

Michael P. Galime, Council President -Utica
2617 Crestway Utica, NY 13501
Tel 3155254224
mgalime@cityofutica.com

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Brian Thomas

Fred Matrulli

CC: Utica Planning Board – Lead Agency, MVHS Scoping

1 Kennedy Plaza Utica, NY 13502

Brian, Fred, Planning Board,

Please see the attached. I have included a list of potential negative impacts that need review and/or further scoping in the pages within this document. Please let this serve as a cover letter for the SEQRA scoping input.

I also am urging the planning board to ensure that this project is treated as a private development project, that has received a government grant for partial funding, and that the project be reviewed in its entirety.

Thank you, and please see the following pages and file it public scoping response for the MVHS SEQRA.

Regards,

Michael Galime

COUNCIL PRESIDENT, CITY OF UTICA

Potential Adverse Impacts, MVHS Hospital Proposal – input for EIS.

New Hartford & South/West Utica Vicinity

Power Plant Cogeneration Facility

What will be the impact of MVHS leaving the cogeneration power plant facility behind? Will the operator continue to run the plant, and how will this effect the power delivery and rates for Utica College?

How will this effect the overall grid for the area?

Medical Office and Outpatient Facility Locations

Many outpatient facilities and medical offices have located and/or been built within the St. Luke's facility vicinity. This includes the Omni Surgical Center, as well as many offices within the business park. Will these locations need to relocate, and if so, will this cause unplanned financial burden on the overall medical community?

Cost of Facility Reuse

The St. Luke's Campus is said to be marketable to private development, however, within the Oneida County Local Development Corporation (OCLDC) application, as of February 2018, the entire campus is not being decommissioned. Who will maintain the property to insure it is not depreciating and left to become decrepit post abandonment, or when partially abandoned.

South Utica Genesee St Vicinity

Facility Reuse

Is there a known plan to market and maintain the property at St. Elizabeth's? Allowing this facility to wain while vacant may impact the overall status of upper Genesee St. Who will maintain the property to insure it is not depreciating and left to become decrepit post abandonment, or when partially abandoned?

Medical Office and Outpatient Facility Locations

Many outpatient facilities and medical offices have located within the St. Elizabeth's area. How much of the surrounding area would be left vacant if there is a general push to move all ancillary medical business downtown?

Downtown Utica Vicinity

Unrealized Potential Cost

The current budget for the hospital proposal does not include water, sewer, gas delivery, or overall infrastructure cost. Who will be expected to pay for these additions to the project if there are overruns or unanticipated issues crop up.

Facility Placement Impact

A blanket statement has been made that there is a need to place medical care within reach of people in socio-economically stressed scenarios. The current proposal and scoping document proposes the construction of an acute care facility with surgical and emergency services. Placing a facility of this type

in the urban core of the greater Utica area may create a situation that the care that is most needed by the population discussed as “in need,” in the MVHS proposal and state legislation, will not be able to receive the clinical and chronic care at the proposed facility.

It is very possible and should be studied that spending 1 billion dollars rearranging the region around a single facility of this design is not addressing the actual needs of this community.

This consideration should be studied regardless of the chosen location.

Traffic and Congestion

The City of Utica is becoming more congested as the municipal center grows. There is more potential for access issues in an urban center. In 2017 Route 12 was closed due to accidents and weather events multiple times, causing Genesee St and Route 5 to become gridlocked. The potential impact of locating our proposed single emergency care facility in this situation must be considered.

Heliport

The heliport specified in the filings is not a helipad. Can a helicopter land within this proximity to buildings, on a ground level, safely? How will people be transported into the facility, considering its placement adjacent to the proposed facility.

Impact of Increased Power Grid Use

The new facility is no longer going to produce its own power. There may be an impact to overall rates and delivery. Has this been studied? This should be included into the overall potential environmental impact.

Financial Impact to City of Utica

The financial impact to the City of Utica is not understood at this point. There are unknown and unspecified costs regarding infrastructure, facility relocations, parking garage costs, and the introduction of a large tax abatement. A long term (5 year, 10 year, and 15 year) outlook should be analyzed and considered. Above and beyond property tax, there will be a loss in sales tax, and increase in services, that should be studied and considered adverse, due to the impact to the City.

