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Deal to sell former O-A school site falls through

Former middle school to go back on market

By [George Basler](#)*Press & Sun-Bulletin***STORYCHAT:** Post Comment 

OWEGO -- A deal to sell the former Owego-Apalachin Middle School to a downstate developer has fallen through, and the district will be seeking new buyers, officials said.

"We're considerably disappointed. We thought we had a firm deal," said Superintendent William Russell.

The former school on Elm Street closed in mid-2005 when the Owego-Apalachin Central School District finished a new \$18 million middle school. The 112,000-square-foot former middle school building is now vacant and being maintained by the district.

Last year, the Owego-Apalachin district accepted a purchase offer from a downstate developer, Russell said. He would not name the developer.

The plan called for the old school to be used for light commercial development, Russell said. In April, the developer asked the school district to endorse a zoning change for the property, which sits in a residentially zoned neighborhood, and the district did so, the superintendent said.

Then, in June, the developer asked for an extension of the purchase agreement for 45 days while he applied to the village's zoning board for a zoning change, Russell said.

But the potential buyer never applied for the zoning change and hasn't been heard from, the superintendent said. The purchase agreement has expired.

The disappointed school board instructed Russell last week to list the property again, board Vice President Gene Cvik said. "I think the board is pretty well tired of doing business with him (the downstate developer)," Cvik said.

The school district will put the building on the market again soon, and will seek a zoning change on its own, Russell said. "We're back at zero, square one," he said.

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