University, hospital continue talks on donated land

BY JIM KELLY
THE CHRONICLE-JOURNAL

Contrary to media reports earlier this week, there is no snag in negotiations between Lakehead University and Thunder Bay Regional Hospital over a piece of land for the proposed new hospital.

“We are discussing the land transfer with Lakehead University and there is no dispute as far as I know,” said TBRH president and chief executive officer Ron Saddington.

LU has donated a 24-hectare section of property north of the university on Oliver Road to TBRH. This land will be the site of the new acute care regional hospital.

Representatives of LU and TBRH held a meeting Thursday to discuss the land transfer.

“The meeting allowed us to continue ongoing discussions,” said LU president Fred Gilbert.

“We’re in general agreement,” he said. “We’re putting together details to consummate an agreement.”

Saddington said both institutions have come together for the common good of LU and TBRH as well as the community.

Gilbert said the agreement could be finalized by this fall.

The hospital still does not have the go-ahead to proceed with plans for the hospital from the Ministry of Health.

The ministry is currently reviewing the hospital’s business plan for the new facility.

Once completed, the Health Services Restructuring Commission must change its directives of October 1996 that all acute care services be consolidated on the Regional’s Port Arthur site.

A HSRC spokesman said recently the commission has received no documents from the ministry on the Thunder Bay hospital.

He refused to estimate how long it would be before a final decision is reached.
University, hospital reach land deal

BY JIM KELLY
THE CHRONICLE JOURNAL

Lakehead University and the Thunder Bay Regional Health and Hospital board have reached an agreement on the purchase of land for the proposed regional acute care hospital.

Hospital board chairman Don Caddo said the deal will be signed in the coming weeks. The site of the new hospital is in the hands of the Health Services Infrastructure Corporation but it's expected the HSCC will give its blessing to the $120 million project.

Caddo said the successful bidder for the construction manager will be named in the coming months. The project manager will supervise the entire project and will be responsible for the construction process for the new hospital.

The province does not have to pay the construction manager, in fact, a Nova Scotia firm, Deloitte Parry, has been hired to do the architectural work.

The province has awarded the project to Charmaine, a company which is expected to be named in the coming months. One of the companies that has been named in the coming months is Charmaine.

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Another piece of hospital in place

Lakehead University, Regional have land agreement for new facility

By Dave Lambers

The Chronicle-Journal

Lakehead University confirmed Wednesday it will donate a 21-hectare chunk of land for a new acute-care hospital.

The value of the land is estimated at $3 million.

"This is a very significant development for the future of the city," Thunder Bay Regional Hospital president Ron Saddlington said at a news conference Wednesday.

"The generosity that the university has shown is indeed remarkable," Saddlington said before a news conference at the university's Administration Building.

The site for a new hospital could be cleared before winter, says the president of Thunder Bay Regional Hospital.

Saddlington said the university will donate the site to the hospital.

"The land is north of Oliver Road and east of Golf Links Road just south of the River Terrace housing subdivision." Saddlington said.

In return, the university expects to benefit from the development.

"We have reserved some interest in some of the commercial opportunities that might accrue on that land base," Saddlington said.

The hospital will be built on the land, he said.

"It's a good trade off," Saddlington said.

Saddlington said it's too early to say what kind of partnerships might be formed between the hospital and the university.

He suggested a "hospital campus" could be established to share information and telephone systems.

He added a "trust relationship" between the hospital and the university will determine what will happen on the property.

"That was a basic tenet of the agreement," Saddlington said.

He said the hospital also wants to establish a link with Confederation College and other Northern health centres.

The Ministry of Health has given its blessing to the proposed hospital and its business plan.

But before the estimated $125-million project can go ahead, it must be approved by the province's Health Services Restructuring Commission.

"The commission is deliberating," Saddlington said.

"It's anybody's guess what further deliberations they require." Saddlington said.

The commission had directed that Thunder Bay Regional Hospital Port Arthur become the single acute-care hospital in the city.

Regional's hospital board has stuck to its stance that a new, centrally-located hospital is the better option.

Health Minister Elizabeth Witmer just this month approved the business plan for a new hospital.

Saddlington said the foundation for the hospital could be poured as early as the spring.
LU turns over land

BY DIANNE GOULIGER

The Thunder Bay Regional Hospital officially has a home. A 24-hectare parcel of land, worth about $3 million, was turned over to TBRH President and Chief Executive Officer Ron Saddington by Lakehead University President Dr. Fred Gilbert, Sept. 30.

The transfer means the city is one step closer to creating an “excellent care facility” that will encourage academic advancement in the health sciences area, Gilbert said.

