCAA's March Madness basketball tournament, and other professional and college sports. But first, a federal ban on sports betting in all but four states would have to be lifted by Congress or overturned by the courts for New Jersey to offer wagering on professional and college teams.
- ❖ **New Jersey regulators consider ACH, Hard Rock casino plans, Nov. 2011:** Owners of ACH, formerly known as the Atlantic City Hilton Casino Resort, have reached agreement with lenders to keep the property open and pump in \$24.3 million in new cash. In a separate matter, the Casino Control Commission is expected to approve Hard Rock International for a pilot program allowing smaller-scale casinos on the Boardwalk. Hard Rock would be the first of two such casinos permitted by a new



state law.

- ❖ **Atlantic City Hilton to become “locals” casino, Nov. 2011:** ACH, Atlantic City’s smallest gaming hall, plans to transform itself into a low-cost locals casino. ACH announced plans to pursue a different marketing strategy that focuses heavily on local customers following a new deal between its owner and lenders to keep the financially troubled casino open for at least another year. The NJ Casino Control Commission approved the deal to rebrand the property and reduce jobs, table games and slot machines.
- ❖ **Hard Rock plans to start construction by July, Nov. 2011:** Hard Rock plans to start construction on the first phase of a new 200-room casino hotel by July 2012, with a grand opening planned for spring 2014. A second phase would add a 650-room tower that would commence within two years of the completion of the first phase. The Hard Rock projects would create 2,000 construction jobs and approximately 1,500 permanent positions.
- ❖ **Revel to limit length of employment for some Atlantic City casino workers, Dec. 2011:** Revel plans to restrict the number of years it table games dealers, cocktail servers, bartenders and other frontline employees may work in their jobs essentially creating “term limits” that are unprecedented in the Atlantic City casino industry. Some of the jobs will be for a defined service cycle role with an employment period of 4, 5 or 6 years.
- ❖ **Revel Casino’s New Sphere, Dec. 2011:** Construction crews have just placed a large sphere on top of the casino’s 47 story hotel tower. The sphere will be part of a spectacular, high-tech light show for the \$2.4 billion megaresort. Revel is scheduled to open May 15, 2012, although the company may push up the date because construction is weeks ahead of schedule.

HEALTHCARE

- ❖ **Shore Medical Center recognized as a top performer by Joint Commission, Sept. 2011:** The hospital is one of 405 hospitals and critical access hospitals to earn be named one of the top performing hospitals in the country by the Joint Commission. Shore was named as a top performer in four key quality measures –heart attack, heart failure, pneumonia and surgical care.

RETAIL SHOPPING

- ❖ **Hamilton Mall plans to expand, Nov. 2011:** Owners of the Hamilton Mall in Hamilton Township are proposing a 305,468 square foot expansion that would add new stores, restaurants and an anchor store to the region’s largest shopping center. The project would be built in two phases.
- ❖ **Lender group acquires Atlantic City’s The Pier Shops in foreclosure auction, Oct. 2011:** The Pier went on the auction block after the previous owner, Taubman

Centers Inc., defaulted on a \$149.7 million mortgage and the lenders foreclosed. The lender group, including U.S. Bank National Association, took over with a winning bid of \$25 million, plus \$1.

- ❖ **New management for The Pier Shops at Caesars hopes to expand options there, Nov. 2011:** International real estate firm Cushman & Wakefield Inc. intends to keep current shops and restaurants while bringing in more tenants with a national following.

