

Mark Fabiani Chat Transcript

10/9/2009 11:28 - chargerchick619 Let's begin!

10/9/2009 11:28 - MARK FABIANI Thanks for having me.

10/9/2009 11:28 - Chargers It seems like there is a new site in Escondido, how is Escondido different from other locations in the region over the years?

10/9/2009 11:29 - dbboltsfan17 Mark, whats the latest on Escondido, something we havent already read or heard about?

10/9/2009 11:29 - MARK FABIANI I guess I should check to see whether "Oscar Goodman" is Mayor Oscar Goodman of Las Vegas?!

10/9/2009 11:29 - dbboltsfan17 Mark, whats the latest on Escondido, something we havent already read or heard about?

10/9/2009 11:29 - Chargers Have any Escondido elected officials reviewed a stadium proposal? What has been their reaction?

10/9/2009 11:30 - Chadder33 If the Chargers leave they will take my heart with them. I would like to know if any of the proposed stadium sites are more than 2% viable at this time.

10/9/2009 11:30 - MARK FABIANI Just a few minutes ago I scheduled a meeting with Escondido community leaders for next week. We are going to get preliminary feedback then from the developer that I met with a week ago last Monday.

10/9/2009 11:30 - MARK FABIANI That will be our first indication whether the private sector has interest in the kind of joint stadium - development project we are trying to move forward

10/9/2009 11:31 - BFISA Good start!

10/9/2009 11:31 - MARK FABIANI Two percent viable?! That's a pretty low standard! If we thought we had only a 2% chance, I'm pretty sure that we wouldn't be spending all of this time and money on the effort.

10/9/2009 11:31 - Chargers Have there been any new estimates on how much the stadium will cost? Used to be almost a billion, has the price of construction been impacted by the economy?

10/9/2009 11:32 - MARK FABIANI All of the sites in question now (downtown San Diego, Escondido, Oceanside) have big pluses, and big minuses. But they are all viable sites.

10/9/2009 11:32 - dbboltsfan17 If Esco talks fail, then what? We understand this cant go on for another 7 years, as you said closer to the end rather than the beginning, do the chargers look out of county at that point?

10/9/2009 11:32 - MARK FABIANI The Dallas stadium was well in excess of \$1 billion, and the Jets/Giants new stadium will cost more than \$1.5 billion. Our stadium here would be much smaller than those examples, though, and so we are still looking at \$1 billion, or maybe slightly less?

10/9/2009 11:32 - MARK FABIANI ...slightly less.

10/9/2009 11:33 - MARK FABIANI I don't think it is all up to Escondido at this point. Remember, we have re - engaged with the City of San Diego (post - Mike Aguirre), and there has been a lot of talk about downtown. And Oceanside is considering putting the golf course site back...

10/9/2009 11:33 - sdjase Mark, when you say that all of the sites have big pluses and minuses, Escondido seems to be all pluses at this point. What's the challenge there?

10/9/2009 11:33 - MARK FABIANI ...in the mix. So we still have a lot of work to do before this process will end, one way or the other.

10/9/2009 11:34 - Chargers Understanding the challenges of building a stadium in California and with the difficulty in San Diego over the past 8 years, how could the Chargers stand by and watch the Raiders or Jacksonville move up to the City of Industry?

10/9/2009 11:34 - Tom Mendenhall Mark, the area around the Escondido site is already fairly well - developed. What would be the plan for acquiring the necessary parcels surrounding the the swap meet. Is eminent domain an option should any of the current owners balk or hold out for \$

10/9/2009 11:34 - MARK FABIANI The biggest challenge in Escondido - - aside from doing something no owner has ever done before, privately financing a billion dollar plus project - - is that the land in Escondido must be assembled.

10/9/2009 11:35 - MARK FABIANI In other words, unlike Qualcomm, or Chula Vista, or even Oceanside, the Escondido land is now owned by many different people and entities.

10/9/2009 11:35 - Chadder33 North County would seem to me to be the most attractive site for a new stadium. You have the fan base of Orange County, North County and it is still accessible to SD County. What are the prospects of having either Escondido or Oceanside chosen.

10/9/2009 11:35 - MARK FABIANI We would need to go into the marketplace and purchase the necessary parcels. And that is a big challenge, because some people might not want to sell; others might want a higher price because of the notoriety of the stadium project, and so forth

10/9/2009 11:36 - Chargers I think Downtown is the best site, how can the city of San Diego look to build/expand a convention center with incorporating a stadium?

10/9/2009 11:36 - MARK FABIANI North County has always been an attractive location for the Chargers, for the reasons you state. There is no reason why we can't attract more support from Orange, San Bernardino, Riverside and LA Counties, and North County is more accessible...

10/9/2009 11:36 - Chargers I think Downtown is the best site, how can the city of San Diego look to build/expand a convention center with incorporating a stadium?

10/9/2009 11:36 - MARK FABIANIto those areas than is Qualcomm.

10/9/2009 11:36 - Mr Vargas Is there any chance Chula Vista will be looked at again as a possible site?

10/9/2009 11:37 - MARK FABIANI Downtown has tremendous advantages, including having all of the parking and infrastructure already in place and available. So the cost of the project immediately is reduced by several hundred million dollars.

