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New York Governor Cuomo makes construction push for stalled Ground Zero Greek Orthodox Church



Gov. Cuomo has pushed for seven heavy hitters to join a group trying to restart the stalled construction of a Greek Orthodox church at Ground Zero, The Post has learned.

“He wants the church finished,” said supermarket mogul John Catsimatidis, one of the seven.

The moves come as the parishioners of St. Nicholas church are celebrating their 18th Easter this Sunday without a home, following the destruction of their former Cedar Street church in the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

The rebuilding of the more elaborate replacement church, known as the St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church and National Shrine, stalled in December 2017 when the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese ran out of money for the \$80 million project.

Some of the money meant for the grand church went to shore up the Archdiocese’s

finances. The US Attorney has been probing the project.

The half-built church has become an eyesore at Ground Zero. It sits on land owned by the Port Authority with a nominal rent of \$1 a year.

The Archdiocese said it would take nearly \$40 million to finish the church, which was designed by Spanish architect Santiago Calatrava, and is supposed to glow at night and provide “a spiritual beacon of hope and rebirth.”

Catsimatidis, who heads Gristedes supermarkets, said donors were ready to step in, but only if a new group was in charge.

“If the Archdiocese is in charge, they’re not giving the money,” he said.

He said no state money would be involved.

Cuomo’s other recommendations to join the non-profit Friends of St. Nicholas include Democratic donor Dennis Mehiel, and Madeline Singas, the Nassau County District Attorney, sources said.

Bishop Andonios Paropoulos, the chancellor of the Archdiocese, said it “had absolutely no problem” with Cuomo’s picks.

He said the group had done no active fundraising since it was formed at the end of last year.

A spokesman for Cuomo said the governor “reached out to the Port Authority, which is trying to help the project that has been stalled for years.”

— Source: nypost.com