

*Community Impact Analysis
and Mitigation*

of a

*Casino-Resort in the
Town of Middleborough, Massachusetts*

July 23, 2007

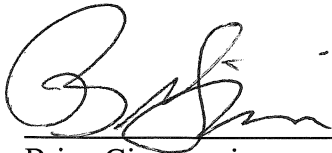


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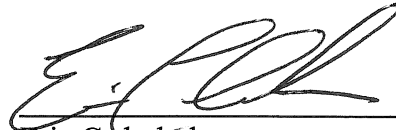
*Written by:
Middleborough Casino Gambling Study Committee
A committee of volunteers*

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

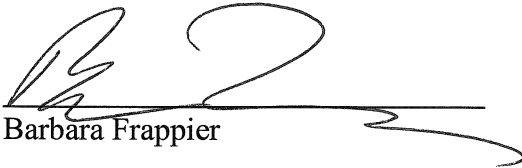
We, the Middleborough Casino Gambling Study Committee, appointed by the Town Moderator, present this impact analysis on behalf of the Town of Middleborough. We further attest that this impact analysis has been written in order to fulfill the charge we were sworn to uphold under Article 1 of the Town Meeting May 21, 2007



Brian Giovanoni
Chairman



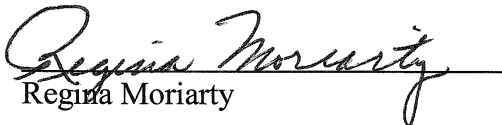
Eric Cederholm
Vice Chairman



Barbara Frappier



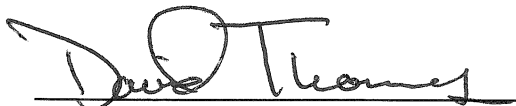
Colleen Lieb



Regina Moriarty



Nancy Ockers



David Thomas

PREFACE

On May 21, 2007, a motion with amendment was made under Article 1 of the 2007 Annual Town Meeting forming the Casino Gambling Study Committee. Town meeting voted to:

“establish a committee of seven residents of the Town, appointed by the Moderator, to formulate a recommendation to be presented at the next Special Town Meeting, and voted upon at that time, regarding whether or not the Town should allow the establishment of a Gambling Casino within its borders, and to prepare draft petitions for the Governor of the Commonwealth, the Town’s Legislator’s at General Court, and the Federal Secretary of the Interior asking them to take action consistent with that recommendation. The committee shall consider and investigate the financial, cultural, and physical effects of such a Gambling Casino on the Town with respect to its zoning, Master Plan, basic infrastructure, utilities, traffic, and long term character of the town by meeting with residents, town officials, legislators, developers, and informed individuals from towns that presently host gambling casinos in neighboring states, and any other resource they deem necessary. Members shall serve until the presentation of the Committee’s recommendations to a Special Town Meeting. Vacancies occurring on the Committee shall be filled by the Moderator.”

Town Moderator solicited volunteers from the citizenry of Middleborough to serve on the Committee. The seven-member committee was chosen from 49 volunteers to investigate positive and negative impacts of hosting a casino-resort in the Town of Middleborough.

The Committee began its duties on June 7, 2007 and continued weekly, to uncover and discuss impacts, meeting individually with local business persons and in casino-resort host communities, interviewing public officials and Town employees who could best quantify impacts to their departments and/or community and others who could offer educated impact information to the Committee. Individually, each member of the Committee researched, reviewed and reported on available written documentation.

The impact analysis serves as an attachment to the petitions the Committee has drafted to the Governor of the Commonwealth and the Secretary of the Interior.

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NEGATIVE IMPACTS AND MITIGATION

The Committee focused much of its attention on the negative impacts of hosting a casino-resort and presents the 14 negative impacts and possible mitigation.

Town Infrastructure

The infrastructure of the Town of Middleborough consists of roads and bridges, water and sewer mains, drainage and municipal gas and electric

Roads and Bridges

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts currently maintains Route 44, which runs along the south side of the property controlled by the Tribe. The Town of Middleborough maintains all other roadways surrounding the site, with a limited budget. Any substantial increase in traffic along the roads surrounding the site would be detrimental to conditions and safety. Travel along the roads during construction and upon opening of the facility should be restricted.

The local roads surrounding the site should be upgraded with proper drainage and resurfaced to allow for safety. To maintain local traffic use, the bridge at Plymouth Street-River's Edge Intersection should be repaired after construction of the casino-resort is complete and restricted access to the site should be enacted to allow primary access only from a reconstructed Route 44. Emergency access should be constructed but remain gated to the local surface roads.