10/9/2009 11:37 - ronjmurray There is concern about ticket prices skyrocketing, especially with the possibility of PSLs. Club seats cost \$340 per game and require PSLs from \$16,000 to \$150,000 in dallas. I HAVE 8 CLUB SEATS. This can definitely mitigate support for a new stadium

10/9/2009 11:38 - MARK FABIANI Having said that, it's hard to assemble even 20 acres downtown. The Port shows no signs of flexibility on Tenth Avenue Marine Terminal, and the land east of Petco is both expensive and already occupied. But downtown's financial advantages cannot

10/9/2009 11:38 - MARK FABIANI ...be ignored.

10/9/2009 11:38 - MARK FABIANI Chula Vista is on hold right now because we have no indication that the State of California is about to allow that power plant to be shut down. This is something that lots of people had hoped would happen by now, but no go so far.

10/9/2009 11:39 - BFISA What's the downside to downtown?

10/9/2009 11:39 - chargerchick619 With that being said, what location is being looked at in Downtown?

10/9/2009 11:39 - MARK FABIANI You are right to be concerned about the impact of a new stadium on pricing. After all, we wouldn't be building a new stadium if we didn't think we could generate more revenue from it.

10/9/2009 11:40 - MARK FABIANI Fortunately for most people, though, the new revenue that gets generated comes from the wealthy individuals who buy luxury suites, and the corporations that want naming rights and signage.

10/9/2009 11:40 - snoboredca I hope I didn't miss this already but what is the expected time - line for moving? I've read Los Angeles has offered to move the Chargers up there for next season while a new stadium is built. Is what i've read accurate, and what's the likelihood

10/9/2009 11:40 - MARK FABIANI We anticipate that in a new stadium there will be many different price points for people.

10/9/2009 11:40 - MARK FABIANI The downside of downtown: Acquiring the land. 25 acres downtown are not easy to come by.

10/9/2009 11:41 - magnificent What about Las Vegas?

10/9/2009 11:41 - MARK FABIANI Two locations are being looked at downtown: Tenth Avenue Marine Terminal, and the land east of Petco Park (Tailgate Park, the county transit yards, and privately owned parcels).

10/9/2009 11:41 - Chargers The Port is weak on vision, look how many projects have gone nowhere over the past 5 years - Lane field, Broadway pier, north embarcadero, Chula Vistabay front, Old Police headquarters, cruise ship terminal

10/9/2009 11:42 - MARK FABIANI Las Vegas? We continue to work in San Diego County. Las Vegas has called us in the past, and we've told them thanks, but no thanks, we're continuing to work here in San Diego County.

10/9/2009 11:42 - dbboltsfan17 Another City of Industry question Mark . We understand that the Spanos are committed to SD, but what happens when all else fails? Do they at least explore that situation? Or have you guys already done that and told Mr.Roski, thanks but no thanks?

10/9/2009 11:42 - Chargers Land is an issue in escondidio and downtown, does that give O - Side an advantage?

10/9/2009 11:43 - MARK FABIANI We were very up front with people in spring of 2008, when Mr. Roski approached us. We heard him out and then said, although your project looks interesting, we are working in San Diego County. If Mr. Roski called tomorrow, we'd say the same thing.

10/9/2009 11:43 - Chargers Understanding the challenges of building a stadium in California and with the difficulty in San Diego over the past 8 years, how could the Chargers stand by and watch the Raiders or Jacksonville move up to the City of Industry?

10/9/2009 11:43 - MARK FABIANI But, I can't predict what will happen if all of our current ideas - - Escondido, downtown SD, Oceanside - - fail to produce results.

10/9/2009 11:44 - MARK FABIANI It's not so easy to move a football team. Jacksonville's owner has said he wants to stay where he is, and the Raiders would have a variety of issues to contend with before they could relocate. So that is not a great concern right now.

10/9/2009 11:44 - Domo Sushi What kind of time frames are we looking at? Could there be a interim stadium?

10/9/2009 11:45 - MARK FABIANI After all, if it were so easy to locate a team in LA, one would have been there a long time ago. Despite the size and wealth of the LA market, relocation is a difficult thing under any circumstances.

10/9/2009 11:45 - MARK FABIANI We anticipate playing in Qualcomm until the new stadium is built. It takes 32 months in our good weather to build a new stadium, and several years of work (a public vote, EIR process,lawsuits) leading up to construction.

10/9/2009 11:46 - MARK FABIANI So even if we all came up with a solution this morning, we are 5 - 6 years from playing in a new facility.

10/9/2009 11:46 - sdjase Mark - Why do you think the Spanos family is so committed to staying in San Diego?

10/9/2009 11:47 - MARK FABIANI Addressing your Port question, there will be a lot of new leadership at the Port over the next year, and we hope that they will listen to evidence that could demonstrate that maritime uses and a stadium can be mutually beneficial.

10/9/2009 11:47 - MARK FABIANI From the very first day, back in 2002, that I met with Dean Spanos, he has been clear about his family's desire to stay in San Diego.

10/9/2009 11:48 - MARK FABIANI I know this because I said that the first meeting, "Why not move to LA? It's a much bigger market. You have a lease with a trigger provision that allows you to leave without paying the city a dime."

