

**Maplewood Nursing Home
Delegation Sub-Committee Public Hearing
June 8, 2016
Sullivan, NH**

Present: Rep. Dan Eaton, Delegation Chairman; Rep. John Mann, Subcommittee Chairperson; Rep. Tim Robertson, Rep. Gladys Johnsen, Rep. Richard Ames

County Commissioners and Staff: Stillman Rogers and County Commissioner Charles Weed, County Administrator, Chris Coates, Sheryl Trombly, County Finance Director, and Maplewood Administrator Kathryn Kindopp.

This public hearing was well-attended by a number of Sullivan residents as well as others from around Cheshire County who are interested in understanding the nursing care offered in our county and it will be served in the future.

Rep. Eaton introduced the officials present and presented the subcommittees challenges and the options that have grown out of the studies that were done. He welcomed those in attendance and encouraged them to offer their thoughts and questions and to view closely the schematics of various options under consideration. The public hearings are necessary as means for the subcommittee to hear from citizens. Information gained here will be taken into account with what has been learned from the architects and developers, visits to actual facilities, and extensive studies and discussions. The subcommittee will deliver their findings and favored option to the Executive Committee of the Delegation and the County Delegation. Through all of these considerations a decision for the future of Maplewood Nursing Home will be made by a vote of the Cheshire County Delegation.

Rep. Mann explained that while Maplewood has a great reputation there are problems, for instance: compromised plumbing, lack of electrical capability, inadequate bathroom facilities and resident rooms, loud speakers, air conditioning, all of which need attention.

He mentioned that a Task Force had studied the facility and had made a 2014 recommendation of building a new Green House method facility. The County Delegation accepted that recommendation as 'informational only' and from the 2014 elected Delegation the current subcommittee was formed to further consider the Green House and other options. These six options are displayed in blueprint form on easels for viewing.

Rep. Mann explained each. He also explained a summary of the numbers showing the expense of each option. This was available in handout form to those present.

A Sullivan resident asked were about the land the county owns in Westmoreland. It was noted by Rep. Eaton that not all of that land belongs to the Maplewood campus. He further described the farm buildings, the area of the previous jail, the woodlands, etc. He noted that 5 acres have been carved out for sale.

Another Sullivan resident inquired as to the impact of a change at Maplewood in the 'return' or benefit to the current residents of Maplewood. Kathryn Kindopp pointed out that a change in

the bathroom ratio of 4:1 currently existing, to private baths would greatly decrease the incident of infection in the instance of neuro-virus, for example.

Another question was asked about the number of beds that might be needed in future possibly exceeding 150, but that number is per current NH law. Rep. Eaton commented that with the emphasis that is now on home care he doesn't expect the number to change.

A Sullivan resident also asked about the needed upgrades that were listed in some of the handouts as to what and why the need. There were discussions as to the obvious deferred maintenance having lent to the problems that exist. It was noted that there were needs as for elevators, generators, air units, replacement of doors, dishwashers, etc. and that most of these are not the everyday, residential quality or size, thus are more expensive.

There were other questions relating to energy efficiency, solar energy usage, location, water and sewage disposal costs, and projected costs. There was discussion about the possible loss of Assisted Living facility that is adjacent to the Nursing Home in Westmoreland and the question of what to do with the current structure for which upkeep is estimated to run at \$350,000.00 to \$400,000.00 per year if it is standing vacant.

It was mentioned that the county has looked into possible sale of the Maplewood facility to various entities, one of whom was the Veterans' Association to serve VT, MA and NH, Drug Rehabilitation Facility, etc. It is a valuable property and there has been some positive feedback. The question surfaced again as to the county's responsibility to provide nursing care to which Eaton explained the cost of our responsibility to provide such care outside our own facility would outweigh the income for selling our 150 bed allotment.

Administrator Coates added that patients or residents would then be forced to live outside the county community in some cases.

Earl Anderson, of Surry, asked why there was \$1,500,000.00 noted against the cost of building in a Keene location (Item#9) but not in another location. Sheryl Trombly, Finance Director, replied that this applied to MEDC's involvement in the development.

There was discussion related to staffing numbers in the various options and the training required to provide "universal workers" with a worker to patient ratio as 1:5, as well as the ability to hire those for the universal care model wherein one caretaker does a variety of jobs in addition to nursing care. Rep. Eaton replied that this is a valid question and that the Green House method which trains the universal care model also comes with a franchise fee and an annual fee.

Other discussion centered on New Market Tax Credits and how much that would or would not benefit the county when weighed against other options. There was a discussion, basically of varied opinions, about the bridge in Westmoreland.

Earl Anderson, a Surry resident, made available to the County Administrator and others copies of a list of possible public hearing considerations he had compiled from research and the meetings of the subcommittee which he attended.

Representatives Eaton and Mann thanked the citizens for having attended. The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

The next Public Hearing will be on June 15, in Westmoreland School, at 6:30PM.