

507 N. 43<sup>rd</sup> Street  
Belleville, IL 62226  
(618)698-1160

.....

# Darrell & Sandy Coons

**RECEIVED**

OCT 02 2014

HEALTH FACILITIES &  
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD

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

Re: Project # 14-043

CC: Courtney Avery

Dear Mr. Constantino:

I would like to go on-record opposing the Certificate of Need for St. Elizabeth's Hospital's planned move to O'Fallon, IL. I have several concerns about their plan.

- 1) A move of the main hospital away from downtown Belleville will have a devastating effect on the business economy of Belleville. Serving as the Director of Belleville Main Street, I can tell you that the loss of the economic buying power of St. Elizabeth's employees will force several of our small merchants and restaurants out of business.
- 2) The loss of the accessibility of St. Elizabeth's to our Belleville residents of limited means will put those residents greatly at risk. They do not have the financial means to take public transportation to O'Fallon.
- 3) The financial burden placed upon Memorial Hospital in Belleville to absorb St. Elizabeth's portion of the indigent population will be a huge risk for that hospital's viability.
- 4) The close proximity of the O'Fallon site for St. Elizabeth's Hospital will make the viability of Memorial Hospital's East Campus questionable. The combined populations of O'Fallon, Fairview Heights and Shiloh will not support two hospitals in such close proximity.
- 5) St. Elizabeth's request for a Certificate of Need is disingenuous after that same hospital administration opposed the CON for Memorial Hospital's CON prior to the issuance of that CON.
- 6) The reduction of total hospital beds south of Interstate 64 will have a detrimental impact upon communities to the south that depend on St. Elizabeth's, such as Smithton, Freeburg, Hecker, New Athens, Millstadt and Waterloo. As the area Fire Chaplain, I recognize the importance of the Emergency Room of St. Elizabeth's in Belleville.
- 7) The O'Fallon site chosen for St. Elizabeth's proposed facility will prove disastrous to the traffic flow of area roadways that are already strained beyond capacity, such as Frank Scott Parkway and Greenmount Road. I see nothing in the proposal calling for the rebuilding of those roads into a four-lane configuration.

I sincerely hope that the Illinois Health Facilities & Services Board will carefully weigh the risks associated with the St. Elizabeth's project and that it will not receive a Certificate of Need.

Sincerely,



Darrell M. Coons  
618.698.1160 (c)  
[dcoons@belleville.net](mailto:dcoons@belleville.net)

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

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Re: Project # 14-043

HEALTH FACILITIES &  
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD

September 24, 2014

Dear Mr. Constantino,

I'm a citizen of Belleville, IL and am writing to appeal to the Illinois Health Facilities & Services Board to deny St. Elizabeth Hospital's (St. E.) application to move from Belleville to O'Fallon, IL.

When my wife (Mary) and I moved our family to Belleville in 1986, it was because of great schools, safety, a strong sense of community, and access to quality health care. Despite some large corporate entities leaving our city for "greener" pastures (by the interstate), in the last decade Belleville has experienced a rebirth of its downtown, access to more shopping, and in many ways it's become a more vibrant and diverse place to live. St. E has been a fixture in the heart of Belleville for well over a century. Mary and I, and our three children, all have been to St. E, for emergent or inpatient care. Three of our grandchildren were born there...and my mother spent her last days cared for in a St. E Hospice bed.

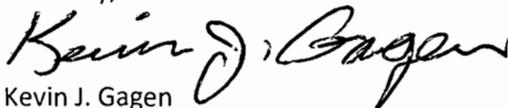
The rationale for St. E's move is transparent and disingenuous. They claim it's to become a "regional" hospital. They also opine that merely seven-miles is insignificant. But make no mistake...their real motive is tapping into what they believe to be a richer patient mix...In a word, GREED. St. E would affect their desired result by providing less care to the poor and indigent. The move would take them further from places where care is already less available, not just Belleville, but for thousands from Millstadt, Dupo, Monroe County, and dozens of rural communities. It would also negatively impact some of the most underserved and underprivileged citizens in our State. Tens of thousands from E. St. Louis, Cahokia, Centreville and Alorton would overwhelm an already full-to-the-brim Memorial Hospital ER. The truth is that for over a decade, St. E has invested little in their facilities and infrastructure, allowing the hospital to fall into obsolescence and disrepair. It's as though abandoning Belleville had been the plan for a long time.

