

Star of the Sea Parish
2250-150 Street
Surrey, BC
V4A 9J3

June 18, 2017

REGISTERED

Dear Father Dion,

We as Parishioners feel compelled to reply to the Parish Master Plan Newsletter that you sent to all Parishioners dated June 2017. It is clearly not for the benefit of new Parishioners that have joined the Parish since the PMP was established as noted in your opening remarks. It is more of a self serving document to convince Parishioners that the entire process of developing the PMP was open and honest. We, along with hundreds of other Parishioners, have objected to the methods you have used to push this Plan through without the input of all Parishioners. Our Archbishop has also been involved and continues to ignore the plight of our Parish.

Unfortunately, we do not have the ability to speak from the Pulpit as you do, nor do we have the mailing list for all Parishioners. Consequently, Parishioners are receiving one side of a very divisive and unfortunate story related to the Parish Master Plan. You have preached from the Pulpit that you have been appointed to the Parish by the Archbishop to be a "Father" as a father is in a family. You said that a Father makes decisions for the entire family and that the family must adhere to those decisions. It was brought to your attention after that sermon that this attitude is long outdated in our society and that BOTH parents and often the entire family are involved in major family decisions. I believe most insulting was when you said to me, (David Edison) in the presence of my wife, that I was representing a bunch of old ladies that were praying before a statue of the Virgin Mary and that they would have no effect on changing the Plan. My wife then challenged you by saying that as Catholics we were always encouraged to pray to the Blessed Virgin in times of crisis. We will not dwell on the various sermons that you have given over the past year in an attempt to win support to a flawed Parish Master Plan.

Once again, we want to be totally clear that we are NOT against a Parish Master Plan. Our appeals to you, our Archbishop and the Vatican are against the method in which you are attempting to push this Plan through without inclusiveness.

In the past we were served very well by our former Pastor, Father Stanley Galvon. He did indeed begin the Parish Master Plan and create the Parish Facility Infrastructure Council. However, over the past year Father Galvon has reluctantly stated to 6 different Parishioners (two of the Parishioners have signed below) that:

- There was no agreement for a Parish Center in the Plan up until the time that he was reappointed to the Archdiocese.
- There was no Rectory replacement in the Plan up until the time that he left and that he thought that the existing rectory was sufficient.
- That he was proposing a Plan to close Holy Cross Church and Star of the Sea Church and that he had told Jim McKinlay (consultant) to move slowly with the process and that he wanted to engage all Parishioners in the discussions.
- He was amazed at the change in Jim McKinlay (consultant) after he left and at how rapidly the entire Plan was progressing.
- That he was saddened by the division within the Parish.

It should be noted as well that the Concept Proposal Draft #1 dated Feb. 4th, 2014 developed by the Infrastructure Council and titled Use of Decision Tree to Determine Best Course of Action was distributed to Parishioners in April 2014 as you stated. An interesting quote from this document is "If we choose the option to construct some new facility space at the Good Shepherd site, then we need to begin the work of determining what facilities are needed, consulting with parishioners and neighbors....." None of this was done. Who determined the mega Parish Center was required? Who shut down the consulting with Parishioners and neighbors? You had just arrived in the Parish and steps were bypassed for some reason.

Furthermore, Father Galvon, on behalf of the Archdiocese stated that you and your committees are at step two or three of a twenty step process required by the Archdiocese in order to get permission to build the mega Parish Center. He also intimated that our Parish would not receive permission to spend the 18 plus million dollars for a 26,000 sq. ft. Parish Center, to quote you "The largest facility of its kind in South Surrey".

It should also be noted that late last year the Archdiocese approached a very influential Parishioner and asked him to gather 4 or 5 other Parishioners to tour the new Saint Nicholas Church and Parish Center to see what was accomplished for less than 4 million dollars. Two of the signators below were included in the group. We all agreed that the facilities were beautiful, well constructed and as much as would be needed by our Parish. The takeaway from the tour by all six of us Parishioners was that Star of the Sea Parish would not be allowed the 18 plus million dollars for the mega Parish Center and Rectory replacement. It seems that our Archbishop (through silence) is leading you and your Committees to believe that the mega Parish Center will be constructed.

Clearly the Parish Master Plan changed upon your arrival without the input of Parishioners as you have claimed. The 82 sworn affidavits by long serving, dedicated Parishioners that serve on almost every committee and ministry, (all three Churches within the Parish), stating that they were not given a presentation on the PMP nor did they "overwhelmingly" approve of it has fallen on deaf ears.

Now to address the Seismic Upgrading and costs to repair Holy Cross Church. We asked you and the Archdiocese a number of times for a copy of the Seismic Report on the Parish Churches and were never given a response. We then contacted the British Columbia Provincial Government and asked for definitions of "medium risk" in the event of an earthquake. Both Holy Cross Church and Star of the Sea Church are rated as "medium risk." We were referred to their website that defines risk in the event of an earthquake.

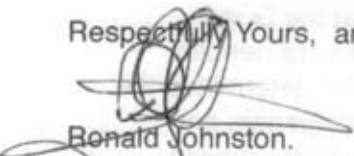
Medium Risk--- Isolated damage to building elements is expected; non-structural elements (such as bookshelves, lighting) are at risk of failure. Non structural upgrades required. Building to be upgraded or replaced within the Capital Plan when it has reached the end of its useful life.

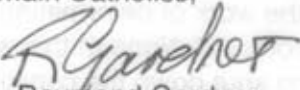
Neither of our two Churches falls within the guidelines above. Each Church requires some minimal repairs on account of failure to spend normal maintenance dollars over the past few years in anticipation of a sale. Rather than spend these dollars it appears that you are prepared to disrupt the spiritual life of the dedicated Parishioners that attend these two Churches to build a mega Parish Centre. It is also inconceivable to us that you believe that building this structure will, to quote your submission to the Congregation for the Clergy, "for the promotion of the sacred apostolate, particularly the catechesis of the young....", especially when the existing school gym and field is rarely used after school hours. As well, the ball field has a sign on the fence stating non use without permission of the Pastor. In addition to this, the City of Surrey has one of the largest sports complexes on the lower mainland only four blocks away from the proposed mega Parish Center.

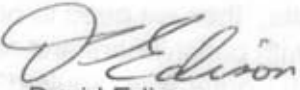
It should also be noted from the Archdiocese web site that 383 structures within the Archdiocese have had Seismic Structural Risk Ratings and 148 of these are rated as HIGH and a further 101 of the buildings are rated as MEDIUM. There is little evidence of other buildings being repaired, let alone being sold off as is proposed for our Parish. Again, there is no need to sell or close these two active, vibrant and growing churches.

Father Dion, we can only say that it would be beneficial for you and your Committees to review Pope Francis' Evangelii Gaudium: Apostolic Exhortation on the Proclamation of the Gospel in Today's World. (24 November 2013). The section "No to Spiritual Worldliness" items 93 to 97 are the impetus to our continuous challenge to this non inclusive Parish Master Plan. To quote but one line, "It can also lead to a business mentality, caught up with management, statistics, plans and evaluations whose principal beneficiary is not God's people but the Church as an institution." Contrary to Father Mallon's teachings on Divine Renovation, wherein he states that the complainers will tire and go away. We will not go away. We believe in Jesus Christ, the Holy Catholic Church and the rights of Parishioners.

Respectfully Yours, and we will remain Catholics,


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