

Village of Smithton

P.O. Box 330 — 101 South Main Street — 618 / 233-4180
SMITHTON, ILLINOIS 62285

MAYOR,
RAYMOND F. KLEIN

VILLAGE CLERK,
DEBI BOEVING



TRUSTEES,
JOEL BOEVING
VIRGIL BECKER
JOSEPH YOCH
DARREN VEHLWALD
MICHAEL SMALLWOOD
JASON BECHERER

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OCT 03 2014

HEALTH FACILITIES &
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD

September 26, 2014

Mr. Mike Constantino
Supervisor, Project Review Section
Illinois Health Facilities and Services Board
525 W. Jefferson St., 2nd Floor
Springfield, IL 62761

Dear Mr. Constantino,

On behalf of the Village of Smithton, IL, I am writing to express strong opposition to the closure of St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Belleville and the establishment of a new facility in O'Fallon, project #14-043.

Smithton is located 7 miles south of Belleville, approximately 15 minutes from the current St. Elizabeth's Hospital. Many of our residents have chosen St. Elizabeth's Belleville for their care and will be significantly impacted by its closure.

Establishing a new hospital in O'Fallon would double the distance and travel time for Smithton residents. As a result, the proposal will significantly impact access to health care for many area residents. I have heard from many elderly residents who simply will not travel to the new facility due to traffic congestion between Belleville and O'Fallon. These patients would instead choose Memorial Hospital in Belleville or other hospitals located out of state in St. Louis.

Equally concerning is the distance impact on those needing emergency care. Between January – August 2014, the Village of Smithton had more than 50 ambulance runs from our community to St. Elizabeth's Hospital Emergency Department. Without St. Elizabeth's ER in Belleville, other emergency rooms will be tasked with handling the overflow, adding strain and capacity issues and most importantly delays to care and treatment. This should be of significant concern to the Planning Board as it is to the residents of Smithton.

We encourage you to deny that effort to close St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Belleville.

Sincerely,

Raymond F. Klein
Mayor

Donald A. and Joanna Stork
27 Symonds Drive
Belleville, IL 62223-1905

Mr. Mike Constantino
Supervisor, Project Review Section
Illinois Health Facilities & Services Board
525 W. Jefferson St., 2nd Floor
Springfield, IL 62761

October 1, 2014

Dear Mr. Constantino,

Thank you for this opportunity to share our views on the relocation decision St. Elizabeth Hospital management proposes to make. It will take a large measure of 'greater good' motivation and courage to go forward with a more effective decision at this stage. The Right Decision is to stop the runaway train where location is concerned. Then restart the process with transparency and due consideration of the strong objections presented since this intent to relocate the hospital north to the O'Fallon area has come to light.

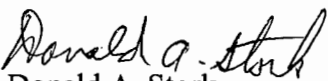
Valid and thoughtful issues have now been raised regarding the intended location. One in particular stands out for further emphasis—the risk and disregard for the medical needs of residents in the towns and rural areas south of the present Belleville location. These residents have no viable option to Memorial and St. Elizabeth. Have we truly considered these population centers within 20 miles or more of Belleville being forced to drive another half hour to get to the 'New St. E.' or limit their option to Memorial, while excellent, will likely be overtaxed for services.

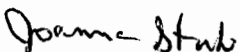
To put this point in perspective, the growth and potential for the future growth in the above referenced population centers is well documented. The 14 areas considered have a current census count in excess of 54 thousand; an increase of over 40% from the 1990 census of these same areas. Reinforcing the trend, a recent Wall Street Journal article (9/19/14) projects these types of "exurb" areas to continue to outpace the general residential market.

Given this insight, along with many equally important considerations that have now been presented, it is impossible to be convincing the most effective road to profit for St. Elizabeth is to move north, particularly when the north area has existing viable hospital options for residents.

These are but a few reasons why the Right Decision at this time is to back away and fully examine the location issues. This should be done with a transparent and comprehensive diagnosis of the opportunities available for St. Elizabeth to effectively serve the total of its potential constituents.

Sincerely,


Donald A. Stork


Joanna Stork

cc Courtney Avery

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OCT 03 2014

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