Water

The Middleborough Water Department currently pumps an average of 1.5 million gallons per day (MGD) of water each year and has a peak summer demand of 2.73 MGD. The casino-resort would require upwards of an additional 0.75 to 1.0 MGD with a peak of 1.5 MGD. This would require the Town to develop or redevelop supplies to provide safe sustainable yield from its aquifer to its customers.

Distribution of water to the casino-resort would have to be fortified to allow water supply even in the event of a watermain break or other emergency.

With only one large water storage tank (5.5 Million Gallons) and one small aged elevated water storage tank (0.5 Million Gallons), the Town would need to erect an additional storage tank allowing for 24 hours of storage availability in the event of an emergency. An elevated tank (to replace the smaller tank) with excess of 1.5 million gallons of usable storage would be necessary.

Wastewater

Middleborough's wastewater treatment plant is currently operating under its permitted capacity (including build-out of the current service area) at but would require an upgrade if a casino-resort were to be connected to it.

Any developer requesting wastewater service from the Town is required to repair and upgrade the existing sewer collection system, eliminating inflow and infiltration (I & I). Reduction of I & I to the Town's sewer pipes, slip-lining or other renovation work, would allow for some of the increased capacity for the developer but not enough to cover its needs, thereby requiring treatment plant expansion.

Expansion of the wastewater treatment facility should not further impact the Nemasket River (into which treated effluent is discharged). Sewerage should be treated to near drinking water quality and recycled in some manner. Irrigation of proposed golf course(s) or flush water could be uses for recycled effluent.

Middleborough Gas and Electric

The Middleborough Gas and Electric Department (G & E) is municipally owned and would be the provider of natural gas and electricity to the site.

Natural Gas

A casino-resort would require high-pressure natural gas (200-250 psi) for general use and standby generator service. A new transmission main from the Algonquin transmission gas main would be required to bring gas to the site. Roads disrupted by construction would require new pavement upon completion of upgrades.

According to the G&E, the new main across Middleborough to the site would have available capacity for additional potential developers along the route.

Electricity

Although the electric division of G&E recently completed an upgrade of supply capacity to the Town's electric system, demand by the casino-resort has been estimated to require an additional upgrade of supply capacity. Two 60 mega-volt-amps (MVA) transformers would be necessary to provide safe adequate supply.

Due to current capacity limitations, transmission of power to the casino-resort would require upgrades to utility poles and underground structures and conduit. Redundancy would also need to be installed to minimize the effect of a local electric emergency.

Purchase of natural gas and electricity from Middleborough G & E should create economies of scale resulting in lower rate costs to all citizens of Middleborough.

Traffic

The Town of Middleborough is serviced with major east-west and north-south highways. Route 495 services most of the north-south traffic and is a main route to Cape Cod from Route 90 (Massachusetts Turnpike) and Route 95. Currently, on any given summer weekend, the volume of traffic on Route 495 increases and causes speeds below the posted limit. Southbound at the location where three lanes become two (“Lane Drop”), traffic backs up to Route 24.

Increasing volumes on the order of 20,000 to 40,000 cars a day on Route 495 would only exacerbate the existing traffic problems. Moving the lane drop further south could lessen this already burdened highway. Collector/distributor roads should be considered for the Routes 495/ 44 interchange, similar to those constructed for the Tweeter Center in Mansfield.

Upon completion of the Route 3 to Route 58 section, Route 44 became the primary route of travel to the south coastal shore communities from points west. The increased volume of traffic is evident daily. Traffic backs up onto Route 495 during evening rush hour. Two major issues cause this: the rotary and traffic lights along Route 44. A casino-resort would increase traffic volumes along Route 44 and gridlock the current road.

A Massachusetts Highway Department 1999-2000 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) states that Route 44 should be widened to four lanes (two east and two west), the rotary should be mitigated with a flyover and grade separated interchanges at Everett Street and Route 105. A “Ring Road” to reconfigure the Routes 18 and 28 accesses to Route 44 was also recommended in the EIS

Route 105 connects the Town to the Fall River/New Bedford area and the MBTA commuter rail station at Lakeville. The intersection of Routes 105 and 28 is one of the most dangerous in southeastern Massachusetts. Traffic from northern south shore communities uses Route 105 through Halifax to get to Town. Traffic is expected to increase (both north and south) along Route 105 to the casino-resort. Use of Route 105 for access should be deterred. Directions to the site and local signage should route northbound Route 105 traffic north on Route 495 and east on Route 44 (minimizing traffic in the center of Town). Directions from northern south shore communities should utilize Route 3 south to Route 44 west (minimizing traffic through Halifax and on Thompson Street).

