

# Chicago Baseball Museum

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It's been a hotbed of baseball for over a century. Now, an Illinois doctor is trying to give Chicago it's own museum dedicated to the sport.

David Fletcher was married at the site of the original Comiskey Park home plate. That should tell you enough about this Illinois physician's passion for baseball, but now the occupational medicine specialist is busy with a project much larger than a ballpark wedding. He's spearheading an effort to put a baseball museum in Chicago.

The memorabilia collector and dedicated fan has amassed a large collection of items dating back to baseball's 'Dead Ball' era. But in addition to possibly having a place to display his own collection, Fletcher dreams of a tourist attraction. An ode to Shoeless Joe and Little Louie and Ernie Banks and Charlie Root.

An initial feasibility study was conducted over the summer of 2004. After much

discussion Dr. Fletcher hired a development director to guide the process of the Chicago Baseball Museum from conceptualization and verbal support, to sound backing for a nonprofit organization.

The Museum is currently working to build a solid business plan and website

before soliciting donations. "We hope to secure \$1 million in corporate,

state, and/or private funding by July 2007," Amber Buchanan, Director of Planning and Development told Sports Collectors Daily. "Once adequate funding is obtained, efforts will focus on procuring a building by October 2007."

Four potential sites have been selected including those near Wrigley Field and Comiskey Park as well as a downtown area near some of Chicago's other attractions.

The Museum hopes to begin accumulating memorabilia as soon as possible. "Outreach has been made to a number of baseball historians and family members of former players but nothing has been solidified," Buchanan explained. "Once the foundation is established, the Museum will begin to focus on collection of memorabilia."

The Museum's advisory board has already made contact with Commissioner Bud Selig who pledged his support for the project. "He thought it was a fantastic idea and said he would cut the ribbon at our grand opening. We also have the support of Jerome Holtzman, official historian for Major League Baseball," Buchanan said.