



The Case for Saving the Old Saint Patrick's School Building:

Valuable Asset, Potential Church Endowment, Neighborhood Landmark,
and Important Part of Portsmouth's Architectural Heritage

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A.



1. Executive Summary

The old St. Patrick's School building on Austin Street is an attractive and dominant neighborhood landmark, a monument to the good works of the Catholic Church in Portsmouth, and an important part of the city's and Parish neighborhood's architectural heritage.

Herein, is a proposal, submitted by local professionals and church members for the repurposing of this beautiful neighborhood historic school building. The repurposing project aims to provide the Parish with a significant financial and charitable endowment. As well as meeting the needs for increased parking; a renewed, nested and protected sacred green space for many new Parish uses; and increased campus capabilities and parishioner faith building opportunities.

Demolition of this rare and magnificently detailed historic school building is inconsistent with actions of the Catholic Church nationwide and against "best practices," according to Catholic scholars involved in helping the Church study the repurposing of over 6000 Catholic schools that were closed. Remarkably, Church researchers found that only 4% of the school buildings have been demolished. This is very significant, and speaks well of the Church's effort in Historic preservation, and neighborhood preservation. Their study shows that almost all school buildings, and especially historic neighborhood buildings, can be and are retained, or, repurposed for new

and beneficial Church and Neighborhood needs.

Given its location in the Portsmouth real estate market, saving and developing the building could create an outstanding financial and charitable endowment for the Church. As well as, provide a significant increase in Parish and Campus capabilities and facilities. These additions lend themselves to growth and development opportunities for Parishioners and Church Leadership. Herein, we give multiple examples of how this can be done.

We have worked to address these opportunities within the framework of Bishop Labasci priorities as expressed in his statement Vision Statement for the Church in New Hampshire. And in particular, address and support the Parish aims and needs which are under the direction of Pastor Belliveau. Pastor Belliveau wishes to increase parking; provide sacred green space; retain privacy and land ownership, foster a campus environment; develop and expand the Parish and its parishioners; increase faith building and charitable activities; develop lay leadership; and foster new pastors for the state of NH.

As Pastor Belliveau provides Parish innovation, we can support his ongoing and long term work now, or flexibly, as needed in the future. The projects provided herein all support very significant financial and charitable endowments for the Parish. Some unique proposals provide more Parishioner faith building experiences and opportunities, and aid in the Pastor's leadership position for fostering increased nurturance of new NH pastors and church lay leaders. Please see Appendix 2 where Bishop Labasci's Vision statement is printed in full and the Bishop's related goals are highlighted for reference.

Parking issues can be solved by 1) prioritizing additional parking adjacent to the church for the elderly 2) creating more spaces on church property with a different parking lot design 3) negotiating with neighbors for additional parking space, and 4) putting parking under the school building. In light of these new parking and school building repurposing opportunities, the older proposed plan for school demolition and parking lot expansion seems to inadequately serve these goals or perhaps not at all. By working together with charitable effort, we are able to better serve the greater interests of the Parish, Diocese and Parish neighborhood.

Options that could meet the Church's goals are modeled to build a financial and charitable endowment, and serve the larger community's interest in historic preservation. The examples included are: housing for Catholic families, housing for Catholic seniors, an assisted living facility, a retreat center / B&B, and simple office space for non profits or storage facility, among other possibilities. All of the proposals include a portion of the school building retained for a variety of Parish important uses and new opportunities.

2. History of Building and Community

The seeds of St. Patrick's School were planted in 1868 by Father Daniel Murphy, who was called

to Portsmouth to serve the spiritual and educational needs of the town's burgeoning Roman Catholic population, especially the Irish, who had arrived in significant numbers as a result of the potato famine in their homeland.

While Father Murphy's first parochial school was short-lived, the demand for Catholic education remained. In 1887, another priest, Father Eugene O'Callaghan, built a new school, on the current site of the existing St. Patrick's School building. It was located on the corner of Winter and Austin Streets, in the future footprint of the west end of the existing building. On the east end, stood a convent for the nuns, who instructed the 300 students.



(Photo St. Mary's School)

The school was set in a neighborhood of artisans who lived in wooden homes constructed outside of the downtown district, where houses were required to be made of brick after the great fires of 1802 and 1813. The Church's Irish parishioners tended to live a few blocks away near the stream that feeds the North Mill Pond.

Demographic pressures and the high demand for Catholic education in Portsmouth soon made

the construction of a larger school necessary. Portsmouth's mostly impoverished Irish population gave what they could, and priests were said to donate their salaries, so that St. Patrick's School on Austin Street might rise. Ultimately it could accommodate nearly 500 students. At a cost of \$45,000. it was completed in 1904, the same year that President Teddy Roosevelt was in town to broker the Treaty of Portsmouth.¹

For decades the school, sharing the parcel with the Immaculate Conception Church and its rectory, served as a harmonious member of the neighborhood and larger community. The laughter of children filled the atmosphere with joy and life. The closing of the street for school purposes and the daily traffic of parents lining up to pick up their children was not a heavy burden for most neighbors, but rather a normal part of everyday existence in a community that was close in many ways.

The old St. Patrick's School on Austin Street performed its mission for 113 years., until the building's need for maintenance, its lack of modern facilities and a generous donation for a new school on Banfield Road, resulted in the proud old building's disuse.

The old St. Patrick's School building, however, remains as a monument to the good works of the Roman Catholic Church in Portsmouth.

3. Church Goals Related to the Property

Based on conversations with parish representatives and information provided at the diocese website, the following are objectives important to church leadership:

1. Maintain control of the property
2. Address the church's parking issues
3. Protect sanctity and privacy
4. Add Sacred Green Space
5. Strong, consistent, lifelong faith formation
6. Charitable action
7. Promote Financial Development

Objectives 1 to 6 are addressed directly in each of the proposed redevelopment options. Objective #7, discussed here in this section, reflects the **third part** of Bishop Peter Libasci's vision for the Diocese, related to the critical importance of providing financial resources. We have gone to lengths in proposing project based building of financial and charitable endowments which also add to and expand campus and Parishioner faith building

opportunities. Appendix XXX has the Bishops full Vision statement with appropriately highlighted sentences. The following are three foundational pillars of the broader NH Vision.

The foundation for our vision is based on the Bishop's three key priorities. These have often been described metaphorically as the three legs of the stool that will support our vision.

1. Catholic Identity and Catholic Pride – By confidently promoting and integrating Catholicism into all we do, we will provide a living witness to our faith that is the bedrock of our Church.

2. Catholic Formation – Strong, consistent and lifelong formation is a key underpinning for building our lives in Christ. Strong formation encourages and deepens evangelization and contributes toward an improved appreciation and experience of: a. A personal encounter and relationship with Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior b. The Eucharist as the source and summit of our Christian lives c. The intimate connection between faith and life d. The dignity of the human person and the gift of human relationships e. The social teachings of the Church f. The role of the Church in continuing the ministry of Jesus.

3. Catholic Development – it is critical that we have sufficient financial resources to carry out the mission of the Church. This priority is especially important given that many of our parishes, schools, and other organizations are struggling financially or lack adequate funds to achieve their full potential.”²

Please see Appendix 2 for Bishop Labasi's full Vision Statement for the Church of NH with applicable sections highlighted.

We feel that this report's proposal options address a wider range of Church interests and goals, rather than simply removing the magnificent and beautifully detailed historic block long building. An irreplaceable historic gem. An endowment ready at hand, that once it is razed and paved over, can never be replaced.

4. Community Goal: Historic Preservation

The Immaculate Conception historic church is one of the finest churches of classical church architecture in the region. The Diocese and Parish have made a sound and important decision to retain and consolidate many church functions around this landmark church. Repurposing the magnificent and historic St. Patricks multistory building, adjacent to the Church, and on the campus provides an important endowment and preservation opportunity.

