

Friday, Dec. 08 2006

ST. CHARLES COUNTY, MO - **Matthew Thornhill**, who resigned this week as an assistant prosecutor amid allegations he solicited baseball memorabilia in exchange for reducing a criminal charge, is still expected to become a judge next month, Presiding Judge Joseph Briscoe said Thursday.

**Thornhill**, 38, was elected as an associate circuit judge in November. He had worked as an assistant prosecutor for 13 years before resigning Wednesday. St. Charles County Prosecutor Jack Banas, who turned over the investigation of **Thornhill** to the St. Louis County prosecuting attorney and the U.S. attorney, said Thornhill will not face state or federal criminal charges.

Banas said the U.S. attorney's office is still looking into the case.

**Thornhill**, who has previously declined to comment, could not be reached Thursday.

Banas would provide few details about the investigation. He said the St. Charles County Regional Drug Task Force and the FBI investigated the case. He said the original case, involving a female defendant, has since been dropped. The case will be brought up again with a special prosecutor from another office, and that person will decide whether to refile charges.

Banas did not say whether he would complain to the Missouri Bar about Thornhill but did say lawyers are obligated to file a complaint if they believe another lawyer was involved in misconduct.

Carl E. Schaeperkoetter, an attorney with the Office of the Chief Disciplinary Counsel, which investigates ethical complaints against lawyers, said that when complaints are filed, an investigation can take anywhere from three months to one year, depending on the circumstances.