

City, County To Apply For Grant To Clean Up Casino Site Despite Debate - 10TV

Written by Administrator

Tuesday, 14 December 2010 19:32 -

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Franklin County Commissioners on Tuesday agreed to apply for a state grant to clean up the west side casino site. The city agreed to do so on Monday.

Officials will ask the state for up to \$3 million in Clean Ohio Revitalization funds to clean up the former Delphi auto parts plant off of West Broad Street, 10TV's Danielle Elias

reported.

The move comes after the city council voted on Monday to change its agreement regarding the casino project and said the Penn National Gaming will not receive city services unless it annexes into Columbus.

The gaming company is considering digging its own wells for water and also asked the city for tax incentives, but the city said that was not part of the original agreement.

SLIDESHOW: [Images Of Casino Renderings](#)

"Their promise was an unconditional annexation to the city of Columbus if they move the casino to the Delphi site," said Mayor Michael Coleman.

The company planned to annex the 130-acre site from Franklin Township as part of the plan to move the casino location from the Arena District, but a spokesman said the company's view of tax incentives changed once they agreed to the move to the west side.

Penn National Gaming Spokesman Bob Tenebaum said the city is using water and sewer services as leverage, Elias reported.

"What it appears to us is that the city's negotiating stance is, 'We're going to try to bully Penn National,'" said company spokesman Bob Tenenbaum. "The argument here seems to be on Penn National's request to be treated like any other development, who comes to a city and says, 'Look I'd like to invest \$400 million in your city and create 2,000 jobs, I'd like to discuss with you some tax incentives.'"

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If the company annexes the land, the city would receive an estimated \$60 million in tax revenue.

"Hopefully this will expedite the process of getting shovels in the ground and creating jobs," Coleman said.

Despite the ongoing debate, Penn National says it still plans to open the casino in 2012.

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