10/9/2009 11:48 - MARK FABIANI And Dean was clear then - - as he has been since - - that he wants to keep the team here. Dean and his family have lived here for many years; his kids grew up here; his wife Susie is heavily involved in the community.

10/9/2009 11:48 - dbboltsfan17 Does the Chargers stop marketing in LA if a team moves there? It seems that whole Wasserman deal would become useless, then what?

10/9/2009 11:49 - Domo Sushi rumors have it, Rush Limbaugh is possibly buying the Rams and returning them to LA, Rumors

10/9/2009 11:49 - MARK FABIANI Having said all of that, though, Dean and his family want to win as badly as our most loyal fans want to win. And, in the end, you can't put a competitive team on the field year after year if you are \$50 million, \$100 million, or even more, behind.

10/9/2009 11:49 - Dan McLellan Have the Indian Reservations like Viejas or Sycuan been considered for a possible location

10/9/2009 11:49 - MARK FABIANIthe top teams in the League.

10/9/2009 11:49 - MARK FABIANI Of course if another team moves to LA our marketing efforts there are likely to be less successful than they are now.

10/9/2009 11:50 - cd was a charger fan from from day one.. and like spanos's, i dont want you to leave.. what can we as fans and taxpayers do to help??

10/9/2009 11:50 - MARK FABIANI The NFL has strict prohibitions against associations between teams and gaming facilities. So the tribal lands would, for that reason, be out of the question.

10/9/2009 11:50 - MARK FABIANI The biggest thing each of you can do is weigh in with your friends, your elected officials, and online. Many, many stories are written about this topic, and elected officials read the comments that come after those stories.

10/9/2009 11:51 - MARK FABIANI We urge all of you to weigh in when you read a story. It only takes a minute, and it makes a big difference.

10/9/2009 11:51 - BFISA So we can put to rest the rumor that the Spanos family is looking to move the Chargers to the City of Industry in the next cupola years??

10/9/2009 11:51 - Domo Sushi Also heard that LA is possibly looking to have more than 1 team ultimately, is that possible?

10/9/2009 11:51 - MARK FABIANI On the St. Louis Rams rumors, I've read the same things you have. But again, it's not so easy to move a team, and the City of St. Louis has been very supportive of the Rams.

10/9/2009 11:52 - snoboredca couldn't a team in LA possibly benefit the chargers by creating a major local rival? The Dodgers/Angels games are nuts; as are the Raiders/49ers games, even though the Raiders are a horrible team and have been forever.

10/9/2009 11:52 - MARK FABIANI On the City of Industry, I can say that next February 1st, when our relocation window opens up once again, we hope and expect to be doing the same thing we are doing now: Working to find a solution in San Diego County.

10/9/2009 11:52 - Mr Vargas Why is east Chula Vista not a viable option? A univerisity and urban center seem to have the city council's approval in that area. Why not a stadium?

10/9/2009 11:53 - Dan McLellan I would have to second what Mark Said about weighing in. I write for SanDiego.com and I can tell you that if you take the time to leave a comment it is noticed.

10/9/2009 11:53 - MARK FABIANI Back in the early 1990s, when Al Davis was about to sign his stadium deal at Hollywood Park in Inglewood, the NFL insisted that he also allow a second team to play in the facility. So there is certainly some history behind the idea of a second team.

10/9/2009 11:53 - MARK FABIANI ...in LA.

10/9/2009 11:53 - BlueMoonBomber Mark - Have you had any recent discussions with Mayor Sanders and are you any closer where the city of San Diego to helping find a viable solution.

10/9/2009 11:54 - MARK FABIANI Thanks, Dan, for reinforcing that point. Also, you would be surprised, but when you inject some rational analysis and hard facts into a on - line debate, you can change the tone of the debate and maybe even persuade a few doubters.

10/9/2009 11:54 - MARK FABIANI Yes, we have a good, open line of communications with the Mayor's office. We met with one of his representatives yesterday afternoon.

10/9/2009 11:55 - MARK FABIANI Our talks with the City of San Diego have focused on downtown, although Mayor Sanders has made clear he would like to help us in Escondido if he can.

10/9/2009 11:55 - MARK FABIANI Having said that, the City of San Diego is beset with all sorts of problems. The Mayor has his hands full, to say the least, and doesn't have resources to work with.

10/9/2009 11:55 - sdjase I second that what Dan has said. There's so much disinformation out there that I spend the better part of many days just trying to set the record straight. The public should be making informed decisions based on real facts, so educate yourselves

10/9/2009 11:56 - dbboltsfan17 How disappointed was the Spanos with the usual SD politics up in Sacramento trying to clock Roski?

10/9/2009 11:57 - MARK FABIANI Very disappointed. To us, it was typical of San Diego politics. Instead of taking a positive approach - - EIR exemptions for big projects are good things, and we want one too here in San Diego - - our local politicians settled for press releases....

10/9/2009 11:57 - MARK FABIANI ...press releases which expressed their desire to stop City of Industry from stealing the Chargers.

10/9/2009 11:58 - sdjase Mark - is it true the funding gap for the Escondido project is about \$400M and if so, what type of project is most likley to close that gap?

10/9/2009 11:58 - MARK FABIANI And though they may have gotten a positive headline or two, in the end they (1) failed to get the legislature to agree with them; and (2) spoiled any chance we would ever have of getting an EIR exemption in San Diego for our stadium.