Portsmouth, NH, is a successful and prosperous city built on historic preservation. Portsmouth's charming old buildings, and the history that goes with them, have attracted and help maintain a vibrant and strong community. Successfully attracting artists, entrepreneurs, restaurateurs, hotels and tourists. It is no exaggeration to suggest that Portsmouth's high quality of life, recognized again and again in prominent national publications and obvious to most anyone who lives here, ultimately rests on our historic structures. *For our common interest, we rely on private citizens, businesses and institutions to be good stewards of the city's architectural patrimony. Preserving old buildings shows our respect for the past and helps secure our future.*

A building's historic value might rest on a number of different factors: age, rarity, beauty, irreplaceable historic details and workmanship, the people who occupied it, a specific story or event attached to the building, etc. As already suggested, the old St. Patrick's School qualifies as significant based on a number of these criteria. With its slate-shingle clad roof, full-height pavilions, denticulated cornice and articulated façade, and a rich history, the old St. Patrick's School has been recognized as an historic structure through its listing on the National Register of Historic Places, and was determined to be significant by both the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources and the National Park Service.

But what makes the old St. Patrick's School still more important is its dominate and inspiring scale and position in the neighborhood. Below is the view from Middle Street, in the historic district, at one end.





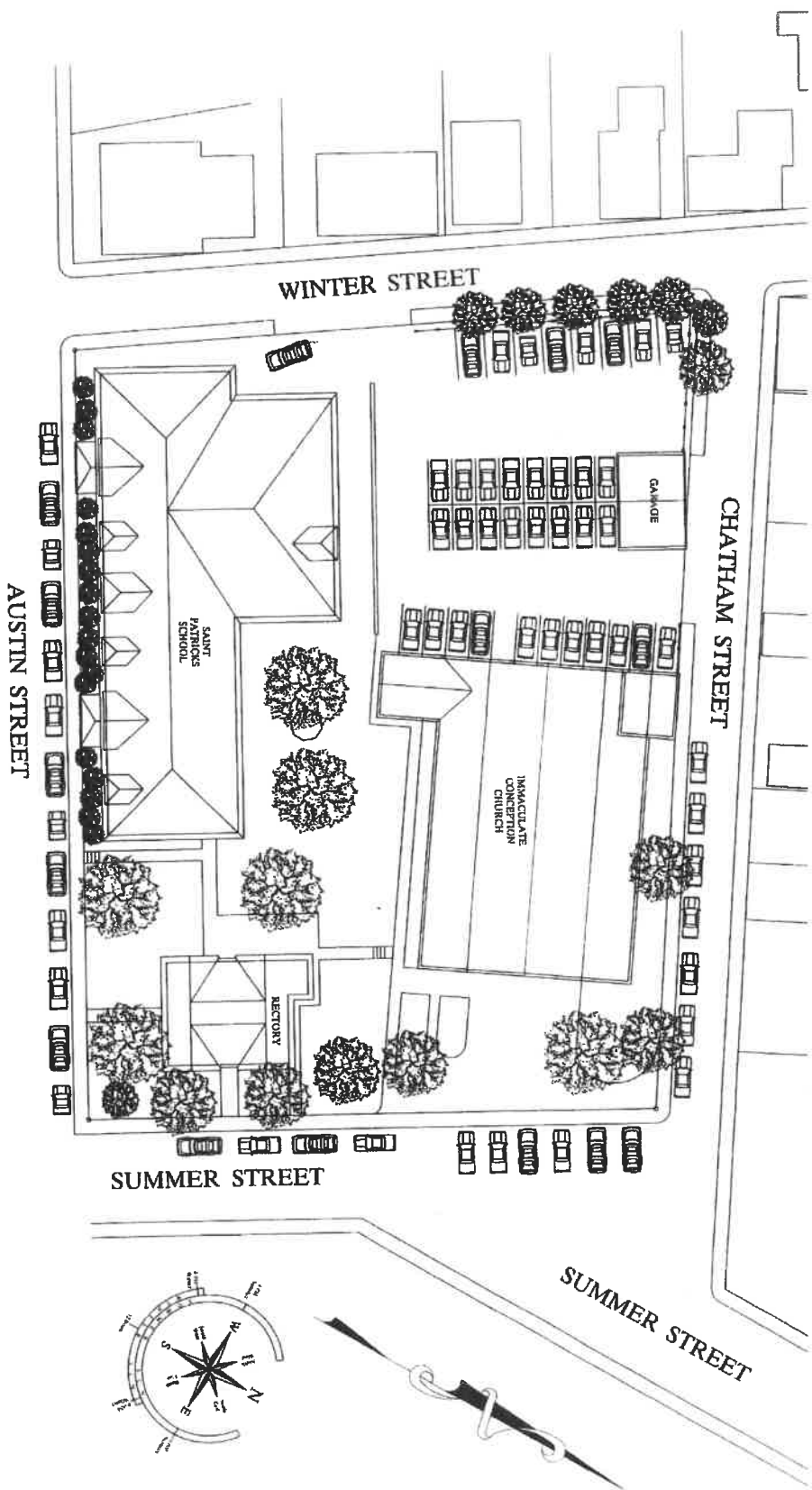
And here it can still be seen, at the opposite end of Austin Street, all of the way over at the intersection with Madison Street..



5. The Demolition / Parking Lot Plan

From the vantage point of the neighborhood, the plan to raze the historic school building would destroy a beautiful and dominant landmark and replace it with a expand asphalt void, and rudimentary landscaping. The beauty and desirability of the neighborhood will almost certainly be diminished. We present here alternative parking plans that provide additional benefits and preserve campus and neighborhood beauty.

Concerning the Church's stated goals of *control, sanctity & privacy, parking, and financial development*? How well does the plan achieve these goals? What follows are two drawings, the first showing the existing buildings configurations, and the second, the removal of school and its replacement with the proposed parking lot:



SITE PLAN (Existing Conditions)



AS NOTED
THIS DRAWING IS NOT
TO BE USED FOR
CONSTRUCTION

PROJECT TITLE
PROVISIONS

ROBERT A. LEMAHAN AIA PLLC
LICENSED ARCHITECT

ARCHITECTURE &
DESIGN

ARCHITECT

REVISION	DATE	DESCRIPTION
06-07-17	1	COMMUNITY MEETING

THE PLAN (Proposed)

1" = 200'-0"

20'

40'

80'

160'



Under the proposed demolition / parking lot plan, the Church does indeed continue to *control* the property, so that criterion is met.

Sanctity is a subjective judgement. Only the Church can decide what is sacred to it. Still, it's hard to understand how a parking lot can be sacred but a building with a rich history connected to the parish is not.

The issue of *privacy* is clearer. In the first drawing, the three buildings form something close to a private courtyard (marked with three trees in its center), a sheltered and potentially sacred space where Church functions might take place. With the school demolished, the private space is completely obliterated. In some sense, then, the proposed plan represents a loss of privacy. A synergistically repurposed school building, combined with re-designing the existing open space into Parish sacred/green multipurpose grounds with some evergreen shielding of rectory windows would serve many magnificent purposes.

Of course a parking lot adds *parking*, but do thirty or so more spaces really make a difference? See section 6, below.

The area in which the proposed demolition /parking lot plan seems to fall most short of a Church goal is in terms of *financial development*.

- The city of Portsmouth estimates the replacement cost of the building at \$4,433,526 minus \$2,837,500 in depreciation leaving a value of \$1,596,026 remaining in the building.
- The cost of demolition, toxic materials remediation, land regrading, landscaping, drainage, fencing, plus parking lot expansion is likely around \$500,000 +/-
- When demolition costs are added to lost opportunity costs with regard to replacing the building with a 30 to 35-space parking lot, then multiplied by the limited use that each parking space will receive (the current parking lot is not fully used 98%+/-of the time), the result is that the parking spaces created will be extraordinarily expensive based in their use, and an exceptionally poor value proposition.
- In terms of zoning, the school building is a grandfathered non-conforming structure. Were the old school to be demolished, it would be difficult to impossible to build a similar building in its footprint.
- Merely retaining the building as is, and arresting further significant depreciation, would retain approximately \$2 million of current value, as compared to the demolition / parking lot plan.

