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(Cleveland) – Recently the **Cuyahoga County Commissioners** decided to throw away more of your tax dollars on a public works project that, if completed, will stand as a monument to decades of Democrat-led government waste and abuse. Now the Commissioners themselves cannot even agree if the project is worth pursuing. So begins our first installment of ***News from the Pork Barrel Buffet.***

You may recall that in late March 2007, the three Commissioners, in their quest to build a brand-spanking-new 350,000 square foot County Administration Building, decided to pursue a course of action **\$20 Million more expensive** than the alternative by demolishing a historic building they had paid \$22 Million for not a year previously. This comes on top of over \$9 Million in unforeseen asbestos abatement costs, necessary for the owner of the property to undertake whether the building is knocked down or not.

Now comes the news, reported in the *Plain Dealer* on May 14th, that Commissioner Peter Lawson Jones is asking the City of Cleveland to refuse to issue a demolition permit. More surprising is that Commissioner Jimmy Dimora has stated that if he cannot knock the tower down, he will put it up for sale instead. **“It can sit as a vacant, empty building,”** according to Dimora as quoted in the PD. Presumably joining the other vacant buildings in the surrounding area – vacant buildings our Commissioners apparently have no coherent economic development plan to fill. Instead they have spent \$22 Million for a building that could not be given away, according to one reputable Cleveland broker, due to the tremendous environmental costs the Commissioners have now saddled onto the backs of County taxpayers.

The important questions for all Cuyahoga County taxpayers: How and why did Cuyahoga County become the owner of this albatross of a piece of real estate? What do the Commissioners plan to do with the property now, ***and just how much are they willing to spend to make the project happen?*** How many fat public contracts will be let to Dimora’s campaign contributors to do the work, and who is keeping an eye on the bidding process? To put it succinctly, how did the Ameritrust Tower become the main entrée on Jimmy Dimora’s ***Pork Barrel Buffet?***