

A Parishioners Guide
to
The Grounds Master Plan for Holy Spirit Episcopal Church

INTRODUCTION. In the early summer of 2020 several Parish members expressed their concern about the condition and future of the landscaping around the Church grounds. Out of that concern Kent Watson, a landscape architect and Vestry member, determined that the timing was right to review the existing conditions and prepare a master plan for the future of all the grounds owned by the Church.

At its September 2020 meeting the Vestry approved the “Outline for a Grounds Master Plan” for the Church that Kent had prepared ([link to Outline](#)). As stated in the outline Kent emphasized “It is important to understand that the preparation of such a plan must be the product of a process, whereby the church family and its leaders work together towards its completion over a reasonable time period.” This guide lays out the key milestones and a schedule for the process that will be followed, to the extent possible under the current COVID restrictions.

1. **Project Announcement/Call for Participants.** An announcement about the Master Plan Project will be sent by email to Parish members, posted on the HSP website, featured in the weekly *Spirited Times* and the monthly Paraclete. It will ask that those interested in participating in the planning process respond by stating their interest and any particular expertise they might bring to the process, as well as the best time for meeting.
2. **Organizational/Orientation Meeting Set.** Based on the response to the Project Announcement, a date and time for the first meeting will be set as a virtual meeting using the Zoom platform. Kent will host the meeting and explain the process of creating a Grounds Master Plan that can be implemented over time. (Under more normal circumstances this meeting would be held in the Parish Hall with participants seated around tables with copies of the Base Map, and an enlarged version on an easel, along with a lecture pad for taking notes.)
3. **Grounds Base Map.** Prior to the meeting Kent will send out a PDF map of the existing grounds, depicting the existing buildings, walks, trees, street lights, shrubs and other improvements that comprise the total landscape of the Church grounds. Participants will be requested to carefully review the map and mark it up with any errors or omissions they find, which can then be shared with the group during the first and subsequent meetings.
4. **First Working Meeting.** Kent will open the meeting with a welcome to the participants followed by a brief introduction of the meeting’s purpose, namely to

engage all the participants in the process of crafting a Master Landscape Plan for the grounds. Each participant will be asked to share their particular interest and/or skill that would be applicable to the process. Overall there would be two areas of interest: Current/Near Term Conditions; and Long Range Considerations. Interest areas related to **Current/Near Term Conditions** include but are not be limited to:

- Infrastructure – includes irrigation system, its condition and viability for the short term; Light poles – existing status (NW Energy?), upgrades, relocation (relates to any future courtyard plan); Church sign and plant bed – replace, upgrade or? Walkways – condition, upgrades.
- Courtyard – Colorado blue spruce condition, age, prognosis, disposition. Design of space if/when removed; use of wood.
- Plant materials – Condition of existing plants, determine those that should be removed and replaced. Consider conversion of non-functional lawn areas to other more water conservative/sustainable ground covers. Should there be a re-design/change layout of current plant beds?
- Columbarium – any immediate concerns, considerations?

Long Range Considerations: This Group would focus on Implementation (see below) and what the HSP complex might look like in 10 or 20 years, including but not limited to:

- Condition, role and future of the existing boulevard trees along both Gerald Avenue and South 6th Street East
- Sanctuary Building. Can or should it be enlarged to accommodate a larger congregation?
- Parking Lot. Maintenance; accommodating external demands for use.

5. **Preliminary Long Range Master Plan.** This would be the graphic distillation of the above process that displays the output of each group as an overall Long Range Master Plan for the Parish grounds. This plan – in PDF format – would be available for review and comment by the entire Parish family.
6. **Implementation/Phasing/Funding.** Concurrent with some of the above activities would be the Group that reviews the Preliminary Plan, obtains draft cost estimates for the various components and sets out the priorities for implementation of the plan based on logical phases for construction and priorities relative to current and proposed Parish activities. Also, the group would explore the possibility of outside funding sources, including but not limited to the creation of “Memorial” portions that a family or an estate might fund as a memorial to loved ones.
7. **Finalize and Adopt Long Range Master Plan.** After a reasonable time for review and comment of the Preliminary Plan, the document would be updated to reflect any changes and published as the Final Plan for review and approval by the Vestry.

(KEW - 2/10/21; 3/4/21. Vestry approved 2/10/21)