The opportunity to develop the existing structure, consistent with the Church's other goals, is the subject of section 8 of this report. There we look at creating a very significant financial and charitable endowment. As well as enhance greater parishioner enjoyment and engagement in faith building and parish activities.

6. Parking

Parking is ongoing issue for the Immaculate Conception Church, which shares the same parcel of land with the old St. Patrick's School Building as well as a rectory and a small parking lot in the rear (which had also served as the school's playground).

Elderly parishioners, in particular, sometimes have trouble finding parking spaces close to the church in winter, when walking can be difficult for them.

The closing of two other Catholic churches in Portsmouth has driven more traffic to Immaculate Conception. The closed churches were in locations that are suburban in character and each had a large adjacent parking lot, as opposed to Immaculate Conception, which is located in the heart of a city neighborhood with limited parking next to the church building. Parishioners from these other churches may feel the lack of parking convenience to which they are accustomed.

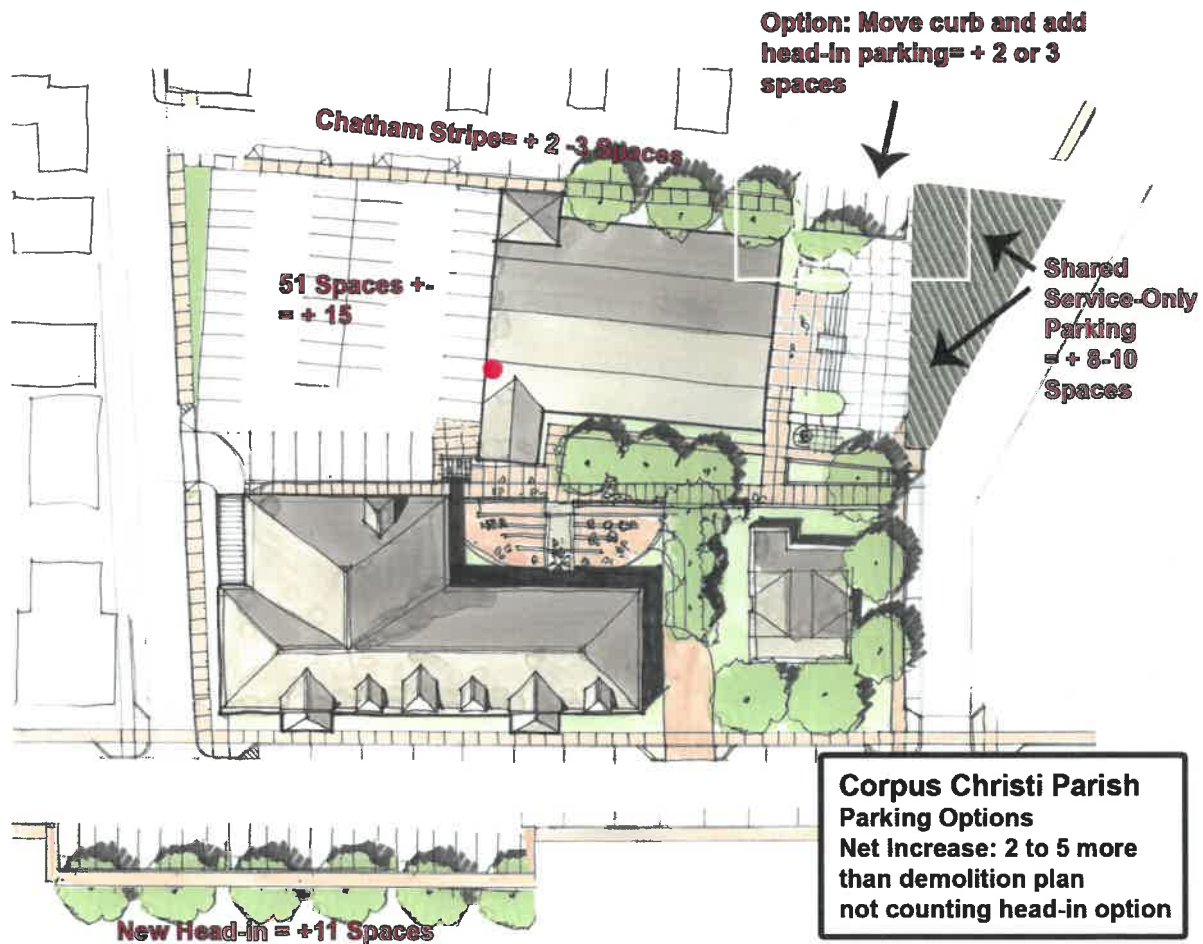
As a downtown city church constructed when most parishioners resided within walking distance, Immaculate Conception Church requires many parishioners today to walk a little farther from their automobiles to the church door. This reality will not change, even if the old St. Patrick's School building is demolished and replaced with more parking, because the plan for new parking in the footprint of the school building adds only 30 or so new parking spaces for a church than can accommodate 500- 600 worshippers.

Parking for the elderly parishioners can be further addressed by organizing a program in which elderly parishioners get prioritized parking spots close to the church building. On both Chatham street and Summer Streets near the church entrance. Meanwhile, if every needed, younger parishioners can walk two blocks from the city parking lot at the intersection of Middle and Miller streets, or they can find spaces in the neighborhood at a similar distance from the church, which are readily available.

As has been frequently pointed out, however, any new use for the old St. Patrick's building would require additional parking and possibly add to the parking burden at and around the property. This is a fair point which any proposal for the school's repurposing must and has addressed this with a design for underbuilding parking or thru other reasonable means.

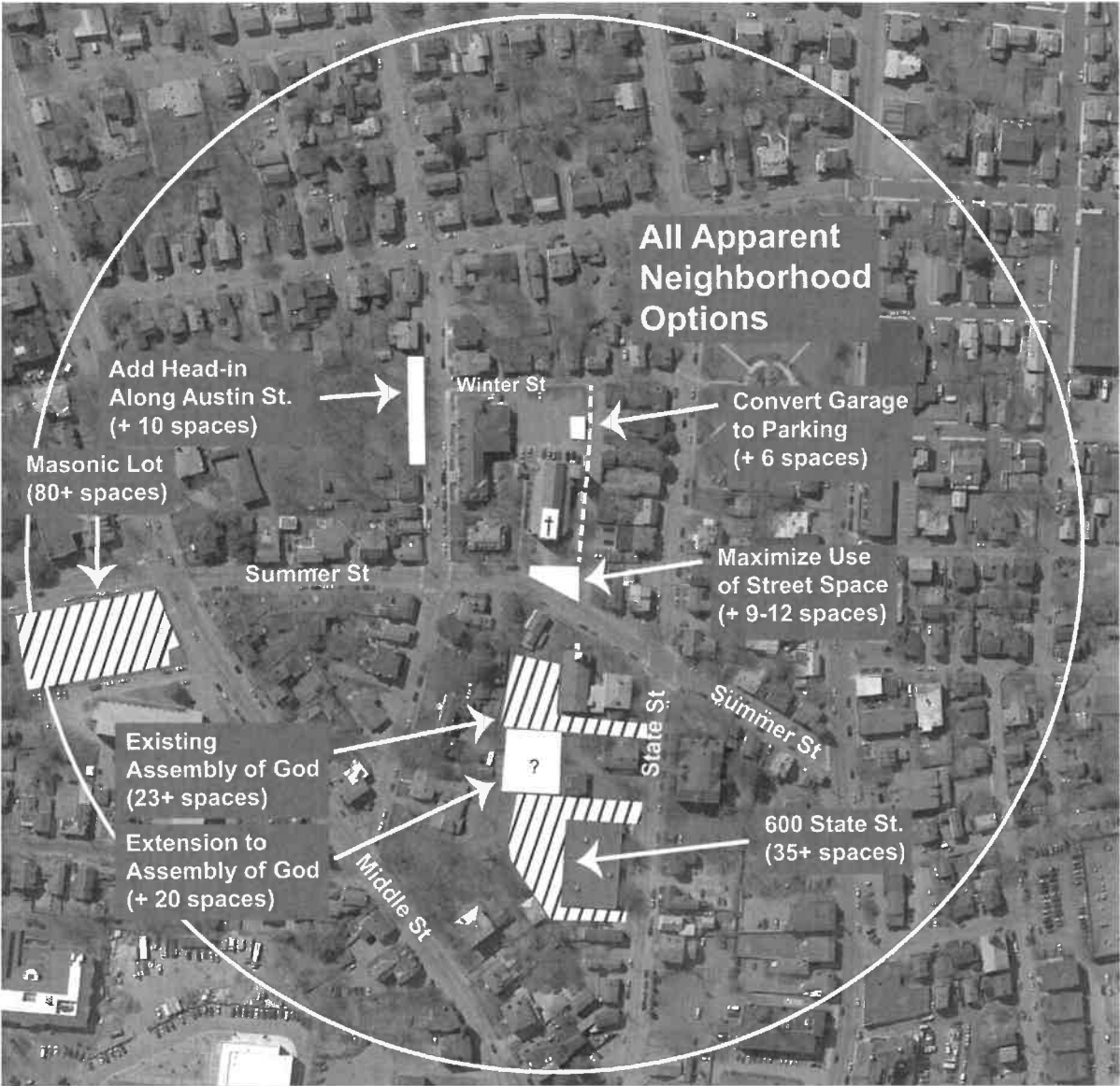
Additional parking possibilities fall into three categories:

First, a similar or greater number of parking spaces (when compared to the demolition plan) can be created around the periphery of the building by doing two things. One, by working in conjunction with Historic New England and the city; and two, by redesigning the existing parking lot and campus. Both Historic New England and the city have expressed interest in preserving the school, and, it would be in all party's mutual interest to preserve the building; working together on providing parking improvements for that area of the neighborhood. (see show slide and Appendixes A7 & A8.).

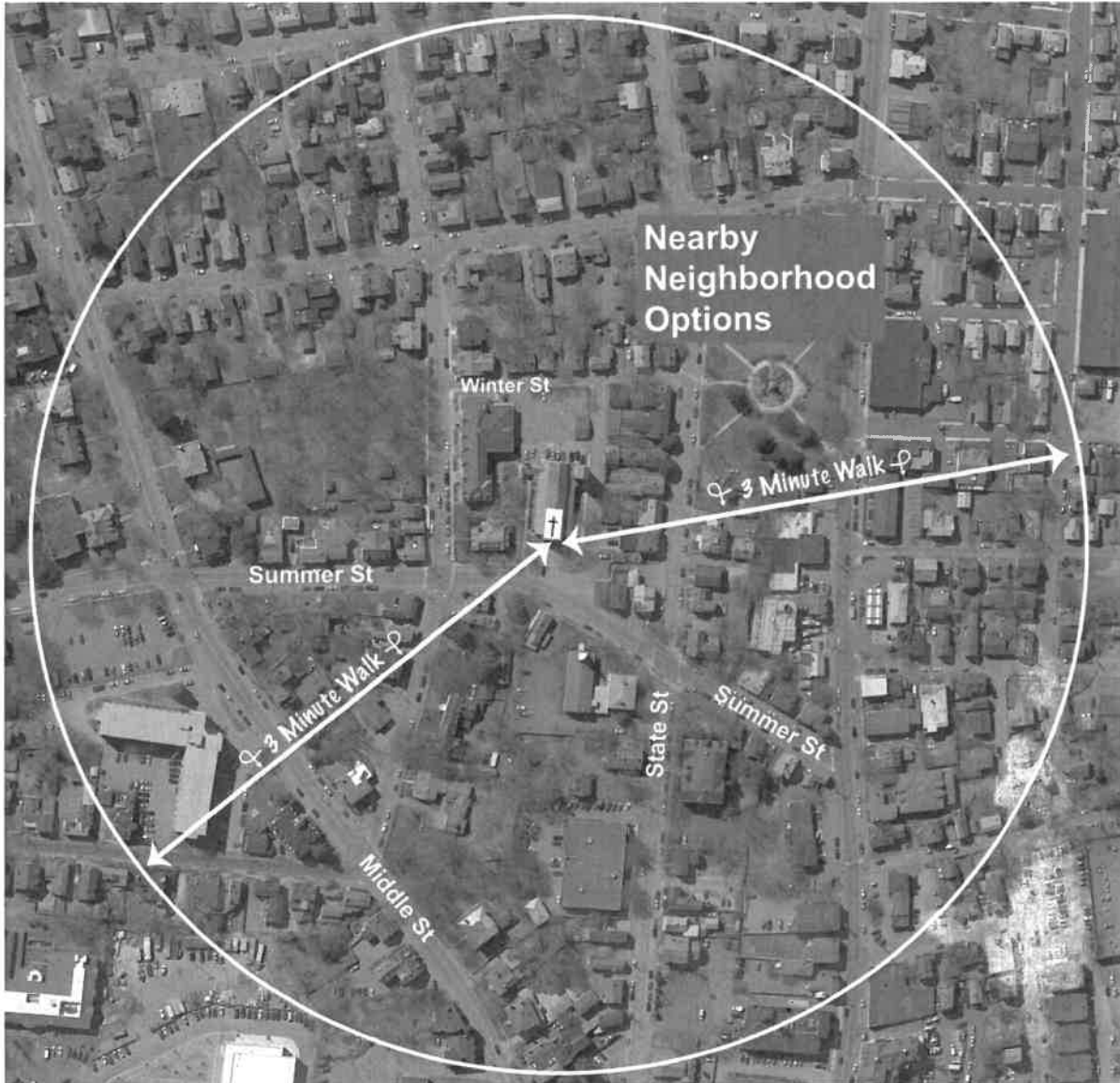


Rendering showing parking designs that provides same or more spaces, as well as, providing expanded campus financial and charitable endowment options

Second, negotiations with neighbors could yield more parking. The most obvious partner is the office condominium association at 600 State Street, where apparently the church has been renting spaces, though they seem to go mostly unused. The parking lot in back of that building is almost exactly the same size as the proposed parking lot that would replace the old school building, is largely empty on weekends, and is a little closer to the church than the city lot at Middle and Miller. Other neighbors might be willing to negotiate the sale of land or easements for additional church parking, directly adjacent to the church on Austin Street, or with access leading to Summer Street in front of the church.. (see slides below and Appendix 7.)



