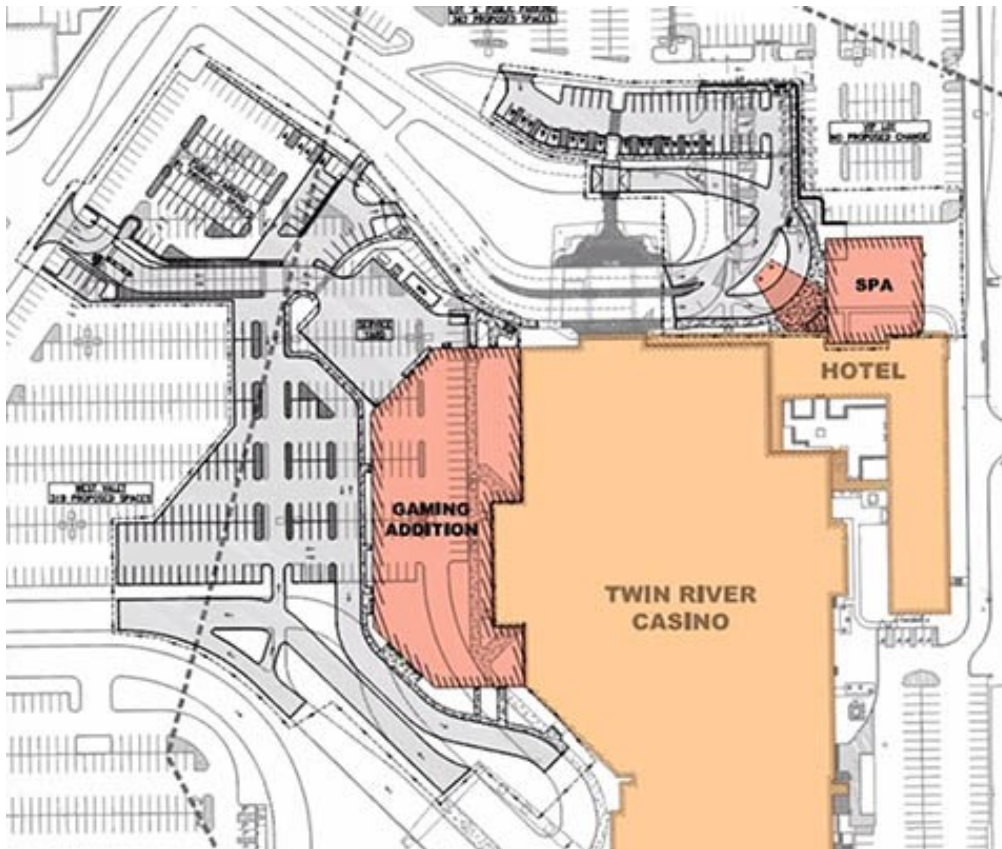


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## Twin River Casino expansion on fast track



Architectural drawings shared with the Lincoln Planning Board last Wednesday show Twin River Casino's planned additions.

By **NICOLE DOTZENROD**, Valley Breeze Staff Writer

LINCOLN – Representatives from Twin River Casino appeared before the Lincoln Planning Board last week to pitch the Lincoln casino's plans for expanding.

The casino is planning to build a 10,641-square-foot spa addition and a 41,510-square-foot gaming addition to the facility, reworking the existing parking area and walkways to accommodate the additions.

Presenting the project at the master plan review stage, David Potter of Pare Engineering said Twin River last appeared before the Planning Board in 2015 for construction on its hotel addition. The

casino came back before the board in 2017 to discuss phasing the hotel project, bringing it down from 250 rooms to 136 rooms with the option to add more in a second phase.

At that time, he said a separate entrance to the hotel and adjacent spa was value-engineered out of the project. The plan is to bring that back in, “so the hotel is its own part of this complex.”

In addition to the new spa entrance, casino officials are also planning to expand gaming space on the northwest side of the building.



Potter said the smoking area will likely be housed in the addition, with a divider between the smoking and non-smoking areas of the gaming floor. The plan, he said, is to renovate an existing portion of the casino into the non-smoking area.

The non-smoking area is currently located upstairs, and Potter said some patrons feel it’s too remote. Officials hope to open the second floor space up for “something new in the future.”

A new service yard will be used to support the addition’s food court.

Potter said the project was somewhat disrupted with the pandemic, but said casino officials are eager to start work. “It’s important to have this type of project to attract new patrons and spark excitement on the site,” he said.

He said his firm has been discussing ways the project can be accelerated, such as conducting early site work, demolishing existing site features and relocating some utilities to outside of the building footprints.

“We’re looking to get some of that utility work pushed forward as quickly as we can,” he said.

Attorney Mark Russo, representing Twin River Worldwide Holdings, said the casino would like to combine the public informational hearing with master plan approval at the Sept. 23 Planning Board Meeting, in order to make the process proceed faster.

With approval, the casino is hoping to break ground this fall.

Town Planner Al Ranaldi said that Twin River did not technically have to appear before the Planning Board last Wednesday because the application is for a renovation of less than 50 percent renovation.

“Our regulations do not require this application to be reviewed by the Planning Board, but we felt that out of an abundance of transparency we (should) ask the applicant to come forward. This is a major business in town and we just want to be as transparent as possible,” he said.

Russo said the casino opted to appear before the board to have the project properly vetted, keeping a promise made years ago that “before they do anything at all there, that they’ll involve the town first.”

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