

# DECISION/DIRECTION NOTE

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**Title:** Application to Develop a Multi-Purpose Annex  
St. John's Designated Heritage Building,  
Anglican Cathedral of St. John the Baptist  
16 Church Hill  
DEV1900091

**Date Prepared:** August 14, 2019

**Report To:** His Worship the Mayor and Members of Council

**Councillor & Role:** Councillor Maggie Burton, Planning and Development Lead

**Ward:** 2

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**Decision/Direction Required:**

To seek approval for the revised design of a multi-purpose annex extension to the Anglican Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, located at 16 Church Hill.

**Discussion – Background and Current Status:**

At the July 8, 2019 Council meeting, Council considered an application for the revised design of a multi-purpose annex extension to the Anglican Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, 16 Church Hill, and agreed to defer the decision for further consideration. Following a meeting of members of Council with representatives of the Anglican Church on July 16, 2019, members of Council agreed to call for a public information session. Through an e-vote of Council conducted on July 17, 2019, a public information session was set for July 25, 2019 to gain public input on the design of the proposed annex.

There were approximately 118 attendees at the public information session, held at the Cathedral, and arguments were presented both for and against the proposed development. Deputy Mayor O'Leary chaired the session and Councillors Collins and Hickman were also in attendance. The objective of the session was to discuss the design of the building, however other related issues were discussed.

The subject property is located in Heritage Area 1, the Institutional and Open Space Districts of the St. John's Municipal Plan and is zoned Institutional (INST) and Cemetery (CEM). As the proposed extension may affect the adjacent cemetery, the applicants are working with an archaeologist and the Provincial Archaeology Office on this application. The Cathedral is a City designated Heritage Building, as well as a provincial Landmark Registered Heritage Structure and a National Historic Site of Canada. It has been recommended that the applicants contact Heritage NL and Parks Canada with respect to this development. The site is also within the St. John's Ecclesiastical District National Historic Site.

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# ST. JOHN'S

### Design of the Proposed Annex

The proposed annex will contain church offices, a multi-purpose room and other related functions and is proposed to be approximately 373 square metres and two-storeys in height. Due to the sloping grade of the site, the portion closest to the Cathedral will be one-storey.

The application is being reviewed by staff for development approval and this decision note is only for the exterior design of the building. Following two Built Heritage Experts Panel (BHEP) meetings, the applicant revised the drawings and resubmitted the attached plans for Council's approval. The proposal is a modern glass design which does not meet the standards of Section 5.9.4 Heritage Area Standards (Table) of the Development Regulations. As per Section 5.9.4, new buildings that do not meet the standards may be approved by Council through a comprehensive design package. Therefore, this proposed design requires Council's approval. The attached renderings and elevations form part of the comprehensive design package.

The BHEP and staff felt that the overall structure is a departure from other structures in the heritage area and lacked character to make it blend in with the surrounding area. It was felt the building, in its current design, competes with instead of complements the Cathedral. The BHEP discussed a number of ways to make the new building blend with the Cathedral, such as incorporating features of the Cathedral and structures in the neighbourhood. The BHEP further recommended that the glass should be highly-reflective and the modern sunshades be removed. These two recommendations have been incorporated into the latest revisions and the applicants have adjusted the colour to blend better with the Cathedral.

From the public information session, there is little support for the proposed design. While much of the discussion at the session revolved around the siting of the annex, many written comments were submitted respecting the design. In general, participants felt that the proposed design is too modern for this historic area and does not blend with the Cathedral. There is also a worry of setting a precedent for modern buildings in the Heritage Area, in particular the St. John's Ecclesiastic District (this is a commemorative federal designation).

At Council's request, the applicant submitted three renderings of the proposed building in the context of the surrounding area. Following the public information session, the applicant submitted three additional drawings to better illustrate the design of the building.

### Possibility of Human Remains under the Footprint of the Building

At the information session, questions were raised regarding the finding of human remains on the site in 1999 during remediation test excavations for a leaking underground furnace oil tank. According to the Archaeological Monitoring Report, prepared in association with a Geotechnical Investigation Report in 2017, human remains were unearthed and collected during the 1999 excavations. For a period, the remains were housed at Memorial University of Newfoundland, but have since been returned to the Parish and reburied on Cathedral property. The Cathedral indicates these were the remains of three individuals.