In addition to the economic catastrophe this would bring, many of the elderly, poor and infirm, not just in Belleville but all points west and south, lack essential transportation. Belleville also has an older population, and facilities like Our Lady of the Snows and many others would be left in the lurch. The move would deprive thousands of our citizens' access to care. I'm disturbed at how in just a generation St. Elizabeth's, founded as a religious, charitable and benevolent institution, could convert itself into the pawn of a nationwide corporate association. One with an altruistic sounding name, but apparently as corrupted in the pursuit of profit as any Wall Street hedge-fund...to the point of hopping onto the shameful and destructive bandwagon of "white-flight", just to assure itself a better bottom-line...while perhaps, inflicting a mortal blow to the historic and vibrant city that stood by and supported it for nearly 140 years.

If St. Elizabeth's wants to build a new hospital, let them build it in Belleville. It could surely be done more economically, and it would keep an essential pillar of our community where it belongs.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Kevin J. Gagen  
124 Lucinda Ave.  
Belleville, IL 62221

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**HEALTH FACILITIES &  
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD**

September 30, 2014

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

Dear Mr. Constantino:

I am writing this letter in opposition to the Application for Certificate of Need filed by St. Elizabeth's Hospital, Belleville, IL. Their plan is to ABANDON a wonderful City that has housed them and partnered with them for over 140 years, and I need to express my concerns on this move being approved.

There are many facts and lies being circulated in the media and in the public I am sure you have heard and are reviewing. I believe the facts in this case that have been or will be presented to you by the City of Belleville will speak for themselves and prove that St. Elizabeth's Hospital has done nothing but twist the truth and outright lie about what their real plans are for the campus they will desert in the City of Belleville, as well as their reasons for "having" to move. Instead of restating those facts, and St. Elizabeth's lies, I am simply going to discuss the ones that most affect my position with the City, and me personally.

I am an accountant, and more specifically a certified public accountant (CPA), who also has an MBA. I am currently the Finance Director for the City of Belleville. I have been in this position for five years. Unfortunately these five years have been some of the hardest five years the City has faced financially due to the economy in a long time. It is only very recently that this City has started to see an upturn in the financial situation that was caused by the economic recession that started in 2008. Just when we started to see the light at the end of the tunnel in these financial times, St. Elizabeth's Hospital wants to wreak havoc on the City's financial future...havoc that will be so serious to the financial health of the City that it's negative effects will be felt FAR into the future, even much farther than my lifetime.

When I heard you were accepting letters of opposition to this project, I tried to sit down and really calculate what financial effect this would have on the City. Let's face it, I am a numbers person. It's what I do, and it's a big part of my decision making on a daily basis. As I tried to sit down and come up with calculations, financial theories, formulas, equations, I realized it is almost impossible to quantify such a financial tragedy. First of all there is the fact that St. Elizabeth's Hospital is the 2nd largest employer within the

corporate City limits of Belleville. The next closest employer is about 400 employees less. Let's take into consideration that these employees are in Belleville on a daily basis. While some may not live in Belleville, they drive to work here, get gas here, they probably shop in town on breaks or before or after work. I know the Hospital has stated in a newspaper editorial that the employees don't eat out in town during their shifts, but instead eat in the hospital cafeteria. It doesn't take a genius to figure out this is not true. I challenge anyone to walk into any of our downtown restaurants during lunch or dinner hours and not see someone in scrubs or work uniforms with St. Elizabeth's Hospital work ID cards on. Maybe many employees do physically sit in the cafeteria to eat their lunches or dinners, but I can guarantee if you walked around the cafeteria you would see people with takeout containers from Belleville restaurants.

