

## **Parish School Building Update #7**

As discussed in the Parish Community meeting this last week, we were making plans for a meeting with the President and CEO of Mid-America Transplant (MTS), Diane Brockmeier. On 22 August, we met with Diane and four members of her senior administrative staff to show her the Parish School Building. My observations are as follows:

1. First, let me say thank you to the facilities team. The building looked spectacular. It's clean, bright, and with the presence of the ECEC the building honestly feels alive.
2. Although I expected one of us would give the tour to Diane, Kevin Lee, the MTS VP of External Affairs, gave her the tour. It was impressive. Kevin was the MTS lead at the first meeting and possesses great insight as a result of reviewing their architects' conceptual drawings of the proposed modifications to the building.
3. MTS's current concept would include 20 apartments consuming the entire first and second floor. They were excited that this would allow for some expected growth.
4. Demand for these units is growing. MTS is already short on housing and the projections of transplants from the hospitals are close to double the current rates. Any surplus units would be utilized for bone marrow transplants which is a segment they currently do not serve.
5. This project for family housing had been specifically requested by the Mid-America Board of Directors and it represents their second largest investment in their 40-year history.
6. The entire senior staff which was present, other than the CEO, was raised Catholic and continue to appear to have strong ties to the faith.
7. MTS briefly mentioned the need for ECEC accommodations which need to be made.
9. MTS reiterated the importance of the neighborhood to this investment.

We left them with information about the current floorplan of the building, a Parish events calendar, a list of local business and a brief historical summary of Dogtown and the Parish.

This opportunity with MTS continues to be our best option for shared use of the Parish School Building. Our two biggest hurdles, as of this point, is the question of will they be satisfied with a long-term lease given the substantial investment they will need for the modification of the building and our ability to accommodate an Early Childhood Education Center to meet our needs.

I don't believe I'm making too strong of a statement that given our current financial position and the maintenance needed on the building this is an extremely important opportunity for St James the Greater Parish. Please continue to pray for the Parish and this effort.

As always, we will do everything we can to continuously communicate updates to the Parish through the weekly bulletin, the Parish website, and as always, the quarterly Parish Community Meetings. If you have any questions, feel free to e-mail me at [parishcouncil@stjamesthegreater.org](mailto:parishcouncil@stjamesthegreater.org).

John Kelley,

Parish Council - Chair