

# Builder chips in \$500G for stadium

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A developer who wants to build a shopping center on the old American Cyanamid site in Bridgewater has offered the county a half-million dollars toward a \$14.58 million minor-league baseball stadium on the same tract.

William Krame, president of the Krame Development Company in Paramus, has sent a letter to the Somerset County Board of Freeholders, offering up to \$500,000 toward "development costs directly associated with the ballpark."



Krame's company and a partner firm, Price REIT of Los Angeles, have proposed building the \$80 million, 700,000-square-foot retail center on about 106 acres of the northern part of the American Cyanamid property in the Finderne section of Bridgewater. Neither firm is involved with the stadium plans.

Krame confirmed Monday that he did make the offer to the freeholders. He declined to discuss details of the proposal but said that his firm remains supportive of the baseball stadium, as it has since the plan was put forward.

Krame's offer follows several financial guarantees from Steven Kalafer, the Flemington car dealer who has proposed bringing two minor-league teams to play in Bridgewater.

The \$500,000 contribution would be in addition to more than \$1 million in road improvements Krame plans to make for his shopping center — improvements which, Krame noted, would be the county's responsibility if the shopping center were not part of the equation.

Freeholder Director Rose McConnell said the board has received the letter, which is dated March 6, and said the offer "sounds very interesting" but that she is "not at all clear on where we go from here."

McConnell said she will consult the county counsel and ask other freeholders to discuss the offer before deciding whether to accept the proposal.

"I don't know how to react to this," she said.

But she noted that Krame's offer, Kalafer's \$100,000-a-year for 10 years guarantee and a possible \$3 million contribution from the state Casino Reinvestment Development Authority adds up to \$4.5 million.

"It's on the way to being taxpayer-friendly, isn't it?" she asked.