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Renewed Faith: A Case for the Preservation and Adaptive Reuse of Urban Neighborhood Churches

Student's name: Ryan M Nagel

This work and its defense approved by:

Committee chair: Menelaos Triantafillou, MLA
Committee member: David Stradling, PhD
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Ryan M. Nagel

B.A., History and Urban Studies, The College of Wooster, 2009

Committee Chair: Menelaos Triantafillou, AICP, ASLA
Faculty member: David Stradling, Ph.D.
Abstract

Churches are an important presence in the neighborhood fabric of communities throughout the United States. They serve as local landmarks, establish identities for neighborhoods, and play a key role in the community and spiritual lives of neighborhood residents. However, significant socioeconomic forces at work in urban areas as over the last half century are increasingly threatening the vitality and survival of not only urban churches, but the neighborhoods in which they have stood for over a century. The phenomenon of church closings is currently no more painful than in the city of Cleveland, Ohio. Following a trend of sporadic closings over the last twenty-five years, a major reconfiguration and consolidation of the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland’s parish and property inventory is now underway. Cleveland Catholic Diocese Bishop Richard Lennon on March 14, 2009 announced a sweeping reconfiguration of the Diocese, will result in a net reduction of 52 parishes by June 30, 2010. This reduction will result in 23% of the city’s parish either being eliminated or combined while 13% will be completely vacated in a time period of just over 15 months.

While there is often a desire within a parish or congregation to save or preserve a former church, the buildings themselves have proven challenging to convert for other uses. Issues commonly faced when reusing churches include the atypical nature of church buildings with respect to their interior spaces and exterior features, restrictive regulatory factors, financing requirements, and the development process itself. These issues are compounded by the lack of familiarity on the part of church officials, congregation members, the public, and developers with respect to converting a former church building into a different use.

Using two case studies of churches that have been adaptively reused in Cleveland, Ohio this thesis will investigate what factors must be present for the successful adaptive reuse of a
former religious structure. Factors considered in successful projects include level of community commitment, stakeholders involved, regulatory context, financial incentives and partnerships, historic designation, building and site design, development process, and development in declining neighborhoods. The case studies examined are: The First Church of Christ in the University neighborhood, and St. George Lithuanian in St. Clair-Superior near Hough. The findings of this thesis indicate that the availability of financial incentives, influential stakeholders, and dedicated owners were most important in successfully reusing these buildings. Other findings include explanations as to why the recent church closures in Cleveland have been primarily a phenomenon of the Catholic Diocese. The lessons learned through the study suggest more anticipatory and locally based planning procedures are necessary to recommend the most viable use for historic churches in urban neighborhoods.
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Preface

Churches are an important presence in the neighborhood fabric of communities throughout the United States. They serve as local landmarks, establish identities for neighborhoods, and play a key role in the community and spiritual lives of neighborhood residents. However, significant forces at work in urban areas as well as in religious institutes in urban areas over the last half century are increasingly threatening the vitality of not only urban churches, but the neighborhoods in which they have stood for over a century. In Cleveland, closed and vacant churches have become an increasing presence in the urban landscape since approximately 1970. While there is often a desire within a parish or congregation to save or preserve a former church, the buildings themselves have proven challenging to convert for other uses. Issues commonly faced when reusing churches include the atypical nature of church buildings with respect to their interior spaces and exterior features, regulatory factors, financing requirements, and the development process. These issues are compounded by the lack of familiarity on the part of church officials, congregation members, the public, and developers with respect to converting a former church building into a different use.

A former church that has been properly adaptively reused can provide a rich environment to users that cannot be had in any other building type and the community benefits are numerous. Many think that the only way a church can be successfully reused for another purpose is if it is in a neighborhood with extremely high property values, and while this condition certainly helps, as you will find out in this thesis, churches in relatively poor real estate climates can be reused for worthy purposes. Cleveland, Ohio has several great examples of reuse projects that retain the elegance of the original church structure while maintaining much of the original character of the interior and exterior qualities of the building while transitioning to a different function. This
thesis examines the phenomenon of vacated churches and analyzes the major issues underlying their successful reuse in order to help raise an awareness of a range of successful strategies and solutions stakeholders in these historic churches can use to help preserve their churches.

The phenomenon of church closings is currently no more painful than in the city of Cleveland Ohio. Following a trend of sporadic closings over the last twenty-five years, a major reconfiguration and consolidation of the Diocese of Cleveland’s parish and property inventory is now underway. Cleveland Bishop Richard Lennon on March 14, 2009 announced a “sweeping reconfiguration of the Diocese, will result in a net reduction of 52 parishes by June 30, 2010.” Twenty-nine of the Diocese's 224 parishes will close outright, while another 41 have been instructed to merge with one or more neighboring parishes. The reconfiguration will result in the creation of 18 new, combined parishes, which will likely be re-named. This reduction will result in 23% of the city’s parish either being eliminated or combined while 13% will be completely vacated in a time period of just over 15 months. It is likely that many of the churches that are closed will be sold by the Diocese and their historic components such as stained glass windows, religious artifacts, furniture, and architectural elements will be sold to collectors while the buildings and land parcels will either be abandoned or put for sale to private developers to be redeveloped for new uses.

Clevelanders are now being faced with many challenging questions such as should these abandoned buildings be reused or demolished? What new purpose could they feasibly serve? The purpose of this research is to provide insight as to what common variables are present in the successful adaptive reuse of churches. The potentials and pitfalls that this research identifies as key elements to a successful adaptive reuse are studied through targeted case studies. Through a literature review, elements that have been previously shown to make a positive impact in the
success of adaptive reuse of churches will be applied to two case studies in Cleveland, Ohio. The major factors that affect the redevelopment and reuse of churches include but are not limited to building type, structure, stakeholders involved, regulatory context, finance, site, development process, and challenging real estate markets in declining neighborhoods. Much of the study will be focused in Cleveland Ohio but the analysis, successful case studies, conclusions and recommendations are applicable to similar scenarios across the United States. Likewise, the two case studies: the First Church of Christ, Scientist in the University Circle neighborhood and St. George Lithuanian in the St. Clair-Superior neighborhood are former Christian churches, but the findings are also applicable to other places of worship such as temples, mosques, and synagogues.
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Chapter 1: Literature Review

This chapter discusses adaptive reuse literature concerning churches, and the many benefits of historic preservation. The first part discusses general background information about adaptive reuse projects. This includes the concept and definition of adaptive reuse, reasons for surplus religious buildings, and advantages behind adaptive reuse projects and historic preservation. Definitions of associated concepts, such as preservation, restoration and reconstruction, are also discussed. This chapter speaks to concerns of parishioners, private developers, and public agencies involved in urban redevelopment in terms of strategies and incentives available for historic buildings that are underused or abandoned.

Later in the chapter, internal and external factors that might affect the choice of adaptive reuse outcomes of historic buildings are addressed. Based on previous literature, internal factors include building characteristics, seller’s denomination and historic status. The external factors include location characteristics, demographic shifts and macro-economic conditions. In addition, the role of tax credits, including the federal historic preservation tax credit, low income housing tax credit, and new market tax credit in choice of reuse outcomes are addressed in the final part of this chapter.

Definitions and Concepts

The term preservation refers to the maintenance of a property without significant alteration to its current condition. This approach should be taken when it is appropriate to maintain a building “as is.” A building changes over its lifetime and each change represents a part of its history and integrity; preservation accepts those changes but maintains its historic integrity and as many of the original features as possible. When preservation is the appropriate
strategy, the only intervention is normal maintenance or special work needed to protect the building against further damage (Tyler, 2000).

Restoration refers to the process of returning a building to its condition at a specific point in time, often to its original condition. Restoration of a building is appropriate when portions of a building’s historic integrity are lost or where its importance at one time was particularly significant. A decision made to restore a building to a defined time period recognizes that importance. This decision must be made carefully, for its means ignoring the natural evolution of the building and creating, essentially, a contrived picture of its survival. However, if a building has a past of great significance, then restoration may be justified (Tyler, 2000). The term reconstruction means the building of a historic building using replicated design and/or materials. This approach is taken when a historic building no longer exists but needs to be physically in place for contextual reasons (Tyler, 2000).

Many historic buildings are no longer viable in their original functions and use but retain their architectural integrity. For these buildings, a common type of intervention is rehabilitation, also referred to as adaptive reuse. Adaptive reuse offers a suitable approach when existing historic buildings are damaged or deteriorated but modification can be made to update portions of the building, even adapting the building for a new purpose. Adaptive reuse is as a process that retains as much as possible of the original building while upgrading the performance to suit modern standards and changing user requirements (Latham, 2000). Generally, the most radical changes are made on the interior, where more latitude may be taken to adapt the building without altering its outward appearance. To maintain the building’s historic integrity, however, exterior changes are generally minimal (Tyler, 2000).
Advantages of Adaptive Reuse

As with gentrification, the process of adaptive reuse brings in new residents and commercial tenants, generates additional economic activity, and results in either renovation or development of the surrounding infrastructure. The conversion of underused historic buildings into functional properties increases the city’s tax base and may spur additional investment in the area (Zielenbach, 2000). The developer of a former religious building for adaptive reuse could be a private development company seeking a return on investment, a nonprofit agency acting as developer for altruistic reasons (such as preservation of an historic structure), a public agency seeking to expand its tax base or abate a nuisance, or a sole proprietor or speculator considering an investment. In some situations, several of these groups may collaborate to achieve their respective goals (Simons, Dimit and DeWine, Forthcoming). This section addresses advantages of adaptive reuse of historic properties, including not only the project costs but also the public side motives, such as urban sustainability and revitalization, historic preservation, and providing low income housing in the distressed areas.

Economic Benefits

The increase of adaptive reuse projects in the 1970s led to the publication of many opinions and books on the topic, including some on the economic aspects of the process. The Urban Land Institute and the National Trust for Historic Preservation published texts detailing the economic development value of adaptive reuse and economic analysis of specific projects (Maddex 1985). It is generally agreed that there are two sides to economic development work: 1) development-oriented economic development, which focuses on obtaining jobs and investment that will benefit the community as a whole, and 2) community-based economic development, which is concerned more with the “equity, fairness and distribution of wealth” (Rucker 2001).
Adaptive reuse can focus both on bringing investment into a community and more fair
distribution of wealth in a community, depending on what kind of building was reused, and what
the new purpose of that building will be.

In a *Preservation Information* booklet published by the National Trust for Historic
Preservation, “The Economics of Rehabilitation,” Donovan Rypkema underscores the need for
preservationists to make economic cases for preservation because those people demanding such a
rationale (i.e. bankers, government officials, taxpayers, etc.) tend to have the most power to
make preservation possible (Rypkema 1997). Rypkema encourages preservationists to look at
historic buildings in a new way as they make their economic arguments, rather than tacking on
weak or unclear justifications. He favors viewing historic buildings as real estate when
discussing a project’s economic merits from the perspective of a source of funding like a banker,
investor or taxpayer, so as to understand their decision-making rationale in order to better
achieve the long-term goals of historic preservation (Rypkema 1997).