All efforts should be made to limit casino-resort traffic from local roads. Providing a sole access point from Route 44, with only gated emergency access from Precinct Street, would keep all routine traffic on Route 44. A thorough study of existing traffic patterns on the roads surrounding the proposed site should be undertaken as part of the traffic mitigation effort.

Public Safety

Fire and Ambulance

The Middleborough Fire Department is currently understaffed to handle an increase in emergency service calls. The fire station in North Middleborough frequently has a sign in the window, which reads "Fire Station Closed". The Town's ambulance service is currently contracted through American Medical Response (AMR). The service was once shared with the Town of Lakeville, which currently provides its own service. The Town of Middleborough desires to begin its own ambulance service in the near future.

The casino-resort intends to establish its own fire department located on land that is in trust. The Tribe would be responsible for the cost of personnel and equipment for this private department. Mutual aid agreements should be completed in the spirit of other inter-municipal emergency mutual aid agreements. This should result in minimal impact to the Middleborough Fire Department.

If the Town and Tribe reach an agreement for Town provided ambulance service, additional firefighter-paramedics and multiple ambulances would be required to service the casino-resort. The Fire Chief has estimated that approximately \$1 million would be needed annually to offset the cost of the additional personnel as well as two new ambulances. This agreement could increase staffing levels from the dangerously low current levels.

Police

The police are responsible for patrol of all roads in Middleborough except Route 495. Annually the Town replaces three or more cruisers, as needed. The existing police station, located in the center of Town, is old and in need of replacement. Preliminary plans have been drawn up to replace the existing station with a new facility on Wood Street. The construction cost has been estimated at \$6-8 million.

The casino-resort intends to establish its own police department that would be responsible for incidents that occur on tribal properties. The Tribe and the Middleborough Police Department would enter into reciprocal agreements.

Based on other host community experiences, a fourfold increase in E-911 calls may occur as a result of the casino-resort. Also, persons taken into custody at the casino-resort would need transportation to the (new) police station. Additional patrols would be necessary on the non-state police patrolled roads resulting in the necessity of at least two additional patrol vehicles with appropriate staffing. This has been estimated at about \$500,000 annually to offset the additional personnel as well as two new patrol vehicles.

Crime

The Town of Middleborough is patrolled by its own police force but has the distinction of having a State Police barracks located in town. Crimes range from aggravated assault to theft but the per capita crime rate is half the statewide rate (2003 FBI).

In 2001, the report to the US Department of Justice titled "*Effects of Casino Gambling on Crime and Quality of Life in New Casino Jurisdictions*" examined eight host communities (jurisdictions)¹ with a casino in operation for a minimum of 3 years. They examined the statistics of crime for each community. They also interviewed 128 community leaders and 400 individual residents of each community to gauge the perceived safeness in the community.

The report discovered that when looking statistically at each community, some communities showed an increase in crime and others showed no increase in crime. When they compared the host cities to control cities (cities of similar make up without casinos), a similar result was found.

The report went on further to say that:

"The examination of the crime data indicated that there can be no conclusive statement, either way, regarding the effect that casinos have on crime."

"The reality, as indicated by citizen's perceptions that crime increases as a result of casino presence, can easily be used by anti-gambling forces to thwart the further spread of casino gambling. At the same time, pro-gambling interests can point out that studies such as the present one show that the citizens' perceptions of crime are not accurate".

The report goes on further to state that people's general perception is that casino causes an increase in crime locally but says:

*"Responses to the questions regarding perceived changes in overall crime, juvenile delinquency, fear of crime and levels of individual offenses since the inception of casinos revealed perceptions of increases...the results show, perceptions of the relationship of casinos to crime **do not mirror reality**"(emphasis added).*

Increase in crime, due to hosting a casino, has been studied by many groups (on both sides of the issue) and tend to contradict one another. Regardless of per capita numbers, one additional crime is one more crime. To say it is statistically insignificant is not so to the person upon whom the crime was committed. The best way to thwart crime is crime prevention. An increase in police presence and community outreach programs we believe to be a necessity.