TRANSPORTATION

AIRPORT

- ❖ **South Jersey Transportation Authority breaks ground on \$14 million rescue station at Atlantic City International Airport, Oct. 2011:** The 40,700—square foot rescue station will replace an existing facility that had been leased from the Federal Aviation Administration’s William J. Hughes Technical Center. The Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting Facility, which is being funded predominantly through federal aviation grants, will include five bays for rescue vehicles.
- ❖ **\$4.2 million design contract approved for Atlantic City Expressway-airport connector, Nov. 2011:** The proposed connection would consist of a series of roads and bridges to funnel expressway vehicles to Atlantic City International Airport and the NextGen Aviation Research & Technology Park while avoiding local traffic and the circle at the intersection of Delilah and Tilton roads in Egg Harbor Township. The project is expected to cost between \$40 million and \$50 million.
- ❖ **ACY to begin \$25 million expansion in hopes of earning the “international” in Atlantic City International Airport, Dec. 2011:** An 18-month, \$25 million dollar expansion of the Atlantic City International Airport construction project is designed to attract more flights and open the airport to more international flyers.
- ❖ **Jitney Service to/from ACY, Dec. 2011:** Effective Dec. 1, a group of Atlantic City Jitney drivers is providing service to and from the Atlantic City International Airport, in conjunction with the airports flight schedule. The cost for the ride is \$10.

EDUCATION

- ❖ **Richard Stockton College launches Legislator-in-Residence program, Oct. 2011:** Students at Richard Stockton College will get to interact with state legislators in a new “Legislator-in-Residence” program as an effort to increase the civic engagement of the Stockton community and help promote understanding of critical state issues.
- ❖ **New Jersey gains high marks in Nation’s Report Card testing, Nov. 2011:** New Jersey students continue to outperform their peers in almost every other state, according to results of the 2011 national test of fourth- and eight- graders. The state ranked second nationally in fourth-grade and eighth-grade reading, third in eighth-

grade math and fourth in fourth-grade math, according to results of the National Assessment of Educational Progress, also called the Nation's Report Card.

- ❖ **Atlantic Cape Community College Expands Bachelor Degree Programs, Dec. 2011:** A bachelor's degree in social work and another in public health will be added next year when Rutgers University opens a \$7.5 million, 20,000 square-foot satellite building under construction on ACCC's Mays Landing campus.

The community college will also begin offering a new aviation sciences associate degree in September to prepare students to transfer to bachelor's degree programs, and is also expanding its performing arts offerings with the addition of theater arts, dance and instrumental music.

ACCC expects to go out to bid on a new \$16 million science building in Mays Landing in the spring and is moving forward with a \$10 million addition to the Atlantic City campus that will house hospitality and gaming programs.

CONSTRUCTION

- ❖ **Pleasantville moves ahead on City Center project, Oct. 2011:** The \$55 million, three-phase City Center Project in Pleasantville can move forward after officials with the Pleasantville Urban Enterprise Zone acquired the last three properties they needed to secure land for the project.



- ❖ **Local builders start to branch out, Oct. 2011:** The new home market still looks grim for homebuilders, but pretty good for potential buyers: Houses haven't been this affordable in decades. Even so, local homebuilders are starting to feel a bit expansive, planning new developments in the area and extending their territories again.
- ❖ **Hamilton Township Proposal for development of 21 single-family homes, Dec. 2011:** An application for a new 32.5 acre development of single family homes to be built along Somers Point-Mays Landing Road near Sunshine Park was recently presented to the township's planning board.

TOURISM

- ❖ **Firm to create master plan for Atlantic City Tourism District, Oct. 2011:** An international real estate firm's U.S. branch will get nearly \$800,000 to develop the master plan for Atlantic City's Tourism District. The Casino Reinvestment Development Authority awarded the contract to Chicago-based Jones Lang LaSalle Americas. Jones

Lang LaSalle Americas will receive \$799,770 for its work, with the CRDA reserving an additional \$40,230 for contingencies. The authority must have a master plan ready by Feb. 1, 2012.