**Construction Costs**

Historic buildings are often cheaper to convert to new uses than new buildings cost to
build, so the decision to reuse can be made on sound economic grounds (Latham, 2000). In other
words, real estate developers are the main recipients of reuse project benefits through savings of
construction time and cost. Rehabilitation projects can be done more quickly than new
construction unless extensive structural reconstruction is required (Langston, Wong, Hui & Shen,
2008; Gorgolewski, 2008; Simons, Dimit and DeWine, Forthcoming). The shorter development
period reduces the cost of financing and inflation of construction costs during the project.
Accountants, consultants, architects, lawyers, and other professionals all expect to be paid,
usually by the hour, which means that maintaining priorities and tasks on time and on budget is
important (Simons, Zitiello and DeWine, Forthcoming). Furthermore, organizations that do not have to relocate experience less disruption to operations and cash flows, as well as reduced temporary accommodation expenses (Langston, Wong, Hui & Shen, 2008).

As Langston, Wong, Hui and Shen (2008) noted, the cost of converting a building is generally less than new construction because many of the building elements already exist; given there are no expensive problems to overcome, like asbestos removal or foundation subsidence, the reuse of structural elements is a significant savings. Simons, Dimit and DeWine (Forthcoming) compared hypothetical development costs of a condo conversion project of a church to a new construction project with the same price points. They found that the total development cost for the new project is approximately 6.5% higher that rehabilitation project. They concluded that in most situations an adaptive reuse rehab project can be brought to market at less expense than comparable new construction. There can be more unexpected costs with rehab but fewer additional investment dollars after site acquisition, making the deal attractive to some developers if the project is “bought right,” especially in cost-sensitive, depressed markets.

**Urban Sustainability**

There is growing support that adaptive reuse of historic structures satisfies a key concept of sustainability (Bullen and Love, 2009). Adaptive reuse is an efficient “green” approach that protects environments and increases sustainability in urban areas. Although the amount of energy consumed during a building’s lifetime varies greatly from building to building, extending a buildings’ useful life is almost always more sustainable than demolishing and reconstruction (Rabun and Kelso, 2009). Environmental benefits from adaptive reuse arise through the recycling of materials, reuse of structural elements, and the reduction in generated landfill. These benefits translate into cost advantages to the developer or the owner in addition to the wider
environmental considerations (Langston, Wong, Hui & Shen, 2008; Bullen and Love, 2009). These wider considerations include: reduced depletion of non-renewable natural resources such as minerals and fossil fuels; reduced air pollution from manufacturing processes and road transportation; protection of natural landscapes; and reduced building waste deposited to landfill sites.

Conservation of the effort, skill and dedication of the original builders is as much energy conservation as it is heritage conservation. According to Latham (2000), whether buildings are made of low energy consuming materials like stone, or high energy like steel and glass, the constructed building encapsulates that used energy. Demolition dissipates it, mostly to waste, though materials reclaimed by adaptive reuse can go some way to compensating for it (Latham, 2000). In addition, many adaptive reuse projects are directly related to Brownfield remediation issues in the urban area. While the typical Brownfield site is an industrial property, many other historic uses also leave environmental contamination behind after the property has been abandoned, including fuel service stations, retail establishments such as dry cleaners, and even some residential properties that may have residual lead contaminants (Mallach, 2006).

Brownfield redevelopment through adaptive reuse projects is very important because it provides an opportunity for intergovernmental management and mitigation of these sites as well as for community enhancement and improvement (Bacot and O’Dell, 2006). Adaptive reuse projects can also provide a better business environment by upgrading the communication and transportation infrastructure through redevelopment of the Brownfield area.

**Historic Preservation**

Urban history is an act of recovery as well as a creative gesture toward the future – a way to comprehend and build upon places over time. Urban history has gradually made its way onto
the radar screens of public officials as a tool to revitalize a distressed urban area (Clark, 2004). From this point of view, community assets such as historic religious buildings, museums and libraries that are concentrated in urban areas make direct contributions to the economy. By enriching the lives of residents and attracting visitors, urban history can exert a powerful, although indirect, influence on private investment (McNulty, Jacobson & Penne, 1986).

Historic preservation is an urban design technique used to protect historic resources in the urban built landscape (Ugochukwu, 2006). Adaptive reuse projects can be strong strategies of historic preservation that provide a positive impact on a local economy (Tyler, 2000). In general, we credit historic preservation by designing historic features into public, commercial, and even residential building projects (Latham, 2000). Latham pointed out that a whole interior design industry has developed around the concept of “historic theming” in museums, shopping centers, restaurants, pubs, night clubs and hotels. He also pointed out that speculative housing developments have greater sales potential if they have a historical look rather than if they have a modern design. In this sense, historic building reuse projects have been preferred by both private developers and public agencies because existing historic features obviate the need to input such historical characteristics to a new building.

Urban Revitalization

Zielenbach (2000) pointed out urban revitalization is a function of both local physical characteristics, including geographic location and urban amenities, and human capital. Proximity to highly desirable locales such as historic resources makes certain communities appealing to both individuals and businesses (Zielenbach, 2000). As such, adaptive reuse may be considered a catalyst for neighborhood revitalization and renewal of distressed urban areas by positively stimulating the local economy through job creation. Adaptive reuse projects require less material
and fewer natural resources, but they are more labor intensive. Adaptive reuse is a greater employment generator than new construction. According to Latham (2000), adaptive reuse generates 25% more employment than new construction per square meter of floor space as a result of the typical labor intensive activities involved in renovation. The reliance on labor-intensive work is important not only in terms of the employment potential of historic preservation, but also in terms of an individual project’s spillover effects on the local economy (Tyler, 2000).

In other words, adaptive reuse projects generate economic multiplier impacts. Those impacts include growth in local retail business, growth in commercial real estate development, and growth in ancillary services such as daycare and consumer services because reused properties can provide stimulation for new businesses and residents whose investments might boost the local economy. Adaptive reuse projects also tend to augment revenues for state and local governments by returning underused buildings to the tax rolls (Latham, 2000). Increased tax revenues then enable local government to invest more funds into the distressed community. The result of such benefits generated by adaptive reuse projects may be seen as additional renovation or development of the surrounding infrastructure (Zielenbach, 2000).

In addition, reused historic buildings can be wonderful sources for tourism and leisure while at the same time adaptation of historic buildings can be visual amenity assets for neighborhoods (Latham, 2000; Wang and Zeng, 2010). That is to say that adaptation and renovation of historic buildings generates tangential non-priced benefits that cannot be economically enumerated to the public. These benefits arise when people get enjoyment and satisfaction from a restored building without paying for access (Garrod, Willis, Bjarnadottir & Cockbain, 1996). As a result, adaptively reused historic buildings are recognized by the federal
or the local governments because urban policy makers assume that these buildings have local historic and cultural values (Wang and Zeng, 2010).

**Providing Low Income Housing**

Adaptive reuses of historic buildings can act as a catalyst and lubricator to the process of introducing alternative functions into areas otherwise swamped by market competition (Latham, 2000). Historic religious buildings can be reused for residential Visual amenity is concerned with the subjective enjoyment that a society experiences from its visual environment. It responds to popular taste and is not inhibited by fixed criteria dictating what should or should not be preserved (Latham, 2000). However, it is very challenging because religious buildings’ architectural styles do not allow the developer to create many individual units without additional construction. Furthermore, conversion of religious structures into market rate condominiums can be viewed as demolishing the religious values in the community. If the building features allow the initiator to build rental housing for low income households, however, a reuse of a religious building for low income housing can be preferred by the community. Some religious buildings located in a distressed community may be good candidates for low income housing if the building can house enough units (Simons and Choi, Forthcoming).

The United States government has input considerable funds to subsidizing low income housing, including both *project-based* programs, such as public housing and Section 8 New Construction, and *tenant-based* voucher programs, such as the Section 8 existing housing assistance, that aim to shoulder a portion of the cost of privately provided housing (Sinai and Waldfogel, 2005). *Project-based* programs are supply side subsidies while *tenant-based* voucher programs are demand side governmental subsidies. The federal low income housing tax credit (LIHTC) is one of the major subsidies to boost economic and social conditions in low income
communities. The federal expenditures on low income housing create positive externalities: enhanced home maintenance, social and political participation, and attachment to community. There are also intrinsic, private benefits that all members of society deserve a chance to consume on the grounds of distributive justice (Turner, Austin, Wial, and Wolman, 2008); the benefits accruing to low income housing are increased wealth, social status, and control over dwelling, pride and life satisfaction.

**Internal Factors**

Internal factors in this dissertation indicate factors related to physical building or property owners. Previous literature has pointed out that a decision to preserve or reuse an historic building is strongly affected by internal factors including physical building characteristics and seller’s denomination. In addition to these factors, historic designations can affect an initiator’s decision to convert the property for a certain purpose because such designation at the national, state or local level may make the property more attractive (Asabere, Hachey and Grubaugh, 1989; Asabere, Huffman and Mehdian, 1994).

Physical building styles and characteristics play a pivotal role in initiators’ decision for reuse outcomes of historic building reuse projects. Initiators of reuse projects seek more unusual buildings to convert, such as historic religious buildings. Wang and Zeng (2010) pointed out that the requirements of the local building codes and the zoning allow or potentially allow affect the proposed uses based on the structural stability of the building and the condition of the mechanical systems should be evaluated when initiators decide their projects. Although a religious building has a sense of historic linkage to the community, if the building style and condition does not fit for a particular reuse outcome or the building condition is too deteriorated to reuse building components without a serious investment, the initiator may delay the building
reuse project until they can finance the project with more subsidies. Alternatively they may give up the project, meaning call option is not exercised. Burchell and Listokin (1981) posited that the condition of the property and building features should be considered in the decision making process of selecting a reuse outcome.

According to their study, residential conversion is the best outcome for a building in good condition and attractive architectural features under both weakening and strengthening markets, but is not a good alternative for a building in poor condition under either weakening or strengthening market. In the case of poor building conditions with common architectural style, they recommended public spaces as a good redevelopment outcome. Mallach (2006) mentioned that if a building is attractive, of high quality, or of architectural or historic value, the building is worthy of being preserved and converted into new uses. Focusing on residential conversion, Mallach argued the size of a building always matters when selecting a reuse outcome, but the architectural or historic quality of the building, character of the building relative to potential market demand, and presence of environmental concerns are also important factors to be considered when developers decide project outcomes.

Similarly, Lion (1982) stated that before any decisions are finalized on the extent or the nature of building reuse, it is essential to perform a complete and thorough building inspection to determine the state of health or deterioration of the building and what repairs, if any, have to be done apart from other alterations for adaptation to other uses. Shen and Langston (2010) focused on the physical life of historic buildings as an important ingredient in the necessary adaptation of the constructed environment due to the impact of climate change and the need to conserve valuable resources in the future. They evaluated adaptive reuse potential (ARP) of 64 historic buildings completed in either Hong Kong or Australia. Through their own application of ARP,
mean values are determined for a number of variables that suggest that the model relates equally well to different contexts. For ARP evaluation, they used date of original construction, date of subsequent major refurbishment, and forecast of physical life to evaluate adaptive reuse potential of historic buildings. A building’s physical condition played a core role in their calculation and analysis.

The adaptive reuse decision might be affected by a seller’s organizational features. For example, whether or not a seller has a hierarchical organization would impact an initiator’s decision because some outcomes might be preferred by a hierarchical seller. For example, the Catholic church has a hierarchical decision making process and their policies, such as promulgating the merger or relocation plans for their parishes, may have driven a larger, but more controlled and economically efficient, net loss of religious buildings, compared with denominations which do not follow a centralized hierarchical process (Simons and Choi, Forthcoming).

