

# Burg Biz

## New Look for State & 2nd

Office building, not hotel, now proposed.

*Lawrance Binda*

The corner of State and N. 2nd streets has a new plan, with a five-story commercial building now proposed in lieu of a hotel tower.

This month, Harrisburg-based WCI Partners will present its preliminary plan to both the city's Planning Commission and Historic Architectural Review Board. The first formal hearings on the project are planned for July, said WCI President Dave Butcher.

According to the current timeline, construction of the 50,000-square-foot building, located at 409 N. 2nd St., should begin next spring and be completed in 2012.



WCI expects to sign a lease soon for the top three floors of professional office space, which has allowed the developer to move forward with the project, said WCI principal Alex Hartzler. The building's first floor is expected to be occupied by a restaurant or another type of commercial tenant, he said.

Hartzler added that the building will be green-certified, using environmentally conscious building materials and power and heating/cooling systems.

In December 2006, WCI received city approval for a 138-room hotel at that location. The recession, however, made that project "fiscally infeasible," in terms of economics and financing, said Hartzler.

The hotel plan was somewhat controversial, as its 160-foot tower would have changed the skyline of downtown. The planned five-story structure is far more modest in scope.

Left, artist's rendering of the planned office building for 2nd and State streets.