

**Community Meeting on Holy Family Development**  
**Meeting Notes**  
**9/14/2021, 6 p.m. by Zoom**

Approximately 50 people in attendance.

**1. Community process & ground rules** were reviewed by Dave Breingan from Lawrenceville United and Lauren Byrne Connelly from Lawrenceville Corporation. The purpose of this meeting is to provide an update on the Holy Family redevelopment and specifically to focus on the treatment of the exterior of the preserved church. History of the site was shared going back to May 2012 when the first community meetings were held with E Properties regarding Holy Family. Emeka Onwugbenu from E Properties & Development and his development team were introduced.

**2. Presentation from the project team**

Emeka Onwugbenu of E Properties & Development provided a brief overview of history and other work in Lawrenceville. Been an active member of the community with office in Lawrenceville and excited to be here and advancing the project.

Ryan Indovina, architect for Indovina Associates.

- Walked through the site plans, including the 3 separate phases.
- Phase 1 & 2 occupies just school and parking lot.
  - Phase 1 would complete, then Phase 2.
- Phase 3 occupies the Church - and town homes.
- No direct access off of the streets, but all accessed off of the private road and access within the site to the garages.
- Overview of Type A, B units.
- Aesthetics of the buildings have been altered: wanted to take into account the more federal townhome styles in the neighborhood. Will include masonry, looking at vertical siding. Large windows on all three floors. Setback of top floor.

Church Building:

- Looking to make best use of existing architecture.
- Lower level: partially below grade along 43rd Street. Bulk of sanctuary are in elevated slab condition, but there is full below grade where the community hall space was. On the floor - looking at 13 internal parking spaces within that community hall. Will be providing elevator access and fire egress stairs. Parking entry would be accessed from internal private roadway from the development and not from 44th or 43rd. Internal bike parking. Storage available.
- Ground level (main space of church): Utilize volume of existing building. Tall building/ Able to occupy two floors within that first zone of the church. Windowless entrance into the vestibule. Would not be impacting that in any way. Will insert new egress there. New condo units will be accessed off of central corridor evenly down the center of the church.

- Second Level: Take advantage of the windows. Interesting opportunities to use side nave arches and columns.
- Third Floor: Sit within what is now the inset portion of the church.
- Bulk of windows on top level will stay the same, but three bays will be extended down to floor level to allow for walk-up balconies.
- 4 new windows introduced within the confines of existing window arrangement, without adding anything too dramatic to alter the building.
- Existing south elevation: facing uphill: Will mirror the window arrangements. Bell tower window arrangements will stay as is. Front/ rear of church: decorative entranceway will stay the same. Current iconography needs to be removed and replaced with limestone panels as per Diocese as condition of sale. Elongating existing windows and increasing with 4 new windows.
- Balcony conditions on 3rd floor and in two bays on 1st and 2nd.

### **3. Q&A with community**

Q from Daniel Kornreich: Timeline and unit counts for each phase?

- Phase 1 - 9 units (townhomes) starting construction this fall. And last 10 months
- Phase 2 - start spring 2022 - 11 townhomes
- Church - 24 units - start spring 2022.

Q from Erica Golebiewski: Major rodent issues along 44th and Summit - can the property be baited?

- Prior to the start of the demolition phase - will look into what more can be done. Extermination was done before that had started.

Q from Daniel Kornreich: What is being done to minimize noise, which is very loud and constant without break while people are still working from home?

- That's something we can look into. Will respect the start and stop time. Today was very loud just b/c of the specific work going on - today was probably the loudest day of the entire project.

Q from Brian Mendelssohn: Thanks for presentation. Improvements look really great. 1st Q: will slate remain on existing church building?

- Yes, will keep it on main roof and side aisle roofs as well as all the projecting detail stuff. Just need to replace anything that's broken at present.

2nd Q: Balconies seem to be the most drastic change to the facade from a historic perspective, in addition to causing disturbance to the side facade. Could you explain, other than the financial aspects, the necessity of those balconies?

