

November 7, 2007

Ladies and Gentlemen:

As the Board of Directors of Shore Health System, Inc. you will soon be called upon to make probably the most important decision in the 100 year life of Memorial Hospital at Easton.

Since the intention to develop a new state of the art hospital was announced early this year, there has been widespread speculation regarding whether the facility will be placed in or adjacent to the town of Easton, or instead relocated to farmland in the vicinity of Routes 50 and 404 or beyond. The latter alternative would have grave consequences for all of us.

Our two organizations, Talbot Preservation Alliance and the Citizens Committee, have worked to give voice to community concerns on this issue. We understand your need to serve the interests of Shore Health System, economic and otherwise. But we also believe that, consistently with your charitable mission and status, the exercise of your responsibility must take into account the future well-being of your friends and neighbors in the community that created our hospital, and generously has nurtured its growth over the years.

When the Shore Health System/UMMS "affiliation" was announced, the paramount message was that our local Board would not be divested of its influence, and that local health care needs would be safeguarded, notwithstanding the change of ownership. That promise is about to be tested, since our community, virtually without dissent, has expressed the strong desire to retain the hospital here, and similarly has affirmed that a relocation to a site at Route 404 would be a monumental mistake.

We are enclosing with this mailing several items that we believe you will find informative and persuasive, and that collectively reflect the views of those who will be affected directly by your decision on the new hospital's location:

- An eight-minute DVD that we hope you will take the time to review, as it reflects the thoughts and concerns of a broad cross-section of community leaders;
- The results of our petition, urging SHS to locate its new facility in or adjacent to Easton, and signed by some 10,000 of your friends and neighbors;
- A selection of newspaper clippings/comments reflecting community sentiment; and
- A summary of an economic impact study, undertaken by the nationally respected Sage Policy Group, assessing the effect of a departure of the hospital from Easton.

As you know, the County Council has offered an excellent site on the north side of Easton, with Town extension of sewer, water and utilities. You are undoubtedly familiar with the compelling practical reasons for locating a new hospital facility in or adjacent to Easton: the critical public access for those at the far ends of our county, and for our neighbors in Cambridge, Denton, Ridgley, Federalsburg and Preston; the planned UMMS emergency facility to serve Queen Anne's County and vicinity; the access needs of law enforcement and emergency management personnel; the availability of public sewer and water, as opposed to the total absence of infrastructure at Route 404; and the proximity to many hospital employees and volunteers who live in and around Easton.

The Sage Policy Group study adds to these factors the role of our hospital in driving our economy, and the direct and indirect dependence of our local businesses upon its central location. The full Sage report can be found at <http://talbotcountymd.gov/>.

Each of these considerations is significant, but perhaps none more so than the need to maintain, during the next 100 years just as during the previous century, the sense of a unified community among the hospital and the many thousands of its supporters and benefactors.

Just this past month we experienced a very successful "100th anniversary gala" celebrating all that we have accomplished together, and recognizing the allegiance of our community to the cause. One wonders just how well this spirit of community will be maintained if, in the future, Memorial Hospital at Easton should become "Memorial Hospital at 404."

We hope that you will bear all of these points in mind as you make your most important decision, and we trust that you will do your best to represent the interests not only of Shore Health System, but of the community that is primarily responsible for the history we recently celebrated.

Very truly yours,

Nancy Clem

Thomas T. Alspach
President, Talbot Preservation Alliance

Russell Dize
Co-Chairs, Citizens Committee