



NEWS RELEASE

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Town of Vienna to purchase Faith Baptist Church property

Vienna Town Council approved tonight the \$5.5 million purchase of an approximately three-acre property at 301 Center Street S; the site has been home to Faith Baptist Church since the mid-1950s.

“This is an amazing opportunity for the Town of Vienna and our community,” says Mayor Linda Colbert. “The property is centrally located among many civic and community facilities. This is a strategic purchase that will provide extraordinary long-term benefits for the community. I’m grateful that the Town’s strong financial planning and position have allowed us to take advantage of this opportunity.”

Faith Baptist Church is changing its mission and recently began considering the sale of its property. The church notified Town officials that it would consider an offer from the Town of Vienna; the church also accepted bids from other interested parties. In July, the congregation voted to accept the Town’s proposal.

Funding for purchase of the church property will come from general obligation bonds issued earlier this year. The Town identified potential property acquisition as one of its objectives when it issued \$34.5 million in bonds in March. The Town generally issues bonds every two years to finance capital improvement projects and repays the bonds using revenues from meals taxes collected from customers at Town of Vienna restaurants.

The Town is scheduled to close on the Center Street property September 18.

Because of its centralized location and proximity to other community facilities, the possible purchase of this property has been discussed by previous Town Councils. When the property recently became available, Town Council met several times in closed sessions to discuss the possible property acquisition. Closed sessions to discuss purchases of property are permitted by state code and help protect local jurisdictions’ interests in the negotiation process.

The main purpose of this purchase is to provide long-term benefits to the community. The property’s ultimate use may not be determined, funded, or implemented for several years, but

Council will begin discussing potential long-term uses during its Capital Improvement Plan work session scheduled for September 21; over the course of time, Council will engage with the community to gather and share ideas and also will likely employ a feasibility study.

“Even though we don’t yet know the best community use for this property,” Colbert says, “I believe that taking advantage of this opportunity allows us to create a wonderful community amenity in the same way that the Town took advantage of a real estate opportunity at Mill Street and Center 18 years ago and eventually created our Town Green, which now functions as our community’s outdoor gathering space.”

In the short-term, the Vienna Police Department will utilize space in the church while a new police facility is constructed; groundbreaking on the police facility is anticipated in the next approximately six months.

Police will use the former church building for a period of 18-24 months. This will allow the department to remain open to the public in a physical location throughout the construction process and provides a more centralized, efficient, and functional option than the Town’s Beulah Road property, which had been previously proposed as temporary space for police functions.

In addition, the Town may use the 301 Center Street property for additional meeting space and, once the coronavirus pandemic has ended, for additional recreational space. The existing parking lot may be utilized by the community for nearby activities and event parking.

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