

Arlington Presbyterian Church Redevelopment

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is Arlington Presbyterian Church (APC) seeking to redevelop our property?

Our vision for APC is strengthened discipleship, with increased commitment to intentional faith-based connections with each other and our community. APC engaged in two-year, facilitated New Beginnings spiritual discernment process which led us to a three part vision:

- Creating and nurturing a community of disciples,
- Being a place of crossroads and connection for the community, and
- Providing affordable housing for our neighbors

We searched how to bring into our hearts and lives both the immigrant community to the West and the young professionals to the East. We discovered that affordable housing is a major unmet need, not only for immigrants but for young professionals in lower paying jobs. Our new building is also meant to be a place of crossroads, providing space for non-profit organizations that serve the community, providing a welcoming place where different people can come together to volunteer to help their neighbors and to receive help, and ultimately nurturing APC as a faith community. APC sits on over an acre of land with a building that, given the increasing demands on time and resources, no longer contributes effectively to the mission plan of our faith community.

What is the proposed redevelopment?

Our initial plans foresee a 6-story, mixed-use building; including affordable multifamily rental housing units, church and crossroads space for mission and community outreach, a child care center, retail space (ideally a coffeeshop) and structured parking. The current structures on the property will be demolished to make room for the new construction.

Who is the development partner?

With Session approval, APC signed a pre-development agreement with the Arlington Partnership for Affordable Housing (APAH) in July 2013. APAH is a nonprofit developer dedicated to developing, preserving, and owning quality housing that is affordable and enhances the Arlington County community.

What is APAH's experience?

APAH is the only nonprofit affordable housing developer to work exclusively in and for Arlington County. Today APAH provides safe, affordable housing for 1,117 households at 13 properties in Arlington with a \$200M+ asset value. APAH also served as a development consultant to the Church at Clarendon's affordable housing redevelopment project.

What is APC's role and who will make the decisions about things along the way?

Session, upon recommendation by the affordable housing team, with input by the congregation, will make decisions about processes along the way. The architect will facilitate discussions early on with congregation.

Who will else manage the development process on behalf of APC?

APAH will manage the development process in close concert with APC. Jill Norcross was hired as a part-time project manager representing the interests of APC. APC has also engaged Mark Viani, a pro-bono attorney from McGuireWoods.

How will the partnership work?

Mark is currently working with APC, the Presbytery and APAH to draft the partnership documents. The partnership structure and documents will be shared with the congregation. Both the congregation and the Presbytery will vote to approve the structure of the partnership, which will take the basic form of a land lease.

Will APC still be a congregation when the project is complete?

Yes, with God's help, we plan to be a congregation and part of the Presbytery when the project is complete. APC will receive turnkey space for worship, education and other meetings. During the redevelopment process, APC will seek to strengthen our community of disciples through outreach in the community.

What will happen to APC during the redevelopment?

Prior to commence of construction (which is expected to be no earlier than 2016), APAH and APC will work together to find interim space for worship near the Columbia Pike corridor during construction.

Will the crossroads space be shared with the worship space?

Yes, we plan for the APC space to be flexible, serving both worship and crossroads needs. There are several existing designs and models for us to consider in the design phase.

Will elements of the existing church (organ, stonework) be incorporated into the new building?

We will evaluate these options during the design phase.

Who will decide the design of the building? How will the architects receive our input?

The architects will convene meetings with the congregation in advance of any design work, to receive our input and understand our vision. These meetings are open to anyone in the congregation who would like to participate.

Will the Clothing Bank and Funshine Preschool continue?

Space for a non-profit child care center and other community missions will be provided in the new development. The operators of these mission-based community services have not yet been selected, but priority will be given to mission activities supported by APC volunteers.

How will the development integrate with the surrounding neighborhood?

In keeping with the Columbia Pike Redevelopment Plan and the neighborhood homes to the north, the redevelopment will follow the Columbia Pike Form Based Code (FBC), designed to create a pedestrian-oriented property with a mix of land uses. The Form Based Code dictates that street-level retail is a required use. At this point, it is our intention to include a coffeehouse not only to serve an identified need in the community but also to meet the required retail use.

Has this type of development ever been done before?

Yes, there are successful, completed examples including right here in Arlington at the Views at Clarendon redevelopment.

How will the project be financed?

Currently we are planning a long-term ground lease structure that would pay APC in part by building new church space for the congregation. Financing for the affordable housing would come from a combination of Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) equity, lower interest debt, and Arlington County Affordable Housing Investment Fund debt. Several other churches, both locally and nationally, have undergone similar successful redevelopment projects, such as our proposed model.

What is a ground lease and what is the term?

A ground lease is a legal structure that will allow for the Presbytery to retain ownership of the land while the lessor makes improvements upon it. The term of the lease will be very long-term, most likely 99 years.

What will happen if the government runs out of funds/cancels program to build affordable housing?

There is more than one source of funding for affordable housing at the federal level. In addition, Arlington County has made affordable housing a priority and supports development financially.

Will the Church be responsible for paying taxes?

APC will not have to pay property taxes, but businesses on site will pay associated business taxes.

APC currently has no mortgage or other debt, would they or the Presbytery take on new debt as a result of this redevelopment?

No, in exchange for the land for the affordable housing through a long-term lease, APAH will provide APC a debt-free, turnkey building, ready to serve our worship, administrative and outreach needs.

Will APC be required to put any money in?

APC and APAH have agreed to split pre-development costs of no more than \$100,000 total (\$50,000 for APC). In addition, we have hired Jill Norcross as a project manager to represent APC. In addition, we are applying for pre-development funding from the Virginia Housing Development Authority (VHDA) which, if awarded, will help offset some of the expenses incurred during this period.

Who will be able to live in these apartments?

Individuals and families meeting the income limits will be eligible to apply to live in the apartments.

What are the income limits for low income and affordable housing?

The income limits for the affordable housing are dictated by the financing through the LIHTC program. This rental housing will be affordable to households earning less than 60% of metropolitan Area Median Income (AMI) which is currently \$65,000 for family of four in the DC metro area. Additional subsidies may be provided by Arlington County to reach lower-income households.

Who will own and manage the property?

Through a condominium structure, APAH will own the affordable housing and APC will own the church and child care space. Ownership of the retail and community space is to be determined. Both APAH and APC will contract with a professional management company to manage the affordable housing, church space, non-profit missions, retail and child care center. Adequate resources will be budgeted to ensure quality management throughout the 99-year lease of the property.

What is the timeline for the project?

As a result of all the necessary approvals (congregational, Presbytery, community, financing and County), there is a long timeline for this project which will take us through 2017 and possibly into 2018.

What is the community process and with whom will APC need to meet?

APC is currently meeting with community stakeholders such as the Alcovia Heights Citizens Association, CPRO, Pike Presence, VOICE, Alliance for Housing Solutions, County elected officials and staff, Presbyterian Ministers, and other neighborhood faith leaders.

How can I stay informed of the project's process?

APC's recently redesigned website, www.arlingtonpresbyterian.org, will allow us to keep you updated on the progress of the redevelopment. In addition, updates will continue to be found in the *Moving Forward* section of our newsletter. If you are interested in engaging in any part of the redevelopment plan, we are forming teams and would appreciate your input. Please speak with any of the members of the Affordable Housing Team, comprised of Susan Etherton, Judy Robb, Kristl Hathaway, Mary Helen Harris, and Pastor Sharon Core.

We are excited about this journey with God and invite you to join us if you would like to learn more.