

Community Meeting Questions and Answers: September 14, 2020

Compiled by 1st Ward Office; development questions answered by LUCHA, other questions answered by 1st Ward Office [Nicholas Zettel, Policy Director, nicholaszettel@the1stward.com]

(1) Questions about funding

Will the church receive any tax deductions, credits or breaks for selling to LUCHA that it would not receive if selling to a for profit entity? Will the project as planned receive any other type of government subsidies?

For LUCHA: can you please provide information on funding for the project? Specially, source(s), overall cost and per unit?

During the meeting, it was explained that no additional benefits were expected for potentially selling the church to LUCHA.

LUCHA is anticipating a mix of public and private sources to finance the project. The tentative list includes:

- Bank financing
- Federally funded housing programs administered by the City of Chicago and CHA
- State of Illinois capital grant
- Illinois Affordable Housing Tax Credit

At this point in the project timeline, LUCHA's total costs and per-unit costs are still preliminary and not ready to be shared.

[Submitted by LUCHA]

Will any of this be TIF funds?

Since the project is not in a TIF District, there will not be any TIF funds applied to this project. [1st ward Office]

Questions for the Alderman / Ward Office

Why did you provide an opinion on the project before the community had a chance to meet tonight?

Here is what Alderman La Spata said to *Block Club Chicago* (link here: <https://blockclubchicago.org/2020/09/10/logan-square-church-could-become-all-affordable-housing-project-under-new-plan/>).

"I think it's a really special project. I think so much of the time what happens to these older churches is they get converted to luxury condos," La Spata said, noting that's what happened to the church where he got married, [the nearly 120-year-old Episcopal Church of the Advent](#).

“To have a church building that is telling such a different story where it’s going to be functioning in the future as housing for working families and individuals at risk of displacement from our community — that’s a special thing. It’s a really great new way to go with these properties and I’m really excited by the opportunity to bring this to the community,” La Spata said.

[1st Ward Office]

Is everyone weighing in on the project from Logan Square or the 1st Ward?

The 1st Ward Office typically conducts an introductory meeting for most projects, like the meeting that occurred on Sept. 14. Once that occurs, the Ward Office typically works with neighborhood zoning review groups for particular, detailed project review. In this case, the Ward Office reached out to specifically invite members of all community zoning partners in Logan Square to the meeting (in alphabetical order: Grassroots Illinois Action, Greater Goethe Neighbors, Logan Square Chamber of Commerce, Logan Square Neighborhood Association, Logan Square Preservation, Somos Logan Square, and other informal groups of West Logan Square Zoning Canvassers and stakeholders). It is the belief of the 1st Ward office that staff or representatives of each of these groups were present at the meeting. The 1st Ward office also accepts written feedback on zoning cases.

LUCHA met with several community groups to gather input prior to the Sep. 14th meeting and will continue to engage with groups of residents and community stakeholders as the project moves forward. The 1st Ward office expects that there will be some future community meeting, as well. If you are interested in partnering with the 1st Ward Office on zoning review, please email zoning@the1stward.com.

[1st Ward Office]

My question is: What confidence do we have that the alderman can control construction? I live directly across from the church. Our many nearby construction projects have been a mess. Super loud every day at 7:00am, against ordinance. Knocked down cable lines. Trash cans, and Porta-jons everywhere. Couldn’t leave our garage some days. We contacted the alderman over and over, nothing was done.

There are already multiple safety issues (equipment, unfinished jobs, port of jons) all over the block. Additionally, there is effectively no parking for the residents already on the block paying taxes and fees. What will be done to address this and the issues that come with large scale construction projects?

It is the understanding of the Ward office that this resident or a neighbor has reached out to the office, and we are working on reviewing these issues. Additional inquiries about specific construction concerns can be sent to the Alderman’s office.

In general, the Ward Office has recently reviewed and revised construction response protocol, and works closely with Dept. of Buildings and Dept. of Transportation to ensure that City regulations are followed at construction sites.

[1st Ward Office]

Will there be a series of community meetings that align with the proposed project timeline?

The 1st Ward office understands that LUCHA may meet with Logan Square groups, such as Logan Square Preservation. The 1st Ward Office expects there to be additional community outreach and meetings, with specific details or forums to be determined. The 1st Ward Office often hosts different types of zoning, policy, and construction preparation meetings with community groups, neighbors, and the general public, and appropriate forums will be selected for future outreach.