10/9/2009 11:59 - BlueMoonBomber Understandable that the City of San Diego is going through budget issues, if the stadium project is privately funded why would the city have any problem in providing resources other than a location and the land to bulid it there?

10/9/2009 11:59 - MARK FABIANI All in all, it was a senseless and self - defeating strategy for anyone who cares about getting major projects done in San Diego.

10/9/2009 11:59 - MARK FABIANI Forget about the Chargers for a moment. What happens when a major company wants to locate here, or expand here, and needs an EIR exemption? Fat chance the company could succeed now in Sacramento with that request.

10/9/2009 12:00 - MARK FABIANI The funding gap is, of course, the issue. The gap is created because, in other cities outside of California, taxpayers pay for most of these stadiums.

10/9/2009 12:00 - MARK FABIANI We are trying to accomplish our goal here with private financing only, and so you have to make up the gap somehow.

10/9/2009 12:00 - MARK FABIANI Our idea has been to make it up with a related development - - a development whose value would be enhanced by an NFL stadium.

10/9/2009 12:01 - sdjase Is that roughly the same funding gap you've been working with all along or is this bigger than originally anticipated?

10/9/2009 12:01 - MARK FABIANI Whether there is any development project in this day and age that could fill a \$400 million gap is the ultimate question. It's a very tough thing to do - - proven by the fact that it's never been done before, by any owner.

10/9/2009 12:02 - MARK FABIANI The size of the gap has grown over the years because the cost of construction has grown. Our window for getting this done was really 2002 - 2005, when Arizona built its stadium for \$425 million.

10/9/2009 12:02 - Dan McLellan An out of the box idea: As a season ticket holder and a writer. I would be open to the creation of a season ticket investment pool in correlation with a new stadium. Perhaps season ticket holders could pay an extra ayear and have that money invest

10/9/2009 12:02 - MARK FABIANI But at that time the City of San Diego was in turmoil (four mayors in aone year period of time; Aguirre's election; pension scandal, etc. etc.), andthe window closed on us.

10/9/2009 12:03 - MARK FABIANI You are right that we are not asking for money from the City of San Diego. But in times of financial crisis, elected officials - - and perhaps even voters - - are reluctant to embark upon ambitious projects without strong leadership.

10/9/2009 12:04 - vash3 Say, I was wondering. Wherever the stadium will be built at (hopefully anywhere in San Diego county), do you plan on having it like a dome or roofless, and do you plan on having it based on the Univ. of Phoenix Stadium or the new Cowboys Stadium?

10/9/2009 12:04 - dbboltsfan17 the people in SD have been waiting 8 long years for a solution, when can they expect one? You say 5 years from now a stadium will be complete, thats 5 years of lost revenue, how does Spanos take that?

10/9/2009 12:04 - dusbrad Hasn't the cost of construction gone down the last couple of years? Steel costs less and construction companies are desperate for work

10/9/2009 12:04 - dbboltsfan17 Do you have any sketches of possible stadiums? Has any architects brought you any of their work?

10/9/2009 12:05 - Domo Sushi More light hearted, Will we have to call the team like the Angels? San Diego Chargers of Oceanside (escondido or chula vista)?

10/9/2009 12:05 - MARK FABIANI Dan, thanks for the idea. It is a creative one. But the numbers involved here are so large - - and the funding gap so huge - - that we wouldn't even consider asking our already loyal fans to help in that way.

10/9/2009 12:06 - sdjase Mark - Are there any proposed stadium designs that the team likes better than others in terms of a dome or an open facility or is that too far down the road to think about right now?

10/9/2009 12:06 - MARK FABIANI On the team name, no, we would not anticipate changing our team name. Many teams play outside the cities they are named for, and that would be the case with the San Diego Chargers (even if we are in Escondido).

10/9/2009 12:06 - MARK FABIANI We definitely want an open facility, with perhaps as few as 62,000 seats (expandable to 72,000 for Super Bowls). That guarantees sell outs every week, pretty much, and creates a facility where all of the seats are close to the field.

10/9/2009 12:07 - dbboltsfan17 what do YOU personally think of Roski's work?

10/9/2009 12:08 - sdjase Would the Chargers consider going back to the voters to ask for money if that funding gap cannot be done privately?

10/9/2009 12:08 - vash3 By open facility, you mean there's going to be no roof at all?

10/9/2009 12:08 - MARK FABIANI We don't regard public funding as a viable option, for several reasons.

10/9/2009 12:09 - DARTH LIRA How serious are the Chargers about the Escondido site??

10/9/2009 12:09 - MARK FABIANI First, to increase a tax for a specific purpose would require a two thirds vote - - almost impossible to achieve under any circumstances, but especially during these tough economic times.

10/9/2009 12:09 - MARK FABIANI Second, the City of San Diego has so many unmet needs - - from under funded police and fire departments, to the pension gap, to basic services such as street repaving - - that it is hard to argue that people should spend money on a sports stadium.

10/9/2009 12:10 - BlueMoonBomber Considering the money that events like the Super Bowl or Comic - Con bring to this city's economy, it sounds like an excuse from city officials to do anything to increase on more revenue generated from them to the point that these events leave SD.

