NYC 9/11 Public Portal Document

Rudy Makes His Pitch

Seeks agreement to build new stadiums for Yanks, Mets

By Steve Zipay
STAFF WRITER

Despite looming city budget deficits and a projected $40 billion in debt, Mayor Rudolph Giuliani said yesterday that he still was pushing to complete negotiations on plans for new ballparks for the Yankees and Mets. But he made it clear that mayor-elect Michael Bloomberg would have to approve any deal, which would require more than $1.6 billion in city, state and private funds.

"We've talked about it," the mayor said at his daily news briefing. "He'll need time to understand all the details of it. He'll also need flexibility to make his decisions about the budget. The deal should not be done without his complete and absolute agreement."

Giuliani indicated that the Mets and Yankees have been willing to increase their share of the costs since the terrorist attacks Sept. 11.

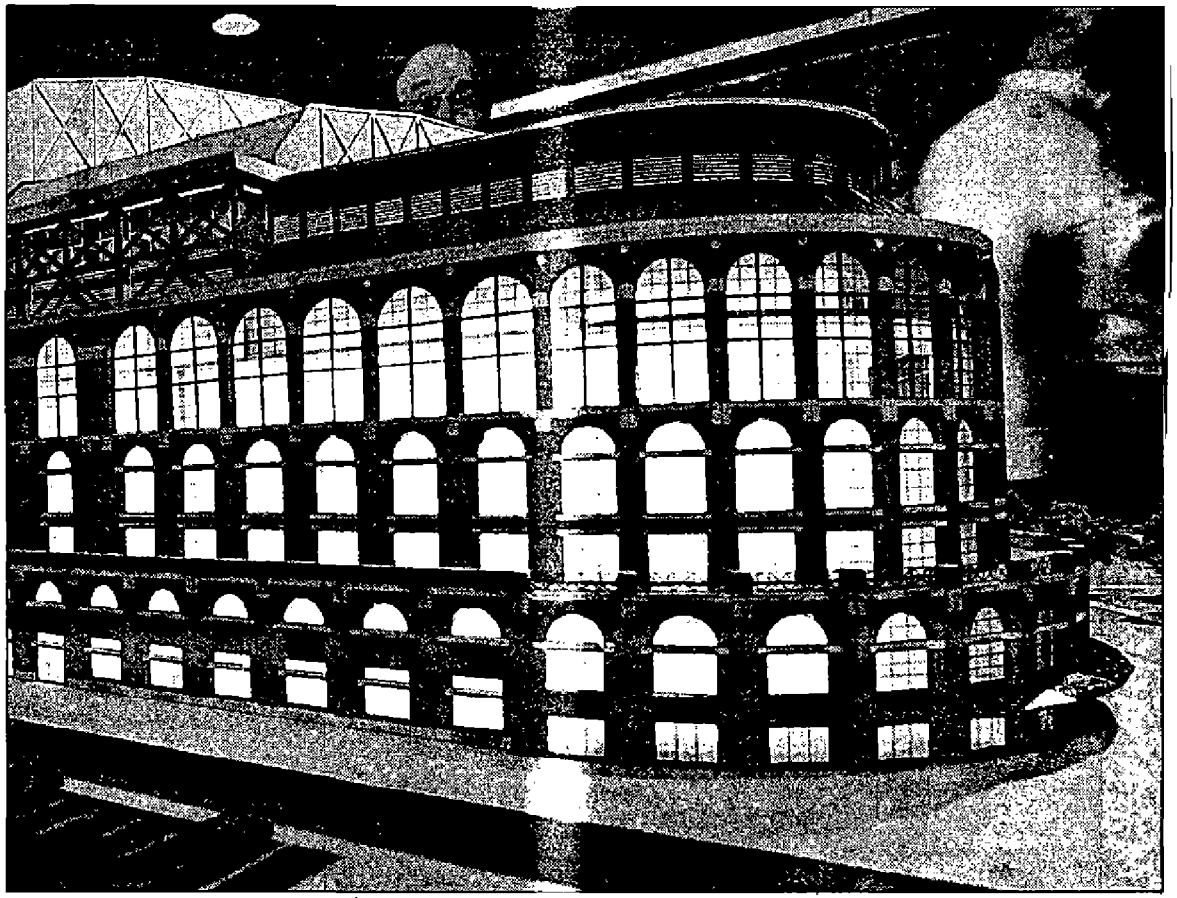
The teams "are making enormous contributions to it," he said. "It's a very, very good economic deal. It was before 9/11, and since 9/11, it's gotten even better from the point of view of the contributions being made by the Yankees and Mets to the building of the ballparks."

He declined to say what those contributions were.

As in the past, Giuliani said he would like to have an agreement in principle before he leaves office Dec. 31, then let the new mayor decide whether to proceed.

Giuliani's comments were surprising, though, given the fact that since Sept. 11, several city officials, including Bloomberg, have said the projects were on the back burner because of the city's other pressing needs. Taxpayers have voiced little, if any, support for subsidizing new ballparks.

On Monday, Giuliani himself proposed cutting $766 million from city agencies. Yesterday, however, he said there was room in the budget already [for the ballparks], so this would not have an impact on the budget decisions I'm making for this year or the budget decision that the mayor-elect has to make for this year or the year after. The way that it's been structured and the contributions that have been made by the teams . . . it's more of a long-term impact."



Newsday File Photo / Michael Ach

If Rudy Giuliani has his way, the Mets will have their Ebbets Field-like park and the Yankees also will have a new stadium

Mets co-owner Fred Wilpon envisions a 21st-century Ebbets Field with a retractable dome in the Shea Stadium parking lot. The Yankees have proposed a new ballpark in the Bronx adjacent to the current stadium, using land in Macomb's Dam Park.

In discussions before Sept. 11, the state Economic Development Corporation had been willing to contribute $300 million for road and infrastructure improvements. It was reported that the city and the teams would divide the bill for the stadiums, with the public monies possibly coming from dedicated tax revenues.

"You have to look at the enhanced value that this creates for the city," Giuliani said. "This enhanced economic value will more than pay for the two stadiums."

NEWSDAY, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2001

CITY_21MC100_01183379B

NYC-WTC_000415567