[1st Ward Office]

I'm curious to hear from the ward office: how many requests or questions about the need for affordable housing does the office usually get? How many people are experiencing homelessness or are unable to afford their rent in the 1st ward currently?

The 1st Ward Office frequently receives calls about neighbors experiencing homelessness, and staff work with numerous community partners and City offices to ensure that services are provided. Unfortunately, during the COVID-19 pandemic, calls regarding homelessness have increased. The 1st Ward Office also receives periodic calls regarding affordable housing, and works with community partners on a variety of affordable housing needs. Additionally, there are numerous residents, community groups, and neighborhood associations throughout the Ward that assist the office's efforts by emphasizing the need for affordable housing in zoning meetings, policy meetings, and written feedback to the office.

[1st Ward Office]

Construction

do they plan to make any changes to the exterior of the building? the diagram is difficult to determine

The most significant structural change proposed to the exterior is the new dormer at the south (alley-facing) elevation of the building to meet light and ventilation requirements for the units being added in that space. Other than that, minor modifications to windows and window openings.

Below is an image of the proposed south elevation, and a current picture of the building. The third story of windows surrounded by the darker gray trim is the new dormer. The dormer is designed to extend

out from the sloped sanctuary roof and be flush with the brick wall below it.



[LUCHA]

Are there any plans to use sustainable/green materials, building/construction practices, energy sources, infrastructure, landscaping, etc.?

LUCHA's commitment to green and sustainable development led us to the current plan of rehabilitation and adaptive reuse while touching the site as lightly as possible to reduce infrastructure and embodied energy costs.

LUCHA has not determined if they will seek a green certification path but will continue to explore as the design moves forward. At minimum, the project will meet the requirements of the City of Chicago's sustainability code, which mandates a certain number of points scored for various green components, including mechanical systems, lighting, appliances etc. In addition, LUCHA is exploring other green strategies as feasible within the budget and the existing structure of the building.

[LUCHA]

What is Lucha committed to ensuring that this will not happen moving forward and keeping the block and neighborhood clean during construction?

Can you provide neighbor testimonials from how you were as a neighbor during construction? We have already had the city issue fines for not abiding by code with dirt and dust from truck pointing as well as waste disposal on common city property?

How many jobs will be created by this project?

LUCHA is planning to meet with 1st Ward staff and immediate neighbors in the coming weeks to understand concerns around construction on the block. LUCHA will directly inform neighbors about the start of construction, and staff will continue to be accessible during construction. LUCHA acts as owner's representative during construction, working in tandem with our architect and contractor to make sure construction follows all applicable codes and regulations. As part of our commitment to being good neighbors, LUCHA will follow strategies including proactive communication and problem solving, and maintaining a log of contact information and conversations if any issues arise, all to ensure there is consistent and responsive follow-up on LUCHA's end.

[LUCHA]

Sale

is the sale complete or is it still pending with a contingency of a zoning change?

The building is under contract at this time. [LUCHA]

Units & Size

(1) How many units in total are being proposed (both new and remodeled/existing)?

For other projects, advocates often raise issues of a lack of units with 3 bedrooms or more. Why is LUCHA not proposing any additional 3 BR unit Six?

is the unit sizes determined based on what is feasible or what is needed. families seem the hardest to find affordable house for in the current development trends I feel like.

(2) Would it be possible to build more units? If yes, what would you need to make it work?

(3) Based upon the tenant testimonials, the present occupants are single mothers with children. Will this be the predominant standard for future occupants? Will seniors also be considered?

Leasing: How will rents change? How will existing residents be affected during construction? Will they have priority to leasing the renovated/new units?

How will this project help other workers who work in the neighborhood stay in Logan Square, who may be having trouble finding affordable housing near transit in the neighborhood?

What about if the current tenants don't meet the criteria

Will the units be for Logan square residents and how will they be marketed to residents?

As discussed in the meeting, LUCHA will target new residents through its community partnerships and leasing processes that conform with Fair Housing Laws. LUCHA is planning for the development to be a general multifamily building, meaning no set-asides for specific age groups. According to its mission and funding requirements, LUCHA follows affirmative fair housing marketing practices and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, national origin, ancestry, sex, physical or mental disability, religion, familial status, gender identity and sexual orientation, and other applicable protected classes.

In approaching the question of the unit mix, LUCHA and the design team were trying to strike a balance of what was possible within the footprint of the building, the unit types that LUCHA knows are in demand in the community, and adding enough units to support the financial operation and maintenance of the building for the long term.

