

## Crafty work keeps **Del Pointe** legislation in racino race

## Crafty work keeps **Del Pointe** legislation in racino race

By Henry J. Evans Jr.

hevans@capegazette.com

A bit of crafty work in the hands of one skilled in handling legislative reins cinched ahold of votes needed to keep **Del Pointe** Resort & Racino in a race to the finish.

Rep. Pete Schwartzkopf, DRe-hoboth Beach, brought House Bill 194 to the floor and immedi-ately tabled the measure Wednesday, June 24.

Schwartzkopf, House majority leader and the bill's primary sponsor, gathered the votes nec-essary to suspend House rules.

The bill would allow an entity that has been granted a Delaware thoroughbred or harness racing license as of Sept. 1, 2008, to be-come a video lottery – slots – agent, and open a casino.

The bill applies to **Del Pointe** exclusively as it is the only quali-fying entity.

“ The racetrack and casino complex is proposed for Mills-boro and would include a 1- mile harness racing track, casino, wa-ter park, indoor sports complex, paintball park, movie theaters and restaurants.

The legislation had been as-signed to the House Gaming & Pari- mutuels Committee, but with no committee meeting scheduled before the Tuesday, June 30 end of session, the meas-ure could have died.

“ It was never my intention to work House Bill 194 before we leave on June 30,” Schwartzkopf said.

He said the governor could call the House back before January for a special session to consider table games.

“ I want this bill to be in a posi-tion to be considered at the same time as table games if that oc-curs,” Schwartzkopf said.

Preston Schell, a **Del Pointe** principal, said the racino propos-al is still Delaware's all- around best bet.

Schell said considering the state's cash- strapped position, “ if they're looking around for \$ 20 million dollars,” **Del Pointe** is the right project and right place to look.

He said **Del Pointe** is running without blinders and is well posi-tioned to give the state – espe-cially Sussex County – the eco-nomic booster shot both desper-ately need.

“ Is **Del Pointe** good for Delaware? The answer is unarguably yes,” Schell said after HB 194 held sad-dle.

He said the recent entry in the race for a casino license, the **Del** -mar International Raceway & Casino, is a project deserving of consideration, “ but they're not ready now.”