



**ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA
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**ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA ANNOUNCES
PHASE 1 COMMENCEMENT FOR
CATHEDRAL BLOCK DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

In 2019, the Archdiocese selected EM Race Vine Venture, LLC as the master developer for the redevelopment of the Cathedral Block. The parties entered into a Master Development Agreement in September 2019, and have now closed on Phase 1 of the proposed development, which grants the Master Developer a 99-year ground lease for certain portions of the Cathedral Block.

The Archdiocese will continue to utilize the Cathedral and Archdiocesan Pastoral Center, which are not subject to the ground lease.

Contextual Background

In the summer of 2012, the Archdiocese of Philadelphia announced its intention to market a premier parcel of land located in the Logan Square neighborhood of Philadelphia. The parcel included the Holy Family Center (227 North 18th Street; Philadelphia, PA 19103) and the northern portion of the parking lot of the Archdiocesan Pastoral Center, which encompasses the length of Vine Street from 17th Street to 18th Street in Center City. No transaction was reached for that parcel.

Subsequently, the Archdiocese examined alternate plans for the redevelopment of a larger portion of the nearly four acre property. In the summer and fall of 2016 initial plans were drawn up for the potential redevelopment of 2.32 acres of the Cathedral Block property.

The remaining 1.62 acres of the Cathedral Block contain the historic Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul, its adjacent chapel, and the Cathedral's Rectory. The redevelopment plans do not include those structures and are required to respect their sacred nature and architectural importance.

Initial concepts included the possibility of redevelopment (with the potential of demolition) for three modern structures on site: the Archdiocesan Pastoral Center (built in 1969), the Holy Family Center (built in 1960), and the former convent for the Cathedral (built in 1957). That result would have provided a clear L-shaped parcel open to development. Renderings illustrating two high rise towers, mixed residential and retail space, gardens, and walkways were shared with the Logan Square Neighborhood Association along with civic officials and received a positive reception.

In the fall of 2017, the Archdiocese issued a “Request for Qualifications” (RFQ) from developers interested in pursuing the redevelopment of 2.32 acres of the Cathedral Block.

Additional information regarding that announcement can be found at the following link:

<http://archphila.org/archdiocese-of-philadelphia-issues-call-for-request-for-qualifications-from-developers-regarding-proposed-cathedral-block-redevelopment/>

Today’s Announcement

The Archdiocese of Philadelphia selected EM Race Vine Venture, LLC as the Master Developer for the redevelopment of the Cathedral Block. The parties executed a Master Development Agreement on September 27, 2019, which contemplates development of two parcels of the Cathedral Block, to be accomplished in two phases. Pursuant to the Master Development Agreement, the Archdiocese and Master Developer will enter into a long-term ground lease for each area prior to the commencement of the applicable phase. The Archdiocese will retain ownership of the entire Cathedral Block, subject to the ground leases, and continue to utilize the Archdiocesan Pastoral Center, Cathedral, Chapel and Rectory.

On November 23, 2020, the Archdiocese entered into a 99-year ground lease agreement with the Master Developer, commencing Phase One of the redevelopment.

The Master Developer has selected Solomon Cordwell Buenz as the architect for Phase One. Construction of Phase One of the Cathedral Place Project is slated to begin this month. Phase One will include demolition of the former convent behind the Cathedral. The Master Developer is constructing a 23-story building on the convent land and adjacent parking lot that includes 273 apartment units, approximately 2,500 square feet of ground floor retail space, and 18 underground parking spaces. The Civic Design Board approved plans for Phase One of the project in February 2020.

Preliminary plans for Phase Two of the project include the demolition of the Holy Family Center, a four-story building formerly used for some Archdiocesan offices. The developer envisions constructing a large-scale, mixed-use tower that would span the Holy Family Center land and adjacent parking lot area between 17th and 18th streets along Vine Street.

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