Architectural and historic evaluations must also be made. Want and Zeng (2010) stated that whether or not the building can meet the criteria of the national register, how much of the historic fabric exists – the authentic materials and workmanship that give the building its character or integrity – and how much it is feasible to preserve can be considered at the decision phases. The easiest way to evaluate religious buildings’ historic value is to investigate whether or not potential religious building reuse projects are registered as a national historic landmark or located in a national historic district. Many religious buildings are directly connected to cultural identities in neighborhood not only because they have provided cultural events but also because with intangible factors they are historic and old, and they have played an important role in
architectural design and landscape of the community. Therefore many historic buildings have been designated as national historic places.

Historic places can be designated at the national, state, and local level. Historic designations give owners of historic places an advantage in the competitive process of grant application and create an identifiable voice in community affairs. Although historic designations restrict development opportunities of owners, they also make historic buildings more attractive to future tenants. Under this assumption, potential initiators of reuse projects of religious buildings might seek properties designated as historic places. The National Trust for Historic Preservation is the most prominent preservation organization in the United States. The initial focus of the trust involved the acquisition of important historic properties. The trust acquired many other buildings and sites during its early years (Benson and Klein, 2008); however, its vision soon expanded to embrace the broader goals of public education and assistance to local organizations and projects (Benson and Klein, 2008). In addition, there are state-wide organizations, such as Preservation North Carolina and Historic Landmark Foundation of Indiana. Some nonprofit organizations such as the Cleveland Restoration Society began as grassroots efforts without any special assistance from statewide groups. They became regional leaders over in an extended period of time (Benson and Klein, 2008).

The National Register of Historic Places is the nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. Authorized under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect historic and archeological resources. Properties listed in the Register include districts, sites, buildings, and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture. The National Register is administered
by the National Park Service, a part of the U.S. Department of the Interior (National Park Service, 2010). The relationship between historic preservation and nearby housing values has been analyzed by various academic fields using hedonic regression models; although there has been evidence of a negative impact or no impact of historic preservation through historic landmark or district designation on nearby housing values in several studies (Asabere, Hachey and Grubaugh, 1989; Asabere, Huffman and Mehdian, 1994), a positive relationship predominates in research cases (Coulson and Leichenko, 2001; Noonan, 2007; Narwold, 2008).

Historic preservation is an urban design technique used to protect historic resources in the urban built landscape (Ugochukwu, 2006). Historic preservation adds value to the existing built environment just as conservation adds to the natural landscape (Benson and Klein, 2008). Stimulating historic preservation work is not limited to the voluntary civic activist: well-educated and ambitious leaders in this growing enterprise can find opportunities in all three major economic sectors: nonprofit organizations, government agencies, and private businesses (Benson and Klein, 2008).

**External Factors**

Location characteristics (Farrell, 1979; Luther, 1988; Murtagh, 2005; Wang and Zeng, 2010), demographic shifts (Mian, 2008; Wang and Zeng, 2010; Simons and Choi, Forthcoming), local commercial market conditions (Williams, 1991; Lentz and Tse, 1995; Luehrman, 1998; Batabyal, 1999; Sing and Patel, 2001; Capozza and Li, 2002; Gunnelin, 2001; Schatzki, 2003; Towe, Nickerson and Bockstael, 2008) and macroeconomic trends (Simons and Choi, Forthcoming) are important external factors that affect initiators’ decisions to reuse historic buildings.
Location factors that affect developers’ decision to invest can be divided into the highest levels, state or Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) level, nearby neighborhood level (urban, suburban or exurban), and micro-location of amenities (Kiel and Zabel, 2008). State level geographic division is a proxy of difference in not only climate, proximity to bodies of water, and cultural attractions, but also state regulation or incentive policies. Neighborhood level geographic division is a proxy of difference in zoning allowance and development potential in terms of surrounding infrastructure. Micro location of urban amenities may include proximity to a park, lake, river, highway, airport, etc. These urban amenities are very important considerations when developers invest their money.

Urban amenities are positively or negatively related to residential preference and housing prices. Benson, Hansen, Schwartz and Smersh (1998) estimated the value of the “view” amenity in single-family residential real estate markets. Their work focused on Bellingham, WA – a city with a variety of views, including oceans, lakes, and mountains – and allowed for differentiation of the view amenity by both type and quality. They found that depending on the particular view, willingness to pay for this amenity may be quite high. Simons and Choi (Forthcoming) tested whether or not location variables affect outcomes of reuse projects. Their findings support previous literature that has empirically proven the negative impacts of the proximity of highways (Clay and Smidt, 2004; Bourassa, 2006) and airports (McMillen, 2004; Jud and Winkler, 2006; Pope, 2008; Cohen and Coughlin, 2008) on residential projects. They also concluded that those location features, however, provide advantages to retail shops as they generate high traffic volume.

One of the key determinants for adaption of abandoned or underused buildings is demographic component shifts. For instance, according to Wang and Zeng (2010), whether or
not a need exists for the proposed reuse can be a product of the local social and demographic characteristics of the area and affect its feasibility. In addition, the type of development taking place locally, the competition in the market, what other uses exist in the area, what proximal plans are in place, and the existing or potential environmental quality of the surrounding areas should be evaluated when initiators decide outcomes of reuse projects.

**Tax Credits**

Not all adaptive reuse projects of religious buildings are profitable without the benefit of public subsidies. As Saurwein and Simons (Forthcoming) stated, communities may find nonfinancial value in saving old buildings that are important to the community because they are highly visible landmarks or otherwise provide an amenity to the neighborhood. Often these projects are developed by nonprofit or public agencies financed with heavy public subsidies and little expectation of financial returns. Developers also tend to rely heavily on debt financing and, accordingly, projects need to produce enough positive cash flow to cover expenses and debt service. Most importantly, a developer needs to be sure that he or she will receive some profit from the project, or else the project will not justify the amount of work required to make the project move forward (Saurwein and Simons, Forthcoming). Among the variety of social and economic factors that have contributed to the current interest in rehabilitation, the most important have probably been the federal income tax credits for the rehabilitation of historic and old buildings (Kass, LaBelle and Hansell, 1993; Saurwein and Simons, Forthcoming).

The complexities of adaptive reuse projects involving historic religious buildings can be managed using both conventional and creative real estate development practices. (Saurwein and Simons, Forthcoming) Despite their potential for increased costs and risks, historic churches are often ideal opportunities for using creative financing tools, such as historic preservation tax
credits and nonprofit grants. Rhodes and Wilkinson (2006) also pointed out the role of financial incentives in choice of property conversion decisions of stakeholders. Tax credit is a dollar-for-dollar recognition of payment of taxes due. Tax credits function either as a reduction in the amount of taxes owed or, if they are refundable tax credits, as a dollar-for-dollar payment made by the government directly to the taxpayer through the tax system (Saurwein and Simons, Forthcoming). Kass, LaBelle and Hansell (1993) noted two federal income tax credits that apply for rehabilitation of historic buildings: the historic preservation tax credit (HPTC) and the low income housing tax credit (LIHTC). Saurwein and Simons (Forthcoming) added the new market tax credit (NMTC) to the options available in decisions.

**The Historic Preservation Tax Credit (HPTC)**

The federal HPTC is one of the most successful and cost-effective public and private revitalization incentive programs in the United States. The program is administered by the National Park Service and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) in partnership with State Historic Preservation Offices. The HPTC program provides federal income-tax incentives for the rehabilitation of historic income-producing properties. Rehabilitation includes renovation, restoration, and reconstruction but it does not include enlargement or new construction (IRS, 2010). Therefore, it may apply for adaptive reuse projects if reuse project initiators do not add new constructed buildings to existing sites.

The HPTC is equal to either 20% or 10% of the amount of qualified rehabilitation expenditures. Whether developers can get benefits from a 20% or 10% rehabilitation tax credit is dependent upon various criteria established by the federal government (National Trust Community Investment Corporation, 2010). The owner must hold the building for five full years after completing the rehabilitation or pay back the credit. If the owner disposes of the building
within a year after it is placed in service, 100% of the credit is recaptured by the government (National Park Service, 2010). To be eligible, a property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment; the historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved; most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved; deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced; chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used; significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved; and new additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired (National Park Service, 2010).

The Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC)

The LIHTC program is administered by U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The LIHTC is an indirect federal subsidy used to finance the development of affordable rental housing for low-income households. Most new construction and substantial rehabilitation projects are eligible for a nine percent tax credit, meaning that owners receive a credit equal to nine percent of the qualified costs each year for 10 years. Projects that are financed through the issuance of tax-exempt bonds may qualify for an automatic four percent tax credit program (IRS, 2010). At least 20% of the units in the project must have rents affordable to low incomes and must be occupied by households with incomes no greater than 50% of the median. Alternatively, at least 40% of the units must be affordable and occupied by families with incomes no greater than 60% of median to qualify for the credit (National Association of
Housing and Redevelopment Officials, 2010). According to IRS rules, low-income occupancy must be maintained for at least 15 years, but there are very strong federal incentives to maintain the restrictions for 30 years and some states impose additional requirements (National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials, 2010).

The Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC or Tax Credit) program was created by the Tax Reform Act of 1986 as an alternate method of funding housing for low- and moderate-income households, and has been in operation since 1987. Until 2000, each state received a tax credit of $1.25 per person that it can allocate towards funding housing that meets program guidelines (currently, legislation is pending to increase this per capita allocation). This per capital allocation was raised to $1.50 in 2001, to $1.75 in 2002, and adjusted for inflation beginning in 2003. These tax credits are then used to leverage private capital into new construction or acquisition and rehabilitation of affordable housing.

The New Market Tax Credit (NMTC)

The NMTC is administered by the Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) Fund under the U.S. Department of the Treasury. Part of the Community Renewal Tax Relief Act of 2000, the New Markets Tax Credit Program will spur approximately $15 billion in investments into privately managed investment institutions. In turn, these privately managed investment institutions, or Community Development Entities (CDEs), will make loans and capital investments in businesses in underserved areas. By making an investment in a CDE, an individual or corporate investor can receive a tax credit worth 39 percent (30 percent net of present value) of the initial investment distributed over 7 years, along with any anticipated return on their investment in the CDE.
The NMTC program is similar to the LIHTC credit program in that both target low-income areas. However, while the LIHTC program is limited to financing rental housing, the NMTC program is much broader in scope and focuses on nonresidential economic development activities to assist local businesses (Saurwein and Simons, 2009). It permits individual and corporate taxpayers to receive a credit against federal income taxes for making qualified equity investments in designated Community Development Entities (U.S. Department of Treasury, 2010). The NMTC Program permits taxpayers to claim a credit against Federal income taxes for Qualified Equity Investments (QEIs) made to acquire stock or a capital interest in designated Community Development Entities. These designated CDEs must use substantially all (defined as 85 percent) of these proceeds to make Qualified Low-Income Community Investments (QLICIs) (Choi, 2010).

Limitations of Previous Literature

There are three aspects of the relationship of reuse projects to external variables that are not adequately addressed in the previous literature. First, historic designations that might be positively associated with reuse choices have not been statistically tested by previous studies that use historic designations as proxies of historic and architectural values of religious buildings. Such testing would inform whether historic district designations and sacred landmarks give our neighborhood an advantage in the competitive process of grand applications and create identifiable voice in community affairs.

