

CITY OF ST. JOHNS
100 E. State Street, Suite 1100
St. Johns MI 48870

MEDIA STATEMENT
May 26, 2021

The St. Johns City Commission, at its May 24th regular meeting, approved an agreement for the purchase of the St. Johns Congregational Church. As part of the agreement, final sale is contingent on the City determining that the property is suitable for use as a public building. Though a split decision, the decision was made to move forward with the purchase agreement so that the City could pursue its due diligence in assessing the feasibility of space configuration, build-out costs, and general occupancy and regular maintenance costs associated with operation of City offices at that location.

While the City had not been actively pursuing alternate space to relocate its administrative offices, it was determined that the public listing of the property presented a unique opportunity that was worth full examination. Based on fiscal considerations of existing occupancy costs associated with our current office space, the City has from time to time considered relocating its administrative offices to a site outside of the Clinton County Courthouse building. As new construction doesn't appear prudent in the current market, the availability of the church property has provided an unique opportunity when considering its close proximity to the central business district, the attractive sales price, ample on-site parking, potential for shared space with other community partners such as the Chamber of Commerce, public meeting space (similar to the 2nd floor of the previous "Municipal Building"), and the ability to meet our space needs now and in the future.

An architectural firm is being engaged to undertake a feasibility study to assess the viability and associated costs of retro-fitting and upgrading the church building to provide administrative offices for the City as well as other functional space for other community needs.

The City Commission only moved forward with its formal offer to purchase the property after the church had chosen not to pursue another offer extended by a potential buyer group and then having taken action to accept the City's proposed term in principal.

Per the terms of the purchase agreement, the City will now have 75 days to explore the suitability of this property for public use purposes through the work of the architectural firm and other internal and external research relating to administrative space needs and potential community partnerships.