

Greek church sues for right to rebuild at disputed Ground Zero site

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(RNS) Greek Orthodox officials on Monday (Feb. 14) filed suit against the agency charged with rebuilding Ground Zero over the disputed fate of tiny St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church, which was destroyed by falling debris on 9/11.

Negotiations between St. Nicholas leaders and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey abruptly ended two years ago, which agency officials blame on the congregation's escalating demands.

"The parish and the archdiocese would have preferred to rebuild the church without litigation," countered the Rev. Mark Arey, spokesman for the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America.

Church officials want to proceed with the preliminary agreement to exchange their strategic sliver at 155 Cedar Street -- now under construction for a major vehicle security center -- for a larger piece of property at 130 Liberty Street.

Port Authority officials, meanwhile, say the church is welcome to rebuild on the original property once the garage is completed.

The church is also suing the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation, the New York State Urban Development Corporation and two Port Authority officials.