10/9/2009 12:10 - MARK FABIANI We have enjoyed working with both the elected officials and community leaders in Escondido. They have been creative with their ideas and forceful with their leadership

10/9/2009 12:10 - MARK FABIANI And the North County site is very attractive, for the reasons outlined earlier.

10/9/2009 12:11 - Dan McLellan Why have the cost gone up in a tight economy when contractors are

10/9/2009 12:11 - MARK FABIANI The challenges in Escondido are two: (1) Filling the funding gap with private resources; and (2) assembling the land from a variety of land owners.

10/9/2009 12:11 - Dan McLellan Why have the cost gone up so much when the economy is so poor? You would think that contractors would be willing to bid less now than in a good economy.

10/9/2009 12:12 - MARK FABIANI You are right, the stadium could be built for less today than the estimates we had before the economic crash. But we aren't starting today, unfortunately. And we have to assume things will improve economically by the time we do start.

10/9/2009 12:12 - sdjase I know that the Chargers have said that a mandate from the citizens in the City of Escondido would help move this along. Is that something that might be on the ballot in the near future. The support level seems high right now.

10/9/2009 12:13 - MARK FABIANI Your arguments about Comi - Con (my kids and I already have our tix for next year!) and the Super Bowl are well stated. But those are benefits that need to be explained to people, and you need strong leadership to have any chance of doing that.

10/9/2009 12:13 - MARK FABIANI We would be looking at an Escondido vote in 2010, if we can fill that funding gap with private

resources.

10/9/2009 12:13 - chargerbacker2 why isnt there more being done to locate downtown, where you already have the public transportaion, parking, and other infrustrutcture. like in other cities?

10/9/2009 12:14 - MARK FABIANI We have worked hard on downtown since the City of San Diego opened up to us, after Mike Aguirre's defeat last November.

10/9/2009 12:14 - MARK FABIANI So please be assured that lots of work is being done on downtown.

10/9/2009 12:15 - sdjase There are a lot of naysayers when it comes to the stadium, how optimisitc are you personally that something will work out in San Diego County?

10/9/2009 12:15 - MARK FABIANI But also know how hard it is. The Port does not seem willing to part with 30 acres of the 100 acre Tenth Avenue Marine Terminal site. And assembling 25 or 30 acres privately in the middle of a bustling downtown is tough, and expensive.

10/9/2009 12:16 - MARK FABIANI I wish I could write this morning that I am 100% sure we can get this done. But that wouldn't be straightforward of me. What Dean and his family are trying to do has never been done before.

10/9/2009 12:16 - MARK FABIANI And we are now trying to accomplish this first in a very difficult economic environment.

10/9/2009 12:16 - MARK FABIANI I give Dean and his family all the credit in the world for sticking with this through some very tough times.

10/9/2009 12:16 - Dan McLellan If a new stadium did cost a billion dollars that would be approximately \$15,000 per seat. How long would it take the Chargers to make a new stadium profitable?

10/9/2009 12:16 - MARK FABIANI And that, in the end, is the best thing we all have going for us: Dean Spanos wants to keep the team in San Diego.

10/9/2009 12:17 - MARK FABIANI But, again, this is ultimately a business where our fans expect us to generate enough revenue to sign our best players and win year after year. And we can't do that in an aging stadium that leaves us so far behind the top teams in the League.

10/9/2009 12:17 - BlueMoonBomber With the success of Petco Park, why do the city officials feel reluctant to working on projects like expanding the Convention Center or building a new stadium when they know the benefits behind them.

10/9/2009 12:18 - MARK FABIANI The revenue gains form a new stadium come from three sources: (1) Luxury suite sales; (2) Naming rights, sponsorships and advertising/signage, and (3) Club seat sales.

10/9/2009 12:18 - Dan McLellan Great Question Blue Moon

10/9/2009 12:18 - MARK FABIANI At the same time, you will have to borrow hundreds of millions of dollars to pay for the new stadium privately. And it will take 15 - 20 years to pay off that debt.

10/9/2009 12:19 - MARK FABIANI The bottom line, though, is that we believe a new stadium will be successful for both the team and our fans in San Diego - - otherwise we wouldn't be going through all of this to try to build one.

10/9/2009 12:19 - MARK FABIANI Great question about Petco.

10/9/2009 12:20 - MARK FABIANI Remember when Petco was approved: 1998. When the dot com boom was in full bloom. Money seemed to be growing on trees. The Padres were in the World Series. Environmental impact rules were much less stringent.

10/9/2009 12:20 - MARK FABIANI The Padres deserve all the credit in the world for threading the needle back then.

10/9/2009 12:21 - MARK FABIANI This is a whole different world now, with a different mayor, different council members, and a big financial crisis.

10/9/2009 12:21 - vash3 Can't y'all have a big franchise or company to help support you as long as they get their company in the new Stadium name? Like maybe Subway, DirectTV, or AT - - AMPER_SAND - - T?

10/9/2009 12:21 - MARK FABIANI Absolutely. Naming rights are a big part of the new revenue that you would generate from a new stadium.

10/9/2009 12:21 - BlueMoonBomber Can you say you are any closer to getting a shovel in the ground than from when the search began?