In November 2017, the applicants prepared geotechnical test excavations and dug four test pits in the area of the proposed annex footprint. Archaeological monitoring was required and no human remains were found in any of the test pits. This should not be taken as a determination that no burials exist within the proposed annex footprint. Data suggests that remains may be present but will not be known until more research is conducted. Also, the

proposed site of the footprint has shifted slightly toward the centre of the lot, so the 2017 test pits may fall outside of the footprint. If the applicants pursue this site, it is recommended that the City permit the excavation of the footprint of the building in accordance with recommendations set out by the Provincial Archeology Office to determine if there are human remains within the footprint of the building.

#### Remaining Burials in the Larger Churchyard

Data presented at the information session indicates the cemetery adjacent to the Cathedral may be the largest burial site of waged working men in pre-confederation Canada. Cathedral records indicate there are approximately 4600 to 5500 individuals buried in the churchyard, however there is some question of the reliability of the records. Further, the exact location of the burials is unknown. A photograph from the late 1800s appears to indicate that a large area of the cemetery was excavated, and it is believed that any remains found at that time were moved to the Forest Road Anglican Cemetery. There are questions to be answered regarding this site, such as where are the human remains in the remainder of the site, and who is buried here. Methods to be used to determine the location could include ground penetrating radar or other methods deemed appropriate. Further research of this site will inform public education and proper acknowledgment of the graveyard and who is buried here. They should not be lost to memory.

#### Use of the Proposed Annex

One of the main arguments for the proposed development presented at the information session is the Parish's need for this space to continue and enhance community outreach. The Parish partners with other organizations for several events throughout the year, and the new annex, including a commercial kitchen and meeting space, will help expand these services. The annex will also make the Cathedral wheelchair accessible so that more people can enjoy the historic building. Any revenues from the proposed annex will assist in restoration costs of the Cathedral. The City recognizes the importance of creating ways in which historic buildings can be maintained and enjoyed by the public .

#### Site Plan

The site plan of the proposed development was presented at the information session. Should the development proceed, it is recommended that the applicants enhance the Cathedral Street side of the site to create more pedestrian connection to the street which contains the adjacent Masonic Temple (also a designated heritage building). This may be achieved through landscaping and trail work, as there is a proposed exit and patio on the Cathedral Street side of the proposed building.

#### Process

This proposed development has presented a lot of discussion around public input on the design of buildings in relation to designated heritage buildings and heritage districts. Therefore, it is recommended that public consultation should be a standard part of the development review process for applications of this nature.

**Key Considerations/Implications:**

1. Budget/Financial Implications: Not applicable.
2. Partners or Other Stakeholders: Not applicable.
3. Alignment with Strategic Directions/Adopted Plans:  
*A Sustainable City* – Plan for land use and preserve and enhance the natural and built environment where we live.
4. Legal or Policy Implications: Not applicable.
5. Privacy Implications: Not applicable.
6. Engagement and Communications Considerations: Not applicable.
7. Human Resource Implications: Not applicable.
8. Procurement Implications: Not applicable.
9. Information Technology Implications: Not applicable.
10. Other Implications: Not applicable.

**Recommendation:**

Based on the concerns expressed at the public information session, it is recommended to refuse the proposed design of the annex extension to the Anglican Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, located at 16 Church Hill.

For further discussion:

- Should the applicants wish to proceed with a revised design on the same footprint as proposed, it is recommended that the City allow excavation of the foundation to determine if human remains are located under the building site. Should human remains be found, it is recommended that the siting of the proposed annex be re-considered. Should no remains be found, this will confirm that the cemetery (CEM) Zone line can be interpreted to exclude the footprint of the building (see separate staff memo on interpreting the zone lines).
- It is recommended that the City explore opportunities with other partners to further investigate the larger churchyard and determine the location of human remains on the remainder of the site. Further opportunities to inform the public on the cultural significance of this site should be explored (for example, interpretive panels).

