

What's the Latest?

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Feasibility Study Winding Down

The architectural firms of Entheos and Kovert Hawkins have continued to work with the St. John Paul II Building Planning Team on our current feasibility study. The most recent meetings continued to explore the four sites that have been presented to the architects: the St. Paul Site, the St. Joe Hill Site, and the two "green field" sites, Silver Creek and Salem Noble Road.

In our last report to the parish we examined some of the assets and liabilities for each of the sites. In this report we will examine additional information about the four proposed sites as well as look at the financial projections for the complete project.

The Building Committee has discussed at length the fact that both green field sites have portions that are in the 100 year flood plain. However, the committee agreed that since there was plenty of space to build on that is not located in the flood plain, this is not an issue. Further, on the Silver Creek Site it is possible to raise the area in the flood plain so that it would no longer be. This area could be used as green space either with or without sports fields on them.

There was also discussion about which liabilities could be addressed and perhaps dealt with in a way that would no longer make them liabilities. For instance, some of the buildings on both the current campuses are not handicapped accessible. This is something that could be corrected so that it is no longer a liability. The two green field sites have the liability of "losing the history" of the two current campuses. However, that is something that we can control as we can find ways to retain the histories of the two former parishes and build them into the buildings at a new location.

One of the discussions centered on the question would we lose parishioners if we located on any site that was not centrally located (this would be all but the current St. Paul Site which is in the geographic center of our combined parish boundaries). Once again, the committee felt that this is something that we can work to overcome.

One of the chief concerns expressed involves the St. Paul Site. The Archdiocese recommends a minimum of 20 acres for all new parishes. However, parishes that are located in cities often have quite a bit less land than that. The architects stated that a minimum of 10 acres would be needed to meet our minimal space needs. This would mean trying to purchase at least 20 homes/properties around the St. Paul

Campus. Building Team Members questioned the feasibility of doing so as in many ways it is an all or nothing proposition. Further, even if we were to get all the owners to agree, we would still be landlocked and further growth would prove difficult. There was also considerable discussion regarding the possibility of a split campus option. In this scenario, the Church would be at one location and the school at the other. This would definitely be at least a temporary solution if we were to choose any site other than the St. Paul Site. The original Vision 20-20 Plan called for a one campus solution eventually. However, a split campus solution could be done until we could afford to move everything onto one campus.

This led to a discussion about the idea of different phases. Michael Eagan, the lead architect with Entheos explained that this is the approach currently being used at St. Malachy in Brownsburg, Indiana. St. Malachy moved from their downtown location in Brownsburg to a green field site. They began with a feasibility study in 2000, commissioned a Master Plan in 2001, the Building of a Church was commissioned in 2002 and dedicated in 2008. The school was commissioned in 2012 and dedicated in 2014. A new rectory was commissioned in 2013 and dedicated in 2014. They are 15 years into their project and they still have phases to be completed. These include a Pre-School, Parish Offices, Faith Formation Center and a Parish Life Center.

Discussion was held about previous capital campaigns in each parish. St. Paul raised \$900,000 in the recent campaign to renovate the Church. Both parishes worked together to raise the money back in 2001 and 2007 to build the Activity Center, additional classrooms, and other renovations in the school. St. Joe Hill raised enough money recently to complete their portion of the land purchase.

To some degree, finances will dictate what we can and cannot do. The Archdiocese has a policy that before you can break ground on any construction project, half the money needs to be on hand and the other half needs to be pledged.

A question was raised as to whether or not the Building Planning Team was ready to eliminate any option at this time. They felt that it would be best to continue to present to the parish all four options. It was discussed that perhaps we need to plan for an additional information night for parishioners to come and hear discussion about each option before being asked to make a decision. This is being studied.

Architects Present Cost Analysis

The old joke goes like this: How do you eat an elephant? The answer is: One bite at a time. It might be good to keep that in mind as we present information about the cost analysis given to us by the architectural firms of Entheos and Kovert-Hawkins.

We asked the architectural firms to give us cost analysis on the four options that we are considering as the possible locations for the parish. These prices reflect the cost for either completely new structures (as would be needed on the two green field sites) and utilizing existing buildings (where practical) on the two current sites.

The price ranges are as follows.

- Current St. Paul Site; \$20.8-23.5 million
- Current St. Joe Hill Site: \$23.6-25.6 million
- Silver Creek Site: \$25.5-27.4 million
- Salem Noble Site: \$26.2-28.2 million

"I'm not surprised by the cost analysis," stated Fr. Tom. "I knew it would be several million dollars because other parishes have recently moved almost entire campuses and incurred similar costs." But Fr. Tom was also quick to remind everyone that this would be a phase by phase process. "Unless someone won the lottery and was very generous in sharing it with the parish, we would not do this all at once." He went on to say that this would be done piece by piece. At St. Malachy in Brownsburg, where they moved their entire campus from one location to another, it took place over 15 years and is not complete yet.

"We are building for the future of our parish and our faith," he said, "Let's also remember that if God is calling us to do something, God will help us to make it happen!"

A few weeks ago, Fr. Tom gave a homily about going as far as you can see. It might be impossible for us to envision raising 25 million dollars, but maybe we can see us raising enough to build a Church that can house all of us. If that is the case, we need to go as far as we can see, and trust that God will be with us then to guide us from there.

"I really do think that is the way we need to look at this," Fr. Tom said, "God is with us. God will continue to be with

us as we move forward in this process."

The architects also presented some considerations for each of the locations. They are listed below.

