

Episcopal Diocese of Missouri
Grace Hill Task Force

TASK FORCE REPORT FOR 2023 DIOCESAN CONVENTION
September 30, 2023

The Grace Hill Task Force, appointed by Bishop Deon at the beginning of 2022, has continued to develop plans and program priorities for renewal of the Grace Hill campus in Old North St. Louis. This property has been owned by the Diocese and home to a variety of uses since before 1850. It has been vacant since the former Grace Hill Health Center became Affinia Health and the former Grace Hill Settlement House merged with the Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis several years ago.

In 2023, our work included additional contacts with other individuals and community organizations as potential partners in future programs and services at Grace Hill. Many of these groups participated in our planning workshop on June 13, hosted by the Church of All Saints and Ascension. Leaders of the Anna's Place program in New Orleans were special guests for the workshop; we had identified Anna's Place as a potential model following an introduction from Bishop Deon last year. We later attended a board meeting of the Old North St. Louis Restoration Group, which supports our Grace Hill initiative. We met most recently with Maxine Clark about the success of the "Delmar Divine" redevelopment of the former St. Luke's Hospital complex at 5555 Delmar.

We agreed in late 2022 to house St. Patrick Center's "safe haven" program in the south wing of the Grace Hill campus. This program, now called "Grace House," is an assessment and referral center for unhoused people prior to their placement in more permanent housing. This is not a long-term shelter, but it plays a critical role in St. Patrick Center's services to our community's homeless population. SPC has been an excellent partner, paying a nominal rent to the Diocese, and we have assured them that they can continue to use the facility until at least September 2024.

The task force recently adopted this concept for Grace Hill's future development:

A community center, sponsored by the Episcopal Diocese of Missouri, providing services and spiritual growth for children, youth, and families in this part of the St. Louis community.

We anticipate the following uses and potential partners:

1. **Worship and multipurpose community gathering space**, in renovated Grace Church sanctuary and outside, on the campus lawn (a ministry of the Episcopal Diocese of Missouri)
2. **Health and wellness center** – clinic, counseling, and referral services (Affinia Health)
3. **K-12 student and family support** – tutoring, mentoring, after-school and vocational education programs (City Hope or AfterSchool Labs STL, Building Futures)
4. **Visual and performing arts and arts education** – small gallery space, artist studios, music, theater, and art classes, youth ensembles (Portfolio Gallery, SLSO, The Muny, Jazz St. Louis, COCO)
5. **Childcare** – licensed facility serving neighborhood residents and employers, including Affinia (contingent on space and licensing requirements; operator TBD)

These plans will require dedicated leadership and significant fundraising from grants and community contributions. The estimated cost of renovation for the entire Grace Hill campus is more than \$10 million. We have submitted a Phase 1 grant application to the John C. Lasko Foundation Trust, which supports construction or renovation of worship spaces; this grant, if we're successful, would be applied to renovation of the original Grace Church sanctuary at the center of the campus.

Please contact either of us with questions or suggestions about the future of Grace Hill. Thanks to all members of our task force and Diocesan staff for their participation and support.

Clark Davis and Valerie Patton, Co-Chairs, Grace Hill Task Force