**Prepared by/Signature:**

Ann-Marie Cashin, MCIP – Planner III, Urban Design and Heritage

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Approved by/Date/Signature:**

Ken O'Brien, MCIP – Chief Municipal Planner

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

AMC/dlm

**Attachments:**

Location of Subject Property

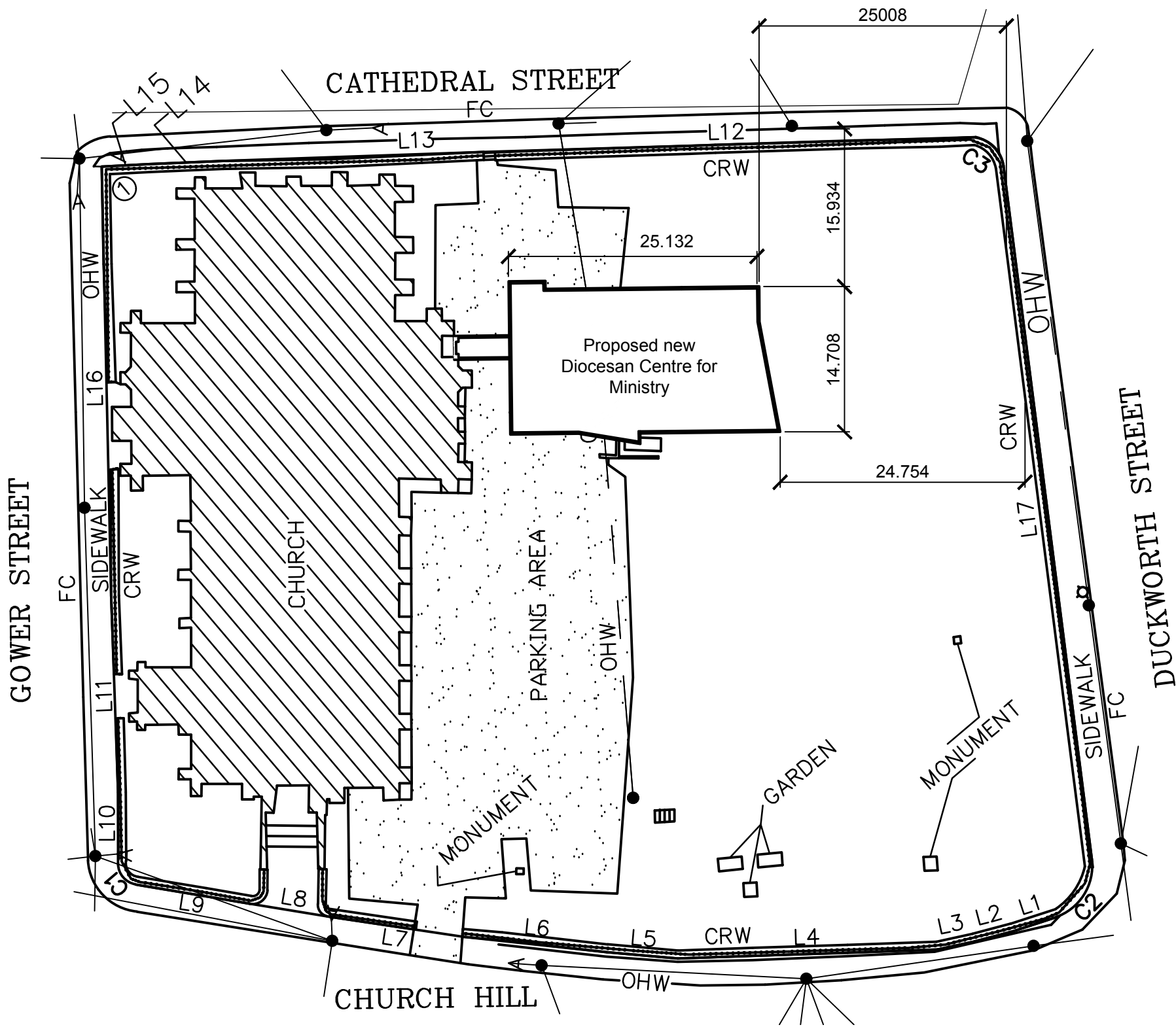
Applicant's Revised Submission

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**Location of Subject Property**  
16 Church Hill



NUM	BEARING	DISTANCE
L1	N67°37'38"W	4.426
L2	N64°39'20"W	4.035
L3	N62°03'15"W	3.830
L4	N51°40'31"W	26.242
L5	N44°44'03"W	7.189
L6	N43°37'38"W	14.521
L7	N41°10'23"W	13.995
L8	N40°24'58"W	7.971
L9	N40°09'15"W	11.651
L10	N40°10'18"E	7.220
L11	N38°15'31"E	19.892
L12	S51°27'51"E	49.171
L13	S51°41'22"E	26.374
L14	S52°06'04"E	7.465
L15	S52°50'25"E	4.804
L16	N39°02'43"E	43.380
L17	S33°01'08"W	70.657



















