

# **Knox Futures – Property Redevelopment Team – Jan 2020 Update**

## **Background**

Knox Congregation, at the March 2018 Knox AGM, established “a committee to seek out a developer to explore redevelopment of the church property, to be led by Don Farmer and Betty Lou Killen”. The Committee subsequently titled the initiative as “Knox Futures”. Agreements for support of the effort were signed with UCC Edge. Working with EDGE, a Viability Report was developed in the fall of 2018, and the Congregation gave the Futures Team their views, on what they want Knox to “do and be”, through participation in a Scenarios Survey, and a following Congregational Workshop, on 17 Feb 2019.

One result of the Feb 2019 Congregational workshop, was to separate the overall Knox Futures project into two distinct Feasibility Study Teams – one to study, and make recommendations, re Programs and Organization (Chaired by Betty Lou Killen), and one to study, and make recommendations, re Property Redevelopment (Team - Don Farmer Chair, Fred Gallop, Floyd Fullerton, Paul O'Brien, George Savage).

The Property Redevelopment Team has had a land-use Planning Report - and formal Property Valuation - developed by Turner Drake Partners Ltd. Costs incurred for those reports (Approximately \$7K) have been paid by EDGE and are not payable until such time as we complete a successful redevelopment project, or sell the property. The Team has visited, and was inspired by, a partnership between All Saints Cathedral and Shannex Parkland on Spring Garden Rd in Halifax. The Team continues to explore other Church partnership projects. The Team was particularly pleased to receive a favourable reception to our summer 2019 approach to the Dalhousie School of Planning to assist us with land-use planning. See Dec 2019 Reflections for more detail on the Property Team's work.

## **Dalhousie School of Planning 4th Year Students Project and Presentations**

The Dalhousie fourth year Planning Students class, of the Dalhousie School of Planning and Architecture, led by Professor Dr Charles Hostovsky, took on our 4 objectives as the basis for a fall term class project. Our objectives are: 1 Provide Facilities for Church programming; 2 Provide income to the Church to supplement declining income; 3 Provide a needed service or facility to the Community; and 4 Enter into a mutually beneficial business partnership.

The Students presented their findings at Dal on 27 Nov 2019. Their report was presented in 5 separate presentations – all of which are, or soon will be, posted on the Knox Web Site ([www.knoxsackville.ca/](http://www.knoxsackville.ca/) under tab News - Knox Futures - Dal Student Presentations).

Presentation A – “Site Plan Analysis” - four parts : A1 Historical context of Knox, the Site, and the Neighbourhood; A2 Land-use Planning, HRM restrictions, and Current Environmental considerations; A3 Present Neighbourhood context (Business development, Community development, Transportation, etc); and A4 Land-use analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Development Objectives).

Presentation B – “Social Visioning” - Based on Student visits to Knox site, and the 9 Oct 2019 Dal Knox Congregational Workshop (Some pictures – you may see yourself in action).

Presentation C – “Design Concept” - Architecture and Land-use. The Students proposal : proposes to preserve the Sanctuary (but with pews replaced with portable Chairs to allow multi-purpose use of the space); proposes a three story 16 unit (850 sq ft per unit) apartment building with a “stepped-back” design and three commercial store-front units on the Cann hall (to be removed) side of the Sanctuary; and proposes a new semi-triangle shaped building on the Florence St side occupying the front half of the parking lot.

Presentation D – “Renderings” – Visuals of what it might look like. May spark a new look in the Community and establish Knox as the centre that defines Sackville’s character. Designed to provide a view of the Knox side entrance from Sackville Drive.

Presentation E – “Environment Greening”. Timely and pleasing.

The CEO of one of our potential partners attended the presentation at Dal and wishes to stay in close touch as we proceed with our study.

### **Team Conclusions and Next Steps**

The much appreciated, Dal Students report, is a comprehensive collection of very valuable, credible, base land-use information. It will enable us (a) To proceed, with confidence, to further discussions with potential business partners over coming years, and (b) Help the Congregation visualize, and expand thinking, on “what could be”. Parking a concern. It is a concept – don’t get hung up on details yet.

The Team will be looking at the possibility of expanding the apartment building proposed by the Dal students (higher and not stepped back), and obtaining “ballpark” costs to aid short-term discussion,

The thrust of the Property Redevelopment Team in 2020 will be to continue to pursue more development options, through discussion with a range of potential partners. We will also be considering costing and budgeting mechanisms; defining the structure of possible business partnership arrangements, and establishing a means to make credible financial projections.

The Teams goal is to have a well-developed Property Redevelopment Proposal, for Congregational consideration, when/if required “down the road”.