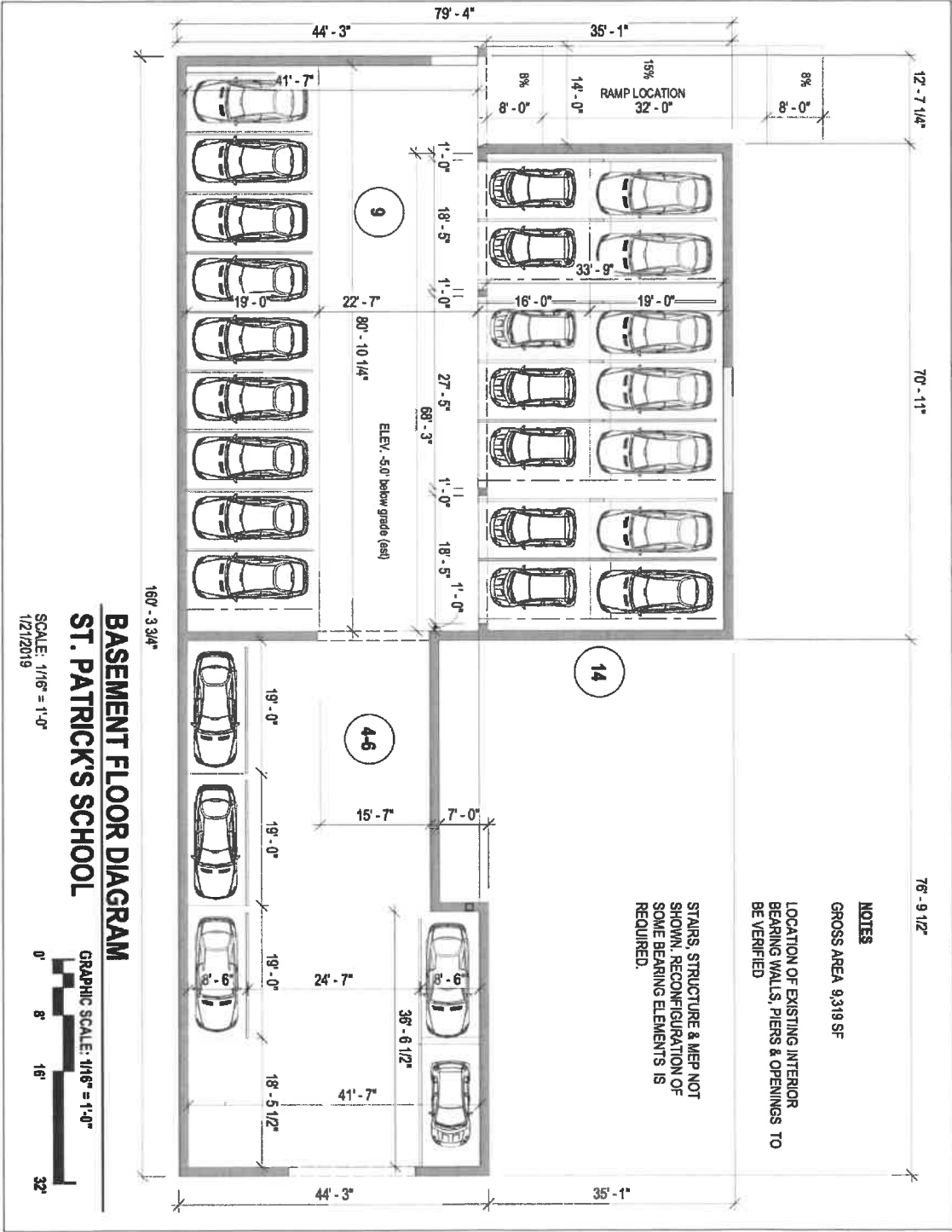
Aerial Photo of Church and surrounding Buildings and Streets showing where additional parking would be within a quick walk.



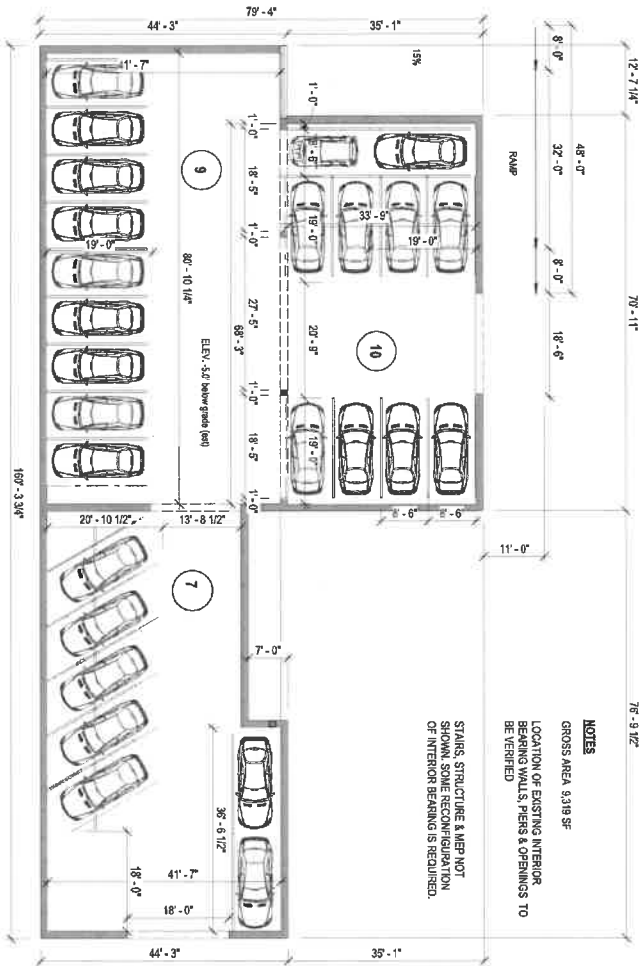
Aerial Photo of Church and surround parking areas and buildings within a quick three minute walk.

Third, tenant parking for the occupants of a new and repurposed school building can be created in the basement of the building (See slides below. Also in Appendix 8.)

Under Building Parking for 28 to 29 Spaces



*Under Building Parking for 26 Spaces -
Uses different ramp entrance*



BASEMENT FLOOR DIAGRAM (ALTERNATE)
ST. PATRICK'S SCHOOL
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"
1/2/2018

As will be shown, some possibilities for the building require no more parking than the school

needed and / and one proposed use might accompany a shuttle service between one of the public parking garages and the building.

Indeed, the reasonable baseline for an acceptable level of traffic and parking availability connected to the property is St. Patrick's School when it was operating on the site. In addition to a number of employees who parked and worked at the school, a parade of automobiles driven by parents, twice daily, dropped off and picked up their children, filling Chatham, Winter and Austin Streets. No new use for the building should exceed this former level of traffic and parking intensity.

7. The Church as Landlord and “Best Practices”

The Catholic Church likely owns more property globally than any other institution in the world. And since the Church has been building and restoring property on both a grand and local scale for well over one thousand years, most of its holdings are historic in nature.

Owning so much real estate also makes the Church one of the world's biggest property managers, collecting billions of dollars in rent annually.³ Lending the Church access to the excellent facility and property management.

In the United States, the Catholic Church has been an often-prudent steward of its old school buildings. In a highly relevant study, *Building Assets: The Strategic Use of Closed Catholic Schools*, authors Ronald Nuzzi, James Frabutt and Anthony Holter, under the direction of Church leadership, describe the Church's repurposing of old and empty former school buildings and make a case for best practices.

They report that between 1965 and 2010, 6000 Catholic Schools in the United States closed. Of these properties, 25% were sold, 18% were leased or given over to other purposes, 7% were vacant, **but only 4% were raised.**⁴

As leaders and members of the Church themselves, the authors view saving old school buildings as a means to help the Church fulfill its mission. They suggest that poor decisions to dispose of these structures have too often been made in isolation. Even so, as the data suggests, demolition of old school buildings has been very rare.

The study indicates that leasing out old school properties has been an especially fulfilling choice.

Leasing arrangements included leases to charter school operators, childcare providers, community agencies, corporations, private schools, public school districts and religious communities. Some creative repurposing includes remodeling into housing for the mentally ill, senior housing, and community centers.

Under “Best Practices,” the authors of the study conclude:

While the church has a clearly stated spiritual mission that has endured for centuries, that mission is supported by its resources and can be advanced or inhibited by the thoughtful and strategic deployment of those goods. The land, buildings, and their contents constitute real property than can support the overall mission of the church and help provide the resources necessary to sponsor and direct the myriad ministries now common in contemporary Catholicism. Closed Catholic school buildings currently constitute a significant part of the church's patrimony in this regard.⁵

8. Building Repurposing Options

What follows are several options for the possible repurposing of the old St. Patrick's School building. Each is designed to meet the stated goals of the Parish and Diocese (see section #3 above). The strengths of each option vary by scenario in terms of the degree to which it furthers a particular goal. Based on the stated goals of Church leadership, each should compare favorably to the demolition / parking lot plan (discussed in section 5).