ST. JOHN'S CATHEDRAL

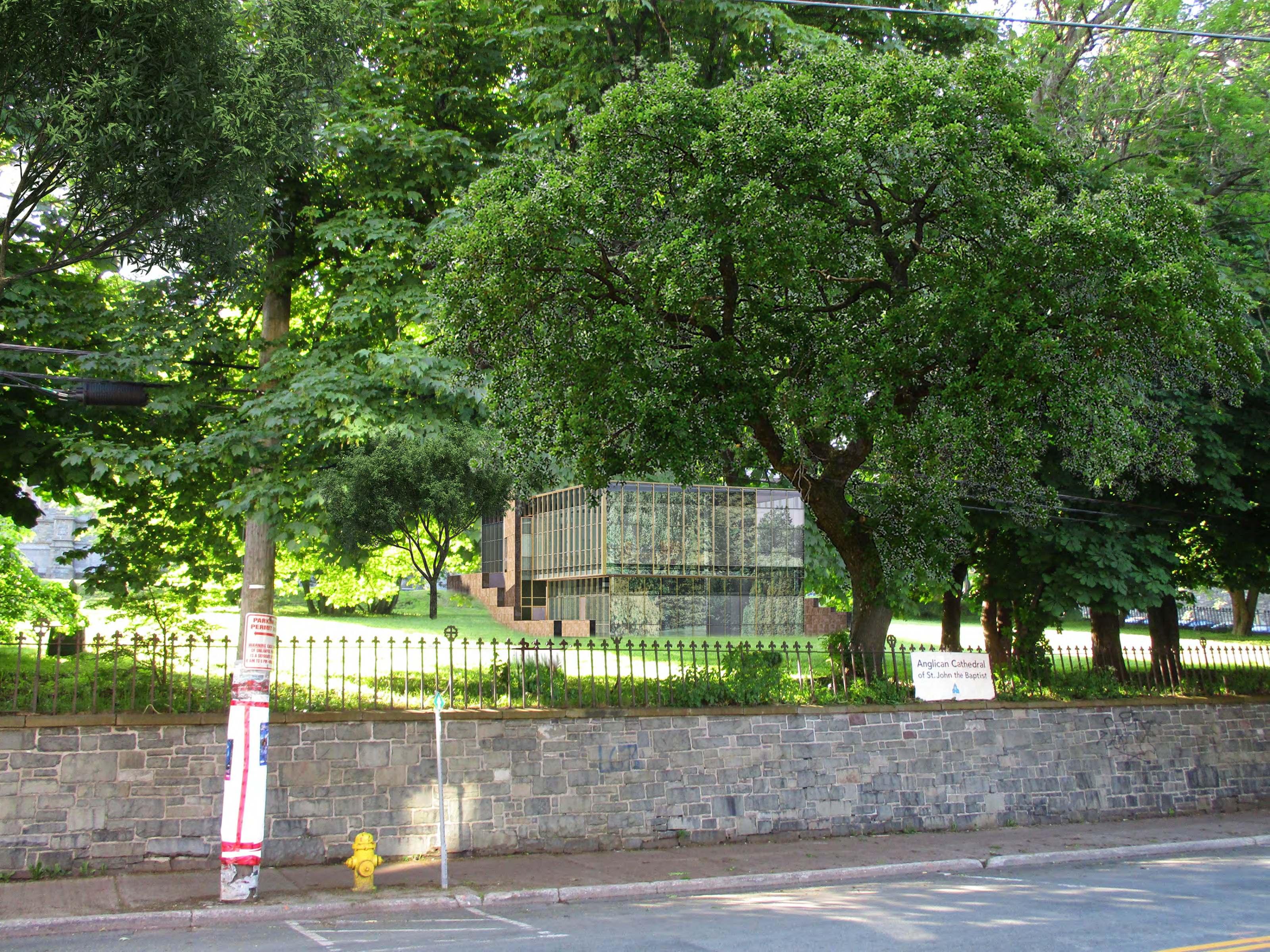
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ENFORCEMENT CONDUCTED BY  
CITY OF ST. JOHN'S  
PARKING SERVICES DIVISION  
24 HR. ENFORCEMENT











PARKING  
PERMIT  
HOLDING CARD  
OF UNLAWFUL  
IS A SEPARATE  
F. 6 AM TO 2 PM - 40

Anglican Cathedral  
of St. John the Baptist