Written by JOE LoTEMPLIO, Staff Writer
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PLATTSBURGH — Once again, developers of a waterfront hotel claim they are on their way to construction."This is a good plan, and I think we are there," James Monahan of Monahan Development Corp. in Syracuse said Thursday. Monahan has been pursuing the waterfront hotel since 2004. Initially, he was seeking a deal with a hotel chain, but those efforts stalled. He envisioned a 100-unit hotel with a conference center on a parcel of land off Bridge Street near the old D&H Railway station. The city chipped in by building a parking lot at the site, which has sat empty for more than a year.

Monahan hired crews to pound the ground at the hotel site last summer in order to get it ready for construction, but work was delayed yet again.

With more than $700,000 already invested, Monahan did not give up.

"I want to see a return on my investment," he said.

He got together with Peter W. Edelmann of the Inn at Essex in Vermont last fall, and the two worked on creating an independent hotel instead of a chain.

Negotiations carried on throughout the winter, and they are ready now to get started, Monahan said.

The initial hotel plans have changed slightly but will still fulfill the city's goals, he said.

"It's going to be a full-service hotel with a conference center, a restaurant and tavern and will be consistent with the city's history."

The hotel will feature 101 units, a mixture of suites and regular rooms, instead of all suites, as initially planned.

The conference center will now be two stories high and hold up to 500 people instead of 400.

Monahan said he will meet with Mayor Donald Kasprzak next week to discuss the plans.

The mayor said he hopes the hotel finally becomes a reality.

"Anytime someone can do something like this to help the city, we will help them," Kasprzak said.

Monahan said he hopes construction can begin in mid June.

"We are very excited, and we thank the community for their patience."