The following is table showing five financially modeled Repurposed opportunities for the Church:

Historic St. Patrick's School Building Re-purposing Financial and Charitable Endowment Options							
List of Potential Uses/Financial Feasibility Overview							
Proposed Use	Capital Required	Cost/SF	SF/Proposed Use	SF/Church Use	Vacancy	Net Operating Income	Value of Investment
<i>Residential-Mixed Use Concept:</i>							
Market Rate Apartments that Generate Income for the Church	\$6,569,652	\$187.00	21,627	3,900	5.00%	\$344,366	\$5,386,084
Below Market Rate Apartments that operate at Breakeven	\$6,569,652	\$187.00	21,627	3,900	5.00%	\$59,241	\$839,427
Market Rate Apts converted to Condos at Sale	\$6,569,652	\$75.00	21,627	3,900	5.00%	\$390,282	\$9,892,020
<i>Alternative Uses:</i>							
Retreat Center/Bed & Breakfast (Scenario 1) - 35% Vacancy	\$6,582,961	\$187.00	21,634	3,900	35.00%	\$1,424,920	\$17,811,494
Retreat Center/Bed & Breakfast (Scenario 2) - 65% Vacancy	\$6,582,961	\$187.00	21,634	3,900	60.00%	\$1,160,700	\$8,743,525
Office Space for Non-Profit Organizations	\$1,915,050	\$75.00	25,534	3,900	10.00%	\$139,787	\$2,150,562
Storage	\$939,090	\$30.00	31,303	3,900	10.00%	\$212,860	\$3,274,775
Assisted Living	\$6,582,961	\$187.00	21,634	3,900	7.00%	\$603,310	\$9,281,686
Notes:							
1. All uses, except for Office and Storage, assume the basement will be converted to parking use.							
2. All uses assume the Church would retain 3,900 SF (~40%) of the 1st Floor SF for their use.							

Please see the expanded benefits list for this and each different conversion option in Appendix 9 covering: Financial & Charitable Endowment Opportunities, Catholic Campus Uses useful in extending & expanding Parish life/Faith building Opportunities, Diocese Mission Benefits, Parishioner Benefits, Capital Investment, Parking Benefits, Community & Neighborhood Related Benefits, and New Sacred/Green Space.

A. Housing for a Catholic Community

Classroom Conversion to Residential Dwelling Units- 15 or more

- ❖ Housing for Parish Seniors
 - Lay Support on Site for Church activities
 - Walk to Daily Mass

- ❖ Housing for Growing Parish Families

- ❖ Housing for Parish Young Adults and Roommates

- ❖ Charitable Support of Parish/Diocese Members in Need or Crisis

- ❖ Church retains 40% or more of the First Floor for Parish Campus Purposes

- ❖ Create new Sacred/Green Multi-Purpose Parish in Nested Outdoor Space

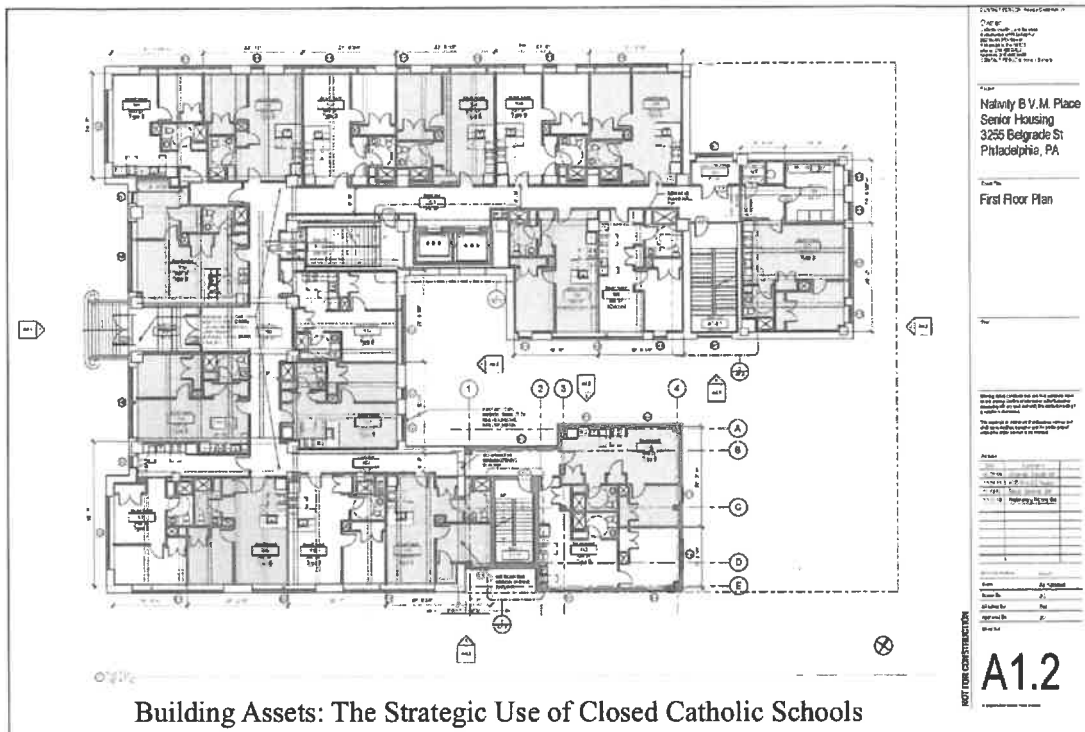
- ❖ Provide Parish with Large Financial and Charitable Endowment

- ❖ Provide Significant Neighborhood & Community Preservation Benefits

- ❖ Significantly Add to Bishop Labasci's Goals for wider Church of NH

(1) See the following Catholic School Conversion Example adopted from a highly relevant study, *Building Assets: The Strategic Use of Closed Catholic Schools*, authors Ronald Nuzzi, James Frabutt and Anthony Holter, under the direction of Church leadership, where they describe the Church's repurposing of old and empty former school buildings and make a case for best practices.

(2) Please see the expanded benefits list for this and each different conversion option in Appendix 9.



Building Assets: The Strategic Use of Closed Catholic Schools

FIGURE F2. First Floor-Proposed. Prepared by Blackney Hayes Architects. |

Original Layout of Nativity School and Architectural Renderings for Conversion to Senior Housing

