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## RAHWAY LOCAL NEWS

### Developer seeks additional story

By Kitty Wilder, Managing Editor  
Wednesday, December 6, 2006 2:41 PM EST

RAHWAY, NJ - The tallest building planned for the downtown business district will now be even taller.

Redevelopment Agency commissioners gave developer Carlos Silva permission last week to build an additional story on the Carriage City Hotel and Tower.

The hotel, planned for the corner of Irving Street and East Milton Avenue, will now be 16 stories tall, about double the height of the nearby parking garage.

Architect Arturo Palumbo told commissioners the hotel's design no longer includes a basement, pushing some amenities to upper floors. The extra story will make up for hotel and condominium space taken over by those amenities.

In reviewing the request for the additional height, Redevelopment Director Peter Pelissier criticized a computerized image predicting the building's exterior.

Exterior designs have changed at least twice since the city's Planning Board approved an early hand-sketched rendering. Pelissier told Palumbo last week the hotel's latest design didn't blend with the surrounding businesses downtown. "That looks to me like a box with different color bricks," Pelissier said.

Palumbo and Developer Carlos Silva defended the design calling the rendering more accurate because it illustrates better building materials.

The higher quality materials became possible when the InterContinental brand expressed interest in the hotel, Silva said.

"We're trying to build a building that's not your traditional stucco," Palumbo said, adding that the higher quality will attract customers. "We're talking about an upscale building. What we're trying to bring into the city is someone who would otherwise be buying in New York or Hoboken," Palumbo said.

Commissioners were split in their opinions of the design. Carlos Garay compared the hotel to some of the new construction in New Brunswick, calling the design a "step in the right direction."

Timothy Nash disagreed. "In my mind, this just doesn't fit with the town. Not at all," he said.



A rendering shows an exterior design of the Carriage City Hotel and Tower planned for the corner of East Milton Avenue and Irving Street in Rahway. The design, which recently became the subject of some debate, has not yet been finalized.

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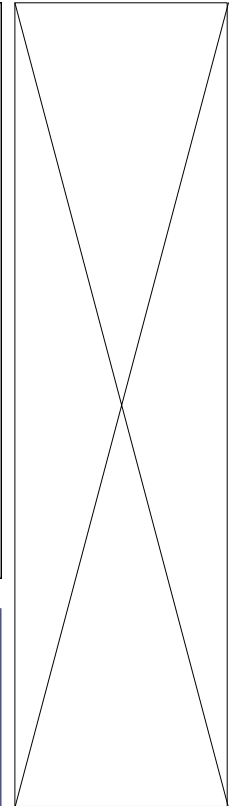
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Nash pointed out a significant drop in the number and size of windows illustrated in the rendering, compared to an image distributed with campaign literature this fall.

Palumbo explained the window design changed largely because of the potential glare the glass would create, especially for commuters and train conductors on the neighboring rail tracks.

The exterior design will not be finalized until it is reviewed by the Planning Board and City Council, which will also review the amended construction plan, Pelissier said.

In the meantime, Pelissier said he and commissioners will take a look at projects with designs similar to the hotel to get a better idea of what the finished product might look like.

The Carriage City Hotel and Tower project — largely viewed as the focal point of downtown redevelopment in Rahway — calls for about 102 hotel rooms and about 222 one-and-two-bedroom condominiums.

The ground floor will include about 16,000 square feet of restaurant and retail space and a lobby. Other amenities include a fitness center and meeting rooms.

Construction is expected to be complete in 18 to 24 months, Pelissier said.

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SP 500	1406.85	-6.05
Russ 2000	793.23	-2.71
AMEX	2089.34	-4.46
NYSE	9041.92	-5.84
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