

## Final Report from the Newell House Committee

The Newell House committee convened in November of 2022 with the goal of determining the key opportunities and needs of the Newell house. This report represents the findings of the committee and considerations for the Vestry as they determine how to move forward with the Newell house space.

### **Background and Cost Estimates:**

Upon reviewing the current space, the committee focused on differentiating between safety and liability issues and overall improvement/maintenance issues for the house. We identified three main safety/liability issues that should be addressed as quickly as possible:

- a. Back porch—the steps and porch are weak and pose a risk for anyone who uses it. Currently, we know of some deliveries which have been placed on that porch and potentially any group using the house could leave through the kitchen into the backyard.
- b. Retaining wall in the backyard-this retaining wall has three main concerns. First, the actual wall itself is made of wood and is rotting at several places. Second, there is a substantial gap on the top part of the wall between the grass and wall where a foot can easily get caught and twisted. Three, the steps going down from the top to the bottom part of the backyard are uneven and unstable.
- c. Landscape blocks facing east toward the garage of the neighbor-we had the opportunity to talk with the neighbor on March 19. He had ProScape come out and look at it and recommended that we may need to regrade our yard as part of the effort to reinforce that wall. (Note, we did not specifically get an estimate for this work).

All other work on the Newell House would fall in line with potential improvements to the property depending on the needs identified by the Vestry and the Parish.

### Estimates:

All estimates are provided by Findorff and should be considered estimates and not actual bids. Depending on the path we pursue, we would recommend getting a full complement of bids for any solution.

- a. Retaining wall (NOT by the garage)=\$33,000
- b. Remove and replace back porch=\$22,000
- c. Teardown of Newell house=\$50,000

We did receive a baseline estimate of \$15,000 if we wanted to update the kitchen. This does not represent any specific plan, but the basics of getting the room to code, updating the floor and painting.

### **Potential paths:**

In our discussion, we identified three potential paths for the Vestry to consider. Ultimately, the Vestry will need to make a specific decision regarding how it wants to move forward. But we identified three potential paths.

**Pros and Cons to each proposal**

<b>Raze the Newell House</b>	
<b>Cost \$50,000</b>	
<b>Updating/regrading backyard-\$33,000</b>	
<b>Pros</b>	<b>Cons</b>
Decreased continued expenses for upkeep	Relocate a number of items for storage
No heating cost/water/sewer	Unavailable for AA meeting – 3 hours a week
Larger outdoor area for church events	Limited ability to offer space to other groups (Cub scouts, Blue Lions, etc)
Available for future building of more functional space (potentially integrated with current church building)	may need to build a weather tight storage Shed
	Negotiating with city and neighbors
<b>Minimal repairs to Newell House in the short term –possible demolition in next 3-5 years</b>	
<b>Cost -Back retaining wall +porch=\$55.000</b>	
East retaining wall by neighbor--TBD	
<b>Pro</b>	<b>Con</b>
Continued storage space	Continued repairs and cost with minimal usage
Continued program space (AA, Cub Scouts, Blue Lions, and other new opportunities)	Building continues to deteriorate
Allows time to assess our needs as our community redevelops after the pandemic	Utilities payments continue (\$3100/yr)
<b>Continue to prioritize investments in the property (no intention of taking it down)</b>	
<b>Cost \$50,000 + annual upkeep and repairs</b>	
<b>Kitchen enhancement-\$15,000+</b>	
<b>Painting and New Roof-\$20,000</b>	
<b>Pro</b>	<b>Con</b>
Maintain Storage	Yearly expense of \$3100
Maintain availability of programming space	Safety repairs need to happen now
Can regrow into space	Given age of building, more significant repairs will be likely in the future
<b>Safety repairs that must happen</b>	
East side driveway retaining wall	\$TBD
Yard retaining wall	\$33,000
Porch replacement	\$22,000

There are many factors that must be considered in determining the final outcome of the Newell House. Certainly cost is one, but below are several other important topics that will need to be addressed as the vestry makes its final decision.

1. Currently we only have AA consistently using the space, at a total of 3 hrs per week. We will need to approach them and see if they would be willing to relocate into the church.
2. We need to ensure we have a good plan for families and youth groups so that we can accommodate those needs as we continue to come back together as a community.
3. We would not recommend trying to turn the house into a rental property or alternative housing. We would have to bring the entire house up to code as well as play the role of landlord, which we are not positioned to do.
4. Our neighbor to the east, Jim, is looking to reinforce the retaining wall and has offered to help pay for that work.
5. If we decide to raze the house, we will reach out to a deconstruction group to salvage some of the materials in the house. This may help to offset the costs of razing the house, but at a minimum would prevent materials from going into the landfill.
6. Also, we will need to inventory the storage items that are in the Newell House and determine where we can store them in the future.
7. With any solution, it is important to engage the parish to determine the best path for our needs and, if removing the house is the right solution, we need to ensure we are appropriately engaging our neighbors as well as the city.

With this report, we consider the work of this committee complete. Many thanks to the committee members for their engagement and feedback:

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