¹ Sioux City, IA, Alton, IL, Peoria, IL, East Peoria, IL, St. Louis City, MO, St. Louis County, MO, St. Joseph, MO and Biloxi, MS

Social Issues

Social issues relating to hosting a casino include addictions (gambling, alcohol, narcotics) as well as depression and suicide, family deterioration and bankruptcies. These social issues are currently in the community and will always be part of any community.

Local gambling addiction is most associated with the Massachusetts Lottery, animal racetracks, illegal bookmaking activities and casinos. The question of how much more addiction would be created with hosting a casino-resort in Middleborough is tough to quantify. 2,768 people from the US DOJ report (discussed in the previous section) were asked whether they had a relative or family member or knew anyone who has a gambling problem. More than half responded that they did not know anyone with a problem but many others (less than half) responded knowing more than one. The same people were asked what they thought was the percentage of people in their community with gambling addiction problems. Half the people responded “10 percent” but the report concludes that:

“The data support the notion that the more direct impact that problem gambling has on the individual, the greater the effect on the perception of prevalence of problem gambling in the community”.

The report found that the perception of problem gambling in communities hosting a casino was far greater than the actual statistics.

Divorce data was collected from 1979 to 1996 from the US government and local state offices recording such data. The Center for Disease Control collects data on suicide.

The report found that comparing the divorce data of eight communities to their control communities (non-hosting), most host communities had a decrease to significant decrease in divorce rates, although one did see an increase. The report does caution that it should not be deduced that the introduction of a casino would decrease divorce rates.

The report compared the suicide data of eight communities to their control communities and found that most communities (6 of 8) saw an increase in the suicide rate compared with their non-host counterparts (2 saw a decrease). The report concluded that the casino might have had an impact in the increase in suicide rates.

Bankruptcy data was collected for the same eight communities and the report found that statistically, the number of bankruptcies in host communities increases as compared with their control counterparts. It was concluded that host communities do see an increase in bankruptcies due to the casino. This report and data also predated the Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act of 2005.

Reports can say different things and they can contradict each other. Whether or not a casino-resort were to be located in the Town of Middleborough, the issues of addiction, abuse and bankruptcy need more attention than they are getting. Programs need to be cultivated locally and regionally to help address these issues. The Town should assist (financially) in the establishment of assistance programs and/or encourage the many

community groups to assist in this endeavor. Governor Patrick of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts should also set aside a portion of its receipts from any casinos for furthering programs already in place.

Environmental Impact - Pollution

The proposed casino-resort is to be located on approximately 550 acres of environmentally sensitive land adjacent to Route 44. Properties neighboring the site consist of open fields, farmland, single-family residences and the wooded Meeting House Swamp. Very close to the site is the Nemasket River, an anadromous fish run for alewife herring, which attracts many large birds such as grey gulls, osprey and the bald eagle. Stable populations of other raptors including Northern barred owl, saw-whet owl, red tail and harrier hawks are found throughout the immediate area.

Portions of the property and abutting land are mapped as an estimated habitat for five state listed species along with several potential vernal pool habitats.

The Meeting House Swamp is hydraulically connected to the Great Cedar Swamp to the west. Any major development could have severe negative impact on the swamp ecosystems with groundwater depletion due to runoff versus natural infiltration and contamination as well as interruption of the hydraulic link. Local review and comment on the drainage design by the Town, funded by the casino-resort developer, would offer additional oversight of the project.

Light and noise pollution would be generated by the casino-resort that would interfere with the behavior patterns of many species, especially migratory birds. Artificial night lighting would create a glow obscuring the sky for stargazing. Use of low impact and down lighting and creation of natural sound barriers are some design basics that could minimize these impacts.

With the reconstruction of Route 44, the movement of local species could be hindered. Proper species crossings should be designed to allow unimpeded, natural and safe passage across Route 44.

It is critical to preserve additional land around the casino-resort to be used as open space to allow natural habitats to be maintained and passage unrestrained.

It is recommended that adhering to the US Green Build Council green construction guidelines and certifying the casino-resort to be LEED – NC Version 2.2 certified, could mitigate much of the environmental and pollution impacts. In addition, requiring review through the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act Environmental Impact Report process will afford an invaluable means to identify and mitigate activities that would pose a negative impact.

