

St. Benedict Catholic Church,
11625 Falcon Highway
Falcon, Colorado 80831

Questions, Concerns, Comments

From “Town Hall Meetings” presentation on the proposed Ross property purchase;
December 4th, 11th, & 18th

Q. If we buy the Ross property, are we going to sell the Judge Orr Rd property?

The Judge Orr property remains in the patrimony of the parish. We could sell it now, but it won't bring in that much money. Right now, undeveloped pasture land is valued at about \$900 per acre, but even when offered at \$500 per acres it isn't selling.

Someday the Santa Fe Spring Development might come to fruition. When that happens the Judge Orr property would be worth much more.

Q. Do we have to do church things on both properties to get a tax exemption?

A. There is a minimum standard for the amount of “religious activity” require before such an exemption is granted. We never reached that threshold on the Judge Orr property, but the annual tax was less than \$100. We will meet it on the Ross property.

Q. *(If we were to stay with the Judge Orr property)* Do we need a rectory as well as a church on the Judge Orr Property?

A. Yes. All new parishes are called upon to build a rectory for their priest, just as all existing parishes are to build a rectory or provide a house for their priest.

Q. In the presentation it was mentioned that even at a 7% interest rate loan we can afford it. Why such a high interest rate, all we hear in the news is 3 or 4 percent loan rates?

A. While we would be purchasing a residential property, we are considered a commercial entity. Any loan we take out would have to be a commercial loan.

Q. Will we need to have a turn lane put in on Falcon Highway?

A. Yes, we probably will have to put in a turn lane if Traffic Engineering says it is called for. When we would have to do that depends on what we build first.

Q. Is there any other access to the property other than Falcon Highway?

A, No, the only access right now is from Falcon Highway.

Q. Are we still going to use the cafeteria *(at the Patriot Learning Center)* after church? Wouldn't we lose people if they have to drive over to the new parish house?

A. Right now the plan is to only rent the gym at the PLC so we have the maximum savings from the rent we now pay. The thought is that the majority of parents bring their children to the current parish house for 3rd through 8th grade classes after Mass, and don't stay at the PLC for hospitality. With all of our R. E. classes at the new parish house they can bring all their children there and stay for hospitality.

Q. What is the time frame that we are looking at to have the property ready?

A. Once we submit our proposal to buy the Ross property it will take anywhere from six to twelve weeks of review and recommendations before the Bishop would authorize negotiation to purchase the property. That is when the negotiation, purchasing process begins. We are looking at late April or the middle of May, 2012.

Q. How long is the (*current*) parish house lease? Are we on a month-to-month?

A. Our lease for the parish house at 11625 Falcon Highway is for one year, but it does permit a termination with only a 30 day notice.

Q. What about underneath the property (*mineral rights*)?

A.

Q. Is there enough water on the property; as a residential well?

A. Church facilities are considered commercial, so the existing residential well will have to be replaced with a commercial well, or connection with a local water district. We will not have to face this issue until such a time that we start construction of a high occupancy structure.

Q. Could we use the “workshop” building on the property for worship space?

A. The 100' X 44' workshop has the potential to be remodeled into a basic worship space. But this would require putting in a floor on the south side of the structure and the addition of a sanctuary. The preliminary study of the building indicates it has an adequate foundation, but such a decision could not be made without a lot of professional evaluation and detailed cost estimates.

Q. If we purchase this property can we please paint the house some other color than blue?

A. When it's ours, we can paint all the buildings any color we want.

Q. Why should we spend (*the estimate*) \$600,000 to rejuvenate an old building? Why not build the church?

A. The two ideas about building dedicate worship space are only that – ideas for comparison. Renovation of the “workshop” structure with parking, etc. is estimated at \$600,000, while building a new structure so we don't have to rent the PLC gym is estimated at \$900,000 with parking, etc. No decisions have been made either way. We included these ideas in the presentation to convey both what we want to do next, and what we will be facing economically when we do. Purchasing the Ross property is only a first step towards our future.

Q. Will this location be big enough for a church?

A. The entire Ross property is 35.9 acres. The south one third of the land, from the houses to Falcon Highway is 12 acres. By comparison, Our Lady of the Pines is on 7 acres. There is more than sufficient space to build a multi-purpose building with dedicated worship space and a church building to seat 1,000 with the appropriate number of parking spaces here. If a master plan for the property indicated this was not the way to go, we still have the remaining 23 acres to work with.

