

Published July 08, 2008 10:30 pm - About 100 citizens and dignitaries attended a groundbreaking ceremony at the Elizabethtown Community Hospital.

## **E'town Community Hospital holds groundbreaking**

Ground broken for addition, then rehab of old unit

**By ALVIN REINER**

Staff Writer

ELIZABETHTOWN -- The public, planners and political leaders were among 100 who joined in a groundbreaking ceremony Tuesday for Elizabethtown Community Hospital.

Hospital Board Chairman Rick Hoffmann said the addition will "benefit all of us -- our children and their children. You may not think about it every day, but you can appreciate it. We feel it is a very important part of the health-care cycle. It's a huge relief to be taken care of in a short period of time."

Hoffmann could not say enough about the staff and their enthusiasm.

"Our journey began six years ago in creating a facility master plan," said hospital CEO Rod Boula. "Now the project is a reality, not just a pipe dream."

He pointed out that the energy efficiency will save \$40,000 the first year.

Boula made a reverse analogy to the "Field of Dreams" quote, saying, "They will come, so let's build it."

Jamie Paul Clark, a major financial supporter, expressed his feelings about having been served by the hospital.

"They (the hospital staff) have always shown great compassion. They are an extended family. You don't lose your dignity."

Fundraising efforts are well under way, with \$1,360,000 of the \$2 million goal realized. Much is due to the generosity of \$250,000 from Jamie Paul Clark and Helen Paul Clark and \$68,000 from the employees.

Campaign Committee Co-Chair Nancy Dawson noted that "We have put our trust in the community, and the community provided the support."

Prospective families look at two factors when deciding to live in a community: its school and the hospital, State Sen. Betty Little (R-Queensbury) said.

"Hospitals have changed in the past 20 years, with more day surgery, and this is a responsible addition to health care today. It will provide a family type of atmosphere and will continue to grow."

"This is my home community," emphasized Assemblywoman Teresa Sayward (R-Willsboro). "It's so uplifting to see the outpouring of support for this campaign."

Sayward related how her mother, at the time living in Peru and needing medical help, once said: "Don't take me to that big hospital. Take me to Elizabethtown because they know who I am."

The project has two phases. The first phase of the \$6.7 million addition of 8,400 square feet includes a new emergency room, main entrance, specialty clinics, reconfigured radiology department and VA clinic.

According to Project Manager Matt Nolan the expected completion date is Oct. 1, which is at least three weeks ahead of schedule.

Following this, improvements will be made to the existing facility.

Tours were given Tuesday to show the progress and where each of the new rooms is being located.

Guests, employees and construction Workers were encouraged to sign a wall as a historical memento of those who attended the groundbreaking.



Project Manager Matt Nolan narrates one of several tours of the addition to Elizabethtown Community Hospital. All of the visitors are in OSHA compliance with hard hats and safety glasses.  
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