

TO: CITY MANAGER 2001 May 30

FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING

**SUBJECT: ST. JOHN THE DIVINE CHURCH
3891 KINGSWAY**

PURPOSE: To provide Council with an update on the potential sale of the historic St. John the Divine Church.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **THAT**, in the event that the St. John the Divine Church is sold by the Anglican Diocese of New Westminster, staff be authorized to work with the new owners of this historic building to negotiate a heritage designation and a heritage revitalization agreement in line with this report and on the understanding that a more detailed report will be submitted at a later date.

2. **THAT** the Community Heritage Commission be sent a copy of this report.

REPORT

1.0 Background:

At the Council meeting on 2001 March 12 staff reported that the oldest remaining church in Burnaby, St. John the Divine, located at 3891 Kingsway across from Central Park, was for sale and at risk of demolition. Staff had advised that, in the event that an application for demolition was made, a 60 day delay, as permitted by the *Local Government Act*, be utilized to allow time to explore all options for the retention of the oldest remaining church in the City.

While the church is still owned by the Anglican Diocese of New Westminster and is still for sale, a Christian group is now interested in purchasing the building and the 1.27 acre property. The group has been speaking to staff regarding their options for the re-use of the building and the further development of the site. 3891 Kingsway is currently zoned P1 (Neighbourhood Institutional Use) for church use (refer attached Sketch #1).

2.0 Current Situation:

To date there have been a number of groups interested in purchasing the church. Some groups have not been interested in preserving the heritage buildings. The group who are currently interested essentially wish to retain the historic building and the associated later additions so that they may use it as a church. They have engaged an architect to assist them in preparing a study of the site to ensure that, with the retention of the historic building, they are able to add other church facilities including parking. The initial proposal includes a small addition to the side of the church and the future construction of a new sanctuary and possibly seniors apartments. The group is looking for cooperative assistance from the City if they are to retain the existing church and its heritage value. Staff feel that the group's proposal has merit, provided that an agreement is reached to ensure the long term protection through a heritage designation of the St. John the Divine Church structure.

3.0 Preliminary Proposal:

The current owners also own a R5 zoned lot at 3880 Sandell Street which the acquiring group would like to include in the church site. The City owns a R5 zoned lot at 3892 Sandell Street which was acquired to protect the cul-de-sac off Jersey Avenue as indicated in the Metrotown Development Plan Sub-area 11 (see *attached* Sketch #2). To further the Development Plan, it would be advantageous to achieve an operational cul-de-sac with access to the church site in part to provide an alternative to the current sole reliance of access to the existing church off Kingsway.

The willingness of this group to purchase the site, to preserve the church building which is considered to have significant capital cost and site redevelopment implications, and to enter into a Heritage Revitalization Agreement is subject to City consideration of a number of provisions. The group would be looking to obtain at no cost the remnant portion of 3892 Sandell Street not required for the cul-de-sac dedication bearing in mind that a portion of the other lot at 3880 Sandell Street would also be dedicated for the cul-de-sac - the balance of land obtained from the City estimated to be in the range of 2,200 sq. ft. This arrangement would include interim construction of the cul-de-sac bulb by the City. These remnant R5 zoned lands would be consolidated with the church site and rezoned as part of the church site, possibly to the Comprehensive Development District based on P1 District guidelines. This group would pursue these procedures with the support of the city.

The overall church site would be modestly increased in size with accesses off the cul-de-sac and existing lane to the north and is considered compatible with the Metrotown Development Plan Sub-area 11.

Staff have considered a wide variety of options for the retention of this historic building. The proposal by this group does entail modifications and additions to the historic church, but does provide for the retention and protection of the existing form of the building. It also makes some provision for the restoration of some key features. They would not preserve the hall which sits to the north of the Church which is not considered an important building. The retention of the Church also preserves the option of restoring more of the building in the future. The use of this historic building

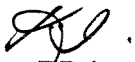
as a continuing church, is obviously compatible with the historic use.


4.0 Next Steps:

While the purchase of the site by this group is not a certainty, staff wish to advise Council of discussions to date. The group is well informed about the situation and is prudently using the services of an architectural consultant to ensure that if they purchase the site, it will meet their current needs by utilizing the historic St. John the Divine, but also the future needs of the congregation and the need for parking. In return for agreeing to protect the historic building, they are requesting from the City considerations as outlined on a preliminary basis in this report.

