

801 Edinburgh Way
Belleville, IL 62221
September 21, 2014

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SEP. 24 2014

HEALTH FACILITIES &
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD

Ms. Courtney Avery
Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board
525 W. Jefferson St. 2nd Floor
Springfield, IL 62761

Dear Ms. Avery,

I am writing to express my concern about the proposed building of St Elizabeth's Hospital in Belleville to O'Fallon, IL. Unlike Belleville Memorial Hospital's extension currently being built in O'Fallon, St. Elizabeth's plan (Project # 14-043) calls for that hospital essentially discontinuing their services in downtown Belleville.

This would make it extremely difficult for patients in Belleville and East St Louis with limited transportation to get to a hospital. It would also strain the capacity of Belleville Memorial's health care capability for patients who have transportation. In addition, at a time when downtown Belleville is enjoying a renewal, this move out of Belleville would eliminate jobs in Belleville, and hurt downtown merchants who rely in a large part on employees and patients at St Elizabeth's Hospital for their business.

I understand St Elizabeth's building is too expensive to renovate, so a move is necessary, but perhaps a better location for the relocation would be around Highway 15 in south Belleville. This would solve many of the problems the hospital is experiencing, while maintaining their patient base and supporting businesses in Belleville.

Thank you for your consideration.

Truly,

Christine Zalocusky

125 Highwood Drive
Belleville, IL 62223
September 21, 2014

Mike Constantino, Supervisor
Project Review Section
Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board
525 West Jefferson Street, 2nd Floor
Springfield, IL 62761

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HEALTH FACILITIES &
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD

RE: Project Application # 14-403

Dear Mr. Constantino,

I am writing this letter in opposition of the Certificate of Need filed by St. Elizabeth's Hospital, Belleville, IL.

I strongly disagree with the proposed move of St. Elizabeth's Hospital to the chosen site in O'Fallon. I agree the old hospital building probably needs to be replaced but I feel the proposed location, and also the cut-back in the number of beds, will result in hardships for many citizens of the communities involved.

In the 1980s St. Louis University also considered rebuilding their hospital miles away from the original, but unlike St. Elizabeth's they felt a strong connection and obligation to the neighborhood to which they had historic ties. Many factors probably contributed to their final decision but in the end they built a new patient wing attached to the old Firmin Deloge Hospital. I understand Barnes-Jewish also faced a similar decision but chose to stay in St. Louis City. The constraints those hospitals faced in order to update their facilities were probably worse than St. Elizabeth's faces now.

I understand from the application that St. Clair County has been designated a "Medically Underserved Area" by the Health Resources and Services Administration. With that in mind, I do not understand how allowing two new hospitals to be built that close together, and cutting back on the number of beds will improve the situation. Memorial Hospital is already constructing a new hospital less than two miles away from the proposed St. Elizabeth's site. Surely our communities would be better served if a second hospital was built in a location closer to the Metro East's population center. Immediately east of O'Fallon the population density is low and consists of small towns and farmland.

There has been much made of how convenient the new hospital location will be because of it's proximity to I-64. The new hospital will be easier to access they say! I believe this statement to be untrue and purposely misleading. According to the statistics in the application submitted to you, (page 99), St. Elizabeth's serves 316,774 in their Primary and Secondary Areas. Again using their numbers, I have calculated there are 154,053 people that live in Belleville and southwest of Highway 13, and of them 28,961 are over 65 years of age (nearly 19%). These people live in Belleville, East St. Louis, Freeburg,

Lenzburg, Marissa, Milstadt, New Athens, Red Bud, Smithton and Waterloo. None of them live in an area where I-64 could be used to access the hospital. I also believe that if I had examined the statistics in this area for low income families a similar result would have been found. Low income households and the elderly are typically those with the most challenging access to care, and I believe the proposed location of St. Elizabeth's Hospital and a decrease in the number of beds will create a hardship to this group in particular.

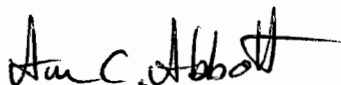
I quote from page 80 of the submitted application, "Patients will no longer need to drive in Belleville to obtain care, facing many stop signs and lights." I contend the majority of people will have to experience even more stop signs and lights. Again according to their own statistics, the 76,521 people located in Belleville zip codes alone represent 24% of the people they are serving. They, and all others that live in that direction, will find themselves forced to use Frank Scott Parkway, Greenmount Road, Highway 50, or Highway 159 to access the hospital, where they will experience some of the notorious traffic jams and back-ups that occur on those routes, resulting in a worse problem than the stop signs, lights and one-way streets of Belleville. I urge you to take traffic patterns and the availability of public transportation into consideration when making your decision.

I must admit I am a proud resident of Belleville and have been for 38 years and I hate to see yet another building vacated. I was born in England, where many US citizens enjoy vacationing and admiring historic buildings still very much in use, while ironically at home they seem to be pressured into believing newer is better. We need more money spent to increase access to medical care for everyone more than we need new buildings. I will continue to use Memorial Hospital in Belleville for my health care and my husband, who has always used St. Elizabeth's in the past, plans to also use Memorial Hospital. If it were not for Memorial Hospital in Belleville and us being fairly mobile senior citizens, we would be better served by using our free Metrolink passes and going to Barnes-Jewish hospital in St. Louis rather than driving to O'Fallon and fighting the traffic.

It also concerns me that in the application submitted to you I saw no mention of demolition costs for the old building. I hope it will not be left derelict because I suspect it is be extremely unlikely this building could be used for anything other than a hospital, and I hope the local tax payers will not be saddled with the bill for demolition.

I thank you for allowing all opinions to be submitted. I respectfully request that you deny the Certificate of Need to St. Elizabeth's Hospital.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ann C. Abbott". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Ann C. Abbott