

Make it a public talk

I am writing in support of a public meeting at which Joe Ross would share with the community Shore Health System's thinking regarding a new medical campus. County Councilman Phil Foster put it well when he said that, given the amount of information that is currently circulating, a private meeting seems unnecessary.

Indeed, it might be counterproductive as Talbot Countians already are worried that important health care planning is taking place without the benefit of public input. This concern is only exacerbated by the bills now

pending in the Maryland legislature that would have the effect of allowing Shore Health System to bypass the usual independent assessment of need required before a hospital can undertake a major relocation of health care services.

Regardless of the merits of a decision to locate a regional hospital in any particular site, as a matter of good policy, such a decision should not be made without public input and without an independent assessment of the needs at issue.

2/23/07 RAY EARNEST, *Easton*

Our lucky choice?

My wife and I were married here, in the living room of our newly purchased home, in 1979. We have enjoyed our life here more than we thought possible back then. When we married, emergency health care wasn't the priority for us that it is today. Being a 10-minute drive to Easton Memorial Hospital is a big deal today.

Some years ago my wife suffered a heart attack while we were returning home from a cruise on our boat. Contacted by cell phone, the ambulance met us at our dock. The story has a happy ending because that hospital was there. Also, because that hospital is there, a clinic of heart specialists is located within blocks of it. We are blessed with a hospital conveniently located in the center of our population convenient to all stratas of our economy and one good enough to pull the unusually cadre of physicians and specialists who practice there.

We were lucky in our decision to live where we do but it will be a dumb choice if our hospital is moved. I can not think of a single decision that could be made to do more damage to our quality of life and those who live in the Easton metropolitan area. As I drive around Easton I see retirement communities everywhere.

If our hospital is moved, it will hurt all classes and races equally but will specialize in those groups who are less able to help themselves (minorities and the elderly).

MILTON and EM IRVIN,
Easton