

'Everything done piecemeal,' architect tells Senate probers

Court contractor criticized

The architect for the long-stalled and increasingly costly Middlesex County courthouse in East Cambridge told a Senate investigating committee yesterday that he had recommended to the county commissioners that the contract for the job not be given to the firm which eventually was awarded the work.

Edward J. Tedesco of Winchester told the special Senate investigating committee headed by Sen. Beryl W. Cohen (D-Brookline) that it will cost at least \$3 million more to complete the 21-story complex, which has already cost \$27 million.

The building, where construction has been stopped since spring, was originally slated to be an 18-story structure and was estimated to cost \$18 million.

Tedesco said the \$30 million figure wouldn't include furnishing and equipping the building as

originally specified in the legislative authorization.

He said if the original contractor, Gevyn Construction Co. of Marmaroneck, N.Y. was still on the job, the building could be completed for less than the \$30 million figure.

The necessity of having a new contractor will increase the cost of completion as much as \$12 million, he said.

Tedesco said he and his firm have not taken advantage of a contractual clause which allows him to be paid 9.5 percent of the total for "extra services" and he charged only the basic 5.5 percent fee.

The courthouse construction has been delayed as a result of several disputes between the contractor and the county commissioners and in March of this year, the Gevyn firm terminated the contract which had been awarded in 1967.

Tedesco told the Senate committee, which also in-

cluded Sen. George V. Kenneally (D-Dorchester) and Sen. John D. Barrus (R-Goshen), that he had received information before the contract was awarded that the largest project the Gevyn firm had ever been involved in was a \$6 million addition to a hospital in Pennsylvania.

He said he received the information from the Aberthaw Construction Co., the second low bidder on the job. Tedesco said he recommended that Aberthaw get the contract because of the ineligibility difference between the bids of the two firms — \$12,000.

Under questioning by Cohen, Tedesco said that a letter from the Gevyn firm to the county commissioners in which they qualified their bid was sufficient reason to reject the firm's bid. But he did not see the letter until the bids had been let, Tedesco said.

He said he never told the commissioners he considered the firm incompetent

to do the job, but that "it might not be in the best interests of the court" to have them.

He also objected to the commissioners the contractor's practice of "doing everything piecemeal," which provoked delays and added to the costs.

Tedesco was the second major witness to testify in the hearing. Last week Atty. Robert Popeo, counsel for the Middlesex County commissioners, outlined in detail what had led up to the planning and construction of the courthouse.

Cohen said the next witness at the Thursday 11 a.m. hearing will be Judge Haven Parker, presiding judge of the Cambridge District Court.

Cohen also noted at the end of the hearing that, in addition to the cost of the courthouse thus far, there are \$9 million in claims due to the delayed construction and \$1.7 million in alleged unpaid bills.