Second, the effects of commercial real estate market conditions on historic building reuse choices have not been statistically investigated. Previous studies of the call option theory have revealed a market impact on land conversion or development, however, the impact of market volatility or conditions on historic building reuse plans was not statistically tested. Finally,
relationships between reuse choices and public subsidies, including the New Market Tax Credit (NMTC) as a part of the Community Development Financial Institutions Fund (the CDFI Fund). The CDFI Fund was established by the Riegle Community Development and Regulatory Improvement Act of 1994, as a bipartisan initiative (U.S. Department of the Treasury, 2010). The historic preservation tax credit, the low income housing tax credit and the new market tax credit, were not statistically tested by previous studies, even if such credits have played an important role in gap financing for both private developers and public agencies who initiated reuse projects of historic buildings (according to their own accounts of the projects). Therefore, these three factors – the historic designation, commercial market conditions and tax credits – are considered as primary independent variables.

**Literature Review Conclusions**

The first part of this chapter addressed background information that is useful to understand for private developers and the public agencies that want to generate financial benefits or preserve religious buildings through adaptive reuse projects. The concept and definition of adaptive reuse, reasons for redundant religious buildings, and advantages of adaptive reuse projects compared to new constructions were described. In addition, this chapter included definitions of associated terms to adaptive reuse, such as preservation, restoration and reconstruction. The later part of the chapter examined the factors that might affect initiators’ decisions for religious building reuse projects.

The size of properties, including building size and lot size, has a positive effect to residential reuse plans but is negative to commercial reuses. In addition, residential reuse projects may need more building stories than commercial plans to allow the developer to build more residential units. Main streets and corner locations are positively related to retail places as a
reuse outcome; this seems reasonable because those locations generate high traffic volume which is positively related to retail spaces but negatively related to residential properties. Higher income level is always welcome to the for-profit developers, but it was negatively related to rental housing as a reuse outcome. It seems that if religious buildings are located in distressed neighborhoods, such religious buildings tend to be redeveloped by non-profit or governmental agencies for low income housing.

Availability of tax credits are enforced by federal laws. To utilize the federal preservation tax credits, users must hold properties at least five years. Therefore, the historic preservation tax credits are not appropriate for for-sale housing projects. To utilize the low income housing tax credit, users must hold low income housing at least 15 years. Therefore the low income housing is positive to low income housing as a reuse. The federal historic preservation tax credit is based on Section 48 and Section 170 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (National Park Service, 2010). The LIHTC is based on Section 42 of the Internal Revenue Code, enacted in 1986 and made permanent in 1993 (National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials, 2010). In order to utilize the new market tax credit, end uses must be income generating uses except housing projects. Therefore the new market tax credit is negative to residential projects.
Chapter 2: Methodology

The purpose of this research is to provide insight as to what common variables present in the success of general adaptive reuse projects may be relevant to church reuse as well. The potentials and pitfalls that this research identifies as key elements to a successful adaptive reuse are studied through targeted case studies. This study will target the role of the aforementioned elements of success – but in a somewhat unique setting – vacant urban churches. In sum, the literature presented in this section will be used to test elements that have been previously shown to make a difference in the success of adaptive reuse in planning an adaptive church reuse. Specifically, this process will offer considerable insight into what common factors are present in successful adaptive church reuse projects.

To achieve the goals of the study, the collection and analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data is necessary. Due to their compatibility with the study of contemporary, real-life events, case studies are the chosen research method. These data collection techniques include, but are not limited to direct observation, interviews, and reviewing archival records. Each activity conducted as a part of the case study contributes to the understanding of the issue as a whole.

Using the case study method as the primary research strategy, the history of the churches and the adaptive reuse projects undertaken with them, as well as several factors of success determined in the literature review will be researched for each of the cases chosen. The same factors will be considered for each case study, however not all will necessarily be important for every case because each of the case studies are very different. Unlike past studies that rely heavily on quantitative data (dealing with numbers, regression analysis and measurements), this study will be primarily qualitative, (dealing with descriptions and data that is observed but not
measured). The reasoning is that each of the four case studies despite only being a few miles apart are very different in terms of neighborhood demographics, property values, religious denominations, building type, and reuse purposes. Given these factors, along with a limited time frame, a qualitative approach has been chosen for the primary method of research.

Once the data is collected it will be compared to determine what, if any, common elements the successful adaptive reuse projects share. Finally, recommendations and next steps for development and policy will be put forth as a result of the study and analysis. Limited interviews, direct observation and the study of archival records will be used. These methods will be employed in order to obtain information such as census data, surrounding property values, property owner and local historic preservation expert insights, building type, stakeholders involved, regulatory context, financing, site issues, development process, challenging real estate markets, preservation-related incentives, and historic designation. This study will explore whether similar variables and themes are involved in the success of different cases of adaptively reusing churches.

Two case studies were conducted, the First Church of Christ, Scientist in the University Circle neighborhood, and St. George Lithuanian in the St. Clair-Superior neighborhood. Both case studies focused on church adaptive reuse projects that had positive outcomes. Unsuccessful projects that failed or ended in demolition were not chosen for case studies, but factors contributing to failed projects were taken note of while completing the literature review. The purpose of the first two of these case studies will be to study elements identified through the literature as important to the completion of successful adaptive church reuse projects. The physical, socioeconomic and political characteristics of each neighborhood studied accompanied
with historical and general physical characteristics and observations of each church will be required for a complete study of each case.

The case studies were selected by reviewing recent events in the Greater Cleveland area, and the March 14, 2009 announcement by Cleveland Bishop Richard Lennon of a sweeping reconfiguration of the Diocese, that resulted in a net reduction of 52 parishes in just 15 months. The studies were conducted on churches adapted for a purpose other than worship. Within the context of the multiple-case study, data was collected through direct observation, research, and limited interviews. Access to information proved an important factor when selecting case studies. Another case was intended to be used (St. Josaphat Catholic) but access to detailed information was inadequate to produce a comprehensive evaluation. The direct observation component consisted of windshield tours of each of the church neighborhoods and evaluating the buildings themselves. The research component consisted of census data and property value collection, as well as periodical-based histories of the churches. The key informant interviews were conducted with the Cleveland Restoration Society, local preservation experts, and property owners. All of these components were listed as appropriate methods within the case study technique explained by Yin (2003). All aforementioned factors of successful adaptive reuse of churches are fully defined and discussed as part of the literature review in the previous chapter and will be considered for each case study.

The first chapter provided a detail literature review completed on the adaptive reuse of churches and formed the evaluation criteria that the case studies will be compared to. The third chapter highlights the history of religion in Cleveland and the inherent value of inner city churches nationwide. It also investigates the church closing crisis in declining cities in the US. The fourth chapter looks at the first case study: The First Church of Christ, Scientist which was
converted into the Nottingham-Spirk Innovation Center in the University neighborhood. Chapter five is a detailed study of St. George Lithuanian in the St. Clair-Superior neighborhood which was recently acquired by the Community Greenhouse Partners to serve as the centerpiece of one of the nation’s largest urban farms.

The results of the research and analysis component of this thesis are used in chapter six to form a series of findings and recommendations regarding the reuse of Churches. The central theme of this thesis is that churches provide a public good through both the spiritual activities they house as well as from the strong, often beautiful visual presence they lend to their surrounding neighborhoods. Churches remain an anchor within their surroundings even as the environment changes around them over time. The public good provided by a church is strongest when the building is being used as a place of worship, but is still present if the church building is converted to another use and the exterior remains intact within the community. The public good (as it is referred to in planning) provided by a church is lost forever if the building is demolished. The goal of this thesis is to highlight development strategies that can be used to encourage the creative adaptive reuse of these unique structures through creative development solution and in order to increase the rate of preservation of historic churches through the purveyance of useful information to interested parties.

The research, case studies, and recommendations are intended to be of use by church owners and congregations seeking to address reuse of a church within their locality. Much of the document is focused on Cleveland, Ohio and the Cleveland Catholic Diocese because of their recent downsizing of historic building stock flooding into the real estate market, however as you will read in the next chapter, churches representing other denominations provide opportunity reuse as well. There are certain restrictions put on buildings by different religions which will be
fully considered when investigating the case studies. Cleveland provides a great example of how these buildings can be reused despite being in a challenging real estate market with a variety of building types and religions being represented.

Data Analysis

Are there patterns in church adaptive reuse success or failure? Once both case studies are complete, data will be reviewed for potential patterns. If similar results are found in both cases, then literal replication will have been achieved. If contrasting results are found for predictable reasons, then theoretical replication will have been achieved (Yin 2003). The goal of this research strategy is to establish that some level of replication occurred through the events at the both churches so that some generalizations of theory may be possible (Yin 2003). Theoretical generalization would be the highest measure of internal validity for the study. These recommendations will take the form of guidance for the property owner to consider that have been successful in other projects, and hopefully help avoid circumstances that undermine other similar projects.
Chapter 3: The Changing Religious Landscape

This chapter examines national and local factors underlying the closure of churches. Analysis of population and religious participation rates in the United States, review of trends in Catholicism nationally and in Cleveland, and the examination of the factors that are driving the closing of churches in the Cleveland area all help to assess the magnitude of the issue and to establish why the reuse of churches is an important and relevant topic for investigation.

Religious Participation in the United States

The rate of religious participation in the United States has decreased over the last twenty years from 51% of the population in 1990 to 49% in 2000. Table 1.0 presents statistics for the largest denominations in the United States. While the total number of religious adherents grew by 8.5% between 1990 and 2000, the total population increased by 13.2% during that time period. Adjusted for population growth, the rate of religious participation has actually decreased by 2%. There are an estimated 2,600 different religious groups in North America.¹ Some religions are experiencing significant growth in terms of adherents (Southern Baptists, Assembly of God, and Latter Day Saints) while others are decreasing (Presbyterians, Methodists). Catholics, the largest religious group in the United States, experienced a high rate of growth between 1990 and 2000, with an increase of 8.6 million, or 16.4% adherents. The 11.2% growth of non-western European religions like Hindu and Muslim reflects an increasing immigration rate of eastern descent into the United States.²

Table 3.1: Adherents of Major Religions in the United States

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>53,385,998</td>
<td>62,035,042</td>
<td>8,649,044</td>
<td>16.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Baptist</td>
<td>18,940,682</td>
<td>19,881,467</td>
<td>940,785</td>
<td>4.97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodist</td>
<td>11,091,032</td>
<td>10,350,629</td>
<td>-740,403</td>
<td>-6.68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish</td>
<td>5,982,529</td>
<td>6,141,325</td>
<td>158,796</td>
<td>2.65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evangelical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lutheran</td>
<td>5,226,789</td>
<td>5,113,418</td>
<td>-113,380</td>
<td>-2.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latter-Day Saints</td>
<td>3,540,820</td>
<td>4,224,026</td>
<td>683,206</td>
<td>19.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian</td>
<td>3,553,335</td>
<td>3,141,566</td>
<td>-411,769</td>
<td>-11.59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assemblies of God</td>
<td>2,161,610</td>
<td>2,561,998</td>
<td>400,388</td>
<td>18.52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lutheran</td>
<td>2,603,725</td>
<td>2,521,062</td>
<td>-82,663</td>
<td>-3.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Episcopal</td>
<td>2,445,286</td>
<td>2,314,756</td>
<td>-130,530</td>
<td>-5.34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Baptist</td>
<td>1,873,731</td>
<td>1,767,462</td>
<td>-106,269</td>
<td>-5.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>15,967,838</td>
<td>17,755,923</td>
<td>1,788,085</td>
<td>11.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total US Religion</td>
<td><strong>126,721,485</strong></td>
<td><strong>137,814,924</strong></td>
<td><strong>11,093,439</strong></td>
<td><strong>8.75%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The population in the US in 1990 was 248,709,766; in 2000 it was 281,421,839. A 13.2% growth*

Table 1.1 lists the largest religions in the United States in terms of the number of congregations. The number of total religious congregations in the United States increased by 2 percent between 1990 and 2000, a total of 4,800 new congregations formed. The fastest growing religions in terms of adherents tend to also show increases in the number of congregations: Latter-Day Saints, Assembly of God, and Southern Baptists. The notable exception is Catholicism, which decreased by 2.9% of 690 congregations during this period. The major religions exhibiting decreases in the number of adherents (Methodists, Presbyterians) also experienced a decrease in the number of congregations. Keep in mind not every congregation that forms or disbands maintains control of a church building, nor does every religion maintain a

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church presence in the same manner, but the trends of congregation formation are an indicator of
the demand for church buildings.

