

“God First in These Affairs”

# *First Baptist Church*

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April 17, 2024

## **FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH SPECIAL CALL MEETING NOTICE**

Dear First Baptist Church Member,

A Special Call Meeting for members of First Baptist Church is scheduled for **Saturday, May 11, 2024, at 9:00 AM in Ida Clark Hall**. At the church meeting held on January 13, 2024, a motion was made and duly seconded to schedule a special call meeting to reaffirm the approval and authorization of First Baptist Petworth Community Development Corporation (FBPCDC) to continue with the planned development of an affordable senior housing project. The purpose of the call meeting is for the church to affirm the approval and authorization to redevelop the church-owned properties at 715 Randolph Street, NW, and 3913 8<sup>th</sup> Street, NW Washington, DC. The following is a summary background for this meeting. Voting ballots will be available at the call meeting and instructions will be announced on how to obtain a ballot before the call meeting for members who are not able to attend in person.

The reaffirmation vote is needed to clarify what is documented in the church records of the October 2019 and January 2020 quarterly church meetings regarding this development initiative. The membership is, therefore, requested to vote either **YES** in support of the redevelopment project or **NO** if not in support of the redevelopment project. Alternatively, you may vote to **ABSTAIN** to indicate no preference.

To provide some context, before 2020, church leadership was strategically planning to assure the future viability of FBC. They recognized that the operations of the First Baptist Senior

Center (which were held in the building at 715 Randolph Street) could not sustain the cost of maintaining the property, which is in disrepair. At the same time, leadership was concerned about declining membership and decreasing tithes and offerings, which would impair the ability to support the overhead costs. They were also cognizant of challenges associated with the long-term maintenance of the physical church and its operations.

The church leadership became aware of various initiatives and resources available to houses of worship to transform their under or un-developed church-owned properties. The leadership saw it as an opportunity to generate much-needed revenue and address the crucial housing needs of seniors and low-income residents. Equally important, it would serve to attract new worshippers and provide additional access points to further community outreach and ministry.

FBPCDC was created to pursue the feasibility of developing the two adjacent properties into affordable housing primarily for seniors. The formation of a community development corporation (FBPCDC) was needed to insulate the church from any obligations undertaken by FBPCDC and to ensure that the church would not be subject to any financial or legal liabilities associated with the development activities. No church funds have been provided to FBPCDC. It has operated from grants provided by unrelated third parties, primarily Enterprise Community Partners.

Since 2019, considerable time and resources have been invested in research and training, as well as outreach with our Ward 4 Councilmember, our ANC Commissioners, community representatives, and various government agencies. These parties have expressed preliminary support for this proposed project. The project also demonstrates our commitment to being responsible stewards of the church's assets and ensuring that FBC remains relevant for future generations. It is also important to note that the planned facility includes accommodations for enhanced social health and wellness amenities, beyond what the existing First Baptist Senior Center currently provides.