

## NOTES: TOWNHALL - JANUARY 16, 2022

### Common Themes from Discussion Groups

#### THINGS PEOPLE LIKED:

##### **Our Values Are Important**

- Single slide identifies our priorities for the project
- Affordable housing = Doing good; following our values 5
- Affordable housing on campus shares same values as other campus partners.
- Looks at accommodating all our priorities.
- really resonates with our goals and mission.

##### **First U's Future is Important**

- Appreciation of the focus on years ahead; feeling relieved / more hopeful for future of congregation
- We're going forward and have a sense of what's possible.
- Happy that we can meet multiple goals, was unsure that this would be possible before the presentation.
- Many are impressed/excited by revenue projections to be able to generate some significant income: projection of steady income for the church's future by 2028
- Looked outside the box for solutions; creative thinking allows us to address multiple problems
- Good that we can balance/address our desire to create affordable housing and our income concerns
- Could do a lot of good; increase ratio of affordable units; prefer revenue go to more affordable units

##### **Cahdco is Impressive**

- Many participants were impressed by the presentation by Cahdco and Theia: they came across as experienced, knowledgeable, professional, qualified; they listened to our team; good consultation process
- Cahdco and Theia buy into our vision
- impressed with what they were proposing.
- Both organizations are obviously committed to affordable housing,

##### **Comments about Proposal**

- Many liked the recommendations overall and the overall goals seem well thought out
- Majority support the idea of two buildings; but some do not – why can't it be one building?
- Likes having different rental levels in both buildings
- Excited about potential for being leading edge in design and sustainability
- Lower buildings won't hurt people's views
- Likes mass timber construction

### **Affordable Housing On Campus**

- Majority strongly support/excited about affordable housing on campus
- Feeling that a lower building could build a stronger community; lower building for affordable housing
- Happy that affordable building would get built faster
- Some suggested that we do 2 affordable housing buildings; then one with market rent income
- Would like to include 1, 2 and 3 bedroom units (for families)
- Hope for some accessible units
- Lower levels reserved for families as opposed to higher floors
- Some confusion about the proposed number of affordable units; some think there are not enough; some think it's more than we originally were proposing.
- happy tower is 16 stories not 20
- Flexibility of mixing AH units with market units; if tenants no longer need/qualify for subsidy they need not be evicted; free up another unit for AH
- Potential for current members to move into the new buildings

### **Sustainability Comments / Green Space**

- Likes that plan doesn't interfere with garden
- Plan to use unused space on campus
- Plan keeps green space
- Excited about being a leader in sustainable development and focus on sustainability, net zero

### **Potential Partnerships**

- 2 buildings could facilitate different types of partnerships
- Potential partners MHI or Ancoura or other NGO's
- Having multiple partners lowers costs for us
- Likes idea of building partnerships, e.g. with indigenous orgs for reconciliation.

## **Process**

- Happy that board will hear all comments
- Shouldn't be frightened by the numbers or length of time
- Good to hear CMHC would be involved

## **CONCERNS AND QUESTIONS:**

### **PLANNING:**

#### **Overall Campus Plan**

- Don't see a common area with climate mitigation and where people can gather.
- Does not feel that campus has had a robust enough feasibility study. Quality of life issues as well with walkability.
- Need adequate space for children to play (playground)
- Need to plan / be intentional about changes to land use - could build a wonderful mixed use community, but need to plan. Need clarity on how amenities would be handled - parking, play space for children etc.?
- Need space to be provided for families: what supports will be available (plaza, green space, playground...)?
- We need a more robust decision making process and vision for the whole campus. There are a lot of unknowns and when working with partners we need to keep our values close at hand.
- Can there be commercial space included in the plan?

#### **Financing Matters**

- Would we need to get a mortgage?
- Do we need to raise \$2M?
- If we borrow funds from our reserve, can we pay it back?
- How do we finance the affordable housing
- if the grants don't come through then where does the money come from? What are the contingency plans for the grants given today's financial climate?
- 10% for deeper discount, what does that mean for up front investment;
- Can we meet our minimum obligations
- Some concern about negative Image of Church using Market Rents to make Profit
- Worried earning such a high income seems greedy /like money grab
- Some confusion about our current finances – we need a clear, simple presentation about our finances; and the finances for this project
- How much money from First U?

- what front end investment is the congregation committed to? Will we need to fund raise?
- Will we need to take money from our investments for this project?

### **What Human Resources Need to Come from First U?**

- How is First U represented on each project
- How many volunteers are needed
- worried about the capacity of church leadership to maintain focus over the long period of the proposed project.

### **Concern about maintaining land ownership**

- Who owns and manages the market building?
- Concerned over loss of control of land. Once we accept a certain model and give up control of use of that land, gone forever.

### **Property management questions**

- how will residents be selected?
- Will First U be involved in property management?
- How do we manage costs of the buildings
- Who Provides Support Services?

### **Timeline for Project**

- Is there a drop dead date? How do we get this moving?
- how believable is the timeline and if it is behind now, then what is the financial impact of potential delays?
- Concern that timeframe provided by CADHCO is overly optimistic.
- Need to have financial discussion that considers the current older church building and need for repairs etc

### **Location/Placement of Buildings:**

- Windows of Unitarian House facing windows of Affordable Housing
- Should not impinge on site D without a campus plan
- Could we put one building in west parking lot instead?
- If buildings are further apart, could we have a bigger affordable building? Could include more living space as well? (playground etc.)
- Should focus on one four storey affordable building
- Can we consider another location on campus instead of site C?

