

*New Baseball
Stadium*

June 18, 1953.

Hon. George V. McLaughlin,
Manufacturers Trust Company,
177 Montague Street,
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Dear George:

Be good enough to let me have the benefit of your thoughts on the following:
I would also like to talk the problem out with Bob Moses.

We need a new ball park. It should be privately built and maintained. The Milwaukee story is an interesting one but I would prefer to exploit the possibility of private ownership. We could not acquire land suitably located without the condemnation assistance of the government. Title I of the Federal Housing Act of 1949 would probably have to be used. I am convinced that a ball park would have to have some use in addition to baseball in order to justify the capital investment.

I have been interested in the success of the Battery garage which, I believe, cost approximately \$3,000 a car to build. There are one or two sites in downtown Brooklyn where a study might show that a parking garage would be successful, particularly if supplemented by patrons of a sports stadium. Automobiles from Brooklyn, Queens and Long Island could be left in Brooklyn and the passengers would have a short ride to Manhattan. A combination parking garage and ball field would make an improvement that could justify Title I action.

In 1947, I persuaded John Smith and Branch Rickey to retain Emil Fraeger to make a study of possible sites for a new ball park. In March 1948, Fraeger recommended a site in an interesting report together with exhibits, diagrams and plans. Last year I asked Fraeger to bring his report up to date and to advise me if such a stadium were to be built could it also serve as a parking garage. He has recently submitted several studies showing that anywhere from 1000 to 1750 cars could be accommodated in what would otherwise be the waste space under the lower stands. If we take the Battery garage figure of \$3,000 a car and extend it by 1750 cars we come within approximately \$1,000,000 of the cost of land, baseball stadium and parking garage. I value the land (only) at Ebbets Field together with the surrounding property we own at more than \$1,000,000. The above would indicate that it is not entirely ridiculous for us to plan a new ball park as it would appear that we might be able to finance it for the dual purpose.

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In the meantime I have studied the interesting plans for the Ft. Greene slum clearance and improvements. Query: Is it too late to relocate some of the planned facilities provided for in the Ft. Greene plan, particularly the apartments, so that a ball park and parking garage could be located at the site picked in the 1948 Praeger report. This comprises part of Area A shown in the Ft. Greene brochure. Our drawings show the site and proposed usage and I would like to show them to you, Bob Moses, George Spargo and Bill Tracy. I believe that there are only a limited number of places, one perhaps but maybe two, where a new ball park and parking garage could be built and be successful. Apartments, however, can be located in any one of many areas in Brooklyn. The particular site lies within one to four blocks of 16 rapid transit stations.

The peak load for the parking garage would be in the daytime (Monday - Friday). Our games would be played Friday night, Saturday, Sunday and two other nights a week when the parking facility would generally be available. We can only park 850 cars at Ebbets Field in the odd and scattered parking lots. At the first night game Brooklyn played in Milwaukee last month 8,752 cars were parked for the game. Lack of parking accommodations, more than anything else, TV included, keeps people from coming to our games. Ebbets Field was built in the trolley car era. There are no trolleys to speak of today but there are automobiles and intelligently planned parkways.

This proposal would bring activity to the Borough Hall section at times when rapid transit, tunnel, bridge and highway facilities are relatively slack. A new stadium properly located would house attractive sports events in addition to baseball. Do you think there is at least the germ of an idea here?

Sincerely,

Walter F. O'Malley,
President.

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