

# MLA concerned over health centre location

## Groenewegen confident services will remain the same

**KRISTEN CAMPBELL**  
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Hay River South MLA Jane Groenewegen has a couple of concerns about the new health centre proposed for the town, but not when it comes to the services offered.

Instead, Groenewegen has a serious concern about the location chosen for the health centre in the Sundog commercial area across Highway 2 from the Super A grocery store.

"I've never supported the current location of the new facility," she said. "I've had doubts about readiness from a drainage perspective. I have concerns about the train tracks if use of train service increases from economic activity. But the Town of Hay River really wanted the hospital development to be there as the anchor development that would bring services into that area, to which they are hoping to attract more development."

Groenewegen said she would have preferred to see the Department of Environ-

ment and Natural Resources site on the east side of the highway used for the new facility.

Before the health centre begins to take a physical form, a public hearing will be held to allow people to learn more information and have their questions answered.

"The public meeting will be in June after session (of the legislative assembly)," said Groenewegen. "I hope people will attend to express their opinions, but I also hope that people will hear the presentation first so that they can provide feedback from the most informed position possible."

The MLA is confident the same services will be offered to Hay River resident in the new facility.

Groenewegen and Hay River North MLA Robert Bouchard have been involved in meetings with officials from the Department of Health and Social Services and Groenewegen said it is her understanding there

will be some changes.

"I believe that some of the administrative services may not all fit into the new facility," she said. "I know it is not government policy any longer to include long-term-care beds in a 'hospital setting' so we definitely have some work ahead in the next three-year window to see how we will retain the 10 long-term-care beds, and even additional capacity before the new facility goes on stream."

Groenewegen noted a modern health facility will benefit the town when it comes to attracting healthcare professionals at all levels.

"I would like to see mid-wifery come to Hay River, but the success of that service depends largely on the complement of other professionals we have as backup should anything unforeseen happen," she said.

"I think we've had some great nurse-practitioners in Hay River and I would like to see that service continued and enhanced."



Jane Groenewegen



CO

Kim Rapati of Ecology North composting promotional event at the Hay River Health Centre. The project was a success for the town of Hay River to encourage green composters were sold during the event.

Advertisement for Relay For Life / Relais Pour la Vie. It features a photo of a pizza, the Relay For Life logo, and the slogan "POWER TO THE PEOPLE".

THE HAY RIVER

**Subject:** Fw: Hub - health centre  
**From:** Jane Groenewegen (janegroenewegen04@yahoo.ca)  
**To:** janemla@yahoo.com;  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 30, 2012 10:28 AM

----- Forwarded Message -----

**From:** Jane Groenewegen <janegroenewegen04@yahoo.ca>  
**To:** Editor <editor@hayriverhub.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, May 25, 2012 8:51:29 AM  
**Subject:** Re: Hub - health centre

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**From:** Editor <editor@hayriverhub.com>  
**To:** janegroenewegen04@yahoo.ca  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 24, 2012 2:35:10 PM  
**Subject:** Re: Hub - health centre

Hey Jane -

Just the one sentence came through on that e-mail. Not too sure what happened there. Would you be able to resend? Thanks so much! Have a great rest of your Thursday.

KC

On 2012-05-23, at 10:59 AM, janegroenewegen04@yahoo.ca wrote:

> Yes, I have been in meetings with public works and  
> Sent wirelessly from my BlackBerry device on the Bell network.  
> Envoyé sans fil par mon terminal mobile BlackBerry sur le réseau de Bell.

>

> -----Original Message-----

> From: Editor <editor@hayriverhub.com>  
> Date: Wed, 23 May 2012 10:57:20  
> To: Jane Groenewegen<janegroenewegen04@yahoo.ca>  
> Subject: Hub - health centre

>

> Hi Jane,

>

> Sorry about all the confusion. Let's try this again.

>

> I would love to get your input on the health centre.

>

> Firstly, have you been involved in any of the meetings with the Department of Health and Social Services?

Yes, Robert Bouchard and I had a meeting with senior government officials with the depts of Health and Public Works to discuss this project for Hay River recently.

>

> What are your thoughts on the new facility? Do you believe that there is a risk of services and/or jobs being cut or are you feeling confident that the same services will be offered? And how do you feel about the location? (If you are willing to disclose that)

I am confident that the same services will be offered in Hay River. I believe that some of the administrative services may not all fit into the new facility, I know it is not government policy any longer to include long term care beds in a "hospital setting" so we definitely have some work ahead in the next 3 year window to see how we will retain the 10 long term care beds and even additional capacity before the new facility goes on stream.

I never supported the current location of the new facility. I've had doubts about readiness from a drainage perspective, I have concerns about the train tracks if use of train service increases from economic activity, but the Town of Hay River really wanted the hospital development to be there as the anchor development that would bring services into that area, to which they are hoping to attract more development. The Dept. of was respectful of the Town of Hay River's desire to locate it at the planned site, and with the competition for so many capital infrastructure needs, to drag out the location question any longer would have risked the commitment of the funding for the new facility. For a key piece of infrastructure such as this, that will be around and serve us for so many years to come, I would have preferred the ENR Forestry site on the east side of the Highway, but that's really not relevant now.

> Do you think a new facility will help attract doctors to come to the North? Do you see full-time doctors in Hay River's future?

I think it's good to have a modern facility for attracting all health care professionals but I don't think that anything about our current hospital has been a deterrent to doctors practicing there. I would like to say there will be full time doctors in Hay River's future and I know the Health Authority and Health Department are working very hard on creative solutions, but I think that a lot of small towns in Canada are up against the same challenges recruiting physicians. In the absence of resident physicians, the next best solution is a rotation of returning locums for continuity.

>

> Are there any services you would like to see offered at this new facility that are not available or in use at H.H. Williams currently?

I would like to see midwifery come to Hay River, but the success of that service depends largely on the compliment of other professionals we have as back up should anything unforeseen happen. I think we've had some great nurse practitioners in Hay River and I would like to see that service continued and enhanced. There are so many things in the spectrum of health services that nurse practitioners can provide. I would also like to see better coordination of pre op bloodwork so patients don't have to go to YK on a Friday for lab work for surgery booked for a Monday. It's stressful and it's expensive.

>

> Any word on when this public meeting will be? If so, do you think people should be attending? And why or why not?

The public meeting will be in June after session. I hope people will attend to express their opinions, but I also hope that people will hear the presentation first so that they can provide feedback from the most informed position possible.

>

> Thanks Jane!

> Any other comment you would like to provide would be greatly appreciated!

>

> Have a great day!

>

> KC