

Citizen Consultation on the Future of St. Peter's Church Summary of Discussions

A public consultation concerning the future of St. Peter's Church took place on May 28, 2019, at 19:00.

Of the roughly 100 people initially registered, 73 residents responded to the Town Council's invitation and came out to the church. Following the welcome address, the attendees listened to a presentation by the Anglican Diocese concerning the structural issues that had led to the sale of the church to Sajo, a TMR company (as announced by the Diocese in its news release dated May 21). This was followed by a brief period of questions to the Diocese representatives.

Of the 73 citizens who attended the event at the church, 51 went to the Town Hall for the second half of the citizen consultation. Participants were divided into five groups to discuss possible ways of reusing the building or redeveloping the site. Several ideas emerged from these discussions. Residents were interested in the future use of the site, the architectural elements worth preserving, the acceptable densification of the space, and the possible ways of honouring the Church's memory.

The different viewpoints and suggestions expressed by the participants were noted and are summarized in this document, and will feed Council members reflection on the future of this area located at the Town's core. The Town prepared several questions along general themes to encourage conversations among the participants. Participants were also invited to bring up other related topics and questions.

To the question, **"If the zoning by-laws were to be changed, how could the location be best used to serve the community?"**, the most popular responses were as follows:

- Condominiums or town houses (both high-end and more affordable)
- Community use (daycare, school, community centre, seniors' residence, café, theatre, art gallery, etc.)
- Mixed commercial/residential usage is one option for some, while others do not wish to see any business development at this location.
- The zoning by-law must take into account the lack of parking and the traffic (residential zoning around the site).
- Organize an architectural competition to generate some project ideas.

To the question, **“If the building were transformed, what heritage elements should be preserved and integrated?”**, the most popular responses were as follows:

- The stained-glass windows
- The arches, columns, and wood panelling inside the building
- The stonework (or stonework of the same colour if it is to be replaced)
- The cross
- The architectural character and style of the church (avoid an excessively modern or contemporary design)

To the question, **“In a redevelopment project, what would the acceptable level of densification be and what form would it take?”**, the most popular responses were as follows:

- Building should be no higher than the current structure (max. four storeys)
- In keeping with neighbouring buildings
- Preserve green spaces
- Parking should be at the rear of the lot

To the question, **“How do we honour the legacy of the place?”**, the most popular responses were as follows:

- Preserve the building’s name (St. Peter’s)
- Incorporate the stained-glass windows
- Maintain the architecture and character of the current structure
- Preserve certain elements of the church (benches, wood panelling, etc.)

To the question, **“If the building were to be transformed, would you support mixed commercial and residential use?”**, the most popular responses were as follows:

- Residential use is the solution preferred by most.
- Community use is an option preferred by some.
- Most citizens do not want commercial use.
- Some citizens would be open to mixed commercial use (restaurant, café, convenience store).

Other questions or opinions were also expressed by participants:

- One resident asked the Town Council to pass a resolution to put the project on hold for six months to give citizens a chance to consider all options.
- In general, complete demolition of the church without preserving any elements reminiscent of its former use or any of the architectural and heritage elements is not a solution that is appreciated by the participants.
- Some citizens brought up other types of questions, including the following:
 - What are the next steps for developing this location and the procedures for changing the zoning by-laws, etc.?
 - How will the development of this project fit into the Town's longer-term vision of urban planning?
 - How will these discussions influence the Town Council?
 - What was the sale price of the property?
 - How will the Town communicate with citizens the next steps of this project?