Schools

The Town of Middleborough provides full day education to its residents at five schools from Kindergarten through Grade 12. Enrollment for the 2006-2007 school year indicated 3,561 students (MA Dept. of Education). Currently there are 5 English Language Learner (ELL) students enrolled in Middleborough (which does not qualify the Town for federal grant funding for ELL professionals).

We interviewed the superintendents of three host community schools in Ledyard, CT (Foxwoods Casino), Montville, CT (Mohegan Sun Casino) and Mount Pleasant, MI (Soaring Eagle Casino). None of the superintendents interviewed felt their school districts had experienced an “out of the ordinary” enrollment increase due to the presence of the casinos. In fact, the Town of Ledyard’s enrollment decreased 4.6% from 1997-1998 to 2005-2006.

The Connecticut schools experienced an increase in ELL students. Montville had an increase from 5 ELL students in 1999 to 114 today (out of total of 3,000). This change resulted in the hiring of an ELL Coordinator at an approximate salary of \$70,000. The Ledyard school district has hired several para-professionals to work with ELL students. The Mount Pleasant, MI school district has not seen an increase in ELL students.

The impact of new jobs on the school districts in the host communities was not significant. It was mentioned that the low availability of rental housing and relatively high rents in the host communities resulted in casino workers living in surrounding communities. A similar situation could develop in the communities surrounding Middleborough.

Ledyard schools host 40 students from reservation land. The district received about \$4,000 from the Bureau of Indian Affairs for each of the 40 tribal children attending their schools, in addition to its state per child payment (similar to our Chapter 70 money).

Based on the information from these schools, it appears that the impact to Middleborough Schools would be minimal. While it does not appear that there is a high likelihood of a substantial increase in overall school enrollment, even a small increase in English Language Learners may require the Town to hire additional staff.

Library

The Middleborough Public Library is currently open 10 hours per week less than is required in order to maintain its certification and state funding. This is due to the current budget constraints of the Town. When the population of Middleborough reaches 25,000, the library will be required to be open 63 hours per week in order to maintain its certification and state funding. Although this represents an increase of 13 hours per week over the required current level, it is actually 23 more hours per week than what the library is currently operating under.

Prior to the proposed casino-resort, the library had assumed that the population would reach 25,000 by 2010. Due to the long regulatory lead time it would take to begin construction on a resort casino, it is likely that Middleborough will reach this population milestone on the same time schedule as previously assumed and will need additional funding regardless of the casino.

Council on Aging

Based on our research, it does not appear that a casino-resort would have a direct negative impact on the Council on Aging.

Real Estate

The current real estate market in Middleborough has been steadily declining for the last two years. With interest rates increasing nationally, real estate values could continue to decline regionally. Even with the recent decline, homes in Middleborough have appreciated in value by about 100% over the last 10 years.

Research about impacts of a casino-resort is mixed regarding how the value of real estate is affected. One study of the impact of homes in the area surrounding Foxwoods found that between 1986 and 1996 home prices kept up with or were slightly higher than the statewide average.

Discussions with both real estate developers and agents have come to similar conclusions:

1. Some people will leave Middleborough and some people will move to Middleborough because of the casino-resort.
2. There will probably be a dip in real estate sale prices due to the immediate sales by those wanting to leave Middleborough before the site is constructed.
3. After the site is developed, there should be an increase in home prices due to demand for housing and the perceived lack of homes.
4. Neither the developers nor the agents that were interviewed were worried that there will be any long term negative effect on property values.

Town Rural Character – Historic Middleborough

The Town of Middleborough encompasses in excess of 73 square miles. Much of its undeveloped residential land is zoned so that 60,000 s.f. of land is required for residential construction. This should maintain the rural feel found throughout Town. Middleborough Center has the feel of the 1900s with beautiful architecture and shops, stores, museums, an art gallery and restaurants with a single traffic light at the intersection of Main and Centre Streets.

As you travel along any of the main roads including Routes 18, 28, 44, and 105, one will find rolling fields, active farms and wooded barrens. The Town has a Wildlife Preserve located at the Rocky Gutter Wildlife preserve.

One of the most frequently expressed concerns that Middleborough residents have brought to the Committee is the impact of locating a large casino-resort on this currently unimproved, partially wooded parcel on Route 44.

Middleborough is rich in historic locations, many of which are in the immediate vicinity of the proposed casino-resort. The Nemasket Spring site, which has an historic association with the Wampanoags, the Oliver and Washburn Houses, homes of the early European settlers and the Oliver Mill Park all provide opportunities for residents and visitors to reflect on the past and should be enhanced and protected. The Nemasket River corridor is of particular interest as it provided food and power for the mills and transportation before roads were cut through virgin forests.

