

## **Lutheran General expansion passes first state hurdle**

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The Illinois Health Facilities Planning Board voted this week to allow Advocate Lutheran General Hospital in Park Ridge to proceed with the construction of a \$239 million bed tower. The project still needs final approval from the Park Ridge City Council, which is expected to occur on Nov. 7.

The Planning Board's approval came with a condition that Advocate Health Care provide a strategy for how it plans to invest money in its other facilities, located within the city of Chicago and several suburbs.

Such a plan was requested by several Chicago community groups and representatives from the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) during a public hearing on the Lutheran General project on Oct. 6.

"We're quite pleased with the decision," said Vasyi Markus of the SEIU's Hospital Accountability Project. "I think it's a victory because this is the first time Advocate will be forced to show investment plans for underprivileged communities."

Tony Mitchell, spokesperson for Advocate Health Care, said Advocate will sit down with the Planning Board very soon to talk about future capital plans for its hospitals.

"It's something we readily agreed to do," he said.

The Lutheran General bed tower project will consist of 192 rooms with a state-of-the-art cancer unit, mother-baby unit, treatment area for neurology/stroke, general surgical and medical patients, and two stories devoted to advanced care of critically ill adults and children.

Advocate Health Care also operates Lutheran General Children's Hospital in Park Ridge; Bethany and Trinity hospitals and Illinois Masonic Medical Center, Chicago; Good Samaritan Hospital, Downers Grove; Good Shepherd Hospital, Barrington; Christ Medical Center and Hope Children's Hospital, Oak Lawn; and South Suburban Hospital, Hazel Crest.