

05/26/2010 05:02 PM

Republicans Pounce on Duffy's 'Unfinished Business'

By: Scott Patterson

Mayor Duffy has a number of downtown development projects that are still up in the air, something state Republicans are already pouncing on.

Just hours after Duffy took his place beside Andrew Cuomo, the Republican Party of New York State issue a release saying Cuomo picked a "yes man" whose legacy in Rochester is unfinished business.

One of the most visible pieces is Midtown Plaza, which has yet to see a long talked about redevelopment. State Republicans call it a "monument to Duffy's own self-serving political agenda."

"Midtown really isn't Bob Duffy's project," said Sandy Parker of the Rochester Business Alliance.

Parker said it is not fair to tie unfinished projects to one individual.

"I think what Bob has done is he's set a pathway," said Parker. "I would hope that whoever succeeds him continues down that same pathway."

One of the possible components of the midtown development is a new theatre.

"It concerns me somewhat because when you have the quarterback suddenly out of the game it's a concern," said Arnie Rothschild of the Rochester Broadway Theatre League.

Rothschild worries that a statewide campaign will tie up Duffy's attention as the league works to decide if a new theatre would be a good fit downtown.

"In a strong mayor system that we have in the city of Rochester, he's the guy that makes the decisions," said Rothschild. "So you know, what you worry about is a change in focus."

Questions are also being raised about Duffy's role in the failure of the Renaissance Square project, which would have brought a campus for Monroe Community College, a bus terminal and a performing arts center downtown.

"I would like to have him asked why his sabotaged Renaissance Square," said political analyst Curt Smith.

Smith hopes to see Duffy explain his about face on the project.

"He was for it then he sabotaged it," said Smith. "He incinerated it. Why? Explain the inexplicable. Maybe he has a rationale, but until he's asked we won't know what it is."

Even with this unfinished business, Duffy has remained popular in Rochester. The question now is will Republicans be able to make these things an issue statewide.