Table 3.2: Major Congregations in the United States

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>22,441</td>
<td>21,791</td>
<td>-650</td>
<td>-2.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Baptist</td>
<td>37,922</td>
<td>41,514</td>
<td>3,592</td>
<td>9.47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodist</td>
<td>37,238</td>
<td>35,721</td>
<td>-1,517</td>
<td>-4.07%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish</td>
<td>3,975</td>
<td>3,727</td>
<td>-248</td>
<td>-6.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evangelical Lutheran</td>
<td>10,912</td>
<td>10,739</td>
<td>-173</td>
<td>-1.59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latter-Day Saints</td>
<td>9,208</td>
<td>11,515</td>
<td>2,307</td>
<td>25.05%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian</td>
<td>11,433</td>
<td>11,106</td>
<td>-327</td>
<td>-2.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assemblies of God</td>
<td>11,149</td>
<td>11,880</td>
<td>731</td>
<td>6.56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lutheran</td>
<td>6,020</td>
<td>6,077</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>0.95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Episcopal</td>
<td>7,333</td>
<td>7,314</td>
<td>-19</td>
<td>-0.26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Baptist</td>
<td>5,801</td>
<td>5,555</td>
<td>-246</td>
<td>-4.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total US Religion</td>
<td>245,541</td>
<td>250,402</td>
<td>4,861</td>
<td>1.98%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Suburbanization and Inner City Churches

From its earliest days the mission of the Church in Northern Ohio has been challenged
and shaped by a common factor in the American experience, the movement of people. As early
settlers from the east settled the Western Reserve and the area that would become Cleveland
pockets of Catholic families were served by missionaries on horseback who traveled long
distanced to offer Mass in places like Wooster, Chippewa, and Valley City. With the growth of
Cleveland, Akron, and Lorain/Elyria as industrial centers, waves of Catholic immigrants settled
in these cities, and the Church responded to their needs by building parishes, schools, and social
service institutions to help them.\(^5\) For many years the largest number of Catholics was found

\(^4\) Association of Statisticians of American Religious Bodies (ASARB)

\(^5\) Knepper, George W.. *A brief history of religion in northeast Ohio*. Cleveland, OH: Center for Sacred Landmarks,
Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs, Cleveland State University, 2002
were found in our major metropolitan areas in the Northeast and Midwest in cities like New York, Boston, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, and Detroit as it was in these cities where most churches were built. Shifting populations challenged the Church and its mission in the past. Now further shifts of population pose new challenges to the Church today. The Churches of the Diocese of Cleveland is being called to respond as creatively and effectively as it responded in earlier times to shrink its size as populations continue to shift to other parts of the country.

Cleveland, Akron, and Lorain/Elyria are the three largest urban centers in the Diocese of Cleveland. Population trends in Cuyahoga, Summit, and Lorain counties will serve to indicate how the population is being shifted from the city to suburbs. The figures in the tables indicate that the populations of Cleveland and Akron are declining, while the suburbs around these cities continue to increase in population. While Lorain/Elyria has grown slightly, the suburbs have grown at a far greater rate.

As the population has shifted, so too has the tax base of Cleveland. As people of greater means have moved from the central cities to suburbs, our cities and our city parishes remain home to growing concentrations of people of reduced income, fewer educational opportunities, and with little or no access to employment in the suburbs where jobs have moved as well. Despite these adversities, those who have stayed remain good, hard-working people with the same dreams, ideals, and spiritual values as those who left for the suburbs. As the populations of cities have changed, needs for education, social services, and job training have grown. Since federal, state, and local revenues to support those services have become more difficult to obtain, the burden is shifted to the private sector, and especially to the churches.

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6 Common ground for the common good: the Church in the City Regional Forum Series proceedings. Cleveland, Ohio: Church in the City Symposium & Regional Forum Series Executive Planning Committee, 1999.
Table 3.3: Cleveland MSA Population Shifts 1950-2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Cleveland</th>
<th>Rest of Cuyahoga County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>914,808</td>
<td>474,724</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>505,616</td>
<td>906,524</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>478,503</td>
<td>915,345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>431,000</td>
<td>844,709</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Akron</th>
<th>Rest of Summit County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>274,604</td>
<td>135,427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>291,971</td>
<td>291,971</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>217,074</td>
<td>325,827</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>199,110</td>
<td>343,295</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Lorain/Elyria</th>
<th>Rest of Lorain County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>81,509</td>
<td>66,653</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>127,991</td>
<td>143,135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>124,605</td>
<td>160,063</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>125,232</td>
<td>180,475</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Urban historians have informed us for years of what has fundamentally characterized urban areas since the end of World War II; an outmigration or movement of people and employers from the central city to suburb, and from inner suburbs to more distant suburbs. As Americans our constant movement has come to characterize us as a nation. How many times has each of us moved in our lifetime? More than most people in the world. Typically we move to better our living situation, we “move up” to a newer or brand new, sometimes larger home. There is nothing wrong with that, but what has turned out to be problematic is the extent to which we have favored building new suburban communities over maintaining and redeveloping cities.

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8 U.S. Census Bureau: State and County QuickFacts. Data derived from Population Estimates, Census of Population and Housing

9 Common ground for the common good: the Church in the City Regional Forum Series proceedings. Cleveland, Ohio: Church in the City Symposium & Regional Forum Series Executive Planning Committee, 1999.
In hindsight it is clear: over the past fifty plus years there has been little balance between building new suburbs and rebuilding our aging cities. More balance would have given people more choice between city and suburb. Not everyone wants to move further out. The lack of choice and the consequent dominance of outmigration helped to create stark separations of people. The poor and minorities have been isolated in concentrations that severely limit the opportunities for a decent life and the viability of sustaining these historic neighborhoods and the churches that stand in them.10

This social and economic separation is problematic not only because of its personal and social destructiveness, but because it is costly for everyone. Studies are showing across the country that regions where the income of suburban residents has been growing least are where the income of city residents has been growing least. Suburbs and city are linked in a single economy. We should not be surprised at this finding. When businesses which are looking to relocate or expand have choices among regions, they are likely to prefer those where distress, such as in Cleveland, is less. Employers will invest where negatives are fewer. The Cleveland/Akron/Lorain/Elyria region is low in income growth compared to other cities in our region.11

The negatives that have resulted in the Cleveland region from a half century of building new suburbs while abandoning old cities have accumulated to where they are serious obstacles to economic growth. All of us are paying a price, and that price will increase if Cleveland and other regions fail to compete effectively for business investment not only nationally, but

10 Common ground for the common good: the Church in the City Regional Forum Series proceedings. Cleveland, Ohio: Church in the City Symposium & Regional Forum Series Executive Planning Committee, 1999.
11 Ibid.
internationally.\textsuperscript{12} Just like the economy, the Church is paying a price for outmigration. Many of our city parishes are left with large, aging buildings and far few parishioners to support them. Faced with loss of population and consequent loss of financial support, parish schools are beginning to close at a rapid pace along with many parishes. Dwindling financial resources do not allow for the hiring of adequate staffing to maintain the social service programs, schools, and buildings themselves in an effective way.\textsuperscript{13}

While these problems are most evident in the core cities, they are now at the doorstep of the suburbs. The outward flow of population that undermined our cities will do the same to suburbs, beginning with those closest to the center city. Inner city churches will continue to pay the price for this process, but the suburban churches will also pay a price, as sudden growth demands new parish buildings and larger parish staffs. This creates a cycle which is completely unsustainable given the aforementioned decrease in overall numbers of adherents attending church regularly and the decline of priests and other clergy. Catholics relocating in the suburbs are often faced with both a home mortgage and a church mortgage, demanding they stretch even further their limited financial resources. Like the city and suburbs of Cleveland, the urban and suburban Church are linked by a single economy, and the problems of the urban church also impact the churches in the suburbs as well.

If the imbalance of investments continues as it is, we can expect urban decline, and all of its negative aspects for inner city neighborhoods and congregations to continue to spread on an even broader scale. Neighborhoods that had been stable will decline, followed by inner ring suburbs and spreading outward from there. The continuous decline will create more stress among people and institutions in the region and will weaken the fiscal strength of county governments,

\textsuperscript{12} Common ground for the common good: the Church in the City Regional Forum Series proceedings. Cleveland, Ohio: Church in the City Symposium & Regional Forum Series Executive Planning Committee, 1999.

\textsuperscript{13} Ibid.
further jeopardizing the region’s capacity to compete in the global economy.¹⁴ Countless amounts of the region’s resources will be wasted as expenditures are made in building new facilities in outer areas, while abandoning core areas. Churches, health care providers, and other social service institutes will be pressed to close inner city facilities and build new ones outside the city where growth is occurring. Libraries, schools, transportation services, recreation facilities and other amenities will be faced with similar costly adjustments.¹⁵

Will using our resources in this way make us more competitive in the global economy? Will it reduce unemployment? Help build social equality? Create community stability? Most certainly not. Continuing in this way will only worsen what has already been severely aggravated over the past half century. If outmigration trends continue, the church will be affected as strongly as everything else. More and more buildings too large and too expensive to maintain will be left in the central cities and inner suburbs. Congregations will decrease and be unable to support their parishes adequately. Parishes will be serving populations which return to the old neighborhood for Mass, anxious to preserve buildings but not always interested in serving the population presently living in the neighborhood. Catholic schools in the cities will serve and increasingly poorer population and will face increasing difficulty with financial support. Outer suburbs will continue to expend even more finances to build for the increasing population leaving higher levels of hardships for people remaining in the cities.¹⁶

¹⁴ Common ground for the common good: the Church in the City Regional Forum Series proceedings. Cleveland, Ohio: Church in the City Symposium & Regional Forum Series Executive Planning Committee, 1999.
¹⁶ Ibid.
Catholicism in America

Most Catholic parishes in the United States were established between the mid-1800s and the early-1900s to serve Italian, Irish, and Polish immigrant communities in American cities. In the late-1800s, parish churches began opening schools for immigrants in response to anti-Catholic sentiment among native groups. Catholic school enrollment increased steadily, reaching an all-time high of 5.3 million students in 1960. Parishes also offered neighborhood ministries, providing food and clothing to the poor and unemployed. In larger cities, Catholic dioceses operated hospitals, hospices for the terminally ill, and health clinics for the uninsured.

