

CAMPBELL'S IN TOUCH WITH NEEDS OF PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED



Commissioner Joan Campbell at the ballpark groundbreaking ceremony.

Commissioner Joan Campbell was the first commissioner appointed to the Minnesota Ballpark Authority. As a retired nurse who had knee replacement surgery last August, she has the needs and concerns of seniors and the physically challenged in mind when deciding on design elements within the ballpark.

"We need railings up and down the aisles so people like me whose knees bother them have something to hold on to," she says. An ergonomically designed structure that suits everyone's needs is one of the many issues Commissioner Campbell has discussed with the ballpark's Advisory Council for the disabled.

Commissioner Campbell, who has been able to become more of a baseball fan since her retirement from nursing, was employed in various positions at the University of Minnesota Hospitals from 1958 to 1989.

She is most recognized as a vocal member of the Minneapolis City Council, representing the 2nd Ward from 1990 to 2002.

She views her role as a commissioner for the Minnesota Ballpark Authority as one that is a voice for the people. "The public is making an enormous investment in this ballpark and the public needs to have a voice in this effort. In addition to insuring that there is disability access, we want to make sure there are affordable seats for people and that there is participation for women and minority owned businesses."

Both public access and profit are important motives for the building of this ballpark, says the Commissioner who grew up in Spring Grove, a town of about 1,000 people less than 30 miles from La Crosse. One of her early recollections of baseball involved her hometown. "We had a game with the American Legion that went for 18 innings. The floodlights were turned on and everyone in town stayed for the whole game. We won."

Commissioner Campbell's interest in public development began during her 1973 – 1989 tenure on the Metropolitan Council. During that time, the Metrodome was built.

"The Twins have been playing in a football field for a long time, they need a space to call their own," she says. "And it is good that it is downtown. It will really be good for the economy."