

Saturday mornings at the St Paul Farmer's market are a weekly thrill most of the year...or, rather, they were. This morning, once again, with winds blowing and sleet coming down, I circled the usual blocks twenty-five minutes hoping for a parking place to open up. Twenty-five minutes. I was determined not to give up this joy, though I am handicapped and cannot easily walk more than a block. Handicap tag was of not use, of course. I decided this would be my last attempt. I will drive to the Minneapolis market where parking is ample. I hate to leave the town I've called home since 1972. I hate to drive across the river when my beloved St. Paul market is just down the hill from my house.

Finally, I parked illegally, facing the Gillette building that will soon become a monument to baseball and the egos of city fathers--and I do mean fathers--especially Mayor Coleman, whom I supported in his first run for office. I'm a city mother who has no use for baseball, so I guess I, and the Mother Nature represented at the Farmer's Market are left to fend for ourselves.

I see the City's plan for the Gillette as a macho occupation, a testosterone disaster that completely ignores the needs of the area. St. Paul's Lowertown needs parking. Lowertown needs a sound barrier where the Gillette stands. The voice of the St. Paul Parks and Recreation director needs to be heard. Dave Thune is right.

Mayor Coleman, you have a chance to leave a beautiful downtown St. Paul behind, or to be remembered, as the builders of the Humphrey in Minneapolis are, as the mayor who spearheaded a gaudy disaster. Please reconsider the plan. You have time to change your mind.

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