

Xanadu threatens Giants Stadium plan

Team: Entertainment complex will make parking nightmare on game days.

By **TOM CANAVAN**
The Associated Press

EAST RUTHERFORD — The New York Giants' plan to build a new stadium at the Meadowlands would be jeopardized unless the NFL team and the New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority reach an agreement on parking at a massive office and entertainment complex planned nearby.

Giants executive vice president John Mara said Tuesday the team will insist that the Xanadu project slated for the area around Continental Airlines Arena be closed on days when there are home games.

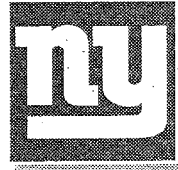
"I am not sure there is any room for movement on their being allowed to open on game days," Mara said, one day before the team and sports authority were to hold negotiations on the proposed new \$700 million stadium.

Mara said having Xanadu open on game days would create a parking nightmare for fans attending games, and insisted an agreement needs to be reached quickly if the Giants are to open their new stadium for the 2008 season.

"If we don't get it done for 2008, the whole deal is in jeopardy," Mara said. "Any delays in starting construction will increase the cost of building the stadium."

The Giants have agreed to pay for the new stadium. The current Giants Stadium is 28 years old, one of the oldest in the NFL.

NJSEA chairman Carl Goldberg



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seemed surprised that Mara saw the Xanadu issue as one of the major stumbling blocks in reaching an agreement.

"That is not on the top of my list," Goldberg said.

Goldberg said the sports authority, which owns the Meadowlands complex in East Rutherford, sees the Giants and Xanadu as two tenants whose interests must be balanced.

"I'm of the opinion that having Xanadu open on game days has possibilities for the Giants and their fans," Goldberg said. "I believe Xanadu won't have a negative impact."

Goldberg admitted the two sides will need to spend some time resolving the issue.

The Giants want to replace the stadium to reap more revenue from luxury boxes and concessions and to add premium club seating.

The New York Jets, who also play home games at Giants Stadium, are trying to get their own stadium built on the West Side of Manhattan.

Other tenants of the Meadowlands complex also are planning to leave. The new owner of the New Jersey Nets, who play at Continental Airlines Arena, plans to build an arena in Brooklyn, N.Y., and the New Jersey Devils are planning a move from the arena to a new venue in downtown Newark.