Q. How long after purchase (*of the property*) can we use it?

A. Once it is ours, we can move everything from the current parish house to the new address and take occupancy immediately.

Q. When could we build on the property?

A. Once we own the property, it will be necessary to have a master plan drawn up for everything we believe the parish will need in the future. This plan will dictate what we will be able to do first and give us an idea of what it will cost. That having been said, we can't build anything without diocesan approval – and this involves having half the money for a building project in the bank before we break ground. Also, we will need to pay off the loan to purchase the property before we do anything. The sooner we pay off the loan, the sooner we can build.

Q. How come we can't build like the Lutherans did down Woodman Road?

A. The new church building you are talking about was built by the members of their congregation. (*Jehovah Witness*) They don't have diocesan support, nor diocesan guidelines. They can do anything they want – and are liable for any injuries on their property. Our liability insurance from Catholic Mutual is very clear about us not exposing ourselves to such liability.

Q. Could we use (*building*) plans that have already been developed, such as by Our Lady of the Pines?

A. As a major cost saving effort, it is possible but probably not as cost efficient as we would hope. Building plans are intellectual property. As such, we would have to pay to use them. If we use them as is, we get just what OLP has. If that's perfectly okay, good. If there are any things that we need different, we would have to pay for the changes. It's not out of the question. But, it may not be worth it in the long run.

Q. Will we have the use of both houses at the time of purchase?

A. It is being looked into right now, there is a possibility of the Ross's being in their house for a length of time after the purchase until this house is needed for a rectory.

Q. Can we continue to rent the (*two story blue*) house which is currently being rented?

A. This is not really an option for us with the Ross's being in their house. We would like to move the class rooms and office into the house being rented currently.

Q. Could we put the parish house in the loafing shed and renovate one of the houses cheaper for a worship space?

A. No. It would be extremely expensive to up-grade the loafing shed into office space, and the house is not big enough, nor laid out in a manner to renovate it to the size we need for worship space.

Q. Is there any road improvements, infrastructure changes coming in the next 10 years?

A. We do know that the County has plans on the books to extend Meridian Road to cross Hwy 24 south to the intersection of South Meridian Rd and Falcon Highway. This would provide a straight through route from the upper Meridian Rd corridor down to the closest intersection to the Ross property.

Q. Will the talk of oil drilling (*in the area*) be a future problem if we are to drill two wells?

A. This should not affect us at all.

Q. Can we divide the property to use part of it as collateral for the original loan?

A. The property we currently have does not help much in the way of collateral. Once we have the original note paid off on the Ross property, we should be able to use that as a help to get us the loan for a building project.

Q. Will the renovated (*workshop*) building be appealing enough to attract/maintain parishioners?

A. Improving the exterior to make it aesthetically pleasing has been in the discussion and this should not be a problem as long as our expectations are not too lofty. We will need to communicate this well with the parish so that expectations are met, but not so that people are expecting more than we can afford.

Q. How does the size of workshop building compare the space in the gym we use for Mass?

A. The workshop is much smaller than the gym.

Q. What are we going to do with the Judge Orr property if we don't build on it?

A. We want to hang on to it until development begins in this area to maximize the amount it will help us financially. It does not cost us much to be keeping it right now.

Q. Can we get our own priest sooner if we buy the Ross property (with a rectory building)?

A. Most probably, but this is in the Diocese hands.

Q. How much money would we save from not having to pay a visiting priest?

A. We would save about \$5,000 to \$6,000 per year.

Q. Can we rent out rooms from the house for other purposes such as music lessons?

A. Something like this might be an option once we were settled in.

Q. What can we afford to pay the Ross's for the property?

A. The Finance Council tells us that we can offer \$410,000. The plan is that we would put down \$120,000 from our Building Fund CD's and borrow 290,000, Put 120,000 down, we retain \$40,000 for maintenance and relocation.

This allows us to service a mortgage which offsets our current rent situation and leave money in our building fund to work with.

