



CITY OF COLONIAL HEIGHTS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CITY ANNOUNCES PLANS FOR COLONIAL HEIGHTS BAPTIST CHURCH June 16, 2008

Colonial Heights City Council announced its Vision for the future of the Colonial Heights Baptist Church property.

Background

- City bought 5 acres and church building in October 2005.
- City paid \$3.75 million for the property.
- Congregation rented the property for 30 months.
- Congregation vacated the property May 5, 2008.
- City earned a substantial sum after costs during the rental.
- City purchased the church to control the future reuse of the property.

City Council believes it is the entity to transition the property from its former tax-exempt institutional use to a future use where the property is taxable and makes a productive contribution to the City, as a whole, and especially the southern end of the Boulevard.

City Council wants a positive economic outcome for the property that is also good for the neighborhood. The property was acquired three years ago to assure a productive reuse and that remains the goal of City Council. The City contracted for a commercial appraisal and analysis of reuse options, and its plans for the future use of the property are on that appraisal.

The City considered reuse of the building for public purposes and rentals. The cost to own and operate the building could exceed \$250,000 per year. Operating costs and debt service exceed what the City can presently afford. Revenue estimates from rentals could not cover these operating costs, so redevelopment planning has become the City's focus, rather than reuse considerations. City Council chose to expand the Community Building on Roanoke Avenue to provide for rentals and public functions instead. A new teen center and an expansion of the senior center are also planned for that facility.

The City plans to salvage assets remaining in the building. City staff is removing items that can be used by City operations. The City will then offer the contents of the building for public sale before the end of Summer 2008. Individuals and groups will be invited to tour the building and offer bids on the contents and fixtures. Numerous items including pews, light fixtures, windows, heating and cooling equipment, plumbing and mechanical items and more will be up for sale. After this public sale, the City will use specialty contractors to salvage remaining asset value from the church building.

Anything remaining in or on the building after the public sale could be sold to these specialty contractors.

After all public sale and salvage operations are completed, the City will demolish the church building to make way for a new commercial development plan. The new plan will include property totaling about six acres. The new site will include the church property, a portion of Chesterfield Avenue fronting the church property, and a large parcel of City-owned green space between the Boulevard and Chesterfield Avenue in front of the church property. The new site will front the Boulevard and have access from the traffic signal at Boulevard and Lee Avenue. The commercial appraisal estimates the value of the consolidated properties to be worth over \$4 million when sold for commercial development. A new commercial development on the property will generate significant tax revenue for the City.

The City has been and will become more active in its marketing of the property for the new development. The City has engaged Clifford B. Porter of Porter Commercial Realty in Richmond to serve as broker for the sale. Mr. Porter and the City's staff will market the property for redevelopment. City staff reports some initial interest from commercial developers.

Further inquiries about the property can be directed to City Manager Richard A. Anzolut, Jr. at (804) 520-9265 or citymanager@colonial-heights.com.