

Dodgers owner hopes to build hotel

by **Carrie Watters** - Jan. 16, 2009 12:00 AM

The Arizona Republic

Chicago White Sox owner Jerry Reinsdorf rolled up his suit pants on Thursday and got a look at the spring training facility his team will soon share with the Los Angeles Dodgers.

Glendale is in the final stages of construction on the more than \$100 million ballpark at Camelback Road and 107th Avenue called Camelback Ranch Glendale.

Reinsdorf gave credit for the facility's ambience - a meandering lake, building rooflines that mimic surrounding mountains and plenty of landscaping (much still to be planted) - to Dodgers owner Frank McCourt

McCourt, also at the ballpark for the tour, shared his hopes of creating a "baseball paradise."

He also confirmed that he wants to build a hotel and conference center on the site, much like the team had at Dodgertown, its 60-year Florida home.

The hotel would be used by minor-league players as well as the public. McCourt said he had no timeline for such a project. For now, he said his focus is to open the ballpark. Opening day on March 1 will feature a game between the Dodgers and Sox.

Between 700 and 1,000 workers are on the site during construction. The number of workers that will be required once the facility is open wasn't readily available.

Both owners said they intend to seek ways to use the facility year-round, with McCourt mentioning youth leagues and tournaments. Unlike most stadiums run by municipalities, the teams will pay for operations and handle bookings at Glendale's ballpark.

The Sox are moving to the Valley from Tucson, while the Dodgers are one of two Grapefruit League teams moving west from Florida this year. The Dodgers, along with the Cleveland Indians at Goodyear's new ballpark, bring the state's Cactus League total to 14 major-league ball clubs.