One of LUCHA's overarching goals is to prevent displacement in the communities it serves. Current tenants will have priority to leasing units in the new development. Likely there will be relocation needed to carry out rehabilitation, but LUCHA is planning for that relocation to happen within the building in order to minimize inconvenience to tenants. LUCHA also follows policies such as the Uniform Relocation Assistance Act (URA) as required by any funding we receive.

[LUCHA]

(4) What is the maximum number of new tenants that will be allowed in the additional 10 units?

The maximum number of tenants allowed in the new units will conform with City of Chicago Municipal Code and income-qualifying standards of the affordable housing financing institutions involved in the project.

[1st Ward Office]

(5) What percentage is considered affordable for a rent with 54k income?

The City of Chicago follows U.S. Housing and Urban Development guidelines for Area Median Income (AMI) in order to regulate affordable housing units. Generally, AMI is a statistic that assesses a

household's income relative to its housing size, within a specific metropolitan region (in this case, a typical multi-county Chicago Metropolitan Region). The City's AMI table is available in an easy to read table here: https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/dcd/supp_info/area_median_incomeami.html

According to these regulations, rents to a household earning around \$54,000 might be: a household of three (in some circumstances), and probably a household of four (the 60 percent AMI limit for a household of four is \$53,460). A household of five earning around \$54,000 would earn between 50 percent and 60 percent AMI.

[1st Ward Office]

Zoning

Is this proposal in a transit oriented development area? Does that mean we can add more units to this site?

Yes, the subject property is a transit-served location due to its proximity to the California L. This transit-served location will be leveraged in the zoning process to allow for the existing building to remain in place, without adding parking spots for the units.

[1st Ward office]

Parking

will this affect parking at all? when the new construction went up on mozart many streets became permit.

The 1st Ward Office is prepared to work with adjacent residents to assess the benefits of residential permit parking in the area, as well as the availability of parking in general. The Office has started surveying the parking at non-commute times prior to the September 14 meeting, to assess the availability of parking in permit and non-permit zones.

[1st Ward Office]

Other

What is the status for garden, attic and coach house units ordinance for affordable housing?

Ordinance 2020-2850 is currently in the Joint Committee of Housing and Real Estate and Zoning, Landmarks, and Building Standards. It received a hearing in July. The meeting details and Ordinance can be found here: <https://chicago.legistar.com/MeetingDetail.aspx?ID=795005&GUID=8AF98288-F351-493A-84B7-ACE2A29E8DF7&Options=info|&Search=>. Alderman La Spata generally supports expanded use of accessory dwelling units and coach houses.

[1st Ward office]

What a great way for this property to continue its legacy! Are there ways the Alderman, and City more broadly, could deepen their commitment to affordable neighborhoods and bring resources to the table to add more units to the proposal?

Is it possible for LUCHA to acquire more churches to turn into more affordable housing? How can this continue to happen in the neighborhood with other empty properties?

In some ways, this project is extremely unique as many other churches or other historic buildings don't already include affordable housing. Preserving the existing units is the main reason LUCHA became involved in the project, and adding units to the sanctuary is part of the financial strategy allowing LUCHA to do so. For other churches or other empty properties, as long as there are resources available, LUCHA is always willing to explore adaptive reuse strategies to create affordable housing or meet other community needs. LUCHA is interested in sharing its experience with this project to inform other projects like this in the future.

Given that this project is rehabilitating an existing building without expanding its footprint, it is difficult to see how more units could be added to this specific project without impacting the units that could be leased to households with more than 1-2 people.

[LUCHA]

How can this project serve as a model for future religious institution conversions?

If a project such as the proposed Humboldt Park United Methodist Church is deemed financially feasible by its affordable housing underwriters, and residents approve of the zoning map amendment to change the use of the property, this project could serve as a model simply by demonstrating that a church can be converted into an affordable housing development.

[LUCHA]

What will the tax rate be in comparison to their immediate neighbors?

Can you please confirm the amount of taxes the church currently pays?

Property tax information is publicly available from the Cook County Treasurer, here: <https://www.cookcountytreasurer.com/>. You can find property tax PIN numbers at the Cook County Assessor (<https://www.cookcountyassessor.com/address-search>) or Cook County Viewer function (<https://maps.cookcountyil.gov/cookviewer/mapViewer.html>).

[1st Ward Office]