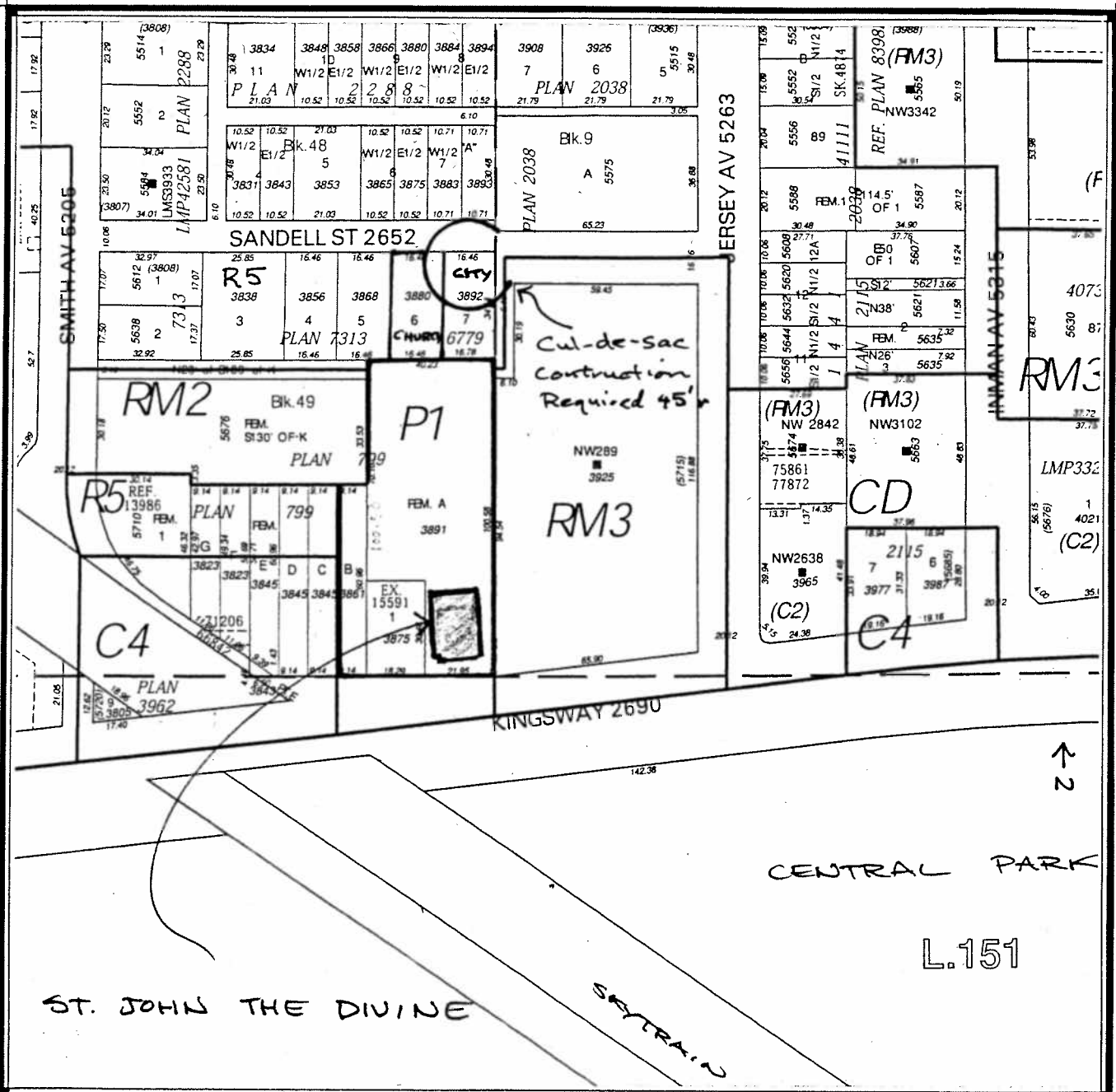
The Church group will be seeking City assistance in the construction of the cul-se-sac to interim standard and in obtaining the remnant parcel of City land not required for the cul-de-sac as part of an incentive for the group to enter into the heritage designation of the church building and its long term restoration and preservation. At least one previous potential purchasing group had indicated an intention to demolish the existing church to achieve its desired building requirements. The current group is the only group to date that has shown a specific willingness to preserve this historic church. Staff consider the proposal to be worthy of further pursuance and the considerations requested of the City to be reasonable in order to preserve the oldest remaining church in Burnaby.

Unless otherwise directed, staff will continue to work with the group in line with the approach outlined in this report and, if discussions are fruitful, will bring back a further report. This may involve heritage designation of the historic church and a Heritage Revitalization Agreement to achieve a plan of development suitable for the group's needs that is acceptable to the City.


BR:hr
Atts.


