

The Church of St John the Evangelist, Ottawa
February 22, 2004

Sale of the Parking Lot

At the Special Vestry held on February 15, 2004, the sale of the parking lot to Teron Inc., under the terms of the Framework Agreement, was approved with 94 voting in favour and 49 against. Although this was a clear indication to proceed, we are one body and the obvious division of opinion is troubling. Every effort will be made to ensure that those not in favour remain actively involved in all future decision making processes concerning renovations.

On February 17, the Administration and Finance Committee of the Diocese of Ottawa received the report of the Vestry decision and approved the sale of the parking lot to Teron Inc.

ARC believes that we will need an estimated \$2 million to give ourselves a church poised to meet the needs of our ministries for future generations. Experienced fund raisers have advised us that this would be too much for St John's to raise; however, if all conditions are met and the parking lot sale is successfully concluded, St. John's will receive \$1 million towards these renovations.

Renovations

The extensive analyses undertaken by ARC over the past year provide a solid foundation on which to develop our vision. The ministries' needs analysis, consultants' studies, detailed costing, and design developed by Cecilia Humphreys, our architect, in response to ARC, are all important inputs to help the congregation make decisions concerning the renovations.

The original plan, as envisaged by Cecilia, is a beautiful vision. It caused controversy in some of its aspects, and many parishioners felt that a \$5 million renovation was beyond our reach as a parish. They believed that a new, less costly vision, was needed.

The next step is to develop an appropriate process that will lead to a common vision. This will guide the congregation on decisions about our renovations. A group of experienced facilitators within the parish will meet to discuss this question and to make a proposal to ARC regarding the best way to proceed.

Affordable Housing

The Affordable Housing Committee met on February 16 to begin to develop a strategy for optimizing the affordable rental housing component of the condominium development. This strategy will be shared with the congregation in the next few weeks. With the assistance of other faith communities, the goal is to purchase as many as possible of the 40 units assigned to St John's to provide affordable rental housing. The next step will be to reduce the mortgage through additional capital contributions which will make the rent more affordable.

The Terons have set aside 7 of these 40 units on the west side of the ground floor for St John's to purchase through a non-profit corporation. One or more of these units could also be purchased for church-related use if desired by St John's parishioners.

The Affordable Housing Committee is now seeking legal advice regarding the establishment of a non-profit corporation.

Condominium Development

Teron Inc. is now marketing the units, on the assumption that all approvals will be received. Marketing drawings are available (modified from the drawings presented last fall to St John's) along with a price list, reservation form to purchase a unit, and a form for a pre-approved mortgage. Potential purchasers can use their own bank or Teron Inc., who will provide a mortgage service as part of the development.

As indicated in the Framework Agreement (#15), St John's parishioners have an exclusive first choice opportunity to select and reserve a unit for purchase during the first four weeks, now that marketing has begun. Packages may be picked up in the church office. There is a sign up sheet on the ARC notice board for those interested in being part of an information session with the Terons regarding the purchase of a unit. As well, those interested in purchasing a unit will have an opportunity to be part of a focus group to fine-tune the proposed design and the options to be provided.

Marketing to the general public will begin in March - with ample opportunity following the four-week period for people at St John's to reserve a unit although their unit of first choice may already be spoken for.

While the goal is to give priority to low income people purchasing units, parishioners of all income levels may reserve a unit. Some parishioners may consider purchasing a unit, renting it and then gifting that unit to St John's or reselling it at an affordable price. This would allow the unit to stay affordable. (Precise details of how this could work and other contribution options for parishioners will be developed by the Affordable Housing Committee.)

In making a reservation, purchasers are asked to submit a refundable deposit of \$500. If any parishioners are interested in purchasing a unit but do not have the full deposit available, please speak to one of the clergy.

Comments, Questions?

The Corporation, ARC and the Affordable Housing Committee welcome your comments, questions and suggestions. The names of the members of these committees are posted on the ARC notice board.