Concept for Catholic Classroom Conversion to Residential Dwelling Units

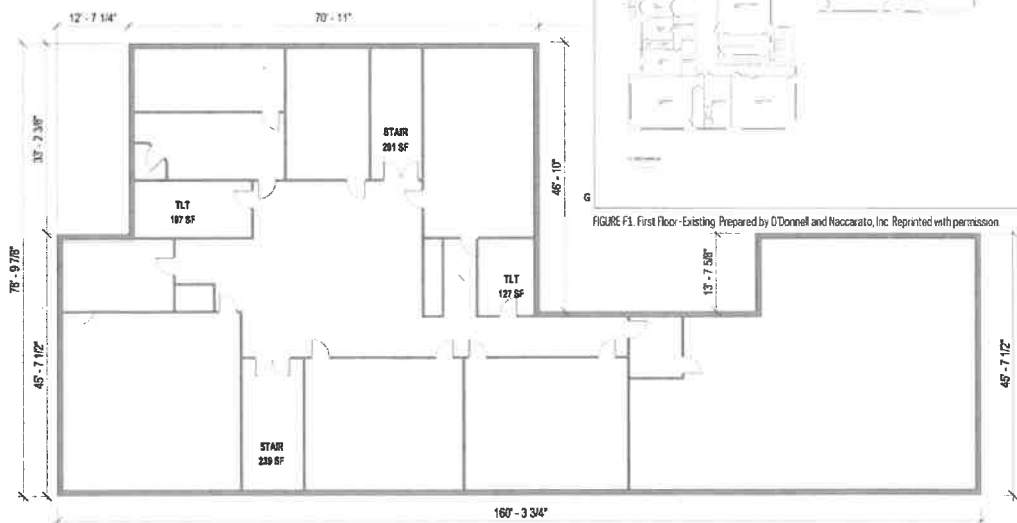
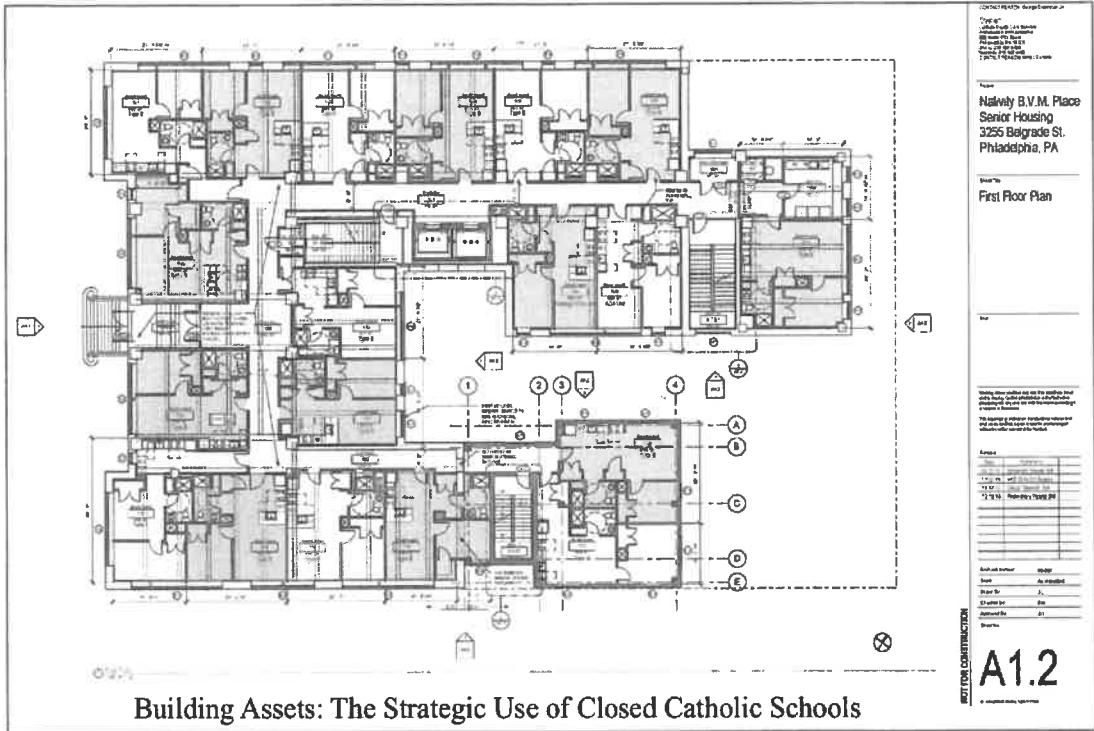
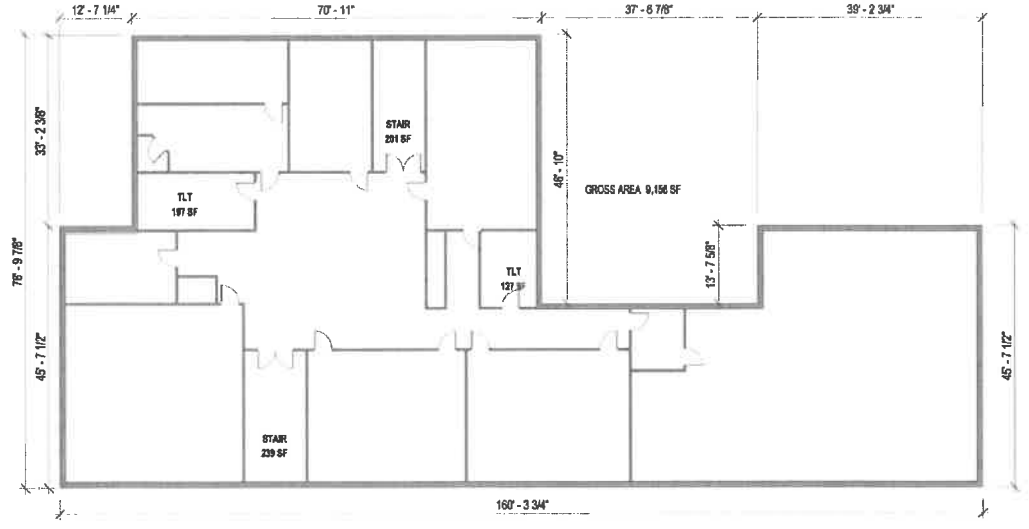


FIGURE F1. First floor-Existing. Prepared by D'Donnell and Naccarato, Inc. Reprinted with permission



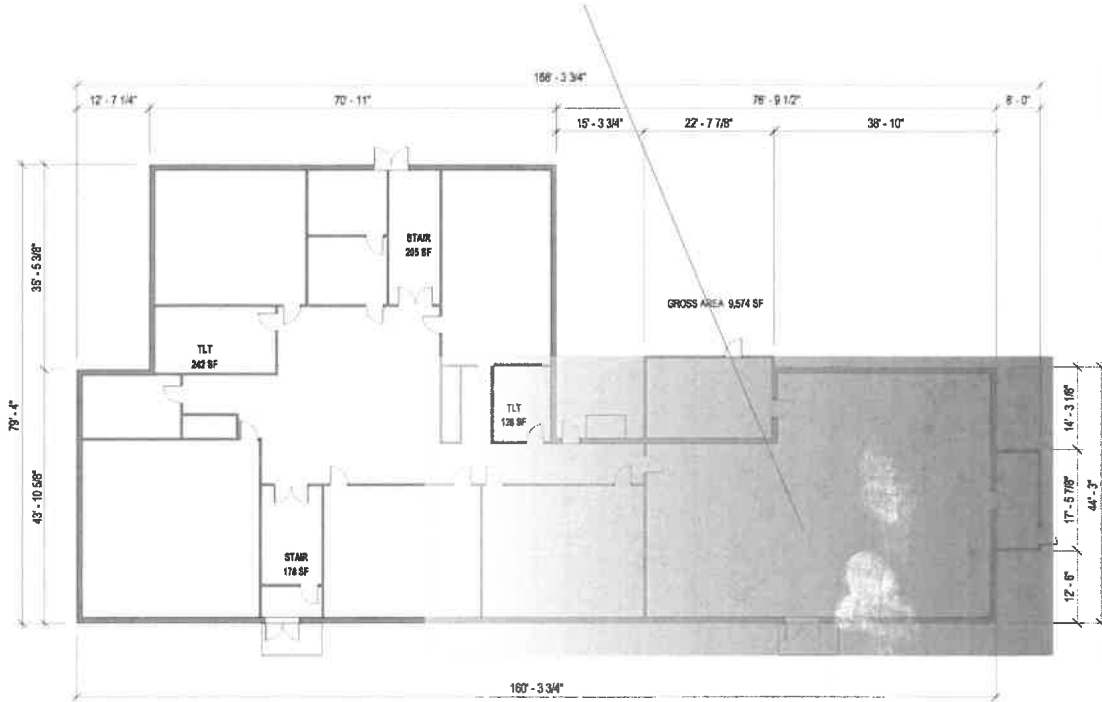
Building Assets: The Strategic Use of Closed Catholic Schools



12/2019

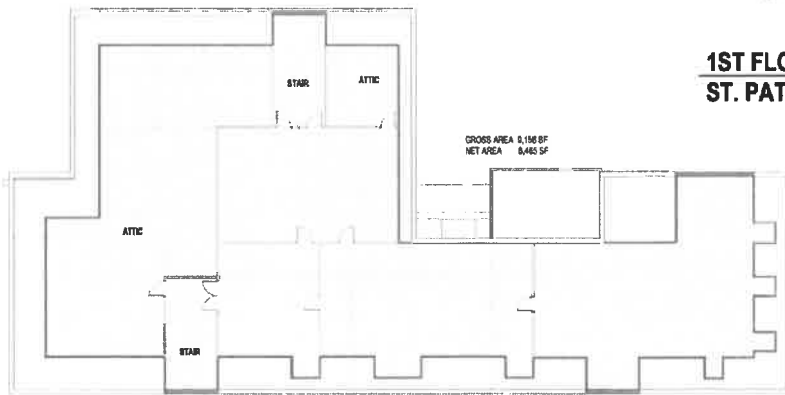
**2ND FLOOR DIAGRAM
 ST. PATRICK'S SCHOOL**

Shaded Area Showing Variable Amount of Retained Area of the 1st Floor



GRAPHIC SCALE: 1/16" = 1'-0" 1/21/2019
 0' 8' 16' 32'

