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Subject:	More HPS/49ers redevelopment clips 22FEB11
Date:	Tuesday, February 22, 2011 10:32:40 AM

49ers stadium plan faces redevelopment hurdle in Santa Clara

By: Ari Burack
02/22/11 4:00 AM
SF Examiner

Hoping to ensure that the San Francisco 49ers will indeed move to the South Bay, the Santa Clara City Council will vote Tuesday on legislation designed to protect public funds to help build a new $937 million stadium.

Santa Clara is scrambling to make sure $40 million in redevelopment funds approved by the city's voters in 2010 isn't taken away by the state. Gov. Jerry Brown has proposed eliminating redevelopment agencies for cities to help reduce the state's $25 billion budget deficit.

Santa Clara officials are trying to establish the fact that because the stadium project there has been developed over several years, redevelopment monies already earmarked for it and other city projects should be left intact.

"We're trying to make sure that we make it very clear that all these projects that the people have spoken very strongly on . need to move forward," Santa Clara Mayor Jamie Matthews said.

The legislation includes the extension of the city's redevelopment plan to include "pass-through" monies to schools, the establishment of a Stadium Authority to own and manage the stadium, and an agreement between the authority and the redevelopment agency.

"It's an important part of the project," 49ers spokeswoman Lisa Lang said of the redevelopment funds. "We are expecting that investment to be there."

For his part, San Francisco Mayor Ed Lee, a self-described "big fan" of the 49ers, has expressed hope a new deal could be forged with 49ers owner Jed York to keep the team in The City. But he has also acknowledged "the economics of running a business."

"I just want to situate ourselves as being open to them, and making sure they know they've got a strong fan supporter at City Hall," Lee told The San Francisco Examiner earlier this month.

A meeting between Lee and York is still in the works, according to the Mayor's Office.

"Santa Clara is our primary focus," Lang said. "But we are still open to discussions with San Francisco if for some reason we're unable to go forward with the Santa Clara site."

San Francisco's plan to redevelop the Hunter's Point shipyard area includes space for a new 49ers stadium.

Niners stadium timeline

June 1997: San Francisco voters approve $100 million bond measure to fund new 49ers stadium at Candlestick Point
Dec. 1997: Team owner Eddie DeBartolo Jr. steps down following gambling fraud allegations; his sister Denise DeBartolo York takes over
Nov. 2006: 49ers scrap plans for new San Francisco stadium and team owner John York announces intention to

move to Santa Clara
June 2010: Santa Clara voters approve new $937 million stadium plan by a 58 percent vote
July 2010: San Francisco approves massive Hunters Point redevelopment plan, to include possible site for new 49ers stadium
Dec. 2010: The 49ers extend lease at Candlestick Park through at least the 2014 season after the completion date of the Santa Clara stadium is pushed back due to uncertain labor negotiations between the NFL and the players union
Tuesday: Santa Clara City Council to vote on 49ers-related legislation

To read this article on line, please go to:
http://www.sfexaminer.com/local/bay-area/2011/02/santa-clara-hoping-clear-redevelopment-funds-49ers-stadium-plan#