



# Promising Practices

## NON-PROFITS

### Cathedral Hill redevelopment helps church fulfill mission

Faced with \$350,000 of debt from costs related to their 178-year-old church buildings, the Christ Church Cathedral and the Diocese of Ottawa got innovative by solving their financial challenges and, consequently, will soon be offering Ottawans the opportunity to live in a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certified condominium building in the heart of downtown Ottawa.<sup>1</sup>

In order to maintain a heritage property, such as Christ Church Cathedral, a great deal of finance is required for heating, maintenance and restoration of the building. It is a difficult challenge that Christ Church and many other parishes bear.<sup>2</sup> In the 1990s, the church was surveyed for restoration needs and the estimated cost of required restoration was \$3.5 million. The restoration of the church has been an ongoing endeavor for the past 20-25 years. In the early years, a couple small grants from the provincial and federal governments were provided.<sup>3</sup> However, the majority of the funding has been provided by the fundraising efforts of parishioners, parish groups and well-wishers from the Ottawa community. These efforts have enabled the church to avoid having restoration costs impact any of the ongoing church programs.<sup>4</sup>

Christ Church Cathedral and the Diocese of Ottawa partnered to lease the available land to Windmill Development.<sup>5</sup> "We see the development as enhancing the City by creating sustainable structures and spaces that reflect our values as a diverse and vibrant community that glorifies God and welcomes all people," says The Very Reverend Shane A. D. Parker, Dean of Ottawa, Christ Church Cathedral, Anglican Diocese of Ottawa. "We want people to experience the Cathedral as a place of hospitality and peace, where beauty is not produced at the expense of creation, but rather as a celebration of creation and of the human capacity to participate in creation in beautiful and life-giving ways."<sup>6</sup> The condominium development, designated Cathedral Hill, will be located at Sparks Street and Bronson Avenue. Windmill Development and their affiliate BuildGreen Solutions are ensuring that the church's old parish hall will be replaced with a new energy efficient hall.<sup>7</sup> Precise details of the commercial lease are confidential, but the Windmill Development firm has agreed to pay out the full land lease in a single payment in advance.<sup>8</sup>

The parish hall, located on Sparks Street, is to be replaced with a new hall that is more energy efficient. A portion of the



financial savings for the church will come from energy savings from the new parish hall. The current parish hall houses many out-dated appliances, to be replaced, including an industrial strength stove and fan that is a massive energy drain.<sup>9</sup> The construction of the development is scheduled to begin in the summer of 2012.<sup>10</sup> Windmill Development is aiming for February 2014 occupancy.<sup>11</sup>

"For faith groups the idea of creation care and stewardship is increasingly becoming recognized as a core value and that is something that they are viewing as increasingly important," says Rodney Wilts of Build Green Solutions.<sup>12</sup> Christ Church and the Diocese of Ottawa partnered with Windmill due to their reputation for environmentally conscious developments that follow LEED standards.<sup>13</sup> The project includes the development of a 12-storey office tower, a new residential 21-storey condo tower, 10 townhouses and a new parish hall.<sup>14</sup> Also, the residents of the townhouses will have access to the amenities available in the condo tower, which include rooftop garden plots and an electric car charging station.<sup>15</sup>

The rooftop garden area is about 3,000 square feet. Not all of that will be garden though as BuildGreen is still working through the concepts. The condos are approximately 50% sold and there are many more still available for purchase.<sup>16</sup> Cathedral Hill provides an example of how to enjoy the finer things in life while reducing your ecological footprint.

Windmill Development is targeting the Cathedral Hill redevelopment to meet the new LEED Platinum standards.<sup>17</sup> This standard system ensures that the development includes high water efficiency, energy efficiency, indoor environmental quality, and the use of green materials and resources. Some of the strategies used at Cathedral Hill consist of a) a green roof providing water management, habitat and food growing opportunities; b) a focus on materials with high-recycled content and locally sourced materials; c) ultra low-flow 3 litre toilets; d) rainwater capture and reuse; e) low and no-Volatile Organic Compounds materials used throughout to improve indoor air quality and reduce smog; f) a minimum of 75% of waste created during construction will be diverted from landfill; and g) use of Forest Stewardship Council certified wood to ensure wood products come from sustainably managed sources.<sup>18</sup>

In order to explain energy savings for the Cathedral Hill development it is important to use a reference building for comparison. This reference building meets the Ontario Building Code (OBC) of 2012 and is also similar in structure to the Cathedral Hill condominium. Compared to the reference building, in adhering to LEED Platinum certification requirements, the Cathedral Hill development is approximately 40% more energy efficient than the OBC reference building. This approximation represents around 1,000,000 kilowatt hours of energy savings per year (gas plus electricity), and roughly \$100,000 per year in energy cost savings for the collective of individual condo owners.<sup>19</sup>

Christ Church Cathedral is taking control and will financially benefit from the 198 year land lease, without selling the land outright. The Cathedral Hill development will establish a new way of living an environmentally friendly lifestyle, while ensuring higher energy efficiency, reduced greenhouse gases as well as reducing energy costs. Bishop John Chapman from the Anglican Diocese of Ottawa feels that "the world is not just human beings... there is a responsibility for those who profess to be Christian to take significant interest in the sustainability of the environment."<sup>20</sup> The Cathedral should serve as an example to other Canadian churches looking for a solution to financial problems related to maintaining a heritage building and delivering on the church's mission of helping preserve the natural environment.

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