**1ST FLOOR DIAGRAM
 ST. PATRICK'S SCHOOL**



GRAPHIC SCALE: 1/16" = 1'-0" 1/21/2019
 0' 8' 16' 32'

**3RD FLOOR DIAGRAM
 ST. PATRICK'S SCHOOL**

B. Retreat Center / Bed and Breakfast

Portsmouth is a highly desirable vacation location because of its Historic District, nearby harbor and seacoast; and of course, its surrounding natural resources. Lodging and Bed & Breakfast space for visitors remains in very high demand. The historic St. Patrick's School building could be re-purposed to serve as an exceptional Catholic/Spiritual retreat center, Bed & Breakfast. Placement next to the Magnificent Historic Immaculate Conception historic, which is designed with Cathedral details throughout, brings special grace to project. Another strength of this approach is that it offers the possibility of flexible common space, like a dining room, kitchen, function and meeting hall, Wedding support, Classrooms, art rooms, sacred art Galleries, Libraries and reading/meditative rooms with sacred outside garden/green space. Many additional features can be integrated to bring expanded regional Campus and Catholic leadership to Corpus Christi Parish. This option can have parking underneath or use a valet service to City or a combination thereof. The financial calculations include full parking below. A very large Financial and Charitable Endowment is possible thru this project, Please an extensive write up on this projects Benefits in Appendix 9.

Week or Weekend retreats Focuses:

- ❖ *Eucharist Intensive Immersion Weekend Experience stays*
 - *Walk to Masses*
- ❖ *Scripture- In-depth or short work focuses; Youth and Seniors and ESL*
- ❖ *Sacred Art –Icon making classes*
- ❖ *Sacred Literature, Classical and Catholic Art,*
- ❖ *Language study- Italian, Latin, Hebrew, Sacred art workshops*
- ❖ *Catholic and Christian film intensives, Wholesome crafts*
- ❖ *Travel and archeological studies of holy sites and Judeo-Christian History*
- ❖ *Rare Opportunity for Creating Faith Building Campus Center*
- ❖ *Begin day with Walk thru sacred gardens to Daily Mass*
- ❖ *Re-Design large existing open area for gardens, fountains, sitting areas*

- ❖ ***Very Large Financial & Charitable Endowment***
- ❖ ***Unique Regional Leadership & Parish Building Opportunity***

C. Assisted Living Facility

The repurposing of St. Patrick's School into an assisted living facility offers a number of advantages.

First, aid and comfort for the elderly and infirm falls squarely within the mission of the Catholic Church. Catholic Charities of New Hampshire currently operates one other assisted living facility, containing 36-beds in Windham, NH.

The old St. Patrick School Building is well-suited to conversion to assisted living units. In terms of size, the building could house roughly the same number of rooms as the Windham facility, or maybe a few less. If the dining room and kitchen were located on the east end of the building, then these spaces could serve a dual use, for both the assisted living community and the larger congregation.

Residents would be conveniently located. They could attend mass with ease in the church building next door. The neighborhood setting would offer unique advantages, especially for the more mobile residents, who could walk to a park, a coffee shop, or possibly downtown. Beyond the places they might reach on foot, they would have access to all that seacoast NH has to offer, including arts, dining, and a host of natural resources.

Since assisted living residents do not usually drive, demand for parking would be minimal. No parking spaces for residents would be required. Visitors can park on the surrounding street. Valet is even a possibility. Since little parking is required underneath, most of the underground parking can be provided for the Parish, if desired.

Quality assisted living facilities are in great demand and getting greater all of the time. The facility in Windham charges \$179 / day or about \$53,000 per year for each resident, The Church would obviously have the option of offering certain rooms at discount based on need.

This option provides a very large financial and charitable endowment. See Appendix 9 for a full exploration of the Benefits of this Campus Re-Development Option.

D. Office Space

Conversion to an Office Space use for local and regional non-profits is also strait forward to construct. One or more classrooms would be joined to form individual tenant offices. Joining one or more offices together allows for the valuable option of tenant expansion or contraction as the

need arises. As office use is primarily Monday to Friday, and users can have restricted weekend access hours, parking may be shared with the church during weekday office hours; and/or parking passes can be obtained from the city. The Parish can retain 40% or more of one floor for many, many wonderful Parish uses. This option also provides a long term financial and charitable endowment. It can be built with or without underground parking that would be for parish use. Please see Appendix 9 for a full exploration of the Benefits of this Campus Re-Development Option.

E. Storage Facility

Conversion to a Parish/Diocese/Non Profit storage facility is strait forward to construct. Storage facilities rent well in the area. Are very desirable and is a very low impact to the area. Access would be on Winter street out of Church view. The Parish would retain 40% or more of one floor for new and future purposes. The existing campus green space is redesigned for new Parish Sacred green space. This application requires little parking other than for loading and unloading. The Parish could decide to include no under building parking or retain up to 33 underground parking for the Parish's uses. This option also provides a financial and Charitable endowment. Although a smaller endowment, it requires low capital investment and allows the Church to easily repurpose the building anytime it desires in the future.

In general, this repurposing options requires the least amount of design effort, capital investment, and management. Simple storage rooms would be built in existing classes and other rooms. No upgrades to building HVAC or electric systems would be needed. Maybe a small ramp to dolly storage items into the building and perhaps a low cost freight/elevator would be added. Some seismic reinforcing may be added a few \$ per SF in build out cost, as experience from other project in town has shown. (Storage probably requires some strengthening of its structural members to meet current building codes.) Parking and Loading/Unloading will be at the rear of the school on Winter Street. Perhaps, a small, second unloading area behind the far end of the school, near the parking lot entrance could be added. Please see Appendix 9 for a full exploration of the Benefits of this Campus Re-Development Option.

F. Other More Specialized Options

- Another School, perhaps with a specialization.
- Transitional refugee housing. The property's walk-to-everything location and Portsmouth high demand for service workers could make the building a perfect place to transition people from other parts of the world, especially Latin America, into life in the United States.

- Museum Space. Perhaps a philanthropist somewhere has a museum concept that would fit well with the mission of the Catholic Church.

G. Combined Options.

- **The Parish could elect to combine one or more of the above options to meet Parish goals and explore various endowment and campus options.**
- A neighborhood café combined with another option is always a possibility. As this would be a good place for neighbors and parishioners to meet and mix.

H. Financing Support

Each redevelopment project has the capacity to stand on it own in terms of qualifying for traditional financing. The building itself and its location in Portsmouth and within the Church serve as a strong *existing* financial project investment. Large historic tax credits are available for this type of project. State grants for historic preservation may also lend some support. Parishioner anonymous donations for seed/design money may be of benefit. Extend the benefits mortgage rate returns to small parish and Diocese contributors may also be of benefit to small investors. Large donors could be paid back with interest, as well as recognition. There are many standard and creative means to support excellent projects.

9. Conclusions

The old St. Patrick's School remains a valuable part of the parish's and diocese's patrimony.

By preserving and re-developing the beautiful historic school building inconjunction with the Campus, the Corpus Christ Parish and the Diocese of Manchester can achieve their own goals as well as the serve the interests of the larger community.

The process will take work and time, but the results can be deeply worthwhile for all parties concerned. The building's usefulness to the Church and campus can continue, its equity grow

into a generous financial and charitable endowment, and, its existence continue to bless and beautify the city and neighborhood we share.

10. Contributors

This report is respectfully submitted to the City of Portsmouth, NH, Corpus Christi Parish and the Bishop of Manchester by a committee of neighbors and friends.

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² <https://www.catholicnh.org/assets/Documents/About/Bishop/PAL-Vision.pdf>

³ Ritchie, Joshua, "How Churches Invest Their Money." The Catholic Church reported collecting \$81.7 billion in revenue from real estate in 2001. <https://blog.mint.com/investing/how-churches-invest-05172010/>

⁴ The fate of 24% of the closed schools is unknown

⁵ Nuzzi, Ronal J., Frabutt, James M., and Holter, Anthony C., *Building Assets: The Strategic Use of Closed Catholic Schools* (Alliance for Catholic Education Press at the University of Notre Dame, 2012).