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## **\$125M pediatric center, 750 jobs coming to Yonkers**

BY JOHN GOLDEN

A specialty pediatric center relocating from Manhattan will bring about 750 permanent jobs to Westchester County when it opens a new \$125 million facility in Yonkers in 2011.

Officials at Elizabeth Seton Pediatric Center plan to break ground in July at the South Westchester Executive Park for a 137-bed pediatric long-term nursing facility and affiliated school. The Yonkers Planning Board recently approved the site plan for the project, designed by Perkins Eastman Architects P.C.

The general contractor, Andron Construction Corp. of Goldens Bridge, will erect a four-story, 165,000-square-foot center for medical, nursing, rehabilitative, palliative care, educational and home-care services on a 6.5-acre site owned by Elmsford-based Robert Martin Company L.L.C. Most of the 140-acre corporate park is owned by Mack-Cali Realty Corp. The facility will be built according to the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Environmental and Energy Design standards. The project is expected to employ 150 to 200 construction workers.

Founded and sponsored by the Sisters of Charity of New York, the nonprofit Seton center serves children with complex medical diagnoses and disabilities from birth through age 21. Primarily serving low-income Medicaid recipients in New York City and Westchester, it is one of only two pediatric nursing facilities in downstate New

York and the only one approved to offer services to ventilator-dependent children.

Seton Pediatric Center CEO Patricia A. Tursi in a prepared statement said city officials' approvals for the project "mark a critical milestone in our journey to establish a permanent home for the pediatric center." She said city officials and the Yonkers community, especially members of the Nepera Park-Grey Oak Neighborhood Association, "have not only embraced our vision for this needed pediatric center, but have already embraced us as neighbors."

The center, which includes a John A. Coleman School for residents, must vacate by 2012 the 90,000 square feet of space it leases at 590 Avenue of the Americas in Chelsea. The Yonkers site was chosen after a two-year search in Manhattan and the outer boroughs.

The 137-bed inpatient center will be organized into six "neighborhoods" and a 15-classroom school for resident children. Other features will include occupational, speech and physical therapy suites; dining, play, and family rooms; an aquatic therapy center, a gymnasium, music and art rooms, outdoor play areas and therapy gardens. Tursi said the new center's design "will be a dramatic improvement over our current space limitations."

Seton Pediatric Center officials changed initial

plans to relocate the center's John A. Coleman School in White Plains to the new Yonkers facility. That school, which currently serves about 150 children, will remain on the North Street campus of the former St. Agnes Hospital, Jane M. Boyle, the center's executive director of development, said last week.

To contain project costs now estimated at \$125 million, center officials also have shelved plans to build assisted-living apartments for retired members of the Sisters of Charity, who would work with the medically fragile children in an innovative intergenerational program. "As the money becomes available, that would be something that we would ultimately love to do," Boyle said.

The project will be financed through a bond issue for some \$100 million insured by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development, with the balance raised through

contributions. The center's capital campaign, "Let Us Build a House," has raised about \$1.5 million since its launch in late 2008. "We have a lot to go," said Boyle.

The capital campaign is headed by attorney William F. Harrington, partner and managing chairman at Bleakley Platt & Schmidt L.L.P. in White Plains.

The Seton Pediatric Center is scheduled to open in Yonkers in spring 2011. With current employees from the metropolitan area expected to relocate with the center, "Right now our HR people are looking at a lot of alternatives for how we can expedite our people getting to Yonkers," Boyle said.

With the 2011 opening, "At the end of the day, this will mean there will be about 750 jobs in Westchester County for this organization," she said.