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# THE BUSINESS REVIEW

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## Lawsuit threatened over plan to sell Troy City Hall to developer

The Business Review (Albany) - 12:25 PM EDT Thursday, September 20, 2007 by [Michael DeMasi](#) The Business Review  
A deal to sell City Hall in Troy, N.Y., to a private developer has yet to be approved, but the Democratic candidate for mayor is already threatening to challenge the sale in court.

"There's been no open process or receipt of proposals or bids," James Conroy said. "It's been a secret negotiation between the mayor and one company."

Conroy blasted the deal Sept. 19 before the first of what will be a series of public hearings on the proposed land swap between the city and Judge Development Corp. of South Burlington, Vt.

Jeff Buell, a spokesman for Republican Mayor Harry J. Tutunjian, criticized Conroy for threatening to file a lawsuit before more details of the deal were released.

"It's a politically motivated stunt from a man who's trying to save his election campaign," Buell said.

Built in the early 1970s, the grayish-white concrete City Hall has badly deteriorated and its modernistic design doesn't fit in with downtown's well-preserved brownstones. Judge Development wants to demolish the structure to build a mixed-use development along 300 feet of the Hudson River that could include residences, retail stores, office space and access to the river. Judge Development already owns five properties adjacent to City Hall.

Under the deal, Judge Development would buy the Verizon building at 1776 Sixth Ave. for an undisclosed amount. The Verizon workers would move to the company's building in downtown Albany, N.Y. Then, the 100 or so workers at City Hall would move into the Verizon building on Sixth Avenue.

The city would lease the space from Judge Development for \$16,000 per month with an option to buy the building for \$2.25 million, Buell said.

Judge Development would rent City Hall for \$1 per year and eventually buy it for \$2.25 million. At the time City Hall is purchased Judge Development would reimburse the city for the lease payments made at the Verizon building, Buell said.

The city estimates it will cost about \$500,000 to renovate the Verizon building, but expects to offset the cost through utility savings. It costs about \$500,000 annually to heat and cool the 1970s-era City Hall compared to about \$120,000 for the Verizon building, Buell said.

The deal must be approved by the Republican-controlled City Council. A vote could come in late October or early November, Buell said.

According to Conroy, Democrats in the city plan to file a lawsuit claiming Tutunjian didn't properly obtain proposals or seek public input before pursuing the deal with Judge Development.