10/9/2009 12:22 - MARK FABIANI The City of San Diego owns the naming rights at Qualcomm, and they sold them to the Qualcomm Corporation back in the late 1990s for just \$17 million. In a new stadium, we can expect to negotiate a much better deal!

10/9/2009 12:22 - MARK FABIANI Yes, we are much closer.

10/9/2009 12:22 - MARK FABIANI Think back to when we began.

10/9/2009 12:23 - MARK FABIANI I started to attend community meetings, and no one -- and I mean no one -- wanted to talk about a new stadium.

10/9/2009 12:23 - MARK FABIANI If I had a dollar for every time I heard the words "ticket guaranty", I could have paid for the stadium myself by now!

10/9/2009 12:23 - snoboredca there seems to be a lot of land off the 15 that's in san diego county. i know it isn't as pretty as the shore, but can't the land be assembled there and make for a viable location with (dare we dream) ample parking to boot??

10/9/2009 12:23 - MARK FABIANI People were disenchanted with the team because of the ticket guaranty. And they wanted us to do better on the field and do more in the community.

10/9/2009 12:24 - MARK FABIANI And Dean Spanos, to his great credit, took what we heard to heart. We renegotiated our lease -- and gave up important rights -- to eliminate the ticket guarantee.

10/9/2009 12:24 - MARK FABIANI And we've addressed the other areas people complained about.

10/9/2009 12:24 - BlueMoonBomber That's what we all want to see is that progress is being made to makethis a reality.

10/9/2009 12:24 - MARK FABIANI In short, our relationship with the community -- and with electedofficials -- has never been stronger.

10/9/2009 12:25 - MARK FABIANI So in that sense we are much closer to a solution than we were when westarted.

10/9/2009 12:25 - snoboredca also, are there any potential mayoral candidates who are more supportive and easier to work with that we could be helping to elect?

10/9/2009 12:25 - MARK FABIANI But the private funding gap is still there, no matter how much support we've built, and all the support in the world is not going to help us bridge that gap.

10/9/2009 12:25 - jim2342 Sorry if this has already been asked, (I just jumped in), but can you give us the location of the site that is being discussed downtown?

10/9/2009 12:25 - MARK FABIANI I'm not sure who is running for Mayor next time. Mayor Sanders still has quite a while to go.

10/9/2009 12:26 - sdjase What about other politicians who are backers of the stadium? Who is onboard?

10/9/2009 12:26 - MARK FABIANI Downtown discussions have focused on Tenth Avenue Marine Terminal and privately held parcels east of Petco Park.

10/9/2009 12:27 - CarylSFoster Hi Mark, what is your best suggestion(s) for how this organization can help the Chargers stay in San Diego?

10/9/2009 12:27 - MARK FABIANI We have had strong support from Ron Roberts and other members of the Board of Supervisors for the County. Councilman Rocky Chavez has been a big supporter in Oceanside, as were Councilmen McCann and Casteneda in Chula Vista.

10/9/2009 12:27 - MARK FABIANI We enjoy widespread support in Escondido, from what I can tell.

10/9/2009 12:28 - MARK FABIANI In short, we feel that we have built strong support, not just from our fans, but from elected officials who understand how important a new stadium would be to the economy.

10/9/2009 12:28 - MARK FABIANI The private funding gap -- not lack of support -- has been our mainproblem.

10/9/2009 12:29 - snoboredca how are season tickets allocated if there's a new stadium built? based on seniority of previous

season ticket holders, or based on prior location (i.e. will have an option on comparable seats to my club level seats, even though I'm a newer purchase)

10/9/2009 12:29 - BlueMoonBomber Why hasn't the county officials been more involved in finding a location/solution to a new stadium project than individual cities have. Why can't this be a county thing?

10/9/2009 12:30 - MARK FABIANI Yes, existing season seat holders will have first dibs on seats in a new stadium. But I don't know exactly how the priority system would work. It's a great question, but not something we've ever talked about.

10/9/2009 12:30 - MARK FABIANI I can find out how other cities have handled the season ticket situation and report back, if you give me your e - mail.

10/9/2009 12:30 - sdjase Speaking of season ticket holders, have the Chargers leveraged them specifically to help build public support

10/9/2009 12:31 - MARK FABIANI Ron Robert has been very involved at the County level. And we have surveyed County - owned land. There simply hasn't been anything that has worked for a stadium.

10/9/2009 12:31 - Dan McLellan Is the Escondido Swap Meet the location that is being considered?

10/9/2009 12:31 - jim2342 Are you any closer to having a developer onboard to help close the funding gap?

10/9/2009 12:31 - MARK FABIANI But the County will play a big role in any solution, including by approving of a new redevelopment district, or the extension of an existing district.

10/9/2009 12:31 - jim2342 Are you any closer to having a developer on board?

10/9/2009 12:32 - snoboredca [email address removed] re the season ticket issue. i ask because i've only been a season ticket holder for 2 years, but would hate to lose out on my club level seats

10/9/2009 12:32 - MARK FABIANI Yes, we have periodically emailed updates to our season seat holders, but your suggestion is a good one - - maybe we will do more of that now that the site search has really heated up.

10/9/2009 12:32 - boltsfans4life Mark, speaking of Oceanside, you may have discussed this earlier but...the newest location in Oceanside seems like a great location, where does the team stand on that location? It seems "from the outside looking in" possible.

