

TESTIMONY OF ANTHONY A. WILLIAMS
MAYOR

BEFORE

THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ZONING COMMISSION

ON THE SUBJECT OF
CONSTRUCTION OF MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL BALLPARK

JUNE 26, 2006 -- 6:30 PM

ZONING COMMISSION HEARING ROOM
ONE JUDICIARY SQUARE
441 FOURTH ST., N.W., Room 220 South
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Good evening Vice Chairperson Hood, and other Members of the Commission in attendance today. I am Anthony Williams, Mayor, and I am pleased to appear before you today on the construction of a major league baseball ballpark.

We have arrived at another important point in the process of building the ballpark which will be the catalyst to revitalize an entire neighborhood along the Anacostia Waterfront. The zoning approval we are seeking this evening will allow construction to proceed on the ballpark within the required timeframe for us to fulfill our commitment for an Opening Day in the Spring of 2008.

The construction of this ballpark is more than a vehicle for the games that will be played there – though we have already seen that those games and the spirit they engender within our city and region are a great contribution in themselves. The ballpark will be the engine that will speed development throughout the surrounding area which will become the ballpark district. It will be the draw for an entire mixed-use community with offices, housing , new retail and entertainment. It will be a lively area that will be active 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year – and not just on game days.

Our financial investment in the ballpark will also bring great economic returns. The ballpark will spur \$2 Billion in private investment, creating 20,000 jobs and between \$50 and \$75 million in annual tax revenues. It will also support a \$450 Million Community Benefit Fund which will fund projects throughout the District including \$125 Million for school construction and modernization and \$45 million for our libraries.

The D.C. Sports and Entertainment Commission will address the specifics of their application before the Zoning Commission for construction of a modern ballpark that will serve as the catalyst I've described.

- They have submitted a number of development options as we seek to achieve the best design consistent with the Capitol Gateway Overlay and the vision for this district along the Anacostia Waterfront.
- The retail surrounding the ballpark will be an important contribution to the district, bringing people south on First Street to the Waterfront.
- And required parking can be constructed in the same timeframe as the ballpark itself, with other amenities that fit in the context of the neighborhood.
- We have worked hard to arrive at a compromise parking plan that I support and am asking you to support as well. This plan will

provide the necessary ballpark parking above ground as well as below grade parking for retail and residential uses that will also be built on the site.

- These additional uses will be built surrounding and above the parking levels, minimizing negative impacts of a structured parking garage to the surrounding neighborhood.
- This new approach is critical to integrating the ballpark into a lively, mixed-use entertainment district.

In closing, I cannot emphasize enough the importance to this project of a positive and timely decision on the application before you. The ballpark is being constructed on an aggressive timeframe and we seek your support to allow it to move forward toward completion by Opening Day 2008. I ask that you approve the application before you without further delay.