

CONNECT THE DOTS: Money in Politics

The Jets' Stadium and West Side Redevelopment: *Football Match Up Leaves New Yorkers on the Bench*

The Game:

The proposed NY Jets' Stadium over the Hudson Rail Yards has become the city-planning controversy of 2004, and some say the largest such debate since the Westway fight of the '70s and '80s. Last March, the Mayor and Governor announced that the city and state would contribute \$300 million each to help the Jets build a \$1.4 billion football stadium on Manhattan's West Side. Proponents and opponents of a new West Side stadium have spent \$11,494,246 lobbying in New York City and Albany in their quest to build or defeat this project. These same interests have given \$397,101 in campaign contributions in recent years. Connect the dots and see who's on what team, and what is at stake for the winners...

Beyond The Players: How the Stadium Will Affect NY'ers

Plans for redeveloping the West Side extend beyond just building a new stadium for the Jets. Possible plans include expanding the Javits Center and several infrastructure projects, including the extension of the #7 subway line and a platform over the MTA's eastern rail yards. The redevelopment would also require the re-zoning of large swaths of the West Side. The stadium project, called the New York Sports and Convention Center, would play host to the 2012 Olympics were the city to win the bid and would also provide extra exhibition space for the Javits Center. Clearly, each and every one of these planned changes would have major impacts on the city and its residents.

New Yorkers have good reason to be concerned about the fate of the stadium project in particular. In March, the city and state announced that they would

contribute \$300 million each to the development costs of the stadium, a private entity. It is not yet known how these contributions will be financed. It is estimated that the stadium will cost \$1.4 billion to build. The Jets have agreed to provide \$800 million in financing, though some reports have suggested that they may seek tax-exempt financing that would reduce this contribution. Proponents of the stadium say it will bring in over \$70 million in tax revenue annually, more than making up for the large sums of public money that will be contributed. Stadium detractors have argued that this \$70 million figure is inflated. Either way, New Yorkers deserve to know all of the facts about the stadium plan, so that they can penetrate beyond sophisticated ad campaigns to decide what they want for their city and the West Side.

The Current Overall Score:

\$11,494,246.00

Spent on Lobbying*

The Pro Team:

Stadium Supporters

TOTAL SPENT: \$3,124,549.00

Since January, the Jets have spent a total of \$2,954,336 lobbying in New York City and in Albany, according to their filings with the New York Temporary State Commission on Lobbying. Others who support the stadium and West Side development, including NYC & Co., the city's tourism agency; NYC 2012, the city's Olympic committee; and a number of building and construction unions, have spent a total of \$170,213 lobbying on the state and city levels.

The Con Team:

Stadium Detractors

TOTAL SPENT: \$8,212,974.00

Madison Square Garden has spent a total of \$2,686,915 lobbying on issues related to the West Side in New York City and in Albany in 2003 and 2004, according to their filings with the New York Temporary State Commission on Lobbying. Madison Square Garden's owner, Cablevision, has also spent \$5,526,059 lobbying in New York City and Albany since January, 2004.

*OTHER INTEESTS: \$156,723

The Lineup: A Clash of the Titans

The teams fighting for and against a new stadium for the Jets include some of the most prominent members of New York's business and government communities.

On the pro-stadium team sit Robert Wood Johnson, IV (owner of the NY Jets, philanthropist, and major Republican campaign contributor), Mayor Bloomberg, Deputy Mayor Daniel Doctoroff, and Governor Pataki. Joining these heavyweights are various construction and hotel employee unions as well as NYC & Co., the city's tourism agency.

The opposing team is headed up by the father and son team of Charles and James Dolan, who own Cablevision and Madison Square Garden, the arena that would compete with any new stadium.

Both sides have hired powerful and well-connected lobbyists and launched powerful and high-cost advertising blitzes to promote their views in the halls of state and city government and on billboards and television sets across the city.

Campaign Cash

Pro Team

In addition to spending heavily on lobbying over the past year, Jets owner Robert Wood Johnson, IV and CEO L. Jay Cross have also long been campaign contributors in New York State. Together, they have contributed \$81,581.82 on the state level since 2001, including \$27,000 from Wood Johnson, IV to the New York State Senate Republican Campaign Committee and \$36,281.82 from Wood Johnson, IV to Friends of Pataki. L. Jay Cross has also made modest campaign contributions on the city level, including \$1,000 to Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields in 2003 and \$2,000 to Council Member David Weprin in 2004.

