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News

Hearing tonight on downtown deal

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By Jackie Majerus

Staff writer

BRISTOL – The public will get a final chance to speak about the city's pending deal with Renaissance Downtowns at a special city council meeting tonight.

"Any questions will be taken care of," said Mayor Art Ward.

Ward said he expects city councilors will support the contract that designates Long Island developer Don Monti and his company, Renaissance Downtowns, as the preferred developer for the 17-acre, city-owned, former mall property.

"I don't think there's any alarm," said Ward, adding that he's excited about the deal, especially that it is coming in amid difficult economic times. "It should be a good working agreement for both."

Monti is likely to attend the 5:30 p.m. meeting Monday, said Ward.

The detailed agreement gives Monti two years to come up with a specific plan for the property and outlines exactly how Monti will acquire the land from the city and how the parties will reach the purchase price.

If the council meeting goes as expected and councilors approve the contract, Ward said representatives of all the parties — the city, Renaissance and the Bristol Downtown Development Corp — will gather Tuesday to ink the deal.

"Everybody's looking forward to moving ahead," said Ward.

Frank Johnson, chairman of the BDDC, said he's happy to be putting the search for the developer in the past and moving ahead "to much more positive things."

Johnson said he's hopeful that by Tuesday morning, the city can sign the agreement.

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