Considerations for the St. Paul Site (\$20.8-23.5 million)

- ◆ The school is in pretty good shape but would require some renovations.
- ◆ The Activity Center could become mostly school with current meeting rooms being converted into classrooms to allow for 7th and 8th grades.
- ◆ A new church could be added to existing church.
- ◆ Approximately ten acres would be needed, but would be still be landlocked after that.
- ◆ Approximately 20 houses would need to be acquired (estimating \$120,000-\$150,000 per house).
- ◆ Could sell some of the property at the St. Joe Hill Campus to fund future building costs.

Considerations for the St. Joe Site (\$23.6-25.6 million)

- ◆ Activity Center could remain with upgrades and a new school with 2 of each grade could be built onto it.
- ◆ A new Church, Fellowship Hall, and Offices could be built on the recently acquired land.
- ◆ The rectory, old school, and garage could be razed.
- ◆ The current Church could be maintained as a chapel.
- ◆ Cemetery would remain.
- ◆ Could eventually sell the St. Paul Campus to fund future building costs

Considerations for either Green Field Sites (\$25.5-28.2 million)

- ◆ All buildings (Church, School, Offices, Hall, Gym, etc) could be attached.
- ◆ Some of the property is in a flood plain, but this would not be a factor as there is plenty of land outside of the flood plain upon which to build.
- ◆ The green field sites have a higher cost because everything would have to be built new.
- ◆ We could sell some property on existing campuses to help fund the future building costs.

Frequently Asked Questions

By Fr. Tom Clegg

A Note from Fr. Tom: In each issue of "What's the Latest," I will write a column called "Frequently Asked Questions." These will be questions I have heard. I believe the question one person asks is often shared by others.

Q. You have spoken a lot about the "phases" of the process. Could you tell us a little more about how that might work?

A. To me it seems obvious that we will not raise over 20 million dollars at one time. Therefore we will need to complete the total project in phases. For instance (and this is just an example as no decision have been made), we might begin by raising the money needed to build a new church. That would be phase 1. Then when the church is complete and completely paid for we might begin to make plans for phase two. Let's say that phase 2 is a new school. This could come a few years after the first phase is complete and paid in full.

Let me add a couple of other pertinent comments. The archdiocesan policy regarding construction projects is that half of the money (50%) must be in hand before you break ground for any new construction. The other half (50%) must be pledged to the project. Once we have met this we can borrow the money as needed from the archdiocese. This is to ensure that no parish gets themselves in a hole that they cannot get out of. I think this is a great policy because it forces us to be good stewards of our resources.

We have a great finance council in our parish. They will also make sure that we don't plan for any more than we can realistically accomplish. The bottom line is this. We can only do what we can afford to do when we can afford to do it. (As a pastor I have been through three building/renovation campaigns. In the first, a new church, we had the debt paid off in four years. In the other two, we did a "pay as you go" approach and never borrowed money.) As your pastor, I promise that I will be a good steward of whatever resources are entrusted to our parish.

Q. At our last assembly, I did not like the fact that we had to vote publicly and that other people could see what we were choosing. Will it be the same at the May assembly?

A. There were several people on the building planning team that shared this concern. The process will be different at the next assembly. Each parishioner 18 and over will have the opportunity to choose the option, or options that they can support. It will be done by private ballot so that only you will know which option(s) you chose.

We do believe it is important that people see what the parish has chosen and so we will find a way to have a visual tally of everyone's input. A more detailed explanation

of the process will be included with a packet of information that will be distributed at least two week prior to the assembly.

Q. You keep calling this a "consensus" process. How is that different from a vote and why are we using this process?

A. First, let's look at the difference between a voting process and a consensus building process. In a voting process, we would have the four options available and you would choose the one you felt is best for the parish. 50% plus one would win. If 401 votes are cast, 201 are needed to "win." If this were to happen there would be 200 people who "lost."

In a consensus building project, we don't simply ask, "Which option do you think is best?", we ask the question, "Which of these options could you support emotionally, spiritually, and financially?". It is quite possible that you could support more than one option. Another way to think about this is which options can you live with. They may not all be your first choice, but you could accept that decision if the parish reached consensus on that decision.

Perhaps an illustration might help. You're going out to eat with 10 of your friends and someone says, "Where do we want to go?" 6 people want to go to "Joe's Diner." Joe's Diner wins. However, one person in your group cannot eat at Joe's Diner because they have allergies to something in the Diner. If we go to Joe's not everyone can go, even though it had a majority. However, everyone is okay with going to "Mary's Place" and it doesn't affect the person with the allergies. So the group builds a consensus about going to "Mary's Place" because it is the option for which everyone can agree.

It would be easier to just do a vote. However, building a consensus is necessary because we are going to ask for your emotional, spiritual and financial support for this project. If we work on building a consensus (that is to get 75% of the parish behind one or more of the options), we have a much better chance of this project ultimately being successful.

If we do not reach the 75% threshold, we will need to find ways to keep working until that threshold is reached. I realize this is a more difficult process, but it is one that I think is essential to the success of the project. If more than one option receives 75% support, the pastoral council will make the final decision.

***Please join us for the
St. John Paul II Parish Assembly***

***May 17, 2015
1:30 p.m.***

St. Paul Campus Activity Center

The Purposes of the Assembly:

- 1.To review what has brought us to this day.***
- 2.To review the results of the feasibility study.***
- 3.To answer questions and address concerns.***
- 4.To make decisions regarding our parish's future.***

***Please note this is a
DECISION MAKING ASSEMBLY REGARDING THE
FUTURE LOCATION OF OUR PARISH.***

***All registered parishioners 18 and older
are eligible to participate
in the discernment process at the meeting.***

I know well the plans I have in mind for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not your woe, so as to give you a future full of hope.

Jeremiah 29:11