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## Another Hitch In Effort to Save Brooklyn's LICH State University Officials Reject a Bid by Brooklyn Health Partners

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The long-running effort to find a way to save Long Island College Hospital looks like it will run a while longer.

State university officials rejected a bid by Brooklyn Health Partners, the leading bidder for the hospital, saying that they were unable to reach an agreement by the Monday deadline.

The State University of New York said in a statement Monday that it plans to begin negotiating with the second-place bidder, Don Peebles, a real-estate developer with offices in Miami and New York City.

The decision marks a setback to a bidding process that was created out of a court settlement and was announced by Mayor [Bill de Blasio](#) at a jubilant news conference in February.

Community advocates and unions had hoped that the bid criteria, which gave significant credit to bidders willing to operate a full-service hospital, could help keep the hospital open. Brooklyn Health Partners, a newly formed entity headed by Californian Merrell Schexnydre, promised to operate a 300- to 400-bed hospital on the site.

A state official said it became increasingly clear that the Brooklyn Health Partners plan had unanswered questions, including how it planned to finance the project and whether it remained committed to building a hospital on the site.

In a letter dated May 5, SUNY's deputy counsel for health affairs, Ruth Booher, said that the university has been unable to reach an agreement with Brooklyn Health Partners and is "terminating our negotiations with your firm effective immediately."

Brooklyn Health Partners said it was prepared to close the deal. It filed a lawsuit in Brooklyn Supreme Court on Friday, alleging that the university was negotiating in bad faith.

A spokeswoman left open the possibility of further litigation. "BHP is currently meeting with its attorneys to determine its next course of action," she said in a statement. "We are deeply disappointed that for the last 30 days SUNY has failed to negotiate in good faith."

University officials have said they plan to stop operating the hospital on May 22, regardless of whether a new operator is in place, creating a tight deadline to reach a deal with Mr. Peebles. His bid includes a 50,000-square-foot primary-care facility and up to 35% affordable units and larger units that will cater to families in the area.

A spokesman said Mr. Peebles and his partners "look forward to engaging with SUNY to redevelop the LICH campus and assure uninterrupted access to a broad array of health-care services."