Middleborough has not always been able to adequately protect its community treasures. It would be in everyone's interest to establish a preservation fund for the purpose of acquiring, maintaining, protecting and preserving these and other similar treasures throughout Town.

Employment

The Town of Middleborough has 620 unemployed people out of a total workforce of 11,536. This represents an unemployment rate of 5.4% (as of April 2007), above the Massachusetts statewide unemployment rate of 4.6%.

Among 17 communities within 30 miles of Middleborough there are 16,600 unemployed people out of a total workforce of 285,417. This represents an unemployment rate of 5.8% (as of April 2007), which is also above the Massachusetts statewide unemployment rate. Of those regionally unemployed, 67% are from Fall River (3,830), New Bedford (3,172), Brockton (2,464) or Taunton (1,613) ².

These figures do not include people who are under-employed that might chose to work at the casino-resort or those who might leave their current position for a job at the casino-resort.

It is estimated that it will initially require 5,500 workers to run the casino-resort. Comparable casino-resorts in Connecticut employ workforces in excess of 10,000 each. Reducing unemployment has an inflationary effect on wages in the region and could impact existing business competing with the casino-resort for personnel.

² (The 17 towns studied include: Fall River, New Bedford, Brockton, Taunton, Plymouth, Wareham, Middleborough, Bridgewater, Norton, East Bridgewater, Carver, Raynham, Kingston, Lakeville, Halifax, Rochester and Plympton.)

Tribal representatives have stated that Middleborough residents would be given preferential treatment after tribal members and other Native Americans when applying for work at the casino-resort. There are approximately 3,000 Wampanoag Tribe members in Massachusetts; roughly 1,450 of them are from the Mashpee Wampanoag tribe.

Local Business and Industry

On June 28, 2007, the Middleborough Business & Industry Alliance voted unanimously to support the development of a casino-resort in Middleborough. They feel that the casino will bring new customers without siphoning off current customers, and that there will be a draw to the community because it would be a destination.

Infrastructure improvements, which would be necessary to construct a casino-resort, would benefit the community by allowing for further development of commercial properties around town.

Local restaurant owners would not be in competition against “cheap casino food” since it does not exist. The opposite is true. Many of the eating establishments located at a casino-resort are privately owned and lease their storefront for a premium. This makes the cost of the food more expensive.

As stated at an open meeting, “*People are not going to drive to the casino, park and walk a half-hour just to get a cup of coffee.*” The people who are using local businesses will continue to use them and if they do not, it is their own free will.

Transportation

The Town of Middleborough has public transportation provided by GATRA and has access to the MBTA commuter rail station in Lakeville.

The casino-resort may provide offsite parking for its employees and provide shuttle service for them. Customer shuttle service may also begin to and from the MBTA station.

If shuttle services from the MBTA station are provided, Routes 495 and 44 should be utilized so as to not impact the center of town.

Plymouth airport is located 12.5 miles from the proposed casino-resort site. The airport is capable of comfortably servicing corporate jets and could see an increase in air traffic. There are currently plans to expand the airport to accommodate further air traffic. Travel to and from the airport would be via Routes 58 and 44.

To reduce noise pollution, Helicopter access to the casino-resort should be for emergencies only.

POSITIVE IMPACTS

There are positive impacts that a casino-resort can bring to the Town of Middleborough. These impacts are based on financial data, historic statistics and some assumptions that negative impacts will be mitigated.

Return of the Wampanoags to their Ancestral Home

The Wampanoags are linked to Middleborough long before Europeans settled here. We would be fortunate to have the Tribe settle back in town, bringing their proud heritage and rich history for the community to share.

Increase in Town Revenue

The Town stands to collect millions of dollars in revenues directly from the casino-resort and from secondary sources. New business locating in Middleborough will increase its commercial tax base and add to hotel tax revenue.

We estimate additional annual revenue as follows:

Direct Payment from the Tribe	\$7,000,000 + 3.1% annually
Tribe Collected Hotel Room Tax	<u>\$4,000,000</u>
	\$11,000,000

The estimate does not include Tribal payments during construction, other offsite fees or taxes, any payment from Middleborough Gas & Electric Department or revenue sharing from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

While there is no guarantee of where any of these revenues will be allocated, it is possible that several town departments such as the Middleborough Public Library, Council on Aging, Parks Department, etc...may recover much needed funding.

