

# Collusion cases against NFL settled

BY BOB GLAUBER  
bob.glauber@newsday.com

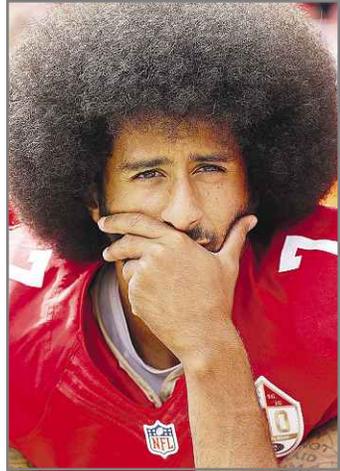
Colin Kaepernick and Eric Reid have settled their collusion cases against the NFL after attorneys for the players and the league announced Friday that the two sides had reached a settlement.

Kaepernick, the former 49ers quarterback who protested racial injustice and police brutality during the 2016 season by sitting and then kneeling during the national anthem, and Reid, a former 49ers safety who signed last season with the Panthers and recently extended his contract, had claimed that NFL team owners had shunned them because of the protests. Terms of the settlement were confidential.

“For the past several months, counsel for Mr. Kaepernick and Mr. Reid have engaged in an ongoing dialogue with representatives of the NFL,” a joint statement released by attorneys for the players and the league said. “As a result of those discussions, the parties have decided to resolve the pending grievances. The resolution of this matter is subject to a confidentiality agreement so there will be no further comment by any party.”

Kaepernick has not played since opting out of his contract with the 49ers following the 2016 season. He filed the grievance alleging collusion in October 2017. The NFL last May instituted a ban on players protesting during the anthem, but later abandoned that rule after fierce protests from the players and some disagreement among owners about plans to fine teams whose players protested during the anthem. Jets owner Christopher Johnson told Newsday after the ban had been imposed that he would allow his players to take a knee if they felt it necessary to protest racial injustice.

Reid, who continued to kneel during the anthem after being signed by the Panthers last September, agreed this week to a three-year extension worth up to \$24 million.



Colin Kaepernick

AP / MARGO JOSE SANCHEZ

A full hearing before an arbitrator had been scheduled for later this month. That hearing will no longer be held because of the settlement.

Kaepernick and Reid posted a copy of the statement on their Twitter accounts Friday. The NFL Players Association issued a statement acknowledging the settlement.

“Today, we were informed by the NFL of the settlement of the Colin Kaepernick and Eric Reid collusion cases,” the statement read. “We are not privy to the details of the settlement, but support the decision by the players and their counsel. We continuously supported Colin and Eric from the start of their protests, participated with their lawyers throughout their legal proceedings and were prepared to participate in the upcoming trial in pursuit of both truth and justice for what we believe the NFL and its clubs did to them. We are glad that Eric has earned a job and a new contract, and we continue to hope that Colin gets his opportunity as well.”

Protests by Kaepernick and several other players during the 2016 season became a topic of national conversation and controversy, with President Donald Trump repeatedly criticizing players who took a knee and suggesting they were denigrating service members and first responders.

# AMAZON PULLOUT

## Observers also suspect fears of political fallout

BY MICHAEL GORMLEY  
michael.gormley@newsday.com

ALBANY — A series of tense, closed-door meetings during which Amazon was pressed to hire union workers at its proposed Queens headquarters preceded the company’s abrupt pullout on Thursday, which shocked even insiders, according to several people familiar with the discussions.

Two days before, in his 38th floor office in Manhattan on Tuesday morning, Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo met with four Amazon executives, Stuart Appelbaum, president of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union, and Mario Cilentio, president of the New York State AFL-CIO.

The prize was clear: A promised 25,000 jobs with an average salary of \$150,000, but Cuomo and Mayor Bill de Blasio were urging Amazon to hire a union workforce.

The 8,000-word memorandum of understanding signed by Amazon and state and city leaders on Nov. 12 made no mention of unions or collective bargaining, and Amazon was, at the time, facing calls for strikes at its facilities in Germany and Spain.

That left perhaps the stickiest issue to be worked out, three months after New York was chosen for a headquarters in a nationwide competition for what would have been the state’s biggest economic development coup in history.

Ninety minutes later, with handshakes all around, what may have been the last and stickiest issue in the megaproject appeared to finally be on track. They agreed to a “framework” on union hiring, a potentially major concession for the traditionally anti-union Amazon.

The union leaders, used to seeing union wages required for economic development projects, admitted the agreement wasn’t much. It allowed



A January protest of Amazon outside the New York City Council’s

only for a fair vote by workers on whether to unionize, and provisions against retaliation against union supporters.

“It was weak stuff,” Appelbaum said in an interview. “It wasn’t neutrality” in a union vote. “It was very, very basic and less than we would have wanted. But it was the first time anywhere we knew of that Amazon was willing to sit down and talk about a path to unionization.”

Then came the phone call. Cuomo, who once joked that he’d change his first name to Amazon if it would seal the deal, was told Wednesday night that the deal was off. He

was “beyond furious,” one source said.

The next morning, the news became public.

