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QUOTE OF THE DAY: "The longer the title, the less important the job." — George McGovern



Staff photo by Kevin Harnack

The Milwaukee skyline is reflected in Rocky Marcoux's windshield as he drives around the city. Marcoux's re-appointment as the head of Milwaukee's Department of City Development hit a snag last week. Ultimately, his re-appointment proposal was sent back to the city's Zoning, Neighborhoods & Development Committee.

## VOTE OF CONFIDENCE

Milwaukee construction industry rallies behind Marcoux to remain development commissioner

Alex Zank  
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**C** hanging who's in charge of Milwaukee's Department of City Development while several large projects are in progress could pull the reins back on the city's ongoing construction boom.



MARCOUX

That was the opinion of various industry officials as members of the city's Common Council grapple over whether to appoint Rocky Marcoux to another four-year term as commissioner of the department. Even though the proposed re-appointment received a committee's approval in late June, Common Council members came close last week to voting Marcoux out of office.

In an initial vote taken Wednesday, council members

came out 8-5 against reappointing Marcoux. Ultimately though, members used a parliamentary maneuver to send the proposal back to city's the Zoning, Neighborhoods & Development Committee.

The events had certain construction-industries officials scratching their heads. Ken Kraemer, executive director of the pro-union group Building Advantage, noted that Marcoux faced similar opposition when he was last up for reappointment four years ago. There was one big difference then, though: Milwaukee was not in the middle of a construction boom.

"This time I thought there'd be no issues at all," Kraemer said.

Marcoux's critics have made much of what they consider to be a lack of development outside of Milwaukee's downtown, even as various projects permanently alter

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## Groups challenge mine report

Environmentalists say DNR sand pollution findings misleading

Todd Richmond  
Associated Press

**MADISON (AP)** — A new Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources draft report wrongly concludes that sand mining operations don't produce fine dust particles and shouldn't impact human health, an environmental advocacy group contends.

The DNR released a potential update to its 2012 sand mining analysis for public comment last week. The analysis tracks the latest scientific and socioeconomic information about sand mining in Wisconsin. The agency uses the analysis to inform policy discussions and decisions.

Sand mining has taken off in western Wisconsin since 2008, as fracking, a process to free petroleum and natural gas by cracking rock with injections of water, sand and chemicals, has taken hold. The region has high-quality silica sand that works well in the process: according to the report, 92 sand mines are currently active in the area. The boom has generated fears of air and water pollution.

A section of the report focuses on air pollution, stating that sand mines don't appear

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# Milwaukee council to decide his fate

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the city's skyline. Some have gone so far as to express gratitude for the jobs being created by large projects such as the \$450 million, 32-story Northwestern Mutual Tower and Commons as well as a \$524 million arena for the Milwaukee Bucks.

But they have noted that the work is concentrated in a relatively small part of the city and have wondered if Marcoux and his colleagues are doing enough to encourage the spread of development beyond downtown.

Kraemer doesn't quite see it that way. He argued that large developments, no matter where they are, generate tax dollars that can be spent on policies that benefit the city as a whole.

Similarly, the developments, no matter where they are, are providing residents with high-paying construction jobs, said Mike Fabishak, chief executive officer of the Associated General Contractors of Greater Milwaukee.

"I think (Marcoux) has been a real important catalyst and unifier in relation to getting projects on the map and greenlighted," Fabishak said.

Fabishak added that dumping Marcoux in the midst of so much development could be "problematic," especially if his successor were to have less experience.

*Our industry is 100 percent behind the commissioner and the department."*

**KEN KRAEMER,**  
Building Advantage executive  
director

Marcoux's supporters among city officials voiced similar concerns. They noted that no possible successor has been identified.

"If you don't have a game plan in place, I think it would be foolish to literally just pull the plug here today," Alderman Jim Bohl said at Wednesday's Common Council meeting.

Kraemer said his office has sent a letter to Common Council members calling on them to support Marcoux. He said he is also reaching out to the Bucks arena developers to ask them to do the same.

"Our industry is 100 percent behind the commissioner and the department," he said.

Marcoux could not be reached for a comment on Monday. Several Common Council members who voted against his reappointment last week also did not respond to requests for comment.