



## Council haggles over fate of HSBC building

By **DAN MINER**

**Observer-Dispatch**

Posted Jun 01, 2011 @ 09:14 PM

Recommend

Be the first of your friends to recommend this.



UTICA — The city’s leading economic development official told Common Council members Wednesday he’d like to see the city purchase the downtown former HSBC building for \$350,000, for the purpose of demolishing it and turning it into a city-owned parking lot.

Randy Soggs, Urban and Economic Development commissioner, said the money for the purchase and demolition, an estimated total of roughly \$700,000, would come from state money allocated for downtown parking.

The city recently refocused its efforts from a downtown parking garage to multiple surface lots.

But the proposal irked some Common Council members, especially because California-based owner Ronald Prince purchased the building for only \$250,000 in 2009. Soggs said he didn’t believe Prince would budge from the \$350,000 price.

“It sounds like we’re not really looking at all the options,” said Jerome McKinsey, D-5, who pointed to successful downtown rehab efforts at Hotel Utica and the Adirondack Bank building.

Soggs led a May 21 tour that included city officials, engineers and reporters through the building, which showed widespread interior deterioration. He said a private developer, or even government grant money, are unlikely candidates to save the building.

Additionally, simply waiting on the building to come to the city in back taxes, or taking it with eminent domain, are options that have their own risks and would likely take years, when the state money is no longer available, he said.

After that tour, engineer Robert Almy issued a report to the city Codes Department that confirmed water buildup on the roof had seeped through the building and that “large amounts of mold have begun to grow.”

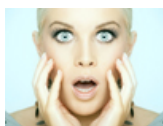
The city Codes Department issued a Notice and Order, kick-starting a process that also could lead to demolition if steps are not taken to repair issues with the roof, sidewalks and “general deterioration.”

But Scenic and Historic Preservation Commission Chairman David Bonacci, of Bonacci Architects, who also took the tour, sent an email saying he believed the building should be saved and restored for a private developer. The email was distributed at Wednesday’s meeting.

Common Councilman James Zecca, D-2, has proposed legislation, currently in committee, that would halt demolition of all commercial buildings until the master plan passed. Zecca has also called for a criminal investigation into the deterioration of the building.

Copyright 2011 The Observer-Dispatch, Utica, New York. Some rights reserved

Advertisement



These 4 things happen right before a heart attack.



How this strange African fruit is making Americans skinny.



Can't sleep? A new, all-natural supplement is helping people fall asleep faster and sleep all night.



New York: Is it a scam? We investigated a work at home story and what we found may shock you!

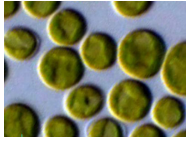


Do not buy until you read this 4 week study on the results of using the E-Cigarette to quit smoking.



Utica - New trick allows any New York resident to get extremely cheap car insurance.

## Popular Videos



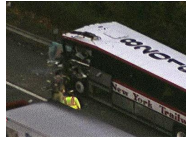
Seaweed Eyed As a Green Fuel Source



Boston firefighter catches boy after 3-story drop



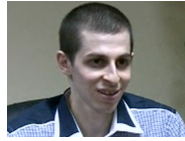
Drunken Dad Allegedly Forces Daughter, 9, to Drive



Raw Video: Passenger Bus Crashes in New York



Raw Video: Dust Storm Rolls Through Texas



Military: Gilad Schalit Now in Israel

**2011 Top Tech Stock EMBA**

Make Money on the Hottest Tech Penny Stock today.  
www.TechStockWire.com

**The Next Internet Boom**

Stock Investment With 1,000% Potential Gains  
www.smauthority.com

**The One Must-Own Stock**

Company's Breakthrough Technology Makes The Internet Up To  
www.TheStockDetective.com

Ads by Yahoo!

Loading commenting interface...

[Privacy Policy](#) | [Terms of Service](#) | [About our Ads](#)

The Observer-Dispatch, Utica, New York | (315) 792-5000 | 221 Oriskany Plaza Utica, NY 13501

Copyright © 2006-2011 GateHouse Media, Inc. Some Rights Reserved.

Original content available for non-commercial use under a [Creative Commons](#) license, except where noted.

SEO by [eLocalListing](#) | [Advertiser profiles](#) | [RadarFrog Merchant Directory](#) | [Contest Rules](#)