

St Francis of Assisi Ohariu Parish - Buildings & Property Review Community Engagement Meeting

Sunday 28 November – 11.30am Sts Peter & Pauls Church

In attendance: 5 parishioners (+ John K & Paul B for the LFT)

Meeting began with a reading of Acts 2:42–47

Attendees were provided with key points from the Archdiocesan Synod 2017 findings: “Go you are sent ... to manage your assets wisely”

Key points of the discussion:

- Need to consider distance and accessibility and public transport options when looking at final decisions re which sites to keep
- If we are to develop a site, providing opportunities for socialising may help attract younger people
- Option of social housing at Newlands was discussed – will require wrap around support services. Are we equipped to do this? Is it part of our core business?
- Any social housing development of Newlands should provide a gathering/worship space
- How can we use the properties we have to release some capital for redevelopment of an existing site?
- If we retain the land at St Andrew’s for social housing, how will we get funds for redeveloping Johnsonville?
- Are the people of St Benedict’s more naturally aligned with the Cathedral?
- Johnsonville is an obvious place for redevelopment given its proximity to transport + proposed redevelopment of the mall and new housing developments
- We don’t want to get into debt that we can’t service
- It’s not good that buildings are currently empty and idle most of the week.
- We want our buildings to help us connect to the community more as part of our Gospel mission – there is currently a shortage of community gathering spaces around Johnsonville
- Redevelopment of Johnsonville should allow for the community to access the space – we need flexible spaces:
children / young persons / mothers support / places to connect – café / shared working spaces / social service agencies / St Vinnies Op Shop / music / space available for hire by community organisations / cultural groups
- There needs to be a worship space big enough for the whole parish – this space needs to be available for worship events during the week such as funerals
- Car parking building – opportunity for income
- Any parish redevelopment will need to foster the growth of small faith communities
- Will large gatherings become more and more a thing of the past due to changes in the way we associate triggered by the risks of the COVID pandemic
- Look at other redevelopments – Kapiti / Arise Church Petone
- If we are going to act boldly, we need to start by thinking boldly
- Archdiocesan Synod findings encourage parishes to talk to the community as well as to other churches as part of the review process – have we done this in St Francis?