Con Team

In addition to their recent lobby spending, Madison Square Garden Owners Charles and James Dolan have also historically been major campaign contributors, having given \$185,300 on the state level since 1999. This total includes \$50,000 to Governor Pataki, \$9,300 to Friends of Silver, and \$48,000 to Sheldon Silver's Speaker PAC. The Dolans have also contributed \$35,750 in New York City since 1999.

The Pro Team: Players

Lobbyists hired by the Jets.

Mercury Public Affairs—headed by former Pataki staff and CEO **Kieran Mahoney**.

Lobbyist **Michael McKeon**—former chief spokesman for Governor Pataki. **\$95,500** in total compensation and reimbursed expenses to date.

Billy Lynch Associates, LLC

Lobbyist **William Lynch**—was Deputy Manager for the Kerry campaign. **\$20,000** in compensation and reimbursed expenses to date.

Greenberg Traurig

Lobbyist **Robert Harding**—is a former Deputy Mayor **\$43,689** in compensation and reimbursed expenses to date.

Lobbyist **Ken Sunshine**—is a former staffer for Speaker Silver.

\$5,000 in compensation and reimbursed expenses to date.

RAD USA, Inc.

Lobbyist **Louis Tomson**—is a former Deputy Secretary for Governor Pataki. **\$22,500** in compensation and reimbursed expenses to date.

Brown McMahon & Weinraub

Lobbyists include:

Patrick Brown—former deputy counsel to Gov. Cuomo

James McMahon—brother of City Council Speaker Gifford Miller's Chief of Staff

Daivd Weinraub—former aide to Governor Cuomo.

\$8,000 in compensation and reimbursed expenses to date.

Jeffrey Buley—Counsel to the NYS

Republican Party (recently added to the lobby team- has not reported receiving any compensation to date)

Harry Giannoulis of the Parkside Group is Commissioner for the Taxi and Limousine Commission and worked as a regional representative for former Governor Cuomo. His firm's contract with the Jets began on September 1st.

The Jets internal lobbying team.

\$2,595,372 to pay for outreach videos, booklets and other materials; banners; TV, cable and radio ads; pamphlets; t-shirts; dinners; stickers; posters; baseball caps; website development; print ads; list purchasing; and other aspects of their aggressive public relations and lobby campaign.

The Con Team: Players

Lobbyists Hired by Madison Square Garden and Cablevision

Patricia Lynch Associates (retained by both companies)—headed by lobbyist **Patricia Lynch**—who was the primary spokesperson for Speaker Silver.

\$34,000 in compensation and reimbursed expenses paid by MSG in 2004

\$13,000 in compensation and reimbursed expenses paid by Cablevision (CSC Holdings) during the same period.

(Patricia Lynch Associates also lobbied extensively on behalf of Madison Square in 2003, though the West Side was not cited on the firm's bi-monthly lobby reports during this period).

Wilson, Elser, Moskowitz, Edelman, Dicker, LLP

Including lobbyists:

Kenneth Shapiro—was counsel to former City Council Speaker Fink and current Speaker Miller.

Kenneth Bruno—is the son of NYS Senate Majority Leader Joe Bruno.

\$31,080 in compensation and reimbursed expenses paid by MSG for West Side related lobbying in 2004.

Park Strategies, LLC

Alfonse D'Amato—former NYS Senator. **\$15,000** in compensation and reimbursed expenses paid to the firm by MSG in 2004.

Arthur J. Finkelstein & Associates, Inc.

Arthur J. Finkelstein—a former pollster for the Pataki campaign.

\$83,814 paid to Finkelstein by MSG in compensation and reimbursed expenses to date.

The Glover Park Group Inc.

Gigi Georges—most recently served as communications director for the NYC Department of Education. She previously served as State Director for Senator Hilary Clinton and as a special assistant to the President in the Clinton/Gore administration.

\$21,589 paid by MSG in compensation and reimbursed expenses to date.

MSG's internal lobbying team

\$1,652,256 Spent from May to August by MSG primarily on media buys and billboards.

Cablevision internal lobbying team

\$5,368,611 Spent from May to August by Cablevision on public messages, pins, and even an appearance by the Rockettes.

This fact sheet was created as part of a series called CONNECT THE DOTS, which aims to show how money in politics impacts on issues New Yorkers care about.

For more information about Common Cause/NY's CONNECT THE DOTS coalition, call 1-800-300-8707.

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