Re: Renaissance — Time to look elsewhere

TO THE EDITOR:

A few years ago our city hired Renaissance to come up with an idea to revitalize downtown. I believe the term “no city tax dollars” or a reasonable facsimile term was used in the outline. Having already extended the deadline for them, I feel it’s time to look in another direction. A partial plan requiring six million taxpayer dollars is a far cry from what our city was told. I am certainly not blaming either side as both parties have tried extremely hard to come up with something. Why should Bristol move forward with an idea which can’t even garner enough interest amongst investors? Is 10 years of tax breaks for potential developers not enough?

Is there any harm in waiting? A decision this delicate should not be made simply because it can be made. Does Bristol need more subsidized housing? Can Bristol even afford to kick in $6 million when realistically, it didn’t even have enough budget money for salt during last winter’s storms.

To the Editor:

Bristol’s City Council is full of people far more knowledgeable on this topic than I and yet I find it puzzling how they don’t see the writing (i.e., graffiti) on the wall. Stop trying to mortgage our children’s futures on a dream that this city cannot afford at this time. Bristol is not forced to play this hand; simply fold and wait for a new hand. Let the people have a vote through a referendum on the next ballot.

Mark Merriam
Bristol

YOUR VIEW

A call for the isolation of Vladimir Putin

NEWSWIRE, MELVILLE, N.Y.

As last week slammed to a close withearing images of a Malaysia Airlines jet smoldering in Ukrainian fields, the American president who once ran for office promising “to deal with the world as it is rather than what it might be” stepped to the microphones to give a not-so-subtle warning to Russia about igniting Cold War II.

Barack Obama was quite correct to offer Russian President Vladimir Putin a finger-wagging lecture on Friday. Obama said “there will be costs” if Russia proceeds with any military activities in Ukraine.

The president is also right to demand an international response, and he should keep up pressure on European leaders, who until now have been quite reluctant to confront the megalomaniac Russian president. While Obama was careful not to directly put blood on Putin’s hands, his advisers were less diplomatic.

Before Obama’s White House remarks, Samantha Power, our ambassador to the United Nations, told the Security Council in Manhattan that the Russian weapons were so technically complex that it was “impossible to rule out” that the separatists weren’t trained by their Russian sponsors.

That it was probably a mistake is of little comfort.

“Increases in missile, economic, and diplomatic actions the United States and our allies must take, the tragic loss of life could underscore a philosophical turning point — reversing America’s growing retreat from world affairs. Suddenly a civil war that has raged quietly in an obscure part of the world has broken out into the open — claiming 298 innocent souls.

It’s now evident that a surface-to-air missile destroyed Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 over a section of eastern Ukraine controlled by Russian-backed separatists. It’s possible the combatants who fired the missiles thought they had targeted a military aircraft. They had boasted earlier of shooting down at least two Ukrainian military planes.

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Beyond the immediate diplomatic and economic actions the United States and our allies must take, the tragic loss of life could underscore a philosophical turning point — reversing America’s growing retreat from world affairs. Suddenly a civil war that has raged quietly in an obscure part of the world has broken out into the open — claiming 298 innocent souls.

That it was probably a mistake is of little comfort.

But can Europe do that? It depends on Russia for oil and gas, which has helped explain why some of its leaders have been reticent about calling out Putin on his military adventures — most recently, his violent annexation of Crimea.

But any excuse for silence has vanished.

This unthinkable episode should galvanize public opinion here and around the world — in a way we have not seen before — to isolate Putin.