

Condemnation challenged

The owners of B&B Holdings LLC say they won't be forced from their land.

By Jeff Sturgeon

jeff.sturgeon@roanoke.com
981-3251

Roanokers looking for something bold and prosperous to emerge from the taxpayer-subsidized business-park initiative on Jefferson Street are drawn to the impressive steel structure of Carilion Clinic's new physician services building.

Beside it is an expansive parking garage that foreshadows the place becoming a new, regional hub for same-day medical care in coming years.

But just down the street, a different side of the development story is unfolding.

It's a condemnation battle over two small lots amounting to about three acres of 26 acres earmarked as the business park's primary footprint.

The case represents the first time since the business-park project began in 2001 that authorities are known to have exerted legal force against an



JEANNA DUERSCHERL | The Roanoke Times

Jay Burkholder (from left), Stephanie Burkholder and Brad Allen stand in the warehouse of their flooring company Surfaces. Roanoke officials are trying to condemn their private land to complete the biomedical park.

affected property owner. All the other business owners — more than 15, in all — gave up their land for the plan.

In 2001, the Roanoke City Council and the Roanoke Redevelopment and Housing Authority mapped a 110-acre area around South Jefferson Street and Reserve Avenue and adjacent properties for redevelopment

— either new structures or adaptive reuse of existing structures.

Officials said 74 percent of the designated area was blighted and deteriorated or improperly developed, or both. Officials envisioned a wave of private development revamping the

See CONDEMNATION, 3