

August 11, 2020

Dear Augusta Heights family,

Before the COVID-19 outbreak, we were in the process of exploring options for the future of the church's property and buildings. Of course, facing a pandemic and church closures and heightened community needs, those discussions were put on hold. But life cannot be put on hold forever. The longer we wait, the more it costs us to maintain buildings we don't need or use, and the farther we are from having a safe, fully functional physical space. Therefore, the Property Committee and Deacons are ready to resume this work and move forward as a church.

Since it probably feels like a few lifetimes ago, here is a quick refresher on what we have done so far. In November the church agreed to undergo a feasibility study and get an appraisal of the church property. In February, the feasibility study was completed and the results communicated to the church (summarized here as a helpful reminder). The feasibility study from AWHS Architects determined we need approximately 1.5 acres of land and 21,000 square feet of facilities for our current missions and ministries, and to give us room to grow. Based on those space needs, the architects presented three site concepts that would meet our needs but differed in their use of our facilities and land, as well as their anticipated costs. The Property Committee and Deacons decided to look further into one of the concepts (shown below), since it leaves a large, uniform section of the property to sell, maintains the most historic part of the property (the chapel), and is the least expensive of the three with a rough anticipated cost of +/- \$1.8 million.

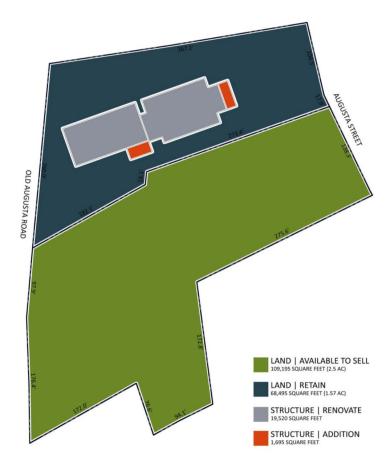


Figure A. Renovate chapel and education wing, adding small expansion to front of chapel and elevator on side of two-story education wing

Please note the color coding for the image:

- Green = property to sell
- Blue = property to keep
- Gray = current structures to renovate
- Orange = structural additions

Stone & Associates Real Estate Appraisal and Consulting also completed the commercial appraisal on the church's property as a whole, as well as the different parcels we could sell. The entire property was appraised at \$2.6 million (as if the land was vacant), and the sellable parcel for the above concept was appraised at \$1.86 million (which is almost \$100,000 more than the next highest valued parcel).

Thankfully, the appraisal of the property we would sell is roughly equivalent to the anticipated costs of renovations. Of course, the renovation costs are very rough estimates based on price-per-square-foot for similar projects done by the architectural team, and are only meant to provide a point of reference. Actual costs cannot be determined until we have architectural floor plans and construction bids. And, of course, actual revenue cannot be determined until we have a property under contract with a buyer.

AWHS Architects has also supplied a preliminary draft of a possible civil site plan (Figure B) and interior layout (Figure C) for the concept shown in Figure A. The site plan addresses needs like parking, fire truck access, traffic flow, etc., and the interior layout was developed based on guidance from the staff and property committee about programmatic needs and capacity. Neither the site plan nor the interior layout is a finalized architectural plan, but rather a conceptual design to give us an idea of how spaces could be arranged to meet the needs of our church's worship, ministries, and programs.

