

Couple awarded \$2.3M after win over seized land

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About nine years ago, the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission took land belonging to Lew and Louann Tarlini near Parx Casino in Bensalem under eminent domain for a construction project, court documents show.

The couple was to be paid \$850,000 for the land but instead of taking the money, the Tarlinis took the case to court saying the land was worth more than that, especially since they had a \$2.2 million agreement of sale with a hotel developer for the 2.6 acres at 2986 Galloway Road.

A Bucks County jury agreed recently, and awarded them a \$2.3 million judgment for the property, which is mostly surrounded by the casino and abuts the turnpike.

The couple's attorney, David Snyder, hired a real estate expert who testified in court that the value of the property in April 2007 was \$2.3 million. He also testified that the "highest and best use" of the property was for a hotel, although the land wasn't zoned for that. Once the turnpike took the land, the sale to the developer fell through.

"We are very grateful the jury awarded in favor of the Tarlinis," Snyder said last week. "The decision is a significant victory for Mr. and Mrs. Tarlini and property owners who only ask to be treated fairly."

Turnpike spokesman Carl DeFebo Jr. said the turnpike had no comment since it was a litigation matter.

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