In a 360-word statement, Amazon said, “The commitment to build a new headquarters requires positive, collaborative relationships with state and local elected officials who will be supportive over the long-term. A number of state and local politicians have made it clear that they oppose our presence and will not work with us to build the type of relationships that are required to go forward with the project we and many others envisioned in Long Island City.”

# FOLLOWED PUSH FOR UNION



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— Stuart Appelbaum, president of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union

what they saw as corporate welfare.

In recent weeks, Gianaris had described the Amazon deal struck by Cuomo without legislative input or approval “a horrible deal for the people of Queens and the people of New York” and accused Amazon of “extortion” to land \$3 billion in tax breaks and incentives.

Ocasio-Cortez, the champion of a rising democratic socialist movement, tweeted at the time: “Why should corporations that contribute nothing to the pot be in a position to take billions from the public?”

But de Blasio said no one should cheer Amazon’s departure.

“I think it is a real oversimplification to suggest every working person out there just is feeling great that we’ve lost all these jobs and lost all this revenue,” de Blasio said on WNYC “Brian Lehrer Show” on Friday. “In fact, the polls would suggest the opposite. The polls were quite clear. According to income level, low-income folks wanted this deal to work. Higher-income folks, more educated folks who had already made it, were the ones who had opposition.”

With Matthew Chayes and James T. Madore

## LI officials fear mistaken ID

BY JAMES T. MADORE  
james.madore@newsday.com

Development officials are worried businesses from outside New York State will confuse Long Island with Long Island City, Queens — and not move here after Amazon scrapped plans for a Queens headquarters because of fierce opposition from Queens politicians.

“Some people will equate Long Island with having made this big mistake,” William G. Mannix, executive director of the Islip Town Industrial Development Agency, said Friday, referring to Amazon’s bombshell announcement Thursday that it was canceling plans for an East Coast headquarters in Long Island City with 25,000 high-paying jobs.

“We need a regional marketing voice, a campaign to get the message out that Long Island is still open for business,” he said.

Mannix and other economic developers called for a proactive response to the loss of the biggest project in state history: Amazon HQ2, which involved \$2.5 billion in investment by the online retailer and an estimated \$27.5 billion in tax revenue over 25 years. In return, Amazon was to receive nearly \$3 billion in tax breaks.

The officials said government at all levels must work with the business community to educate politicians and residents about the benefits of megaprojects and the incentives required to lure them. Amazon, in a North American competition, chose Queens and Crystal City, Virginia, for its East Coast headquarters.

Mannix also warned that New York State could compound the damage to its reputation with CEOs by passing bills in the State Legislature that would raise construction costs.

The legislation would require companies to pay the prevailing wage — a guaranteed minimum rate above the state minimum wage — on construction that is supported by tax breaks. The

prevailing wage is already paid on government projects.

“The loss of Amazon is a very big black mark,” Mannix said. “And now, this legislation, which is very likely to pass, would raise the cost of construction between 30 percent and 40 percent on Long Island.”

He and Richard Kessel, chairman of the Nassau County Industrial Development Agency, said they were in a Melville meeting about the prevailing wage bills when they learned Amazon had pulled out of Queens.

Amazon’s move “makes it more of an uphill battle to attract new businesses,” Kessel said. “Large companies don’t want to go through the ringer that Amazon went through.”

Post-Amazon HQ2, he said IDAs will be more cautious about helping companies.

“You have to be a lot more sensitive and careful. . . . It’s a new world and tax incentives aren’t necessarily liked,” Kessel said, adding Long Island is no stranger to the community protests that enveloped Amazon in Queens.

For many CEOs, the Amazon HQ2 takeaway is that big business is no longer welcome in the Empire State.

“The business community is seriously concerned about the future of New York if this anti-corporate, anti-jobs sentiment is going to prevail,” said Kathryn S. Wylde, CEO of the Partnership for New York City, which represents the city’s large employers. “What are the prospects for business to be able to thrive in New York? Not very good.”

Empire State Development, the state’s primary business-aid agency, was mum Friday on whether it plans to reassure corporate executives.

An agency spokesman pointed to Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo’s statement after the Amazon HQ2 deal collapsed: “We won’t be deterred as we continue to attract world-class business to communities across New York State,” Cuomo said.

second hearing on the company’s second-headquarters deal.

The news rocked Albany, even those close to the project. “Our lawyers were working on language,” Appelbaum recalled. “Then someone at the very top, I presume (CEO Jeff) Bezos, said, ‘We don’t talk to people, we tell them.’”

“They created a process that was doomed to fail,” Appelbaum said. “It revealed they didn’t want to listen.”

Some have suggested that Amazon also may have been concerned about being a long-term political target for those opposed to the deal.

“They have an agenda in Washington,” said Kathryn Wylde, CEO of the Partnership

for New York City. “When you have high-profile members of Congress (Sen. Elizabeth Warren, Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez) jumping on the Amazon New York location controversy, that’s not tenable for them. They have big stakes down there with the privacy issues. . . . They don’t need to become a target of the liberal wing of the national Democratic Party.”

Cuomo, meanwhile, has blamed State Senate Deputy Majority Leader Michael Gianaris of Queens for his public criticism of the Amazon deal, pushed by liberal and democratic socialist opponents of

CHARLES ECKERT