Q. Could we build a Catholic School there?

A. The simple answer is yes if we have the money. We would have more than enough land. Ultimately, it comes down to a demand; are there enough families, Catholic and non-Catholic alike, in the area with the desire and resources to provide their children with an outstanding Catholic education. This is exactly the kind of think parishes should want to do. Time will tell if it is something we can do for our community.

Q. Will the Ross family still live there? AND Where is the Ross family going to go? AND Can they rent the house?

A. What we are talking about today is the offer to purchase the Ross property. This is a business question. The question about their future residence is theirs to make. Once we own the property we can explore what the parish would like to do with our two houses, and for how long. We do know that one is to be used as a rectory – when the Bishop appoints the first Pastor to St. Benedict Parish.

Q. Do we need more people in our parish (*to be able to do this*)?

Right now, with the number of families we have, and the number of households who consistently give each Sunday, we can buy this land and stay within our current budget. But, we must be realistic about the future, about the expenses we must deal with when we own, instead of renting. Right now if the heater, or plumbing goes out at the rented parish house we call our landlady and she takes care of it. That all changes when we own two house and a couple of out-buildings. Not only will we need to have the money to fix things, we will need a ready reserve to take care of any emergencies that come up.

The bottom line is, literally, we need more of our household to consistently give to their church, more than the 34% of households who do give consistently. More families does mean more sacrificial given to the church. Still, all Catholic household are called upon to support the church

Q. Who will write the proposal and can everyone be present to help write this proposal?

A. The Parish Director has directed the five members of the Development Steering Committee to write the proposal to the Bishop to purchase the Ross property. They will in turn work with the Pastoral and Finance councils to finalize it as a recommendation to the Parish Director. He and Fr. Paul, our Canonical Pastor, will put it into the form used to present it to the Bishop.

Q. Can anyone come to the meetings

A. Yes, every parishioner is welcome at any of the Pastoral Council and Finance Council meetings.

Q. When the paper work is ready for the Bishop, will the proposal be presented to the Parish?

Yes, definitely. It will be posted on the parish website with all the other material on this effort, and hard copies will be made available at Mass. As with every other major issues within the parish, we are committed to be as open and transparent as possible. That's why, even after the Town Hall Meeting, we are soliciting any and every question, concern, or comment our folks have. Please, call the parish house, email anyone in charge of anything. They are all listed on the back of the bulletin. We don't want to assume anything, or miss anything. We need parish wide input, and consensus.

Q. Is this a done deal? AND When is the decision made to go forward or not? AND What is the go-no-go flag that we will proceed?

A. NO it is not a done deal! We want and need your input, not only up to that point when we submit the proposal to the Bishop; but also at any time right up to us going to act of sale. We are to include this information in the formal proposal to the Bishop to purchase this property. Due to the amount of this expenditure, this purchase cannot take place without a complete review by the diocesan Buildings and Property Commission, Finance Council, Presbyteral Council, etc. These entities make their recommendations to the Bishop so that he can make a final decision with the benefit of their input. It is actually the Bishop (or his designee) who enters into final negotiations leading to a purchase contract.

As mentioned before, the proposal will not go to the Bishop without both the Finance and Pastoral council's formal recommendations. This, again, is why it is so important that everyone with questions or concerns let the leadership bodies in the parish know about them, and answer them as soon as possible.

Comments

- "I really like the ideas that our money would be going to the future of our church instead of to rent."
- "I see this as the best opportunity we have ever seen since we started planning our future. We need to do this. If we don't, a couple of years from now we will have to pay more for some less central location."
- "I agree with the others on the Judge Orr property. I just could not ever see us building way out there. I couldn't picture it."
- (*Speaking of the Judge Orr Property*) "If people aren't coming to St. Benedict because we have Mass in a gym, how could we expect them to come to an isolated location out in the middle of nowhere."
- "If the money we drop on rent can pay the loan we would need to take out, why wouldn't we do it? It looks like a no-brainer to me."
- "When you were making the presentation I was waiting with each slide for you to tell us how we were going to build our own worship space. But you didn't and I wasn't so sure I like this whole idea. But then when you were talking about what we could afford and why we needed to keep money in reserve, I understood. This is our big first step. We won't be able to build anything in the future if we don't have a good location with the infrastructure we need first."
- "This is an extraordinary opportunity for St. Benedict."