

Johnstown Residential Facility to Reopen with Helio Health

By Todd R. McAdam



Helio Health plans a \$2 million project to re-open this residential care facility on North Perry Street in Johnstown for 14 patients to stay for three to four months at a time.

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JOHNSTOWN — The Johnstown Planning Board will have a public hearing Sept. 1 on a \$2 million plan to re-open a short-term residential facility for people with mental health issues, following a presentation Tuesday by owner Helio Health.

Helio Health plans a two-story, 2,100-square-foot addition to its 7,300-square-foot facility at 462 N. Perry St., plus renovations throughout, allowing it to reopen a facility closed in 2024.

It would also increase capacity to 14 residents from about a dozen and create 20 jobs, mostly nurses and clinicians, said Duane Miller, vice president of the capital region for Syracuse-based Helio Health.

“This is very similar to how it’s been used for years,” Miller said. “A lot of the space we’re adding is for support space for the staff.”

Among the proposed improvements:

- New bathrooms.
- Re-configured bedrooms, living areas, kitchen and offices.
- A new sprinkler system.
- A new roof, siding, windows and doors.
- New interior and exterior lighting.

- A new ramp to improve accessibility for people with disabilities.
- The demolition of much of an old garage, to be replaced by additional parking.

Some of the bedrooms during the building's prior tenure as a residential facility were double-occupancy, giving it room for about a dozen. Enough bedrooms will be added to create 14 single-occupancy rooms for residents expected to stay three to four months.

"It's a 100% upgrade to the building," project manager Mark Lisberg told the planning board.

The building is down the street from Helio Health's [Friendship Lodge](#) at 507 N. Perry St., a three-story, 64-unit, 65,000-square-foot affordable and supportive apartment complex on 34 acres. It includes 30 units of affordable housing, 22 units of housing for people in need of supportive services and 12 treatment apartments. Residency in all apartments is limited to households having moderate to low income.

Construction on the facility began in 2021, with it opening in 2022. Part of the plan then was to close the 12-resident facility at 462 N. Perry St.

However, the plan was always to reopen 462 N. Perry, Miller said, but funding from the state Office of Mental Health was delayed as program standards changed. "We know there are some folks who need it," he said after the planning board meeting.

Helio Health also opened a [drug treatment facility](#) in June in Gloversville. The clinic provides treatment for three methadone patients and 11 others in outpatient programs. The clinic is expected to take on an additional 70 patients now receiving treatment at an outpatient center run by St. Mary's Healthcare in Montgomery County.

The planning board seeks to declare itself the lead agency for a State Environmental Quality Review, although Helio Health has already begun a SEQR short form. The only non-compliance issue is that the building's face is too close to the street.

"The front yard is an existing non-compliance from the 1890s, so there's not much you can do about that," Lisberg said.

"It was a beautiful old house and it's got great bones," Miller said.

If approved, the facility would probably re-open about the middle of 2027, Miller and Lisberg said.