- ❖ **Former Aramark head to lead promotion of Atlantic City's Tourism District, Oct. 2011:** As CEO of the Atlantic City Alliance, Liza Cartmell, former president of Aramark sports and entertainment, will have a \$30 million budget to market the new district created to reverse the ailing casino industry.
- ❖ **CRDA to demolish Garden Pier Theater, Dec. 2011:** Work crews are demolishing the weather-beaten stone structure that formerly functioned as an amphitheater on Garden Pier as part of a \$2.2 million renovation project scheduled to be completed before Memorial Day. The CRDA will pay \$2.1 million in restoration work needed in the pier's buildings currently home to the city's art and history museums. The pier is located at New Jersey Avenue and the Boardwalk across from the Revel Casino.
- ❖ **Atlantic City Air Show moved to Friday, Dec. 2011:** The Atlantic City Air Show will return to town on August 17, the first time in 10 years that the show will be held on a Friday. The annual event is being moved to a Friday to accommodate the Air Force Thunderbirds. The Thunderbirds, the Air Force's official demonstration team and the Golden Knights are both set to appear in the 2012 show.
- ❖ **ACCVA Approves \$11 Million for 2012 Marketing Budget, Dec. 2011:** The Atlantic City Convention & Visitors Authority board approved an \$11.3 million destination marketing budget for 2012, an increase of approximately \$540,000 from 2010. More than \$5 million will be spent on direct marketing expenditures such as advertisements and trade shows in 2012, a \$375,000 increase from the previous year.
- ❖ **Revel Awarded \$2.6 Million to Train Workers, Dec. 2011:** State officials announced \$2.6 million in worker training grants for employees of Revel Entertainment Group's casino. Revel will hire approximately 5,000 employees and every worker will get at least 40 hours of training through Atlantic Cape Community College. The training will occur online, on the job, or in a classroom setting. Atlantic Cape instructors will handle training in the classrooms at the college's Charles D. Worthington Atlantic City campus located one mile from the Revel Casino. The college will hire 50 to 80 additional instructors on year long contracts that could extend longer, in addition to the more than 110 faculty now working at the college's three campuses.

BUSINESS

- ❖ **Bottom Lines: Minority-owned businesses in Atlantic County get one-third of small business loans, Oct. 2011:** The federal Small Business Administration backed a record amount of lending in its just-concluded fiscal year, more than \$30 billion nationwide. In New Jersey, the bulk of the increase came in loans to minority-owned businesses, which jumped 78 percent in the year ended Sept. 30. Overall SBA lending in the state was up 49 percent.

ATLANTIC CITY

- ❖ **New Jersey residents feel safe in Atlantic City, poll shows, Nov. 2011:** Atlantic City was ranked the second safest of six cities included in a recent Fairleigh Dickinson University PublicMind poll. Sixty-four percent of respondents said they felt safe or very safe in the resort.
- ❖ **Gov. Chris Christie visits Atlantic City, Nov. 2011:** Gov. Chris Christie was in Atlantic City and stopped at the Boardwalk for a personal tour of the James Candy Co.'s operations.
- ❖ **Atlantic City Jetty in line for Extension, Dec. 2011:** In the next three months, contractors will start working on an \$8.4 million jetty extension project for a popular surfing beach at Vermont Avenue. The project will double the length of jetties or stone groins at Vermont and Massachusetts avenues. The work is meant to better maintain the beach, which fronts Revel Entertainment Group's megacasino. A recent erosion project by the Army Corps of Engineers widened the erosion prone stretch of sand from just 50 to 100 feet to 350 feet.
- ❖ **Atlantic City Housing Authority to add \$500,000 of surveillance cameras at public housing properties, Dec. 2011:** Residency advisory groups identified security as the most pressing concern. The Housing Authority has applied for a \$180,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to help defray costs for this safety initiative. The money would add an additional 32 cameras to Stanley Holmes Village.
- ❖ **Upgrades sought for Boardwalk Hall, Dec. 2011:** The Atlantic City Convention & Visitors Authority is hoping to decrease performance costs at Boardwalk Hall with the installation of a new \$2 to 3 million dollar sound and lighting grid. The multimillion-dollar equipment will allow for easier setup and less expensive shows. The ACCVA plans to go out to bid for the new equipment early next year with plans to install by October 2012.



BEACH

- ❖ **Replenishment project adding sand, Revel taking steps to keep it, Sept. 2011:** Erosion had left little sand in front of the \$2.4 billion casino site when Revel began construction in late 2007. But the Army Corps of Engineers has recently been replenishing the beaches, leaving a thick layer of sand that stretches 350 feet from Revel to the ocean.
- ❖ **Absecon Island beaches to get even more sand for regular beach replenishment, Oct. 2011:** A few months after almost 1.5 million cubic yards of sand were pumped onto the beaches in Atlantic City and Ventnor, another beach-fill project is set to add an additional 2 million cubic yards.