- In terms of impact on the upper level, the intention was to keep them in the footprint of that slope so that they're not dramatically altering the visual element on the side aisle and two lower levels. We're widening the windows to more reasonable levels. The main part of our intentions is to articulate the thinnest and most non-impactful railing detail. Current package is flat 2D drawing, looks heavier than the intent is.

3rd Q: on 44th Street, the artistic concrete thing -- the frieze -- will you remove that and replace it with plain concrete?

- Agreement Emeka has with the Diocese is that they want no iconography on non functioning churches. They would like us to take that off and replace with carved limestone with the same panel arrangement. Would look similarly architecturally, but wouldn't have the people on it.

Q from Laura Everhart: 44th is quite a busy street - I live up a few blocks - are there any plans to help with traffic mitigation since the occupants of these homes will also experience the traffic and noise?

- Eliminating existing curb cuts should help.

Q from Bill Carter: Would anyone lose any view of the bell tower? Are units for sale or rentals?

- Units will be for sale condos.
- Will remain as visible as it is now, no impact in terms of pedestrian visibility along 44th or 43rd.

Q from Marc Patti: Brick facades look great! Are there plans to preserve the interior, three murals within the church?

- No, all the religious iconography must be removed.

Q from Brittany Reilly, Preservation Pittsburgh Board Member, live close by in Lawrenceville: Clarification on the removal of the lime stone parcels for religious iconography -- want to clarify that the replacement material will be limestone? And I'm not sure if you said there would be a carved detail -- will they be plain or have detail? In addition to that, the rest of the facade of the historic church, any plans or need for restoration or replacement at the entrance (other than limestone panel) for decorative details and how you will do it?

- Limestone panels: haven't gotten into specific detail whether there's opportunity to be detailed or not. Right now would be set up to be a range of rows of panels and we'd put them back in that arrangement -- would make an interesting pattern with the joints themselves as a baseline. Second part is whether we would do a if materiality variation whether a hammer finish or a smooth finish - open to suggestions and hearing about opportunities for how to deal with that. There's an indented detail as the brick ends and shifts into limestone, so that's a smooth finish -- if we did something that's further articulated in terms of limestone or precast would need to look at it that it would still work with that.
- In terms of the lower level pedestrian elevation of the church entrance: most of the limestone is in great condition, just showing signs of general pollution and weathering. Would need to be cleaned with appropriate masonry cleaners. The doors are messed up so we probably need to replace those regardless. The transom windows above the doors are glass, which I think are OK now. Two arches flanking the doors - one will probably need to be replaced, goal would be to try and restore as much as we can. Would be limited to those items because facade is masonry and is in pretty good shape.

Q from Bruce Chan: Echoing Brittany that the friezes and the historic nature of the structures are really important, hope there's some way to preserve them. 1st Q: The site is in the IZ area in LV, can you confirm how many units will be for sale affordable units?

- Yes - we will have condos and townhomes that will meet IZ - 10% of 45 units. 5 units will be affordable. City still thinking about how to operationalize.

2nd Q: Describe street trees you'll be proposing, what's going on with the curb?

- As part of City requirements, we have to provide street trees every 30 feet where they don't currently exist. There's really nothing on the outside right now, two larger interior trees on the downhill side of the Church. Current intent is to provide 29 new street trees in 3x10 tree pits with larger calipers, plus new internal landscaped trees in the front yard of each unit -- different caliper size, smaller flowering type. General scheme is to provide a great deal of new trees and green it up significantly.

3rd Q: Opportunity to provide some interpretive signage along the street to describe the inclusive and diverse history of what this site was and what it meant to LV?

- Open to this but also have to take into consideration that someone else will be owning and maintaining it, so have to take that into consideration but happy to explore that and open to ideas.

Q from Tim: Reiterating that baiting for rodents is needed. Parking?

- Residents on site will not be eligible for permit parking and to park on the street.
- For construction workers, we have lots of space to park vehicles and do deliveries on the site, not sure why they'd be parking on the street. Regarding no parking signs along 44th for public parking, there will be temporary no parking for demolition and deliveries to get excavators and bigger equipment in. Mostly a few more deliveries left then construction crews should be able to work off the site interior.