10/9/2009 12:32 - MARK FABIANI We met with our first potential development partner in Escondido just about two weeks ago. We expect to get a preliminary assessment from the developer next week.

10/9/2009 12:33 - MARK FABIANI It is a great location - - with one big problem attached to it: The nearby airport. 230 - foot tall stadiums and airports don't get along well together. So we have been exploring whether the airport could be closed, or relocated.

10/9/2009 12:34 - MARK FABIANI But the location is great, and the developer that controls the location, Thomas Enterprises, has been a pleasure to work with. We have another meeting scheduled this afternoon, after this chat, with Mel Kuhnel, Thomas's representative.

10/9/2009 12:34 - sdjase But it could be used as an ancillary development site for say an Escondido stadium right?

10/9/2009 12:35 - CaryISFoster As developers in their own right, is the Spanos Family looking to joint venture partnership with an outside developer?

10/9/2009 12:35 - MARK FABIANI Yes, that's a great point. The stadium and the ancillary development don't have to be right next to one another. If two cities were willing to cooperate, you could have the stadium in one city and the development in another.

10/9/2009 12:35 - BlueMoonBomber And what is the biggest sticking point with the 10th ave terminal - the city or port district?

10/9/2009 12:36 - MARK FABIANI No, the Spanos family wants to find a way to privately finance a new stadium for the Chargers. We are not looking to be part of the development team. The developer will take a big risk and, if it works out, make a nice profit.

10/9/2009 12:36 - MARK FABIANI We are not looking to take any of those profits - - beyond those that we need to help fill the funding gap.

10/9/2009 12:37 - sdjase Have the Chargers considered altering their funding strategy at all to adapt to the new economic and political realities?

10/9/2009 12:37 - boltsfans4life Thanks Mark, perhaps a design that takes the structures to the Eastern side of the land might be a possibility. Or the land being developed between Mesa and Oceanside Blvd for either airport or stadium. Only thoughts but thanks again for all you do!

10/9/2009 12:37 - MARK FABIANI Sure, we consider it all the time. The problem is, we can't come up with another alternative that is likely to work any better. The obvious alternative - - convince the public to help pay for this - - just isn't available to us here in San Diego.

10/9/2009 12:38 - MARK FABIANI Our experts have told us that the airport and the stadium are incompatible, no matter where on the 100 acres of drive in site that you build the stadium.

10/9/2009 12:39 - MARK FABIANI On other ideas and approaches, we are open to fresh thinking, to be sure. That's why I encourage all of you to stay in touch - - my email is mdf@markfabiani.com, and my phone is 858 - 551 - 2818. We want to hear what you are thinking....

10/9/2009 12:39 - sdjase It's hard to believe there's even an airport there. The only thing the public would miss if they closed it are the monthly small plane crashes. Isn't Palomar Airport good enough

10/9/2009 12:39 - MARK FABIANI i...and if you can come up with an approach for us that we haven't thought of, well, we'd appreciate it!

10/9/2009 12:39 - boltsfans4life Mark, please keep us informed of how that meeting goes, you already know the team has many huge supporters in North County as well. Thanks again!

10/9/2009 12:39 - MARK FABIANI Yes, the airport is lightly used, but right now a 3 - 2 majority of the City Council in Oceanside supports the airport.

10/9/2009 12:40 - MARK FABIANI Absolutely. We appreciate more than I can express in a chat box all of the support you have given us over the years. This is a long, hard slog, but we know how important the team is to you, and to the San Diego area.

10/9/2009 12:41 - sdjase Any hope of resurrecting Perry Dealy's idea or any other potential option at Qualcomm? I only ask because the NFL commissioner mentioned it recently...for some reason.

10/9/2009 12:42 - MARK FABIANI Mr. Dealy's idea was shot down immediately by the Mayor and others because of its extraordinary density - - the equivalent of two Empire State Buildings worth of office space.

10/9/2009 12:42 - MARK FABIANI Leaving aside whether anyone is around to rent all that space, the fact is that Mission Valley can't possibly support that kind of density.

10/9/2009 12:43 - sdjase What about the failed Fanita Ranch project in Santee. Have you looked at that massive parcel?

10/9/2009 12:43 - MARK FABIANI But Mr. Dealy proved a point for us, in a roundabout way: The Qualcomm site no longer pencils because the cost of the stadium and infrastructure is now double what it was when we started.

10/9/2009 12:43 - MARK FABIANI Without another funding source, Qualcomm doesn't work for a stadium and development.

10/9/2009 12:45 - sdjase It sounds like Escondido is really the front runner based on all of the information up to this point. Are there any other potential fringe options that are emerging at this time?

10/9/2009 12:46 - MARK FABIANI I don't know of any fringe sites - - although I get an average of two calls a week from landowners hoping to sell us something. And we have a team that evaluates each of these potential sites.

10/9/2009 12:46 - snoboredca while the opportunity is here for the season, what's going on at the stadium to raise support (esp. political support)? are the tailgaters passing out flyers, or talking to each other? what about kiosks and ballots in the stadium?

10/9/2009 12:46 - MARK FABIANI But, as you all understand, it is hard to find a stadium site under any circumstances: The parking, transportation access, and surrounding neighborhood issues all have to workout.