Catholic churches, schools and institutions, in other words, became important anchors of urban neighborhoods. While public schools began crumbling in the 1960s and 1970s as a result of the flight of white, middle-class families to the suburbs, Catholic schools have remained strong. The National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) reports a 99 per cent graduation rate at Catholic secondary schools in 2007 versus a 50 percent graduation rate for urban public high schools.17

Still, Catholicism is the largest religion in the United States and its 62 million adherents represent 22% of the total population.* Catholicism is the only religion in the United States with a strong centralized authority, and all major policy and doctrine for the Church emanates from the Vatican in Rome as it has for thousands of years. It is the Vatican’s authority that divides each country in which it is active into Archdiocesan districts which are in turn subdivided into individual parishes. The location of each parish is controlled by the diocese, and in turn by the Vatican. By contrast, congregations from religions without a central authority such as

17 The National Catholic Educational Association (http://www.ncea.org/)
* See Figure 3.1
Protestants, Baptists and Judaism, are largely autonomous, and draw congregation members from wide and overlapping geographic areas and freely locate or relocate.\textsuperscript{18} The Catholic Church’s position as the largest religion in the country and 16% growth rate in terms of adherents, however, only covers some of the major structural shortages within Catholicism nationally that is impeding the Church’s ability to serve existing parishes as well as to grow into new parish areas.\textsuperscript{19}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{Fig3.1.png}
\caption{Majority Religious Groups by county}
\end{figure}


\textsuperscript{19} Ibid.
Could this then, be a fundamental structural defect in the way the Catholic Church has operated for hundreds of years in the United States? I believe it is. The flight of the white middle class to the suburbs after World War II certainly affected the existing network of churches no matter what the denomination but why has the Catholic Church been hardest hit? One could say because of sheer numbers, which is in part true, Catholicism is the largest religion in the Cleveland metro area and has been for more than a century. I find that the structure of the centralized Catholic system that is controlled through the Vatican in Rome plays a significant role in the rate of abandoned urban churches and the difficulty in their reuse.

As part of suburbanization some religions reacted differently than others, in part determined by the nature of central control in the religious institution behind the faith. The lack of central control in the Jewish, Protestant, Presbyterian, and Christian Scientists allowed for individual churches and synagogues to move along with their congregations following demographic shifts mainly to the east side of Cleveland. Many of their structures were sold to minority congregations of different denominational groups, and others were able to adapt these structures for different uses and community service activities, while respecting their historic character. One of the most dramatic illustrations of this is the migration of Cleveland’s Jewish community. Many of the congregations relocated to the suburbs and built new synagogues after the Second World War. Today, the only active remaining temple is the Temple-Tifereth Israel which was just this year became a partnership with Case Western Reserve University for its performing arts program.

The centralized Catholic system, however, by retaining land ownership and by subsidizing parish operational expenses, allowed the increasingly struggling inner city parishes to remain in place even in the face of diminishing membership and decreased donations. The
policy of the regionally organized Diocese to subsidize struggling urban parishes for the past forty to fifty years has had many positive community effects in transitional urban neighborhoods, ranging from stemming the outflow of Catholics from the inner cities, to helping stabilize neighborhoods otherwise lacking social services, and by helping assimilate new immigrant populations in to the city. Despite the positive intentions by the Catholic Church in urban areas, could the centralized Catholic Archdiocese in Rome have set itself up for a future massive collapse in the urban United States by failing to assimilate gradually over time the way most other religions in the city did? I think the answer is yes. The Catholic Archdiocese being located in Rome and giving little control to its local dioceses is not properly suited to deal with the complex urban issues in post war industrial cities in the United States

**Demographics and Catholicism**

Demographic patterns indicate that the United States’ population will become increasingly ethnically diverse over the next fifty years, with the largest population increases coming from Hispanic residents. The US Census Bureau forecasts that the Hispanic population will triple from 35.3 million people in 2000 to 98.2 million people by 2050. The white population is forecasted to increase about 10 percent from 194.5 million to 213 million over the same period of time. The historic white majority is projected to decline from 69 percent of the population in 2000 to about 53 percent by 2050. The Hispanic population is located primarily on the west coast and southwest with only 19% of the population residing in the Northeast and Midwest.*

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* See Figure 3.2
According to the US Conference of Catholic Bishops, over 70 per cent of the Catholic population growth in the US since 1960 has been Latino, primarily immigrants from Central and South America. Unlike previous generations of immigrants, most will not have the benefit of a parish church or school and the serenity, safety, comfort, and quality education they can bring. The loss of viable Catholic parishes is shattering to many American urban communities. City governments, inevitably, are left to pick up the pieces. As Richard Garnett, professor of law at the University of Notre Dame writes of Catholic church and school closings, “As these institutions fold, the burdens on and challenges to public ones will increase.”
Since even by conservative estimates, some 56 percent of Hispanics presently adhere to Catholicism, it can be expected that the Catholic Church will continue to experience growth in the number of adherents as a result of the shifting ethnic composition of the American population. A problem is that the growth will not take place in the cities of the Northeast and Midwest that have traditionally supported a large Catholic base. This is likely to continue to pressure the Vatican and Archdiocese to shift resources away from older urban neighborhoods in the Northeast and Midwest that are full of catholic churches, to new developing areas in the West and Southwest to build new churches for the new Catholic population centers.*

* See Figure 3.3
Catholic Population Moves, Leaving Parishes Behind

The accompanying map displays changes in Catholic population between 2000 and 2006, according to reports issued by arch/dioceses to The Official Catholic Directory. The colors clearly show the movement out of the traditional heavily Catholic areas of the Northeast and Midwest and into the less Catholic South and West. The map also displays the net change in the number of parishes reported by each arch/diocese over the same time period. Arch/dioceses along the eastern seaboard are too concentrated to display clearly on the map. The net change in parishes for those arch/dioceses is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arch/Diocese</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boston</td>
<td>-74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall River</td>
<td>-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Springfield, MA</td>
<td>-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worcester</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providence</td>
<td>-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hartford</td>
<td>-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridgeport</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norwich</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brooklyn</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rockville Centre</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newark</td>
<td>-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camden</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metuchen</td>
<td>-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paterson</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trenton</td>
<td>-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philadelphia</td>
<td>-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allentown</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harrisburg</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baltimore</td>
<td>-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilmington</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Catholic Church in Cleveland

With 710,351 adherents in 2010, the Cleveland Catholic Diocese is the 17th largest Diocese in the United States. Representing 27% of population in its eight county area, the Diocese spans an area of 3,414 square miles consisting of Cuyahoga (Cleveland), Summit (Akron), Lorain (Lorain-Elyria), Lake (Painesville), Geauga (Chardon), Medina (Medina), Wayne (Wooster) and Ashland (Ashland).* The Diocese of Cleveland is also one of the largest land owners in Northeast Ohio, with a portfolio of 174 parishes and several hundred associated buildings like schools, houses, and offices, as well as numerous properties bequeathed through charitable donations. The Diocese also contains 112 elementary schools (31,954 enrolled), 22 Secondary (10,000 enrolled), 69 Pre-schools (2,852 enrolled), and 14 Head Start programs (1,305 enrolled) within its area. The Diocese also currently has 260 active Diocesan priests, 131 retired priests, 24 Extern and Special Assignment priests, 99 religious order priests, 57 Brothers, 1,035 Women Religious, 215 Permanent Deacons, and 252 Certified Pastoral Ministers. The Catholic Charities of Cleveland is the largest diocesan system of social services in the world, serving 299,861 people of all denominations, 2.8 million meals, and 65,355 nights of shelter to those in need. Its home cathedral is the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist established in 1848.21

20 http://dioceseofcleveland.org/diocesan_docs/FACTSHEET.pdf
21 Ibid.
As immigrants from Europe came to the United States in a quest for greater opportunity, they brought with them the traditions that gave them solidarity in their homelands. The city’s immigrant heritage, particularly which represented by Eastern and Southern European workers who settled here in the late 19th century is reflected in many magnificent sacred buildings which were built out of love for God and nostalgia for the old country. Their Catholic faith was central to their lives, and in their new homeland they sacrificed greatly to build their parishes, churches,
and schools. The churches they built were often named after one of the saints from their native land, and the shrines within them were dedicated to the cherished models of Christian life.  

The parish church was, of course, primarily a place of worship. The familiar Latin words and rituals of their former homelands brought a sense of continuity and comfort in a land that often seemed alien. Forty Hours devotions, Corpus Christi processions, and Christmas midnight Masses were especially meaningful to the faithful. Of course many of the most important events in life, baptisms, marriages, and funerals bound communities to their local churches. The parish was also a place where other aspects of the immigrants’ culture were kept alive. Parish dinners and dances mirrored the festivals of the old country; the schools were also bilingual, helping the newcomers to gain skill with English, while also helping the new generation retain their parents’ native tongue. The parish was the focal point for the faithful’s ethnic cultural identity.

It was the tide of immigration that helped Cleveland flourish at the end of the 19th and into the 20th century, and the Diocese of Cleveland grew with it. A defining moment in the history of the church in Cleveland came in 1935 when it hosted the Eucharistic Congress. The Congress drew 75,000 to a Saturday midnight Mass at Cleveland Municipal Stadium. Sunday a huge crowd of 300,000 lined the route from St. John the Evangelist Cathedral to the stadium. There were 22,000 marchers in the procession, most garbed in some form of religious dress, as the Eucharist was carried to an altar set up in the stadium outfield. A crowd of 125,000 crowded into the stadium for the devotions, the largest crowd ever to attend a stadium event in the United States. Such was the vibrancy of Catholic life at the time.

23 Ibid.
24 Ibid.
Since 1950 there has been a major out migration from the city to the suburbs and even beyond. In 1959 there were 914,808 residents in the city of Cleveland, representing 66% of Cuyahoga County’s 1,389,582. As the 2010 census information is being released the current population of the city is around 435,000, while Cuyahoga County’s population has remained relatively steady at 1,301,000, still a loss of some 24% since the county’s peak population of nearly 1.7 million in 1970. The Catholic population of the diocese has also shrunk by about 20% from its peak in 1970. Cuyahoga County is still the largest concentration of Catholics in Ohio. Further evidence of the state of the Catholic Diocese is a study by The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life in its 2010 national study that reports 33% of those individuals who were raised as Catholics no longer describe themselves as Catholics.

Figure 3.5: Number of Catholic Congregations in Ohio

![Map of Ohio showing the number of Catholic congregations](image)

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25 First, Debra G.. *Founded in faith: Cleveland's lost Catholic legacy*. Cleveland, OH: Cleveland Landmarks Press, 2010
26 * See Figure 3.5
26 Ibid.
A further impact on the vitality of the Diocese of Cleveland is that the number of those who attend Mass regularly has fallen to just 29%, a reduction of 55% since 1970.\textsuperscript{27}

Accompanying these changes has been a marked decline in vocations to the Priesthood. In 1949 the number of diocesan clergy was at its peak (582), and the numbers remained relatively stable until 1970. There has been a steady drop since then, with few in seminary training for the future. The diocese has projected that there will be only 258 diocesan priests under age 70 by 2011.\textsuperscript{28}

This decline in priests is an issue nationwide as table 1.2 illustrates. Data such as this clearly played a role in the bishop’s decision to downsize. Doing so will permit him to reallocate the diocese’s ever dwindling resources. The process however, will inevitably further destabilize inner city neighborhoods.

