

BEVO LOT TASK COMMITTEE Overview Spring 2019

Since July 2018, the BLT Committee has been meeting once or twice a month to gather information on possible options for the Bevo Lots' development. The task force understood its overall goal - ultimate responsibility - as one of discernment: To discern what God would have for UPC in the coming decades if not centuries. We have revised that to be: To discern God's purpose for the highest and best use of the lots in UPC's ministry to Christ at this time and into the coming decades and centuries.

We identified eight areas or first steps to get the group started. Each member agreed to begin looking at one or more of these and to make at least an initial report early in our deliberations, as follows:

1. Theological discernment about the future of the Bevo Lots and UPC's ministry in this place;
2. Real estate considerations, including the size of the Bevo Lots; zoning and other City of Austin development considerations, including height limitations and West Campus special issues; and architectural visioning, among others;
3. Determination of what currently exists around UPC and more generally in the West Campus area which are and will continue to affect UPC, including the transition of the area from former single-family housing to high-rise multi-purpose buildings and the continued transition of the area into the future;
4. Review of the current legal relationship with the Coop (the lease with the Coop for the Bevo Lots as well as the parking arrangement for the parking garage across the street, including time lines of the arrangements);
5. Relationships with others who might have an interest in what UPC will do – and UPC with what they may do, including the Congregational Church across 23rd Street from the lots; University Baptist Church; University Methodist Church; Baptist Student Ministries; APTS; UT; Coop; and University Area Partners;
6. Presbyterian Polity as it relates to the ownership and use of the Bevo Lots;
7. What other churches in other parts of the country (around the world?) are doing with their land, including churches in close association with - direct ministry to - other universities as well as churches in urban settings with undeveloped land (or possibly land to be redeveloped) who are in transition;
8. Communications and interactions with congregation, staff, and Session.

Thus far, we have heard from three different entities with varying concepts for this space. The first presentation was exploring a big developer's concept on a building predominately used as a student housing facility (much like the other high rises in the West Campus area and the one currently being constructed across San Antonio Street from our church called Moontower).

The second presentation was from a multifaceted youth recovery program that serves high school through college age students and is interested in building a high-rise to house a high school and dormitory, recovery offices and university sober living "apartments". Their desire is to partner with the community (UPC, the Coop, UT and the surrounding areas) to create a "welcoming and healthy living" space for all in addition to spaces for their programs.

The third presentation was a Skype conversation with Mark Elsdon of Pres House in Maddison, WI. Mark has been instrumental in creating and running a student housing building on the campus of University of WI, which is adjacent to the Presbyterian church he pastors.

Though these presentations were made individually, our committee can see how many elements of each could overlap in a final decision for the Bevo Lots use.

Our committee keeps in regular contact with the Coop as the Bevo Lots lease with the Coop does not expire until August of 2021 or otherwise agreed to. We are also investigating possible legal representation on behalf of UPC for potential future developments with another entity.

Below are a variety of different UPC values and neighborhood opportunities our committee has been weighing as we discern the future of these lots. It is by no means a complete list but does show the complexity of the opportunity as this exploration continues.

Openness to the guidance of Jesus Christ & inventiveness of the Holy Spirit

UPC's core mission to UT and college students

Green space & daylight, especially in a changing neighborhood

Multipurpose community spaces (indoor & outdoor)

Helping maintain a healthy, welcoming, beautiful area

Neighborhood opportunities for additional retail

Neighborhood opportunities for additional housing

Needs & hopes of our mission partners in Austin

Ongoing state of west campus redevelopment

Parking & accessibility needs for UPC

Redefining and inventiveness of spaces

Involvement & relationship with the University Co-Op

Involvement & relationship with other local churches

Opportunities for new ministries or partnerships

Fiscal responsibility to UPC (short- and long-term)

Income for normal UPC operations

Ensuring sustainability of our current building & infrastructure

Short-term commitments versus long-term flexibility

Prudence about the time & bandwidth of the congregation

Imagining our church facility now and into the future for generations to come