

## Saint Mary's eyes borough

### Medical building could be part of Naugatuck revitalization

BY PAUL SINGLEY

REPUBLICAN-AMERICAN

NAUGATUCK — Saint Mary's Hospital of Waterbury will consider building a new medical facility downtown as part of the Renaissance Place revitalization project, the hospital announced Thursday.

The hospital will work with Renaissance Place developer Alexius C. Conroy of the Fairfield- based Conroy Development Co. to develop what Conroy called a major medical building that would be an anchor of the revitalization project.

Saint Mary's plans to consider relocating physician offices and its Health and Wellness Center, currently located on New Haven Road, into the yetto- be-developed Renaissance Place project. The current center on New Haven Road in Crosspointe Plaza offers walkin care for non-emergency illnesses and injuries, outpatient physical therapy services, and laboratory testing and X-ray services. The hospital said it might introduce other services to a new facility.

Michael O'Connor, vice president of operations for Conroy Development, said he anticipates that current services will be rolled into the new facility. "And we anticipate it will be much more than that as well," he said.

He said the development company, the hospital and Naugatuck officials will discuss community and business needs before proposing a detailed plan. He said he will also seek input from the community.

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## BUILD:

### Parc el C is the likely location

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Mayor Robert A. Mezzo said there has been no decision yet on where the facility would be developed. However, it appears that Parcel C, a vacant lot on the corner of Maple and Water streets, is the likely location.

"I wouldn't see why Parcel C wouldn't be an option," Mezzo said. "It's a valuable piece of flat land, it has access to the highway and the rail system, and despite some recent setbacks, it will ultimately be completely clean (of underground contaminants) in a relatively short period of time."

Setbacks to cleaning up the former industrial property were revealed this week when the borough learned the state Department of Environmental Protection does not approve of Naugatuck's initial plan to clean contaminants from Parcel C. The \$1.4 million cleanup may now take more than the anticipated four months and could cost an additional \$30,000, borough officials said.

Mezzo said he believes the building will be much more than a movement of the walk-in center from New Haven Road. He believes it will incorporate more medical facilities as well as a retail component where stores would be placed below medical offices. Those types of buildings are what Conroy has planned all along for the \$710 million, four-phase Renaissance Place project. Mezzo believes Thursday's news is evidence that the project will be built. "It shows that even in these drastic economic times, the project is moving forward and has generated significant interest from very reputable parties," he said. "I seriously doubt Saint Mary's would be involved if they didn't believe in Renaissance Place."

The original first phase of Renaissance Place called for \$152 million of private investments for condominiums, offices, stores, a movie theater and other projects on the current site of General DataComm at 6 Rubber Ave. Conroy is working to strike a deal to purchase that property and says that plan will still go forward.

Mezzo said the development agreement the borough signed with Conroy gives the developer first rights to build on any borough-owned property within the 60-acre development district for downtown. The borough owns the 2.2-acre Parcel C lot.

The borough also has plans for a satellite facility for Seven Angels Theatre on another section of Parcel C. That building would include town meeting space and a museum for the Naugatuck Historical Society.

Mezzo said he would not know what kind of tax revenue the project would bring to Naugatuck until final plans are submitted. He believes the tax revenue, as well as the draw to Naugatuck, will have a significant impact. Neither he nor Conroy had a timetable for development.

Conroy said the medical facility will "draw patients from an extensive region who will become potential customers and patrons at restaurants and retailers in Naugatuck."

Chad W. Wable, president and chief executive officer of Saint Mary's Health System, said the system looks forward to the potential opportunity to expand and enhance health care services at Renaissance Place.

Marco Nardelli, co-owner of Nardelli's Grinder Shoppe on Maple Street, across from Parcel C, said he believes the health facility will be good for the business climate downtown. "It's been such an eyesore for so long that I think anything on Parcel C is good," he said. "I think this can be a draw for all businesses, including retail."

The Conroy Development Co. will meet with the joint boards of mayor and burgesses and finance at 7 p.m. Monday at Town Hall to discuss updates on the project as well as the new proposal.

*What do you think of the Saint Mary's plan? Post your comments on this story at [www.rep-am.com](http://www.rep-am.com).*