

Transparency, please 2/10/07

In his commentary Feb. 16, Joe Ross said Shore Health System has initiated its planning process for the location of a new hospital, and the community would be "encouraged to express its voice as we plan for the future."

But Feb. 27, it's reported the SHS planning committee spokesperson, Patti Willis, hasn't divulged the names of all the SHS planning committee members, and won't "without their permission."

Wouldn't a hospital that truly wants its supporting community to be part of the planning process require that its planning committee members be willing to divulge their identities?

How can the community express its views to the planners if their identities won't be divulged?

On Feb. 21, Ms. Willis stated in the press that SHS will involve the county councils for Talbot (and other jurisdictions) in the planning process and the debate.

But the hospital has refused, apparently, to appoint a member of the Easton Town Council and the Talbot County Council, respectively, to the long-range planning committee that will make the final recommendations.

How can the professed desire to include our elected leaders in the planning process be squared with a failure to include representative leaders?

Given the unending support the hospital has received from our local governments and taxpayers over the years, including most recently closure of an entire Easton street to accommodate its needs, one would think the public, through those leaders, should have representation on the committee that will make decisions so critical to the health care future of us all.

ROGER BOLLMAN,
Easton