



Message from Parish Executive on Ellwood House Extension

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

As you may know, the idea of developing an extension to Ellwood House, located on the St Thomas campus, has been under discussion for some time. Today we are writing with some important and exciting news regarding this initiative, the first in a series of updates you will receive in the coming weeks.

What's this project about? If approved and funded, the Ellwood House Extension (EHX) – a project led by the Ellwood House Board of Directors – will add a further 35-38 units of affordable housing for seniors living in our community. It's proposed that the new units be constructed on the site of the former parish Rectory (which would be demolished) as an *extension* of the current Ellwood House building. For further details, please consult the *Information Briefer* (attached and also available at the church).

Why is it needed? There is a chronic shortage of affordable housing for seniors in our community. This project is even more urgently needed today: COVID-19 has further highlighted the critical need for more affordable housing, with seniors as one of the priority groups. The Ellwood House Extension will grow our capacity to provide housing for individuals who need it the most.

Why is it important to St Thomas'? Our parish has a rich history of service to the community, through partnerships with campus partners – the St Thomas Nursery School, Braeside House, and Ellwood House. This extension will enlarge the caring circle of service to children, adults and families in our community. Partnering with Ellwood House and the Anglican Diocese of Ottawa in the development of this project will support the Diocese's commitment to addressing homelessness and affordable housing and is a tangible expression of our mission – "*Serving as the hands of Christ*".

What's the latest news? The project has been gaining momentum since May when the City of Ottawa committed a \$100,000 forgivable loan to Ellwood House to conduct pre-development work. A steering committee with representatives of the project partners – the Ellwood House Board, the Parish and the Diocese – has been meeting regularly to shape this initiative, supported by a project manager (Cahdco, a not-for-profit affordable housing developer). Several pre-development studies and reports are underway to obtain City planning

approvals, confirm a project budget, and explore funding opportunities. All this to make the project shovel ready for development funding.

How will this impact our campus? The design of the extension will be consistent with that of the existing Ellwood House building. In fact, Colizza Bruni Architecture, the firm retained for this project was responsible for the design of Ellwood House almost 30 years ago. There will be ample opportunity for parishioners to provide feedback on the site plan, including any impacts on traffic flow, parking, etc. Most significantly, this development cannot proceed unless the Parish – as co-owners (with the Diocese) of the land on which the extension would be built – decides to commit the former Rectory property for building the extension, through entering into a long-term lease agreement with Ellwood House.

What's being asked of us? Important decisions must be taken by the Parish in the near future – specifically, whether to: (1) enter into a long-term lease for the Rectory land; (2) secure the \$100,000 City of Ottawa forgivable loan by a mortgage registered on title to the Rectory property; and (3) merge the Rectory lot and the Ellwood House lot into one consolidated parcel of land owned by the Parish. These decisions can only be made by Vestry, which will meet in February.

This will be a special vestry, date to be announced.

Where to from here? You will be engaged, so that any decisions you are being asked to make will be informed by a clear understanding of the project's benefits and risks. You can expect ongoing communication from your clergy and wardens – working in close collaboration with the Ellwood House Board – including further information briefers, materials posted on the parish website, and dedicated information and feedback sessions such as a Parish Townhall or guest speakers.

We deeply appreciate your prayerful and thoughtful reflection on this opportunity now presented to us as a parish community. All of your questions are welcome! In the meantime, if you would like to discuss, please don't hesitate to reach out to us or to fellow parishioners serving on the Ellwood House Board. Thank you.

Yours in Christ,

The Rev. Tim Kehoe, Incumbent
The Rev. Michael Garner, Associate Incumbent
Andrea Teekasingh, Rector's Warden
Ryan Benjamin, People's Warden
Cathy Munroe, Deputy Warden
Jean Jordan, Deputy Warden