



## **Courant.com**

**BRISTOL**

### **Bristol, Developer Working On Deal To Put Apartments, Retail And Hotel At Downtown Mall Site**

By DON STACOM

The Hartford Courant

May 21, 2010

BRISTOL —

Five years after buying the decrepit Bristol Centre Mall, the city is on the verge of signing a deal with a corporation that's promising to redevelop the property as a downtown centerpiece.

Renaissance Downtowns LLC says it plans to build 750 apartments, 60,000 square feet of retail space and a 100-room hotel on the site. It is tentatively agreeing to buy the property from Bristol for at least \$2.1 million after both sides agree on a detailed development plan for the 17-acre tract.

"This is historic. This is something that happens once in a lifetime," said Ed Krawiecki, the city's chief attorney. Krawiecki's office has spent months working with the nonprofit Bristol Downtown Development Corp. and Renaissance on a plan for reclaiming the property, which has been a vacant lot since the city razed the mall two years ago.

The city council will convene a public information meeting on Monday at 5:30 p.m. at city hall. Don Monti, president of Renaissance, will explain how his company plans to redevelop the property. Mayor Art Ward, along with finance board Chairman Rich Miecznikowski and Frank Johnson, chairman of the Bristol Downtown Development Corp., will also be at the meeting.

Unless the council rejects the proposed 56-page contract, city officials plan to

sign it on Tuesday morning.

"This is a momentous occasion in the history of the city of Bristol as it begins the revitalization of the downtown area," Ward said in a statement.

The contract gives Renaissance the status of "preferred developer" of the property, and requires the Long Island-based company to produce a detailed development plan. If the city and Renaissance cannot agree on a detailed plan within two years, the agreement expires.

The proposed contract is  
at [http://www.ci.bristol.ct.us/filestorage/3070/DEVELOPER\\_AGREEMENT.pdf](http://www.ci.bristol.ct.us/filestorage/3070/DEVELOPER_AGREEMENT.pdf).

The city paid more than \$5.3 million for the mall in March 2005, evicted the remaining tenants and demolished the building 2 1/2 years later.

The original plan was to use state funding to create a complex of civic buildings ringed by private development. But voters turned down Mayor Gerard Couture's re-election bid in 2005, killing his proposal. The state showed far less enthusiasm for a major financial commitment after that.

Copyright © 2010, [The Hartford Courant](#)