

## Gigantic 'Adelaar' resort unveiled

By Dan Hust - staff writer

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By: Contributed Illustration

A rendering of how the proposed Adelaar casino will appear at night.

MONTICELLO — Touting itself as “close to home, far from ordinary,” the proposed casino resort near the old Concord site – now called Adelaar – made its debut to a dazzled crowd Thursday at Bethel Woods. Various pieces of the massive \$750 million project had been publicized prior, but this was the first time the entire scope was presented to a general audience.

And that scope is vast:

- 1,100 hotel rooms spread out over a casino, waterpark, spa, “adventure hotel,” and bed & breakfast
- 650,000-square-foot casino with slots, table games, buffet, 24/7 lounge and live entertainment
- 400,000-square-foot year-round indoor/outdoor waterpark with a rollercoaster, tubing, pools and dining
- 200,000-square-foot “entertainment village” featuring a multiplex and restaurants
- Outdoor activities across 1,700 acres, including snow-tubing (on the site of the former Concord Ski Area – but with skiers referred to nearby Holiday Mountain); trails for hiking, biking and cross-country skiing; paintball; rafting; kayaking and canoeing; fishing; and ziplines
- A redesigned Monster golf course
- A residential village with a dedicated town square available for farmers markets, carnivals and other social events
- A 1,300-seat event center and 500-seat showroom for conferences and concerts
- Retail shops
- The existing Monticello Raceway may remain in its current location rather than being relocated to the new casino site near the corner of Joyland and Thompsonville roads in Monticello, if the state does not require relocation

- 2,550 estimated construction jobs, 2,161 estimated full- and part-time permanent jobs

Though billed as “a fully integrated and self-contained resort,” officials promised theyll be introducing a “casino points” rewards program, encouraging guests to buy products and services from area businesses. “We will be a union-built project, 100 percent,” added Manny Pearlman, chairman of Empire Resorts board. “..

. We are the hometown team here.”

It's a team that's spent much of the last decade developing Adelaar (a Dutch word meaning “eagle”).

“We have invested over \$200 million to date,” said EPR CEO David Brain.

That includes money and time spent garnering necessary town and state approvals, and the developers are now well-positioned to compete for one of the casino licenses soon to be offered in the region.

Able to start construction within 30 days of receiving a license, they've vowed to proceed whether or not they land one, but they've also indicated it would be a smaller project without that coveted license.

All talk Thursday, however, assumed that license will be forthcoming this fall.

“I feel sure Sullivan County is in the running and that we'll get this casino,” predicted Assemblywoman Aileen Gunther.

“They have a two to three-year headstart on everyone else in the game,” noted Thompson Supervisor Bill Rieber. “... We're so proud to have this project in our township.”

“I see light at the end of the tunnel,” added Sullivan County Partnership for Economic Development CEO Marc Baez. “... It is a catalyst we've been waiting for for some time.”

Legislature Chairman Scott Samuelson shared that optimism, saying the project has the backing of the Legislature.

That includes Legislator Alan Sorensen, in whose district the project sits.

“I'm 1,000 percent behind it,” he affirmed after the presentation, impressed with the attention to environmentally and community-sensitive issues like lighting and traffic. “I think it's something that is going to be sustainable in the long term.”

As for the old Raceway site, Empire Resorts Executive Vice President Charlie Degliomini promised it won't be abandoned if EPR/Empire decide not to move it to the casino site.

“We are committed to parimutuel racing,” he told the Democrat.