TOPIC FOR WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 21, 2019:

When will construction of the new regional medical center begin? What needs to happen before construction can start?

Our goal is to have a “shovel in the ground” by the end of the year. Here are some of the next steps toward meeting this goal:

**MVHS Ownership of Properties and Preparing for Construction**

Right now, MVHS has “control” of all 20 properties under the new medical center building, and we’ve closed on 85 percent of these properties and have agreements with the other 15 percent.

Construction fences are being put in place to secure properties as the abatement (e.g., removal of hazardous materials such as asbestos) process of those sites begins. Once this process is completed, the buildings will start coming down.

**State Regulatory Process**

Last week, both the New York State Department of Health and the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York (DASNY) issued their Statement of Findings as part of the required State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) process. Both certified that the requirements of the law have been met, that MVHS will “minimize or avoid adverse environmental effects” as much as possible and any unavoidable effects will be addressed appropriately. In its document, DASNY also stated: “The neighborhood is a documented blighted area . . . despite revitalization of surrounding areas over the years, there has been little development in this area for almost 30 years.”

**County and City Approval Processes**

Officials at the County are currently reviewing the MVHS Site Plan for the new medical center for comments and/or suggested actions.

Three City of Utica bodies are engaged in the review of the new regional medical center – the Planning Board, the Zoning Board of Appeals and the Common Council. The Planning Board will be the body to approve the Site Plan. The Zoning Board of Appeals will be deciding on variances necessary for the medical center to be built as designed. The Common Council is considering the discontinuance of both Sayres Alley and parts of Cornelia Street for the new medical center and will hold a public hearing at its meeting on September 18. It is anticipated that all three bodies will act during their meetings this September.

**Financing Update**

We are awaiting the release of the remaining funding from the Phase Two grant from the State of New York. Last Friday, the Oneida County Local Development Corporation unanimously approved tax exempt bonds of up to $300 million for MVHS, and a mortgage tax exemption if we need to take out a mortgage on the property. Monday night, we received the first major contribution – $250,000 from the Bank of America – toward the building of the new MVHS Regional Medical Center.