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04 Jun Santa Clara City Council Adopts Stadium Deal

Posted by: Eric Melendez
Niner Noise blog
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After a 6 ½ hour debate and listening to Santa Clara residents in favor and opposed to building the Niner's a new stadium the Santa Clara City Council voted 5-2 in favor of adopting the proposal. Now it is up to the citizens to vote their approval for the building of a new stadium which will likely come in March or April 2010. Here is what the city council is asking of the voters:

Use $79 million in public money to fund some of the construction costs.
Create a new tax on hotel guests at eight nearby hotels that will generate $35 million for additional stadium funding. No new taxes on Santa Clara residents will be created. (This is a huge deal for residents. Certainly taxing visitors in a hotel tax is fine, but not Santa Clara locals.)
Head joke Jed York is touting the proposal as great for residents because whether or not they like football or the 49ers it will make Santa Clara "a better place to live, to work and play." Really York? So what about San Franciscans? The love of the 49ers goes back to 1946 when the team was first established and the 49er Faithful bleed red and gold. Based on York's logic will San Francisco now become a worse place to live, work and play without an NFL team? The way the York's are going about the proposal will alienate not only die hard Niner fans but the city of San Francisco as well. If the deal with Santa Clara is rejected does that mean they will fall back to the San Francisco proposals? How many bridges will have been burnt down by the York's come spring 2010 in trying to get approval for Santa Clara? Mayor Gavin Newsom has been quoted this week as saying the deal is bad for the South Bay city and the money could be used towards something better like schools and education. This will be the first of many attempts by Mayor Newsom and The City to keep the 49ers in S.F. Most of the public who attended the hearing were in favor of the proposal but it has been said that currently there is a 50-50 chance it would get approved by voters. With the vote not expected until spring 2010 that leaves plenty of time for both the York Family and San Francisco to use public relations to sway the voters against or in favor of the stadium. I guarantee you S.F. will not let the 49ers just walk out of town without a fight. Expect Mayor Newsom and company to use everything they can which might include passing legislation requiring only sports team within city limits to be able to use San Francisco is their name. Also we might see a fight for the 49ers team name in which only a team in S.F. can use. This would be a last resort but expect San Francisco city officials to leave nothing off the table.

What to Do?

I am all for a new 49ers stadium. The current stadium Candlestick Park is crumbling and it is not uncommon for anyone who has been to the stadium to not feel safe when walking around. But the 49ers are San Francisco and San Francisco is the 49ers. The first major sports team to come to San Fran was the 49ers. The way the York's have balked at proposals to stay in San Francisco it seems like they really don't care at all to stay in S.F. One of the claims that they say makes Santa Clara such an ideal place is because of the transportation infrastructure of freeways and light and commuter rails are already intact and nothing will have to be built. The York's have said the proposals for a stadium at Candlestick Park and the redevelopment project in the former Navy shipyard Hunters Point does not have the adequate transportation infrastructure as the Santa Clara site and it will be hard to get Niner fans to a new stadium at either proposed site. Has this been a problem Niner fans? I think people have gotten used to the idea of either driving by taking the US-101 freeway or the Muni line to and from the stadium that picks up fans all across the city. Next time you are in San Francisco during the football season walk around the city on a Sunday, before the 49ers game of course, and all that you see are Muni buses taking fans to Candlestick. Yes, it is super crowded on the buses on the way home but that is life living in a big city. Would we not expect the same in Santa Clara? I would think die-hard 49er fans would continue to put up with driving or taking Muni if that meant keeping the team within

city limits.

The York's have the thinking backwards. They are thinking in terms of their own self-interests and then the 49ers. When it should be the 49ers, the city of San Francisco and then their self-interests. Keep the 49ers in San Francisco!

To read this blog on line, please go to:
http://ninernoise.com/2009/06/04/santa-clara-city-council-adopts-stadium-deal/