J. S. Belhouse
Director Planning and Building

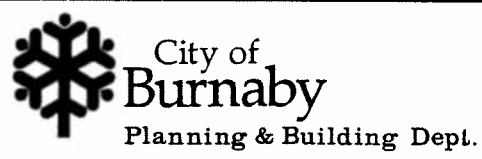
cc: Chief Building Inspector
City Solicitor
Director Engineering



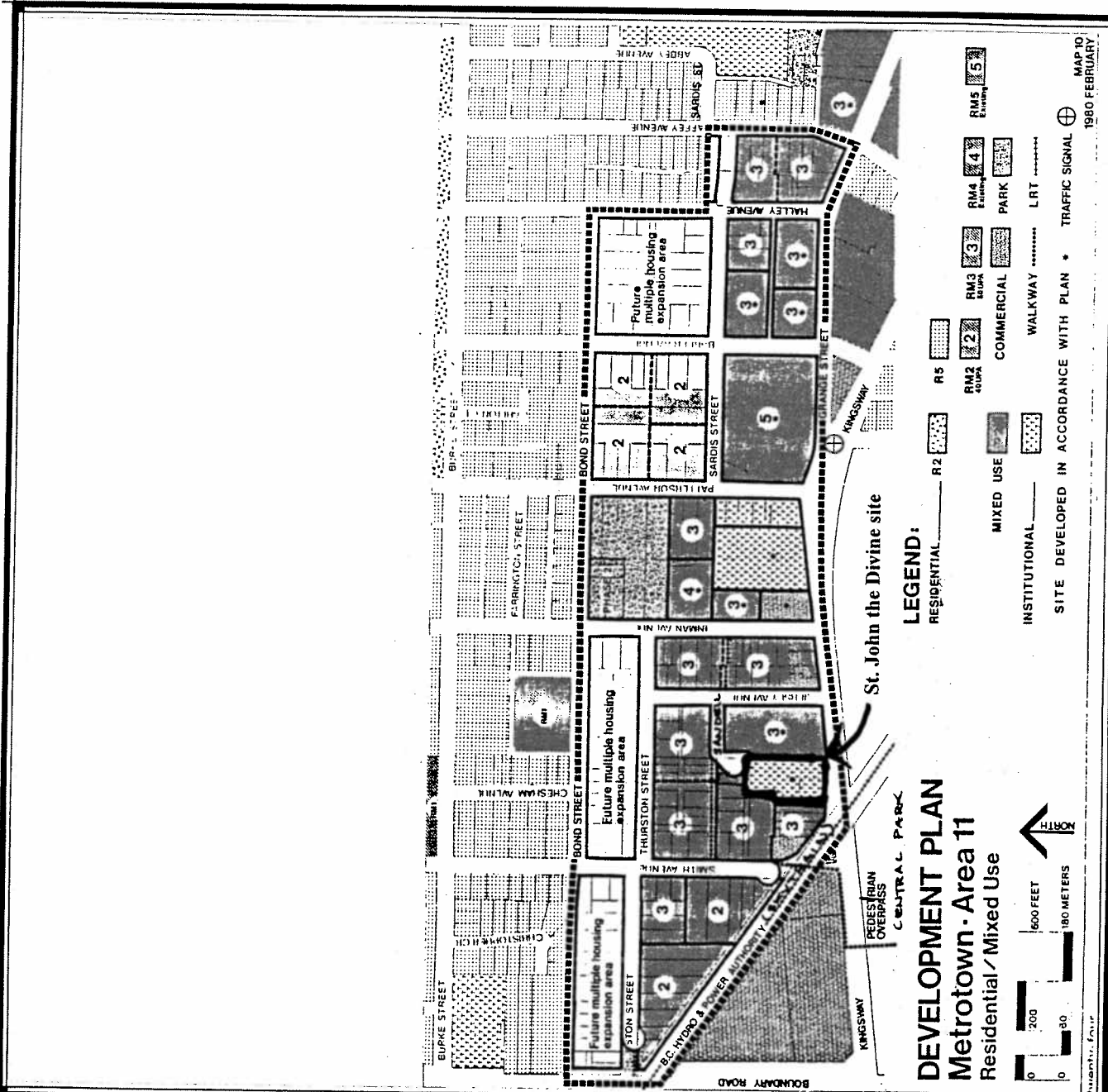
Date:
2001 MARCH

Scale:
1:2000

Drawn By:



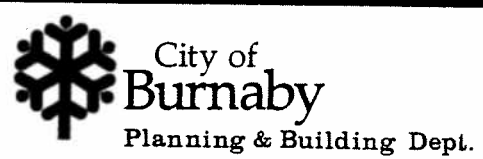
ST. JOHN THE DIVINE (3861-3891 KINGSWAY)
Anglican Church.
SKETCH # 1



Date:
2001 MAY 30

Scale:
NTS

Drawn By:



METROTOWN AREA 11 : ST. JOHN THE DIVINE
SKETCH # 2