Table 3.4: Catholic Priesthood in America\textsuperscript{29}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population (millions)</td>
<td>45.6</td>
<td>48.7</td>
<td>52.3</td>
<td>57.4</td>
<td>59.9</td>
<td>63.4</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parishes</td>
<td>17,637</td>
<td>18,515</td>
<td>19,244</td>
<td>19,331</td>
<td>19,236</td>
<td>19,081</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diocesan priests</td>
<td>35,925</td>
<td>36,005</td>
<td>35,052</td>
<td>30,607</td>
<td>30,607</td>
<td>29,285</td>
<td>-18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious priests</td>
<td>22,707</td>
<td>22,904</td>
<td>22,265</td>
<td>15,092</td>
<td>15,092</td>
<td>14,349</td>
<td>-37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Priests</td>
<td>58,632</td>
<td>58,909</td>
<td>57,317</td>
<td>45,699</td>
<td>45,699</td>
<td>43,634</td>
<td>-26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priestly ordinations</td>
<td>994</td>
<td>771</td>
<td>533</td>
<td>511</td>
<td>442</td>
<td>441</td>
<td>-56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate-level seminarians</td>
<td>8,325</td>
<td>5,279</td>
<td>4,063</td>
<td>3,172</td>
<td>3,474</td>
<td>3,414</td>
<td>-59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parishes w/o resident priest</td>
<td>549</td>
<td>702</td>
<td>1,051</td>
<td>2,161</td>
<td>2,843</td>
<td>3,040</td>
<td>454%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The last 50 plus years have seen marked changes in both the city and the church. The clearest signal of the magnitude of the change came in June 2009, when Richard Lennon, bishop of Cleveland announced a need to downsize the Cleveland Catholic Diocese. The reduction in the number of parishes would come from throughout the eight county dioceses, but the greatest

\textsuperscript{27} Hannibal, Joseph T., St. James "100\textsuperscript{th} Anniversary Book," Guide to Stones used for Houses of Worship in Northeast Ohio, 2009.

\textsuperscript{28} Founded in faith: Cleveland's lost Catholic legacy

\textsuperscript{29} Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate Georgetown University

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loss would be felt among the urban churches, especially those in the city of Cleveland proper where a total of 27 churches were to be closed.* The underlying causes of this sad scenario are many, and sociologists and historians have devoted much time to studying them and arguing their relative impacts but certain facts cannot be ignored and these certainly played their role in the downsizing mandate.

Figure 3.6: Cleveland Catholic Diocese closings

* See Figure 3.6
Of Ohio’s 2,231,832 Catholics (19.7% of the state population) 862,422 or 29.3% of them live in the Cleveland/Akron metro area. According to the latest figures, the Cleveland/Akron metro area lost only 8 congregations between 1980 and 2000 yet lost 172,729 adherents; a 17% decrease in just 20 years. Despite the low number of congregations being lost, these numbers indicate that the existing congregations are losing members at a rapid pace thus threatening their survival. The need to close churches and combine congregations was finally made a reality in 2009 when Cleveland Catholic Diocese Bishop Richard Lennon announced the closing of more

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30 Association of Religion Data Archives: *Metro Area Membership Report, Cleveland-Akron, OH CMSA*

31 Ibid.
than two dozen churches and the merger of more than forty more by June of 2010 which left communities all over the city in panic. * Currently there are over 250 religious structures within city limits that either are currently or are eligible for Cleveland Landmark status, many of which are threatened with an increasingly uncertain future.32

Table 3.5: Cleveland Metro Area Congregation & Adherents 1980-200033

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Religions</th>
<th>Congregations</th>
<th>Adherents</th>
<th>% Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>-8</td>
<td>-172,729</td>
<td>-17.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Baptist</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2,534</td>
<td>1949.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodist</td>
<td>-3</td>
<td>-24,137</td>
<td>-21.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>64,589</td>
<td>304.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evangelical Lutheran</td>
<td>-8</td>
<td>-11,550</td>
<td>-22.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latter-Day Saints</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2,819</td>
<td>65.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>-14,291</td>
<td>-35.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assemblies of God</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>4,177</td>
<td>30.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lutheran</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-7,148</td>
<td>-15.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Episcopal</td>
<td>-63</td>
<td>-38,279</td>
<td>-66.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Baptist</td>
<td>-3</td>
<td>-6,585</td>
<td>-17.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total CLE MSA Religion</td>
<td>-14</td>
<td>-200,600</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* See Figure 3.7
33 Ibid.
Chapter 4

Case Study 1: First Church of Christ Scientist, Cleveland, Ohio

Christian Scientists in Cleveland

Christian Scientists were first organized in Cleveland by General Erastus N. Bates in 1877. Bates secured 2 rooms in a downtown building and formed a ministry based on the teachings of Mary Baker Eddy, founder of the Christian Science church in Boston (1866). Christian Science interprets the Scriptures as maintaining that disease, sin, death, etc., are caused by mental error and have no real existence. The First Church of Christ, Scientist, received its charter from the state in 1891. Services were held at several locations before adequate quarters were found in the Pythian Temple. Services continued there until 1901, when the church moved into its own building at Cedar and Kennard streets on Cleveland’s near east side. Abiding by the rule that Christian Science churches must be free of indebtedness, the new church was not dedicated until 1904. In 1917 the congregation moved to a theater, where services were held for a year before the purchase of the Euclid Ave. Methodist Church building at Eucid Ave. and E. 93rd St. In 1931 a new $1 million building was completed on Overlook Rd. near University Circle and by 1933 more than 10,000 Christian Scientists worshipped in the Cleveland area.

Following its early meteoric rise, the Christian Science Church suffered a steep decline in membership in the second half of the twentieth century. Though the Church is prohibited by the Manual of The Mother Church from publishing membership figures, the number of branch churches in the United States has fallen steadily since World War II. A 1992 study of the Christian Research Journal found that church membership had fallen from 269,000 in the 1930s to about 150,000.34 Some believe membership has fallen further since then, however current

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estimates for church membership vary widely, from under 100,000 to 400,000. Dr. Stephen Barrett has reported that since 1971, the number of practitioners and teachers listed in the Christian Science Journal has fallen from about 5,000 to about 1,160 and the number of churches has fallen from about 1,800 to about 1,000. Today there are less than 10 Christian Scientist churches in the greater Cleveland area.

**University Circle Neighborhood**

The University Circle neighborhood in Cleveland is bounded by Wade Park Ave. on the north; E. 105th on the west; and the RTA light rail tracks on the east and south sides.* It is a 488-acre complex that includes many of Cleveland's major cultural, educational, religious, and social-service institutions in a park-like setting. It is the only cluster of its kind in the world. The area was first settled in 1799 with the establishment of Nathaniel Doan's tavern at what is now E. 107th St. and Euclid Avenue, but was then called Doan's Corners. University Circle began to take shape in the 1880s. Western Reserve University moved its campus from Hudson, Ohio, to Euclid Avenue in 1883. Case School of Applied Science moved from downtown Cleveland to a site next to WRU in 1885. In the same decade, Jeptha Wade donated to the City of Cleveland a large tract of land that adjoined the WRU campus, stipulating that the land be used as a public park with an art gallery. The name of the area was taken from a streetcar stop on a line running on Euclid to a turnaround at E. 107th known as Univ. Circle. The presence of the colleges and the beauty of the area attracted other institutions. In 1916 the Cleveland Museum of Art was built behind the

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* See Neighborhood Map Index


Wade Park Lagoon in a corner of Wade Park. In 1931, Severance Hall (the home of the Cleveland Orchestra,) was constructed at the corner of Euclid and East Blvd.*

Figure 4.1: Aerial view of University Circle circa 1935

Figure 4.2: Postcard depicting Cleveland Museum of Art and Severance Hall

Between 1900 and 1918, the Wade family developed their remaining land into a residential area. Many of the people who moved to the area were trustees of Circle institutions

* See Figure 4.1 (photo courtesy of the Cleveland Memory Project)
* See Figure 4.2 (photo courtesy of the Cleveland Memory Project)
and generous benefactors, which was perhaps the most important factor in the development of the Circle's unique character. After World War II, the next generation of Circle benefactors and directors moved to the suburbs, and some of the surrounding neighborhoods began to deteriorate. Mrs. Wm. G. Mather (Elizabeth) donated the seed money to form the Univ. Circle Development Foundation (UCDF) and to commission a Boston urban-planning firm to design a development plan for the Circle. The Adams, Howard, & Greeley Plan of 1957 laid down guidelines for Circle institutions to work together to provide for future needs that would be harmonious with the Circle's character. In 1970 UCFD was reorganized as University Circle, Inc. The emphasis was less on new construction and more on adapting use of older structures. In 2000 UCI had approx. 80 different members and associate member organizations in Univ. Circle or close by that served the physical, cultural, and spiritual needs of Greater Cleveland.39

The University neighborhood in 2000 had a population of 9,469, a 12.1% increase from 1990, compared to a 5.4% decrease citywide in Cleveland. It is 56.5% white and 30.6% black. The drop in minority presence in recent years could be a sign of increasing levels of neighborhood gentrification displacing minority residents. Despite the world class cultural attractions in the neighborhood, in 2000 41.7% of the neighborhood residents have incomes below the poverty line with a household income of only $19,111 and an unemployment rate of 19.9%, up from 7.9% in 1990. A positive sign however is the housing and crime. The neighborhood added almost 250 housing units from 1990-2000 and has only a 9.7% vacancy rate. The majority of housing (86%) is rental housing, a mixture of college students, young

38 “Encyclopedia of Cleveland History: UNIVERSITY CIRCLE.”
39 Ibid.
professionals, and low/moderate income.\textsuperscript{40} In addition, University Circle area ranks low compared to surrounding neighborhoods with only 72 violent crimes in 2009.\textsuperscript{*} 

**Site History**

The First Church of Christ, Scientist was completed in 1931 at a time when the Christian Science denomination was very active with at least fourteen churches in the greater Cleveland area. The building is prominently situated on the crest of the Allegheny escarpment at the eastern border of the city, overlooking Little Italy and the University Circle neighborhoods.\textsuperscript{41} The church building is located in the University neighborhood, near the City of Cleveland Heights. Its tall bell tower provides a distinctive landmark.\textsuperscript{*} The building was designed by Walker & Weeks, Architects, one of Cleveland’s leading firms during the first half of the 20th century. The building was originally intended for a site at the intersection of Euclid Avenue and East Boulevard, where Severance Hall (the home of the Cleveland Orchestra) now stands.\textsuperscript{42} Both buildings have octagonal configurations and were completed and opened the same year, although the First Church preceded Severance Hall, having been planned a year before in 1928.\textsuperscript{43} It is a superb example of 20th century Beaux Arts Classicism.