### **Potential to Rebuild Daycare into one of the new Buildings**

- day care centre occupies quite large footprint;
- can we incorporate it into a new building?
- Need to look at daycare
- Can we go higher and incorporate?
- Did consultants consider incorporating River Parkway Children's Centre (RPCC) into market building? Proposes that the resulting combined building be on the current RPCC site. If not, why not? Could allow higher market building and affordable building further from Unitarian House.
- Can we get city to re-zone the site of daycare for small tower?

### **Concern about what is under the land**

- environmental assessment – land could be poisoned due to garage next door; water main issue
- what are these costs?

### **AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

#### **Not Enough Truly Affordable (Deeply Affordable) Units**

- was expecting more affordable housing than
- confusion about what "affordable" really means; need more info on this
- should be more affordable in tall building
- Why Restrict Affordable to Only 4 Storeys?
- 1/7 for people on ODSP - too low; ought to be at least 1/5; we want to be focusing on people with psychiatric illnesses, many of whom on ODSP; may be able to attract more investment partners particularly interested in supporting those on ODSP (ie. Ancoura)
- affordable building should not include market units - focus should be on ODSP and below market
- if going to have a high rise larger proportion should be affordable.
- Truly affordable housing is minimal, 7 odsp and below market
- Not enough affordable housing
- what happens when the kids grow up and move out? Do they have to move?
- Need rents to be low enough for low income families
- Put more revenue into lowering rents for more people
- Wish affordable housing building was a level higher (5 floors) to get more. affordable units.
- how affordable will it actually be?
- How about reducing revenue to request a minimum of \$100K annually and building more affordable units?

### **Questions on Ratios / Math on “market rent” and below market rent...**

- Multiple people: why current ratio of ODSP/below market/market units?
- would like to see more information on the calculation of different types of units
- Can we increase ratio of ODSP units? How was this model achieved?
- why are we using market rent as the basis/reference point - an unacceptable basis
- If market rent unaffordable, is “below market” affordable? By how much below?
- what would the rents actually be for the units in 2022 dollars?

### **Concern about Stigmatizing Residents in two different buildings (us/them)**

- Who would residents be? How are they selected
- would two buildings go against vision of people from different income levels living together (now distinct / separated)
- also concerned about separation of affordable and market buildings; likes the idea that affordable building would be built first.
- concern about “othering” with two buildings, in effect “ghettoizing” the people in the affordable building.
- All units and occupants in both buildings should be seen as equal.
- is there a perceived discrimination between the us/them of the 2 buildings?
- perception of discrimination will be huge, how to rectify with the 2 buildings?
- Concerned project seems paternalistic - 16 story elite building versus 4 story affordable building
- Can we more clearly define our priorities for affordable housing?

### **Reconciliation**

- Could we give some land to local Indigenous group? Or ask them their opinion?
- How are Indigenous concerns being incorporated into this project?
- Indigenous families could live in the buildings; they are on waiting list

### **IMPACT QUESTIONS**

#### **Construction Concerns:**

- Noise and disruption to campus (church, UH and daycare) during construction
- Concerned about safety with construction close to the childcare centre

#### **Impact on Unitarian House**

- Second building might be on land currently leased by Unitarian House

- how do we ensure safe access to the site - and protect UH residents who are often out walking
- Concerned about the quality of life of those living in UH and those facing them in the campus. They feel that the buildings are densely placed
- Concerned about the vulnerable population given an increase in vehicle flow

### **Design of Potential Buildings**

- examples given very boxy
- balconies would be nice; UH doesn't have them
- How will entrance and exit to buildings be accommodated? In & Out access a concern. Deliveries and emergency access.
- Beauty/Aesthetics important
- Buildings need to be designed together so they look good near each other

### **Access to Site**

- Increased number of residents; increased traffic volume
- New access road from Richmond?
- Can campus handle additional traffic flow?
- Could the entrances be in different locations (market on Richmond road & Affordable from back?)
- where will the entrances to the new building be? Off of Cleary, or Richmond Road? Also concerned that there is no second exit point from the property. What happens in an emergency situation, especially with increase population density on the property.
- Walkable campus – (in Kanata, there is a property focused on pedestrians, with posts that could be broken by a fire engine if needed)
- Pedestrian pathways; walkway to LRT

### **Will there be a parking problem?**

- encourage renters to use LRT rather than have cars needing parking spaces.
- Where will residents of new buildings and their visitors park?
- new LRT should alleviate the need for parking, and we should be de-emphasizing cars as a means of transport.
- Some of the current people who can't use LRT won't be driving in 5-10 years
- Can't see how parking will be accommodated, with 50% of tenants wanting cars. Limits who will rent. How to accommodate EVs?
- Parking could be problematic for mobility limited individuals who require to drive

- How many parking spots will there be for congregation and events? Will there still be enough parking spots for congregants and others who don't live in the neighbourhood (especially those with physical impairments)
- will need to rethink our approach to parking.
- Adequacy of parking for increased campus occupancy.
- expecting that residents of the new building will move there knowing that there is minimal (no) parking, and this is in line with city intentions (prioritize LRT and alternatives).
- Not all people have cars (very privileged view point to assume people own cars)
- Did Cahdco take into account LRT station?

### **What is the Impact on Gardens?**

- Worries about the impact of the 16 story building from shadows on gardens?
- What is the impact on our green space on campus?

### **Update What is happening on Richmond Road?**

- Lima Dental
- Kristy's
- Rennie's garage (future)