St. Martha’s Commons Community Vision

“We believe that the St. Martha’s Project should be a community commons that brings together people from diverse generations, spiritual and personal backgrounds, races, and physical and mental capabilities to promote the well being of all and the environment in which they live.”

Demographics Excerpt

The population within the 1 mile radius is aging. For example, in the year 2000, residents over the age of 65 within a 1 mile radius accounted for only 0.84% of the total population but by 2010 this age bracket had increased to 1.38%. This is about 18 more residents over the age of 65. Again for the 60-64 age bracket, the distribution changed from 2.71% to 5%. This amounts to an increase of 256 residents who will reach retirement age in the next 2 years. This trend has also increased the median age for the neighborhood from 28.0 years old in 1990 to 32.2 years old in 2010.

St. Martha’s Focus Site Recommendations

1. Put the Property on the National Register of Historic Places:
   - This will help preserve the church and cemetery for future generations to enjoy and protect the property from unwanted development.
   - Beyond simply preserving and protecting the site, registration will have the added benefit of opening new funding sources through historic preservation grants.

2. Establish A Non-Profit Entity:
   - This recommendation results from the necessity of a singular entity to provide for the ongoing management of the St. Martha’s Commons.
   - Beyond simply preserving and protecting the site, registration will have the added benefit of opening new funding sources through historic preservation grants.

3. Create A Museum Within the Church:
   - A “Women of Ford” museum could be operated within the church itself without using any permanently fixed exhibits, preserving the architecture inside.
   - We have identified the former St. Peter’s Boys’ Home dormitory building as containing the greatest potential around which to center some of these operations.

4. Identify A Facility for Operations:
   - Many of these recommendations cannot be achieved without adequate facilities.
   - Our conclusion regarding the need for a non-profit health care clinic was identified through analysis of the community profile and inventory of community assets which identified a gap in non-profit health care clinical services.

5. Establish A Non-Profit Health Care Clinic:
   - Development of Multi-Use Gardens, Trails and Landscaped Pathways:
   - The need for multi-use gardens was identified through meetings with the St. Martha’s Planning Session.
   - In addition to the new gardens, other portions of the site could be devoted to a walking trail for seniors living in the Villages facility.

6. Develop Multi-Use Gardens, Trails and Landscaped Pathways:
   - The need for multi-use gardens was identified through meetings with the St. Martha’s Planning Session.
   - In addition to the new gardens, other portions of the site could be devoted to a walking trail for seniors living in the Villages facility.

7. Establish a Community “Farmers” Market:
   - It is also recommended that the site serve as the location of a new community farmer’s market.
   - A community market would draw attention to the site on a regular basis which would help to establish the St. Martha’s Commons concept and solidify the commons as a destination for community partners.

8. Mutual Agreements With Community Organizations and Non-Profits:
   - The success of the Commons plan will likely be determined by the strength of coordination and agreements with existing non-profit entities serving the local community.

Site Recommendations

District 1: St. Martha’s Commons
- Recommendations listed in the center
- Put the property on the National Register of Historic Places
- Establish a Non-Profit Entity
- Create a Museum Within the Church
- Identify a Facility for Operations
- Establish a Non-Profit Health Care Clinic
- Develop Multi-Use Gardens, Trails and Landscaped Pathways

District 2: Joy West Apartments
- Continue current use
- Incorporate residents in Commons activities

District 3: Abandoned Homes
- Demolish buildings
- Green space will serve as a buffer

District 4: Christ Child Society
- Continue to build upon existing relationship with St. Martha’s Commons

District 5: Former Islamic Center
- Continue Islamic community service use

District 6: Existing Commercial
- Continue current use
- Improve parking lot with landscaping and pedestrian friendly walkways
- Monitor future commercial proposals

District 7: Wooded Lot
- Preservation

District 8: Wayne County Community College
- Option 1: Repurpose for technical or training facility
- Option 2: Demolish campus and encourage cottage style senior assisted living housing

District 9: Detroit Urban Lutheran School
- Advocate for a K-12 school to once again occupy the building

District 10: Existing Industrial
- Continue current use