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## Street tries to ease residents' slots fears

The city will not let casinos go where they are not appropriate, the mayor told 120 in South Phila.  
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Mayor Street told South Philadelphia residents yesterday that the city would play an active role in siting the two slot casinos slated for the city, although he acknowledged that state law "really doesn't give us any legal authority."

Speaking to about 120 people at a community meeting convened by the Gaming Advisory Task Force he set up, Street said: "We aren't going to let anybody impose a couple of big, old, giant gaming facilities in a place where it's totally inappropriate."

The mayor said the possible total of 10,000 slots in the two casinos "has the potential of changing our city forever."

Micah Mahjoubian of the task force staff said the two slot casinos would probably be up and running by 2007.

He said 10 sites are being discussed for the two casinos. One of those sites is in the Navy Yard. The community meeting was held at Galdo's, a catering hall on 20th Street. The residents gave the presentation their attention, and at times greeted the speakers with mild heckling.

Addressing the task force, Barbara Capozzi, president of the Packer Park Civic Association, said that the view of the neighborhood was "not here, not now, not ever, no more."

Capozzi said she feared that, whatever the community did, the Navy Yard would wind up being used.

"The greedy people who have the most to make from the slots will demand an easy and quick solution," she said.

Traffic congestion was the main concern of the residents, who already put up with the traffic generated by the sports facilities in South Philadelphia.

A preliminary traffic study done for the **Sports Complex Special Services District** indicated that the sports facilities generate about 5.5 million vehicle trips a year in the area. Opening a 3,000-slot casino in the Navy Yard would add 10 million to 11 million vehicle trips a year to that total, the study found.

In addition, most of the high-volume trips to the casino would take place on weekends and during the warmer months - times when the sports complex facilities are particularly busy, the study said.

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