10/9/2009 12:47 - MARK FABIANI You will see all of that material - - and more - - if we can find a site option that works - - and by that I mean an option that can close the private funding gap.

10/9/2009 12:47 - MARK FABIANI If we find a site, we promise to run the best campaign that San Diego County has ever seen!

10/9/2009 12:47 - boltsfans4life I really think that a possible development between Oceanside and Escondido might be a very strong front runner of an option if we can get their support. Can you briefly explain how that might work?

10/9/2009 12:48 - chargerchick619 Is there a hard - line date for determining that?

10/9/2009 12:48 - snoboredcaso the major road blocks are private and financial, not political?

10/9/2009 12:48 - chargerchick619 (private - funding gap)

10/9/2009 12:49 - MARK FABIANI No, Dean Spanos has never in seven years put a single deadline on anyone. He understands how hard this is. So we aren't about to start throwing around deadlines now. Our next opportunity to relocate out of San Diego is February 1, 2010....

10/9/2009 12:49 - MARK FABIANIand when that dates rolls around, we hope and expect to be doing right what we're doing today - - finding a solution in San Diego County.

10/9/2009 12:50 - MARK FABIANI Yes, I think you've said it well. The roadblock is financial, not political. It's not as if we don't have political support, and it's not as if politicians wouldn't solve this stadium issue if they could.

10/9/2009 12:50 - MARK FABIANI It's just that they don't have the resources - - or the tools to create new resources - - to help.

10/9/2009 12:51 - sdjase What's the single most important action (other than commenting online) that a group such as this one and an individual can do to help the Chargers get this stadium deal done?

10/9/2009 12:51 - snoboredca thanks, i misunderstood that part.

10/9/2009 12:51 - snoboredca has anyone made any serious offer or gesture to indicate interest in buying the team from the Spanos?

10/9/2009 12:51 - MARK FABIANI Talk to your family, friends, business associates - - anyone who will listen - - to clear up the misconceptions that persist. We are not looking for public money.

10/9/2009 12:51 - MARK FABIANI We are not seeking taxpayer contributions.

10/9/2009 12:51 - MARK FABIANI We are willing to pay our own way.

10/9/2009 12:52 - MARK FABIANI We don't want to leave town - - if we did, we would have left a long time ago, when we had a lease that allowed us to leave without paying the city a dime, and when it would have cost \$425 million to build a stadium.

10/9/2009 12:53 - sdjase What do you see as a rough timeline for knowing if Escondido is financially feasible? Will we know in 6 months or less?

10/9/2009 12:53 - MARK FABIANI The Spanos family has never indicated a desire to sell a majority stake in the team, and that is pretty well known. It is not inconceivable that, for estate planning purposes, a minority stake in the team might be sold at some point....

10/9/2009 12:53 - MARK FABIANIbut the Spanos family intends to retain majority ownership under any and all foreseeable circumstances.

10/9/2009 12:53 - MARK FABIANI In Escondido, yes, six months or less is a realistic time frame.

10/9/2009 12:54 - sdjase Thanks for your time Mark. We have a few minutes left if anybody would like to ask a final question before we conclude our chat.

10/9/2009 12:55 - CaryISFoster Given those financial and fiscal stipulations, what is the excuse for the City of San Diego (i.e. the City Council) not actively working with the Chargers to keep them within the City?

10/9/2009 12:55 - MARK FABIANI It has been a real pleasure. I encourage all of you to stay in touch with me as this process moves forward.

10/9/2009 12:55 - chargerbacker2 thank you Mark

10/9/2009 12:55 - sdstadium Thank you very much for your time and information you shared with us

10/9/2009 12:55 - boltsfans4life Just want to say that we appreciate you taking time to do this and please keep us informed of how things progress. What is the best way for us to stay up - to - date?

10/9/2009 12:56 - MARK FABIANI On the City of San Diego, it is clear that Aguirre's brooding omnipresence deterred the city from working with us while he was in office. But that changed last November when he was defeated. We have a good open line of communication with the Mayor

10/9/2009 12:56 - sdstadium We will post this chat transcript online for those that missed this session and we look forward to other chats with you

10/9/2009 12:56 - Luque Thanks for your time and hope to see some good news in the near future

10/9/2009 12:56 - MARK FABIANI It is always a pleasure...and please feel free to call or email for more info.

10/9/2009 12:56 - Jeff R Go Bolts!

10/9/2009 12:56 - sdstadium Also like to thank the SDSC for your efforts and providing this opportunity

10/9/2009 12:57 - sdjase Thank you again to Mr. Fabiani and all who participated. Look for this transcript on our website and please heed Mark's word about educating anybody and everybody who will listen to you about this issue.

10/9/2009 12:57 - chargerchick619 Thanks for all your hard work Mark. Please let the Spanos family know that this city and it's fans appreciate their dedication and are thankful for every season we've had. We look forward to many more to come.

10/9/2009 12:57 - CaryISFoster Thanks Mark!

10/9/2009 12:58 - chargerbacker2 appreciate your time Mark?

10/9/2009 12:58 - MARK FABIANI My pleasure!

10/9/2009 12:59 - sdjase Thanks Mark!