All accountable costs, revenue loss, revenue gains, and expenses must be considered.

Financial Impact to City of Utica School District

If the downtown location is chosen, the Utica School District will be losing tax revenue funding.

Financial Impact to County

If the downtown location is chosen, the Oneida County will be losing tax revenue funding.

Financial Impact to City of Utica Library

If the downtown location is chosen, the Utica Library will be losing tax revenue funding.

Impact of loss of Central Business District

The direct cost to the City of Utica in aiding MVHS to build a downtown facility may be greater than the cost to reinvigorate the current tax paying business district through use of the same street scape and façade improvements proven to work on Genesee St and repairing and reutilizing our current parking structures for Hotel and Auditorium needs.

The indirect cost of spending money to reduce the ability to generate tax revenue will spread the direct costs of the MVHS aid from the City and County across the remaining tax paying entities left in the City of Utica, while resulting in a permanent tax abated installation.

Future Expansion: Landlocking

The current proposal calls for a reduced size single location consolidation of our medical delivery system. This is being placed in the center of the City of Utica, landlocking the facility for all future development, while surrounded by privately owned property. This will limit future expansion and should be considered an adverse effect.

Affected Property Owners and Businesses

At this time there have been adverse negative effects imposed on the central business district. MVEdge has stated multiple times that the district could have kept moving forward during the #MVHSDowntown campaign, however, in the case of the new Enterprise Car location, the city, property owners, and Enterprise were all sent correspondence from MVEdge to not develop their property because it will be taken.

This correspondence was prior to the filing of the project with the OCLDC.

Moving forward how will the affected businesses be dealt with. There has not been, to date, clear discussion based on this. The central business district is home to many tax paying businesses as well as not-for-profit community support businesses. The current filings from the OCLDC are stating that PILOT agreements and possible relocation costs will be dependent on job creation.

The potential negative impact is that these businesses themselves are placed in a position of stagnancy and financial impact that they would have otherwise not had to deal with if this proposal was not floated for multiple years prior to its filing.

Infrastructure Cost

The following are not currently specified within the 480million dollars of proposed cost.

- Storm Water Mitigation
- Water Delivery
- Natural Gas Delivery
- Power Delivery

There is a potential negative impact where these costs will fall outside the specified scope, and MVHS will look to the City, County, and State for additional funding.

Regional Land Use and Availability

Empty hospital site issue

The greater Utica area will be left with three empty hospital sites. The state psychiatric facility, St. Elizabeth's, and St. Lukes. Is this scoped proposal the best use of the downtown developable commercial active property, while leaving behind facilities that are currently in use empty, and have no scoped reuse and/or rehabilitation plan.

In exchange for a few empty buildings that have commercial potential downtown we are creating multiple large empty facilities with no current commercial prospects, throughout the region.

Land Availability

Downtown Utica property is becoming a premium. Reducing the available land will increase cost and sellable value, creating a situation where current business and property owners may either not be able to expand in place, or be priced out of their current options. This should be considered part of the scoping of adverse effects.

MVHS Ability to Complete

Financial Plan

At this point the scoping document and proposed project filed with the Oneida County Local Development Corporation does not demonstrate the financial ability to complete the proposed project. There is a potential situation where MVHS may not be able to fund the project fully and may turn to tax payer funding to bail out overruns.

Cost Overrun Planning

The current statement from MVHS CEO Scott Perra, when asked how the project will be dealt with if over budget, was that the project will not go over budget. This is not an adequate answer for a project of any scale.

Overall Facility Impact

The proposed purpose of the facility filed with the OCLDC and scoped within the SEQRA filings is to improve the overall delivery of health care needs in the greater Utica area.

This proposal is consolidating current facilities into one, keeping operational care the same in most areas, and reducing it in others (pediatrics), for example.

Regardless of the chosen location, there is potential negative impact that the proposed facility will not achieve proposed and pitched improvements and not increase our healthcare delivery overall, while at the same time reducing the size of the overall capabilities within the area.