



MAJOR LEAGUE SOCCER

Donald P. Garber  
Commissioner

May 28, 2009

Commissioner Daniel Saltzman  
Portland City Hall  
1221 SW 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Room #10  
Portland, OR 97204

Dear Commissioner Saltzman:

I am writing to respond to your request concerning Major League Soccer's position on both the Portland Timbers and the Portland Beavers playing at PGE Park once the Timbers join MLS in 2011.

As I said during the March expansion announcement, the selection of Portland is contingent on the renovation of PGE Park and the relocation of the Beavers to another venue as outlined in the deal between the City of Portland and the Paulson family. Without the fulfillment of this plan, MLS cannot expand to Portland.

The success of MLS teams, and indeed all professional sports teams, is driven in large part by the quality of the in-stadium fan experience. In the case of PGE Park, that experience would be negatively impacted if the Beavers were to continue to play at the stadium.

The most significant areas of concern are:

- 1) Seating Configuration;
- 2) Field Surface; and
- 3) Schedule.

For MLS games, the most valuable seats are on the two sidelines. In the current configuration of PGE Park, there would be no seats on the east side of the stadium and a significant percentage of the seats would be behind the goal (the seats behind home plate and along the third base line in baseball).

Sideline seats generate the most revenue for, and provide a critical contribution to the financial performance of, each MLS team. Without these seats, the Timbers will struggle to achieve financial viability in MLS. Moreover, in order to maximize the value of the seats, it is

vital that the grandstand includes the requisite supporting infrastructure including permanent restrooms and concession stands.

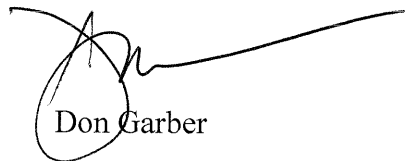
Having fans on both sides of the field creates the type of exciting, intimate atmosphere that is a hallmark of successful MLS teams. I cannot overstate the importance of this type of in-stadium fan experience. It not only leads to greater fan interest and attendance, but as significantly, a passionate atmosphere drives the overall perception of the team in the media and on television. This last point is particularly important. Because television cameras shoot west to east, there would be no fans in the majority of the television shots broadcast from PGE Park if the east side grandstand is not built. The lack of fans in broadcast view will lead to the perception that the team has little support in the community.

In addition to seating issues, baseball and soccer field surfaces are not compatible. The most obvious issue is the in-field "skin" used for the baseball layout needs to be replaced with grass for each MLS game. While there are some make-shift solutions, there is no cost-effective method to convert from baseball to soccer that provides a professional quality field.

Finally, the overlap between the MLS and AAA baseball schedule presents a significant challenge for the MLS team. To be successful, the MLS team in Portland will need to play on the best nights available during the season, and conflicts with the baseball schedule will impact our ability to develop the optimal schedule.

I hope you find this information helpful. Please let me know if you have any additional questions.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Don Garber", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right. The signature is written over the printed name "Don Garber".

Don Garber

Cc: Brendan Finn