“The generosity the University has shown us is indeed remarkable,” Saddington said.

Gilbert said the conditions of the deal include a joint venture arrangement, meaning both organizations “will share equally in any returns.

The University has retained some interest in terms of commercial opportunities, and therefore there will be cross-refer-
Construction may start in spring

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sentation on any and all boards formed, Saddington added. There will be a “trusting, open relationship” between the two institutions that will jointly discuss and determine “what will happen on that property before it happens.”

Saddington said the deal is advantageous because it involves another public institution. The hospital would also like to create a link with Confederation and other health services agencies in the North.

“A year ago the nay-sayers of this community were having a hay-day,” Mayor Ken Boshcoff said of skeptics who didn’t believe the $126-million project would ever become a reality.

But Saddington said he is hopeful the hospital will get the go-ahead from the province’s Health Services Restructuring Committee to begin clearing the land this fall, with the foundation being put in sometime in the spring of 1999.
LU, hospital deal under wraps

BY JIM KELLY
THE CHRONICLE-JOURNAL

Neither Thunder Bay Regional Hospital nor Lakehead University are revealing any details about a partnership agreement on land for the proposed $126 million regional acute care hospital.

LU donated the 60 acres of land north of Oliver Road just south of the River Terrace development.

"We've agreed that if other activities (are located there), unrelated to the hospital, we would discuss these with LU and determine if it's appropriate to have them on that site," said hospital president and chief executive officer Ron Saddington.

He said recent negotiations between LU and the hospital took place because LU wanted to determine what the hospital's intentions were.

There were rumours that commercial developments such as a hotel would also be on the property, but Saddington denied this.

LU president Fred Gilbert said it was premature to discuss what other activities would be located on the site.

Former LU president Bob Rosehart said that when the university board of governors were looking at the land issue, they envisioned a partnership with the hospital.

"We looked at a simple-minded concept that was ideal geographically for the city and an association of programs between the two," Rosehart said in an interview from Kitchener-Waterloo where he is president of Sir Wilfred Laurier University.

"We were looking at a development opportunity that fit the hospital and LU."
New hospital should incorporate site's natural assets, says professor

"I don't know how many other universities that can equal the uniqueness of this one," said Puk, referring to the trees and wildlife on campus — specifically in the area east of Golf Links Road and north of Oliver Road that has been allotted for the hospital. The land contains a family of beavers, a stream with fish and features scarce species of trees. The professor said these are rock formations ranging from 10,000 to two billion years old.

"Everyone talks about LU achieving the status of a tier one university but I think we are actually becoming less of a tier one university because we're giving up the unique academic opportunities this land provides," said Puk.

He said he understands that "tough decisions" have to be made but said expected there would at least be the opportunity to comment.

"This project will be about where the hospital will go," Pauwells said in an interview from Toronto.

"It's not about tearing everything down and re-creating it. We have to take advantage of what's already there." He said he would like to see some of the trees and streams preserved, but said driving out some wildlife is inevitable.

"There are pros and cons to every project," Pauwells said, "and there is a fine balance that must be reached between the environment and a new facility to take care of the community."
Professor threatens legal action over hospital site

BY JIM KELLY
THE CHRONICLE-JOURNAL

A Lakehead University professor says legal action is a possibility in stopping construction of a new hospital on LLU land the campus was allocated for expansion of Aboriginal programs.

Donald McPherson, a visiting professor of Indigenous studies, said he attended meetings with former LLU president Bob Rashbush in the early 1990s discussing building a facility housing research, criteria and residence for upwards of 200 students.

McPherson said Rospach was in full agreement with the project. "He told me open a new hospital." McPherson said the centre would be an international attraction for native students.

The proposed regional acute care hospital is about 10 to 15 hectares of the land north of Effort Road and west of Left Licks Road north of the River Terrace housing development.

The land was donated by LLU to Thunder Bay Regional Hospital. The university entered into a joint agreement with the hospital for certain potential commercial developments on the land.

Rospach denied being aware of the aboriginal project.

"That's not the situation but no comment will be made," Rospach said in an interview from Wilfrid Laurier University, where he is president.

"I went to a meeting but this aboriginal centre was merely a concept." Rospach said there was an endorsement by a university board of governors recommending the land along Robinson Street for an aboriginal centre.

"It was nothing more than a concept" Gilbert said.

"There are no grounds for a lawsuit because LLU didn't take formal action on the proposal," he said.

He said a final decision to put the initiative on the ground would be passed at the annual general meeting in March. Gilbert said the aboriginal centre concept could be revitalized through the LLU strategic planning process as long as the centre is not used for hospital land.