

Summary Report to Congregation

From: the Land Use Task Force

November 27 2024

On Sunday October 20 the Land Use Task Force presented a vision to the congregation that we feel God is calling Maranatha into for the use of our back 6 acres. Since then, we have been gathering feedback.

The response to the vision presentation was positive. People understood it and we received lots of great feedback. Many are excited, but there were a lot of questions and reservations around the 'housing with a purpose' part of the vision.

As of November 3, we received **108** feedback forms (paper and online). The following is a summary of the feedback.

- **87** support the vision as presented including a community center/gym addition, greenspace, and housing with a purpose.
 - Some people made comments specifically mentioning their support for housing with a purpose
 - Some commented specifically that the community center/gym/greenspace excited them most
 - Others simply checked the box 'yes' in support of the vision with no additional comments.
 - Some expressed support for housing with a purpose, but have concerns and questions.
 - One questions the need for a gym/community center but supports housing so has been included here.
- **16** support the vision for a community center/gym addition, greenspace but either:
 - Do not support the vision for housing with a purpose
 - Expressed that they'd need more information before they could support the vision for housing with a purpose
 - Do not support a gym/community center or housing, only green space
- **5** do not support the vision as presented
 - Do not support the vision
 - Expressed a desire for more information before making a decision

From the written feedback received, it would appear that the vision for housing on Maranatha's property is receiving support from **80%** of respondents.

The vision for a community center and greenspace is supported by **95%** of respondents.

It's clear that most respondents are in favour of developing a community center and gym, along with a picnic pavilion and green space. Discovering the cost, timing, fundraising and development process for this will be a job for another team.

It's also clear that there are reservations around developing housing on Maranatha's property. In conversations with church members, the comments around housing vary. Some are concerned about the cost to develop the property, especially now that we're mortgage free.

Many aren't prepared to share the property with people who wouldn't take care of it or value it. Homeless people on the property is a big concern - but some who support the housing vision expressed excitement to have an opportunity to help the homeless and the housing vulnerable.

Many are concerned about ownership structure - will Maranatha become a landlord? Will housing distract Maranatha from its mission? These are examples of questions that came up. Some seniors and advocates for seniors feel that any housing on the property should be reserved for Maranatha's seniors.

The Land Use team recognizes that the answers to these questions are beyond the scope of our mandate. In our discussions with housing developers and those who work with the housing-vulnerable, we've learned that there is a lot of work to do, and many options to consider around each of these questions.

We've also learned that there are a number of housing projects in the early development stages underway in the area, and some have only come to our attention in the past few weeks. 3 of these involve other local churches (Trenton, PEC and Belleville) and another project involves redeveloping St. Mary's School in Belleville into housing. We're also curious to find out if there are plans for the vacant Quinte Secondary School across the road. Understanding what's going on in the area will better inform us as a congregation what types of housing are most needed.

Thank you for your prayers through this process of engaging with the congregation and our community to help discern God's vision for the property.

In Christ,

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Elaine Bouma
Steven Twiss