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[Plans killed for west bank casino](#) Harvey - Some people living near the Harvey Canal said the State Gaming Control Board made the right move.

The board voted against giving Louisiana's last available casino license to Penn National, a gaming corporation which proposed building a riverboat casino on the Harvey Canal along Peters Road.

However, some in the business and political community wish the gaming board had ruled another way.

"We're disappointed, but we're also optimistic about the future development along the Harvey Canal corridor," said James Hines of the Harvey Canal Industrial Association.

The final casino permit instead went to a company that will put another gaming establishment in Lake Charles, hundreds of miles from the New Orleans area.

Some residents in the old Harvey area which is in walking distance to the proposed casino site are thrilled the project is dead. They feared a casino there would have attracted undesirable individuals to their community.

"We got enough burglaries and too much drugs in the street now and too much murder in the street now, so that just would have created more for the community itself," said Resident Chris Williams who is also involved in the Old Harvey Civic Association.

And he added that with Boomtown, the West Bank already has enough gaming going on .

"Unnecessary for another casino, we already had one, why two?" he asked.

Written by Administrator

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The first phase of the casino would have mean \$150 million investment and environmental cleanup of the old Evans-Cooperage industrial site.

A \$ 150 million second phase included plans for a 250 room hotel and a entertainment showroom.

"Certainly it would have been nice to redevelop that piece of property, I think of the end of the day it may come back because Lake Charles is attractive right now, but if Texas ever legalizes gambling you're going to hear a big sucking sound going to Texas, " said Jefferson Parish President John Young."

"As you can see there is a need for revitalization here along the Harvey Canal and we support a diversification of business and industry here along the canal," said Hines.

While people in the nearby who took a stance against the casino project say they welcome more economic development, they said casino jobs are just not what they had in mind.

Chris Williams said there are other skilled jobs needed. "Like trucking and welding, you know what I'm saying, fitting jobs like, say like what they got in Avondale."

Hines said just to get the project going, there would have been at least 100 jobs involved in transforming the vessel into a riverboat and that would have benefited the Harvey industrial corridor.

"One of the reasons that we initially supported the added casino here was that the vessel that they were going to be using would have been retro-fitted here along the Harvey Canal," he said.

But Williams and some of his neighbors said business and parish leaders should find another way to create jobs because the last thing they want is a casino nearby.

"It's bad for the neighborhood," said Williams.

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Karen Bailey, a spokeswoman for Penn National said they respect the gaming board's decision.

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