Let's pretend for a second that the hospital is correct that the employees don't eat in Belleville, but what about friends, family, and loved ones of the patients served by the hospital? Do they only eat in the cafeteria as well? Once again, how do we put a number on what these people spend in Belleville, even if the hospital used faulty logic that these people don't eat out at restaurants in Belleville. Most drive cars. Many probably stop and get gas in Belleville. Some relatives may have to stay overnight in the City. How do I even begin to quantify this? The economic ripple effects that this hospital being in Belleville creates for this City is **far** too great to put a general number on. All of my calculations come back to one answer:

### St. Elizabeth's ABANDONING Belleville = Financial DEVASTATION to the City of Belleville

The little extra expense (at least in comparison to the overall size of the project) that the hospital representatives say would result if they tried to renovate or rebuild in Belleville as opposed to O'Fallon PALES in comparison to the outreaching financial devastation this will cause for the City of Belleville and its taxpayers. People say this will be good for the region as a whole because it is keeping a hospital in the region by moving it to O'Fallon. This can't be further from the truth. O'Fallon isn't losing anything if the Application for CON is denied and St. Elizabeth's Hospital is not allowed to move. You can't lose something you never had...especially something you haven't had for the last 140 years. If approved though, O'Fallon's gains would be immense, but only because their gains would equal Belleville's DEVASTATING LOSS!

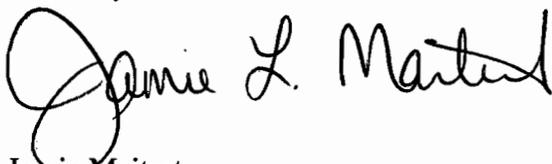
Now that you know my background, and my job and taxpayer related concerns, I would like to take just another moment of your time to share a personal note related to this move. More important than my career endeavors and job related responsibilities is my family. I have lived in this great City my entire life. My family has lived here since long before I was born. My grandparents loved this City, and they loved St. Elizabeth's Hospital. I spent many days and evenings visiting my grandparents at St. Elizabeth's when I was younger and they were ill. It was sort of sad that as a young teenager I had the layout of the hospital memorized because I had been there with them so much. One thing they were though was loyal. They were devout Catholics, and even if they would have gotten sick 10 feet from Memorial Hospital, they insisted on traveling to St. Elizabeth's Hospital. They always received excellent care there, and that meant a lot to

them. My grandmother was my best friend growing up. She taught me more things than I could ever list in this letter, including loyalty, hard work, and love of family and community. My grandmother took her last breath in a room at St. Elizabeth's Hospital. It is sad for me to think that my grandparents' love and loyalty for this great City and St. Elizabeth's Hospital is not reciprocated back from the hospital to this community anymore.

I am now a mother of three young children; a 4 year old, a 22 month old, and a 2 month old infant. I live right off of Green Mount Road in Belleville. It is terrifying for me to even think about any critical health emergencies happening to my children or my husband or me, but in the event that it does, the closest hospital to us is St. Elizabeth's in Belleville. If the hospital would move to O'Fallon, even though the proposed site is on Green Mount Road, the commute to that site because of lights and traffic takes more than double the time it takes me to get to downtown Belleville where the current hospital is. **Nothing** about this proposed move would be worth having to take my children farther for care in a health emergency, especially now that O'Fallon/Shiloh parents are already going to get their emergency healthcare needs for their families met with the new Memorial Hospital in that same area as St. Elizabeth's is proposing to move, as well as the St. Elizabeth's Urgicare Center already located in O'Fallon.

Thank you for allowing me to express my concerns about this proposed move. Please consider all of the negative effects such a move will have on the City of Belleville, the community, the taxpayers, and most importantly the families in Belleville and the surrounding medically underserved communities that need the hospital to stay where it is.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jamie L. Maitret". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and "M".

Jamie Maitret  
1629 Colfax Court  
Belleville, IL 62221

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

CC: Courtney Avery

I oppose the move of St. Elizabeth's Hospital to ofallon. The economical impact would be devastating to the City.

I am an employee of St. Elizabeth's <sup>(41 years)</sup> 3 years ago I took a job at the Medical Bldg on access from the proposed site. Since then I have shopped more at the stores on green mount out of convenience that I would have done had my employment remained in Belleville.

Taking the 1300 employees from the city on a daily bases has the potential to really hurt the property value of the Belleville. Schools will feel the impact, Businesses and the smaller surrounding communities as well.

Please consider this when determining the Certificate of need. ofallon has a lot of potential for growth without the hospital move. Belleville will suffer.

Thank You  
Nancy Buray