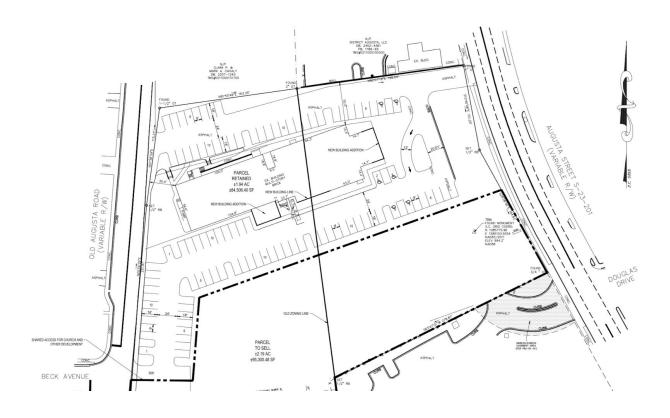


Figure B. Possible site plan for remaining property

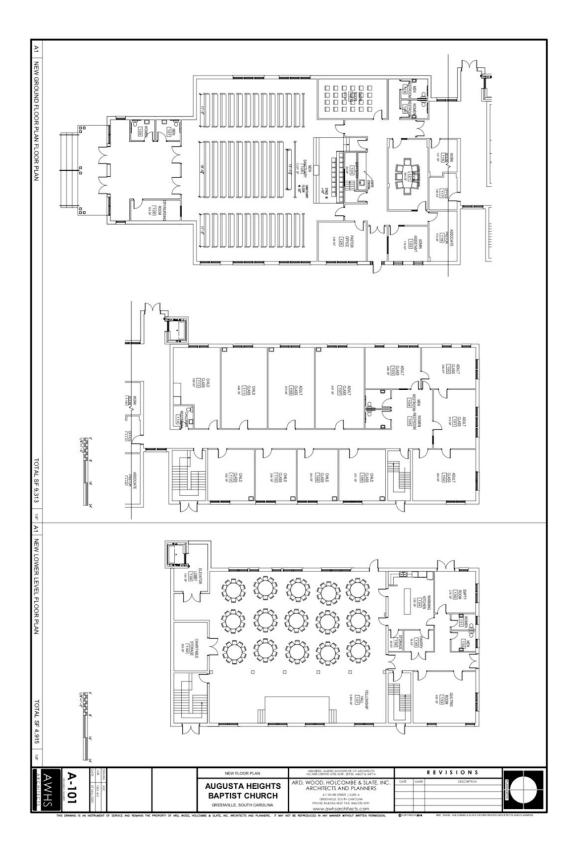


Figure C. Possible floor plan for remaining buildings. From top to bottom: chapel and offices, upper level of education wing, lower level of education wing.

After renewed discussions, the Property Committee recommended to the deacons to proceed with the concept above, and the deacons are now recommending the same to the church as a whole. *The recommendation is as follows:*

- sell the +/- 2.25 acres shown in Figure A for an amount no less than \$1.5 million
- continue developing plans for renovations similar to those shown in Figure B and
 Figure C

Of course, in order to make important decisions like this, we need as much input and engagement from the congregation as possible. Over the course of the next month, you will have a number of ways to ask questions, offer feedback, and discern a path forward for our church. In fact, we have already scheduled four opportunities to hear from you, one of which is this coming weekend.

We will host two "drive-thru town hall" meetings. These will be opportunities to come by the church and speak with church leaders about your thoughts and questions. Several leaders (ministers and lay leaders) will sit on the sidewalk of the front driveway of the church. You will be able to stay in your car while you talk through an open car window. If you have a question or would like to speak with a staff member or church leader, you can come by on Sunday, August 16th, anytime between 4:00 pm and 6:00 pm, or on Wednesday, August 26th, anytime between 10:00 am and Noon. If these times need to be rescheduled due to weather or an increased spread of COVID-19 in our area, we will be sure to let you know no later than 2 hours before the start of the drive-thru time.

We will also host two town hall meetings on Zoom to provide more detailed information, answer questions, and receive your input. These meetings will each provide the same content and format. We are simply offering them on two different days at different times to give as many people as possible an opportunity to attend one. These **Zoom town hall meetings will be held on Tuesday, August 18th at 8:00 pm and Sunday, August 23rd at 2:00 pm**. We will send out an email invitation to the town halls the day of each, which will include a link to access the Zoom meeting.

And finally, your ministers and deacons will be making phone calls and socially distanced visits to members who may not be able to attend the Zoom or drive-thru meetings. We want everyone to have every opportunity to ask questions and offer feedback in this process, so please do not hesitate to call or email any of the staff and/or your deacon. We will also offer more Zoom or in-person meetings if necessary for further discussion. Of course, no final decisions will be made without the approval of the church as a whole, which we are planning to do through email and mailed ballots this fall.

Obviously we do not know what the future holds. None of us could have predicted what has already happened this year. Through these discussions and decisions, we hope to set up the church to continue to meet the ever-changing needs of our congregation and community. So, as we have said many times before, let us dream and pray about this opportunity to shape our physical space in ways that will support our missions and ministries for years to come.

With you in the work of Christ,

David Blondeau, Property Committee co-chair

Greg Dover, Pastor

Christine Powell Kellett, Associate Pastor

Josh Kendrick, Property Committee co-chair

Mandy Scott, Deacon chair

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