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Ballpark at Slater Mill is generating new development interest - by Donald Grebien

December 08, 2017 - Rhode Island

Donald Grebien,
Mayor of Pawtucket

Before even putting ink to paper, the Ballpark at Slater Mill, future home to the Pawtucket Red Sox, is already generating interest from private sector developers. This is the type of ancillary development that will breathe new life into Pawtucket's historic Main St. and throughout the city's downtown.

The Ballpark at Slater Mill, with easy access to I-95, can be the economic engine and catalyst that Pawtucket, the Blackstone Valley and Rhode Island need to continue to move forward. Pawtucket is a business-friendly city and a growing number of investors and developers are expressing support for the ballpark project.

The Ballpark at Slater Mill project creates an opportunity to bring year-round entertainment and family-oriented events, expand access to our waterfront and create a world-class destination to attract 500,000 visitors and patrons from around the country to our state. With that activity is the ability to draw hotels, restaurants, businesses, shops and residential development.

Private sector development combined with a \$45 million private investment from the Pawtucket Red Sox to build a public park will ignite development, bring life back to Pawtucket and generate additional revenue for the state. These opportunities will not be realized unless we capitalize on this commitment, and garner state approval for this project.

Developers are beginning to consider purchasing properties that have been on the market for years in the city's downtown, abutting the proposed stadium site. Churchill and Banks has submitted a letter of interest expressing enthusiasm for the development climate in Pawtucket and their strong desire to move forward with a project on the Tidewater site if the ballpark comes to fruition – joining the PawSox and Peregrine Group who have already committed to the project development area. The city also expects a letter of interest in the coming weeks from another developer interested in constructing and operating a hotel proximate to the ballpark. Just up the riverfront, local developer Scott Davis has just completed his financing for the Fuller Mill project, an upscale mixed-use development of high-end apartments and commercial space set to begin construction in a few

months.

Now is Pawtucket's time to reemerge as a premiere arts and cultural destination.

Join the evolution.

For development opportunities, contact Jeanne Boyle, Pawtucket's commerce director at Jboyle@pawtucketri.com.

Donald Grebien is mayor of the City of Pawtucket, R.I.

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