



# That's the Spirit!

Even more great things are happening in the neighbourhood...

## There's been a lot happening since the last neighbourhood newsletter.

We continue to worship at the Maritime Conservatory, although our shared summer services are held at St. Andrew's United at Coburg & Robie. In the fall we will be back at the Conservatory with our programming and outreach ministries continuing at St. John's House at 6233 Willow Street as usual.

We have an architect working with us to design our new building called SPIRIT Place. Michael Napier Architects have designed a complex that includes both housing for seniors and a smaller church space. We want to provide a new, smaller multi-use flexible church space and provide apartments for seniors who may already live in our neighbourhood and wish to remain part of their community.

In the Halifax area, most affordable housing for seniors is limited to choices in areas outside of the city. SPIRIT Place will also provide the opportunity for the GLBT (gay, lesbian, bi-sexual and transgendered) community to feel that they could have a place that is known to be a welcoming community, and to live and grow old in a place that is affirming and celebrates diversity. In addition, we want to provide housing to those on reduced incomes by providing a centrally-located affordable housing option.

We have made application to HRM for a plan amendment and a Development Agreement for the project. There are a considerable number of steps that need to be followed in obtaining

these approvals and we are starting on this journey. We feel that the redevelopment of such a complex will have a positive effect on the whole neighbourhood and will be a win-win situation for all in the community.

We formed a Community Liaison Group that consists of neighbours and church members to provide input as the design is developed. This group was the incentive behind an Open House that was held as a method to share information on the project to date.



**Visit SPIRIT Place Online**

Get the latest news and developments on the progress of SPIRIT Place.

[www.spiritplace.ca](http://www.spiritplace.ca)

## Good for Our Community

- Churches are known to provide a positive and stabilizing influence within communities.
- In communities with places of worship, democratization is enhanced.
- Churches act as an anchor point and a place of safety.
- SPIRIT Place will make its space available for neighbourhood activities and meeting space for community groups.
- Additional space will likely be available for community interest groups or non profit groups to share.
- The streetscape of the proposed SPIRIT Place will provide green space both around and inside the new building. Mature trees will be preserved to provide quiet areas to benefit the community, as well as, SPIRIT Place residents.
- Seniors are a quieting influence on neighbourhoods; not noisy, not known to operate vehicles late at night or in the early mornings. Seniors tend to walk to stores, appointments, etc.
- SPIRIT Place will serve as a model for other communities who will be faced with similar situations in the years to come. The intergenerational relationship between church, seniors and community organizations is a model of beneficial cooperation.



### Report on the Open House

In late April 2010, a group of nearly 100 people attended the SPIRIT Place Open House. The purpose of the Open House was to bring the adjacent neighbors and wider community up to date with the status of the proposed development of SPIRIT Place and to gather feedback from interested parties. Preliminary drawings were available for all to see. We heard both positive and negative responses from the community. The positive responses consisted of excitement and best wishes for this innovative and community minded project. The negative responses centered around the height and mass of the building and the concerns with traffic and parking.

### In Harmony with Our Neighbourhood

After the Open House, the architects revised the designs to include more greenspace around the building, a more appealing streetscape, a setback on the top floor, and plan to have colours that better blend with Willow Street.

The traffic study done by a professional Traffic Engineer advises that Spirit Place will not have any significant impact on traffic in the area. Likewise, a consulting engineer has advised us that the size and shape of the proposed building will not cause any wind tunnel effect in the vicinity of the building.

### The Journey Continues...

Although this project has been a lot of work for predominately volunteers, we continue to keep a broader community vision in mind as we move ahead. We want SPIRIT Place to be an integral part of the local community and to serve as a model of how church and neighbourhoods can live together, share community dreams and give the city a soul and a unique look.

We plan to continue to liaise with the community through the Community Liaison Group. The next stage will be to concentrate on the opportunities and needs of seniors. We are now looking for community members who may be interested in providing input regarding both the interior of the apartment portion of the building and the activities that may be part of SPIRIT Place. If you are interested in learning more about this volunteer opportunity please contact us at [info@spiritplace.ca](mailto:info@spiritplace.ca).

We will continue to work with the architects as they develop the design of SPIRIT Place, to ensure that we create a place that enhances our community.

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit our website for further details and the latest updates.  
[www.spiritplace.ca](http://www.spiritplace.ca)