

Land Battle Impacts New Twins Stadium

Written by The Staff

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In May of last year, Hennepin Co. passed legislation that provides an estimated \$522 million in public funds for a new Minnesota Twins ballpark, through a 0.15 percent sales tax that went into effect on New Years Day.

Too bad that the legislation didn't provide a guideline for agreement on a purchase price for the land.

The Twins, Hennepin Co., and several land owners are locked in a battle over what is deemed to be a fair market price for the 10-acre site where the ballpark would be constructed. As [report ed by the AP](#)

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On Jan. 22, a Hennepin County District judge ruled that the stadium served a "public purpose" under the law and authorized possible condemnation of property on the site.

Because the Legislature capped infrastructure costs at \$90 million -- an arbitrary decision, according to the team -- the county is wary of paying too much for the land and leaving little money for road, transit and other improvements around the ballpark. After all it took to reach this point, nobody wants to build the stadium on the cheap, and the 10-acre site that was chosen just west of Target Center on the edge of downtown is a tight parcel of land that brings extra construction and design challenges.

The county appraised the value of the land at \$13.35 million, but project leaders are hesitant to put faith in the eminent domain process because it could take too long or produce a ruling that the property is worth more money than the county has available under the \$90 million cap.

The Twins hope to announce plans on the ballpark and break ground next month. The club has

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committed \$130 million to the project. Land owners have agreed not to contest the eminent domain procedure, arguing that because of the county's spending cap the negotiation process is fundamentally flawed.

[To see renderings of the new Twins ballpark design, view them here on The Biz of Baseball.](#)