

As a physician raised in Saratoga Springs, I know why Saratoga Hospital seeks to build a medical office center near the hospital campus on Church Street.

We propose building this medical office center to fulfill our mission of providing the best possible healthcare for our region. As a long-time community member, I also know the misinformation circulating about Saratoga Hospital's plan. Allowing mistruths to go unchallenged could undermine a project that offers significant benefits to our community. To support the many members of our community backing this project, the record needs to be set straight.

Here is the truth about some of the misinformation:

- **We have no plans to build 42 houses on the site off Morgan Street.** Saratoga Hospital wants to build a medical office center where doctors treating patients with cancer, heart disease, and other serious conditions could collaborate on care and—in case of an emergency—get to the hospital immediately.
- **The land is not part of the Greenbelt.** It is a 16-acre parcel in a neighborhood that includes single-family homes, apartments and non-hospital-owned medical offices. The Wesley Health Care Center and Skidmore College campuses are nearby. In fact, in the 1980s those opposing the adjoining Birch Run Development argued it was going to ruin the country feel of the area.
- **There is no evidence that a medical office building will negatively impact neighboring property values.** Prices for homes sold since we announced our plans reflected the same levels of growth as other homes in the City. Nearby homes are particularly attractive to medical professionals who want an easy commute and to older residents looking for homes that are convenient to medical care.
- **The review process has been comprehensive and open.** Our parcel is one of 18 recommended for rezoning to align the Saratoga Springs zoning map with the city's Comprehensive Plan, as required by state law. The Comprehensive Plan document states the plan reflects "19 months of much dialogue and discussion including 19 public meetings, four public workshops, a 2-day open house and numerous focus groups." The final decision rests with our City Council.
- **The location has no effect on what we will charge for medical care. However, because the Morgan Street land is within 250 yards of the hospital, it protects our ability to get the enhanced Medicare reimbursement for the care we provide.** Millions of dollars will be lost if we locate the medical office building farther from the hospital. Look to Glens Falls to see the results when a community hospital has financial difficulties in this competitive marketplace.

Much of this misinformation comes from a small group of people who have no experience in managing a hospital system in today's challenging healthcare environment. Saratoga Springs does have community members who understand the critical need for this project, including the administration, physicians, nurses, staff, and Board of Trustees of our Hospital. Please support them.

David Mastrianni, MD, Senior Vice President, Saratoga Hospital Medical Group