Reconstruction of Route 44 and Rotary Elimination

With a major commercial development on the project site, the reconstruction of Route 44 will be addresses. The planning of this work has been ongoing for over 20 years and as it looks now, without this project, the state will not get around to fixing it for at least an additional 10 to 20 years.

Morning and evening commuter traffic backups at the rotary, at each traffic light and side streets will be alleviated.

New Restaurants

Although we have several existing restaurants locally, there are no five star or large format themed (Hard Rock Café, Margaritaville, etc) restaurants in the region. The development of a five star resort will ultimately include at least one five star dining establishment without having to travel to Boston or Providence and most likely would have a large format themed facility as well.

Entertainment Venues

The closest large indoor arenas are located in Boston, Providence and Worcester. With a large indoor arena, residents may be afforded the opportunity to see internationally recognized entertainment and sporting events.

The nearest small entertainment venue is in Cohasset, MA and is not opened year round. A small intimate venue would be able to host entertainment, which in the past would require a trip to Cohasset during the summer and Boston or Providence during the winter.

Regional Conference and Convention Center

There currently is no regional conference center that can hold large events. A casino-resort would offer the only one without a trip to Boston. It would be a draw for events looking for closer proximity to Plymouth and Cape Cod. It would allow people to experience the quaint shops and rural character that Middleborough has to offer.

Tourism

A casino-resort would bring people to Middleborough and the surrounding communities. Mystic Seaport, for example, has seen a substantial rise in the number of visitors since the opening the two nearby casinos. We expect a similar experience in the coastal communities and Middleborough.

Commercial Development

The roadway and infrastructure improvements completed for the casino-resort will allow the Town of Middleborough to further definitively plan for additional commercial development areas. A “Ring Road” would allow truck traffic easier access from the Routes 18/28 industrial parks.

Additional water, waste water, electric and gas improvements will give resource redundancy what is needed to further assist commercial development in town by making the development less expensive for the next developer who comes to town.

Employment

The casino-resort may hire as many as 5,500 new employees. This would make it, by far, the largest employer in Middleborough, thereby greatly expanding job opportunities in Town

Public Safety

With the reconstructed Route 44, the state police will patrol Route 44 freeing up police for other town patrols.

Additional paramedic/fire fighter necessary for ambulance service will also be protecting the Town.

Mutual aid from the casino-resort fire department would be available to our community. Reports show that casino-resort fire departments typically have the most up to date apparatus and equipment to aid our community in times on emergency.

Reunification of North Middleborough with the Center

Reconstruction of Route 44 will allow easy travel between the center of town and North Middleborough. Route 44 has separated North Middleborough from the remainder of the community due to peoples desire to avoid crossing the dangerous highway. With grade separation, people will be able to cross over or under Route 44 safely.

Tribal Museum

Middleborough is the home of the Robbins Museum of Archaeology. Working in conjunction with the Tribe, the Robbins Museum could create a venue that would rival the Mashantucket Pequot Museum. A tribal museum would offer an educational as well as tourist destination attraction to the Town.

Golf Course

The Tribe has discussed locating a golf course on the casino-resort site. This would be the first golf course in the Town of Middleborough providing additional open space and recreation in the community.

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC OPINION POLL

The Committee conducted a non-scientific voluntary poll to garner public opinion related to hosting a casino-resort. With assistance from the *Middleborough Gazette* and indirectly from both casino-resort community groups' websites, we were able to allow the public a forum to voice their opinion.

We asked the citizens to list their top three thoughts (pro or con) relative to the potential casino resort. The purpose of this survey was to find out what issues were of most importance to people in Middleborough. The survey was also to be used to insure that the Committee had as complete a list of impacts as possible. We received 162 individual responses from the community (approximately 22,000 residents) and the top concerns (ranked in order frequency) are shown below:

- Potential increase in traffic
- Possible increase in crime
- Potential increase in revenues to the Town that would help the budget
- Concern for property values
- Increase in pollution (noise, air and light) Environmental impacts
- Increased job availability to the local economy
- Ability of utilities and/or water infrastructure to handle large increase in demand
- Improvement to roads at no expense to the Town
- Negative impact to school department through increased enrollment and/or addition of non-English speaking students

We appreciate the efforts of all those who took the time to complete the survey. **All** responses were discussed at Committee meetings and assisted with creation of this report.