
Sources: Nassau OTB putting chips on Westbury casino site

By: David Winzelberg  December 9, 2014  0

[Nassau Regional Off-Track Betting](#) is negotiating to acquire adjacent retail sites on Merrick Avenue in Westbury for its planned mini-casino.

That's according to high-placed industry sources, although neither OTB nor the owners of 655 Merrick Ave., Woodbury-based [Pergament Properties](#), would confirm Tuesday afternoon. [Trinity Place Holdings](#), the Secaucus, N.J.-based owners of 695 Merrick Ave. next door, the 5.9-acre site of a shuttered Sym's clothing store, also declined comment.

This is not a done deal. One industry source contacted LIBN late Tuesday to say negotiations were underway at a nearby site, not on Merrick Avenue.

Max Brittain, vice president of Pergament Properties, told LIBN Wednesday that the company "[is] not in negotiations and [has] never been in negotiations with Nassau OTB on this property."

However, sources with inside knowledge of the casino site-selection process told LIBN Monday Merrick Avenue was a good bet – and Nassau OTB is also planning to build a parking structure at the site, which is directly across from Eisenhower Park and just up the road from [Nassau Coliseum](#).

The first building, on a 5-acre site on Merrick Avenue, is occupied by [Micro Center](#) and [The Tile Shop](#). Hilliard, Ohio-based Micro Center, a computer and electronics retailer with 25 stores nationwide, still has multiple years left on its Westbury lease, where it's been since 1998. Company officials told LIBN Monday they have not been notified that the property may be sold.

An OTB spokesman said Monday "no decision has been made as to the site" for the slots parlor. However, Nassau OTB unanimously passed an "official intent resolution" Monday authorizing the agency to do prep work in advance of adopting a bond resolution to fund the acquisition and development of a casino site, the OTB spokesman said.

Nassau OTB had previously eyed its [Race Palace](#) in Plainview as a possible casino site, but dropped those plans after stiff community opposition and revelations that the building's physical structure was inadequate to hold the 500 gaming machines targeted for the second floor.

The gaming facility is slated to have 1,000 video slot machines and is expected to open in 2015.

Meanwhile, [Suffolk OTB](#) is scheduled to break ground in February on its video slot casino on a 31-acre former multiplex movie theater site in Medford, which is also slated to open late in 2015.
