

The first plans submitted to the review committee show the resort would be built in phases, starting with a 21,000-square-foot casino, 14,700 square feet of restaurants and pub, and two small retail spaces totaling a little more than 2,000 square feet. An 18-slip marina also would be part of the first phase.

Cavanaugh said plans aren't complete for further

phases.

More details will be announced when the project goes to the Mississippi Gaming Commission, he said, hopefully Feb. 24.

Larry Gregory, executive director of the Gaming Commission, said, "If it's a hot project we're going to do everything we can to get it on the February agenda."

The city also is fast-tracking the project, Creel said. It is scheduled to go to the Biloxi Planning Commission on Feb. 17 and, if approved, to the City Council on Feb. 22.

The 24-acre property is on the Back Bay, north of the Palace Casino.

It is the site of the old East Harrison County Industrial Park. Just prior to Hurricane Katrina, it was an approved site for Havana Casino, whose principals are now proposing to build CanCan Casino in D'Iberville.

Planners and engineers with Machado-Patano in Biloxi represented the developers at the review committee meeting.

David Machado said the developers are looking to the city for infrastructure upgrades such as extending Pine Street as a four-lane road to Fifth Street.

“The city has been talking about extending and improving Pine Street for a long time,” Cavanaugh said. He said the city is considering a tax-increment financing bond to pay for the improvements.

The resort will be raised above flood elevations and Floyd Waltman with Machado-Patano said the preliminary design has 25 percent more parking than is required. “Otherwise, I think we conform to the code.”

City officials recommended some of the parking be designated for bus and RV spaces and that a stop be created for the Coast Transit Authority Casino Hopper.

Creel said the new casino project will be a catalyst for other development in the city. “This is the first of several projects we’re going to be announcing in the next several months,” he said.

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