Q from LU: Planning Commission date set yet?

- Not yet, should be sometime in October.

**Additional questions/comments that ran out of time on and were answered by project team after meeting:**

- Q: Parking - Residents on site will not be eligible for permit parking and to park on the street, is this correct? Asking for clarification that this goes for residents of the Church as well as townhomes.
  - A: The zoning approval states that residential units shall not be eligible for permit parking.
- Q: Any opportunity to plant even more street trees on 43rd and 44th beyond what is planned?
  - A: We are currently planting a lot more trees than required.
- Q: What is the preliminary name for this development? Will the diocese allow for a "Holy Family" name/recognition? Maybe something that is indicative of what the former site once stood for.
  - A: We do not have a name for the development, but will certainly work on honoring the history of the site/building.

- Thank you for this presentation. As a former member of HF church (and graduate of the school), it will be a pleasure to see the church structure kept mostly intact and the location be put to use.
- Q: What about electrical and water service? How much disruption can we expect once that gets going? I live 43rd & Summit.
  - A: There would be occasional street closure to tap the water/sewer line, otherwise, We do not anticipate any major interruption to electrical and water service
- To the extent you're able/willing, Preservation Pittsburgh would love to remain updated/informed about the historic church facade restorations/detail replacements. Perhaps we can be supportive/helpful. Thank you.
  - A: Noted on Preservation Pittsburgh request, and as a community sensitive developer, we would certainly work with them.
- How similar or dissimilar is the brick masonry of the new units to that of the existing church masonry?
  - A: The bricks are complementary to existing church masonry.
- Thank you for the presentation! These plans look really good and I'm glad to see the church building will still be in place.
- Q: Any idea when we will be able to park on the right side of summit street again? They put up no parking signs on that side a month or two ago
  - A: The school demolition would be complete in about 45 days, and then it would be safe again to park along summit.
- I appreciate this meeting. Thank you for your work on this. For the record, I am supportive of this development. That said, my home is on 45th Street -- so, want to bend to the wishes of this most affected.

#### **4. Closed Door Discussion**

- It's a good plan, I think he's done well, demolition hasn't been too bad and I live right next door. The only thing I want to make sure is that the people who live at this development won't have access to Residential Permit Parking and that it's the entire site.
- I think generally it's an OK design, they are butting up on 43rd and 44th and so that's keeping intact with the general pattern of housing on those hilly streets. My only thought is that this is a church and all our neighborhoods have had a very great legacy of religious structures and that slowly we are losing those structures to development, which makes sense b/c we need to make sure they're not vacant, but is there a way to keep that legacy of religious and community imagery? They said they weren't able to preserve the friezes, which I feel is a very prominent part of the front of the church. Really gives me pause, erasing the imagery. Don't think it's worth stopping the development, but I feel like it's something we could be proud of when this is done -- interpreter's signage, noting history, something we should fight for.
- Agree with previous comment. Frieze is an unnecessary removal. Historic Commission was adamant to keep everything in Catholic property. I get it, the Church hates Church Brew Works and that's where a lot of this comes from. Balcony is a complete unnecessary -- in historic rehab, always a balance between what's necessary and what's

unnecessary b/c you want to do as much as possible -- balconies is pushing it too far. I get lengthening the windows down, but widening is really pushing it for me, and the balconies make the rendering look like an apartment building instead of a cool church conversion. That's my biggest feedback. Glad that the townhomes are trying better, parking in the rear is great, some brick is good. Overall, not bad.

- No parking signs: want to know what the timeline is. LU will follow up (see above).
  - Planning Commission will specifically be looking at the church facade, so that's where we should focus our comments.
- Clarification on affordable for-sale units?
  - LU: 5 units. Similar to Community Land Trust. Home prices would have to be priced affordably for a household earning 80% area median income or less. Gets a little complicated with condos & condo fees, but working with City Planning how to tailor a deed restriction. In terms of the affordability period, it lasts 35 years that starts over if the home is sold within that time frame.