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{40} NEO CANDO system, Center on Urban Poverty and Community Development, MSASS, Case Western Reserve University (http://neocando.case.edu).
\textsuperscript{*} See Violent Crime Index
\textsuperscript{*} See Figure 4.3 (photo courtesy of the Cleveland Memory Project)
\textsuperscript{42} Choi, Eugene. *Adaptive reuse of religious buildings in the U.S: Determinants of project outcomes and the role of tax credits*
\textsuperscript{*} See Figure 4.4 (photo courtesy of the Cleveland Memory Project)
\textsuperscript{43} "Sacred Landmarks: Nottingham-Spirk Innovation Center." Cleveland Restoration Society
\end{flushright}
Figure 4.3: First Church of Christ, Scientist circa 1931

Figure 4.4: Severance Hall circa 1940
By the end of the 1990s, the congregation had diminished to the point where it could no longer keep the building, which had been scrupulously maintained throughout its more than 70 years in religious service. When the congregation moved out in 2002, there were several potential buyers; all of which intended to raze the building for new residential development. Fortunately, the owners of Nottingham-Spirk recognized the building’s exceptional artistic and architectural quality and its potential for a unique and sensitive adaptive reuse.

**Project Overview**

The First Church of Christ Scientist of Cleveland, originally built in 1931, was purchased by Nottingham-Spirk Design Associates in 2002 and converted into office for the Nottingham-Spirk Innovation Center opening for reuse in 2005. This religious building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2003. This reuse project successfully saved a historic building, returned its property value back onto the tax rolls, and spurred economic growth and creativity. The First Church of Christ Scientist sat vacant on Overlook Road on the east side of Cleveland for many years. It was a curiosity to those who passed by to see the interior of the elegant and enigmatic building designed by the Cleveland architectural firm of Walker & Weeks.

The site has an area of approximately 3.76 acres, about 5 miles from downtown Cleveland and less than one mile from the Cleveland Clinic-University Hospital-University Circle cultural area, a powerful and growing economic driver in the area with over 40,000 jobs. In addition, this beautiful religious building is closely located to Case Western Reserve University.

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44 Choi, Eugene. *Adaptive reuse of religious buildings in the U.S: Determinants of project outcomes and the role of tax credits.*

45 "Sacred Landmarks: Nottingham-Spirk Innovation Center." Cleveland Restoration


47 Cuyahoga County Auditor’s report

* See Figure 4.5 (Photo courtesy of Google Earth)
University, Little Italy, and Severance Hall. In the spring of 2003, working with City 
Architecture, Nottingham-Spirk began to renovate the First Church of Christ Scientist. 
Formerly separated between two buildings, the relocation of all Nottingham-Spirk employees 
and processes to one central location with 60,000 square feet of space and 5 floors has been a 
boost to the productivity of the firm, but it is the grandeur of the space that has proven to be the 
greatest inspiration. 

Figure 4.5: Overhead view of site

Nottingham-Spirk Design Associates, an internationally recognized industrial design firm 
acquired the building in 2002 for $1,659,000 and immediately began to transform it into their 
headquarters, studio and laboratory spaces. What sets the Nottingham-Spirk Innovation Center 
apart is its ability to simultaneously function as a high-tech business while embracing its historic

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* See Figure 4.6 (Photo courtesy of Google Earth)
49 "Nottingham-Spirk Design Associates – Innovation Center Historic Landmark." Nottingham-Spirk Design 
50 Cuyahoga County Auditor’s report
character. The latter became the inspiration for the new company headquarters. Originally, site had one main building of approximately 47,000 square feet. The reuse plan included a new 10,000 square feet building. Nottingham-Spirk & Design Inc. planned to invest $8 million to remodel portions of its new offices.\(^{51}\)

Figure 4.6: Google Earth image shows the close proximity to many amenities

Development Process and Financial Incentives

\(^*\) See Figure 4.7 (Photo courtesy of the Cleveland Restoration Society)

\(^{51}\) Sacred Landmarks: Nottingham-Spirk Innovation Center." Cleveland Restoration Society."
The design challenge was to successfully change the function of the building from public worship space and classrooms to a high-tech research and design facility respecting the historical architectural and special features of the building. This was accomplished in a sensitive rehabilitation that retained the operating organ and virtually all of the visible historic fabric. Literally miles of electronic cable were installed behind the original finish surfaces to retain the clean, uncluttered look of the historic structure.\textsuperscript{52} Funding for this project required multiple sources, including federal rehabilitation tax credits, a conservation easement, Ohio, Cuyahoga County and City of Cleveland loans together with typical construction loans from banks.\textsuperscript{53} In 2005, and almost $10 million later, a prominent Cleveland landmark that was at risk of demolition was saved and continues to be an aesthetic and economic contributing component of the University neighborhood.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{image.png}
\caption{Figure 4.7: 10,000 square feet of addition space}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{*} See Figures 4.8 & 4.9 (Photos courtesy of the Cleveland Restoration Society)
\textsuperscript{52} Sacred Landmarks: Nottingham-Spirk Innovation Center." Cleveland Restoration Society.
\textsuperscript{*} See Building Plans Index
\textsuperscript{53} Choi, Eugene. \textit{Adaptive reuse of religious buildings in the U.S: Determinants of project outcomes and the role of tax credits}.
Figure 4.8: First Church of Christ, Scientist Existing Conditions 2002

Figure 4.9: Nottingham-Spirk Innovation Center after conversion
Market Conditions

Cleveland’s population has declined almost 10 percent from 2000 (433,748) in 2008. The surrounding suburbs have experienced similar declines, indicating that churches in these cities have probably been abandoned due to decline in adherents and thus finances. Estimated median household income in 2008 was $26,731 in Cleveland, $52,733 in Cleveland Heights and $72,201 in Shaker Heights (two proximal suburbs), while Ohio’s estimated median household income in 2008 was $47,988. The 2008 estimated median house or condo value was $87,600 in Cleveland, $140,800 in Cleveland Heights, $232,109 in Shaker Heights, and $140,200 for the state of Ohio. The number of building permits of single family housing in the City of Cleveland has sharply decreased after reaching its peak in 2005: 354 building permits in 2005, 253 building permits in 2006, 184 buildings permits in 2007 and 109 building permits in 2008. This trend was also seen in Cleveland Heights and in Shaker Heights. Their building permits of single family housing reached their peak in 2005 and have similarly declined.

The office vacancy rate in the Cleveland market area, according to CoStar’s market report of the fourth quarter in 2006, has decreased since the first quarter of 2005. In terms of vacancy rate of total office market, it was 16 percent at the first quarter in 2005, but the rate was decreased to 14 percent at the end of the fourth quarter in 2006. Another indicator, a rate of office employment growth, also shows a trend of office market from 2005 to 2006 was vitalized compared to the historic trends. It was even at the first quarter in 2005, but the rate was increased to almost 1 percent at the end of the fourth quarter. From a brief market condition analysis, I conclude that population decline and demographic shift is the main reason that this church was abandoned, while relatively strong residential and office market conditions around 2005 have

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54 Choi, Eugene. *Adaptive reuse of religious buildings in the U.S: Determinants of project outcomes and the role of tax credits.*
55 Ibid.
been working as a motivation of reuse project initiations. Since many of the employees at Nottingham-Spirk are a creative class of urban young professionals, the close proximity of quality, affordable housing in the relatively safe University, Cleveland Heights, and Shaker/Shaker Heights neighborhoods was an asset for the company to locate in this facility.

**Financing Issues**

Total project cost was approximately $8 million. The owners of the Nottingham-Spirk Design Association utilized the 20% federal historic preservation tax credit. They also utilized the new market tax credit of $500,000 invested by Cleveland Development Advisor (CDA) as a part of the new market tax credit awarded to CDA. In addition, as a Brownfield revitalization project in Cleveland with expectations for a positive externality, the Cuyahoga County government raised $1 million in 2003 to support the asbestos removal, interior demolition, and environmental testing at the former First Church of Christ Scientist. The city’s expectations of financial return thus far have been positive, with the design firm paying $76,496.16 annually in taxes.\(^{56}\)

**Lessons Learned**

The historic preservation and adaptive reuse of the historic First Church of Christ Scientist has been undertaken to create a dramatic and compelling work environment for an innovation company. The biggest stakeholder (Nottingham-Spirk) was essential in the reuse of this church because as mentioned earlier, the other developers simply wanted the building for its land, so it could be razed and turned into new residential units. Because of this I have found that abandoned church buildings that are in exclusive neighborhoods with high land value can be especially susceptible to demolition because of the monetary and status value of its location.

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\(^{56}\) Cuyahoga County Auditor’s Report
company as progressive as Nottingham-Spirk that promised a multi-million dollar investment and dozens of well-paid jobs is ideal for this particular situation.

The conversion of this historic building to offices was comprehensive including use of the sanctuary/auditorium as a design studio, renovation of the balcony into offices for incubator companies, and basement as shop space.\(^57^\)* The interior renovations and 10,000 square foot addition had to be planned carefully to conform with the Secretary of the Interior’s preservation standards in order to stay eligible for the 20% rehabilitation tax credit. Environmental concerns were also important factors in this redevelopment plan. As a Brownfield revitalization project in Cleveland with expectations for a positive externality, Cuyahoga County government raised $1 million in 2003 to support the asbestos removal, interior demolition, and environmental testing at the former First Church of Christ Scientist.\(^58^\) If a reuse project of a religious building is connected to environmental contaminations (which many are because of mold, asbestos, lead paint etc.) various forms of financial assistance can be provided by local governments if the expected return is both socially and economically positive.

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\(^{57}\) "Nottingham-Spirk Design Associates – Innovation Center Historic Landmark." Nottingham-Spirk Design Associates

\(^*\) See Figure 4.10 (Photo courtesy of the Cleveland Restoration Society)

\(^{58}\) Choi, Eugene. *Adaptive reuse of religious buildings in the U.S: Determinants of project outcomes and the role of tax credits.*
Other factors leading to the successful reuse were the fact that it was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2003, and is considered a contributing Structure within the Cleveland Landmarks Little Italy Historic District. This is significant because it makes the building eligible for the federal rehabilitation tax credit. Architectural significance was also a positive factor for the building being adaptively reused. The original building was designed by Frank Ray Walker and Harry F. Weeks (Walker & Weeks Architects), who worked for J. Milton Dyer, designer of Cleveland’s City Hall. Walker and Weeks to this day is arguably Cleveland’s most prominent architectural firms designing notable buildings such as the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland, Cleveland Public Auditorium, Cleveland Municipal Stadium, Lorain-Carnegie Bridge, and the Indiana War Memorial. The design for the First Church of Christ, Scientist provided a prototype for Severance Hall, the home of the Cleveland Orchestra. The building also earned other recognition as a Cleveland Landmark in 2003 (which gave the Landmarks Commission and Design/Review board the opportunity to deny demolition permits and exterior
modifications), Cleveland Restoration Society Restoration and Adaptive Use of a Sacred Landmark Award, AIA Cleveland Historic Preservation Award, Ohio Historical Society Award of Merit, and Northern Ohio Live Magazine Award of Achievement.\textsuperscript{59}

\textsuperscript{59} Choi, Eugene. \textit{Adaptive reuse of religious buildings in the U.S: Determinants of project outcomes and the role of tax credits.}
Building Plan Index
University Neighborhood Demographic/Statistical Index

Population Composition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>University 1990</th>
<th>University 2000</th>
<th>Cleveland City 1990</th>
<th>Cleveland City 2000</th>
<th>Cuyahoga County 1990</th>
<th>Cuyahoga County 2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resident population</td>
<td>8,444</td>
<td>9,469</td>
<td>505,647</td>
<td>478,403</td>
<td>1,412,140</td>
<td>1,393,978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent increase or decrease in the resident population</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>-5.4</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>-1.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Percent white</td>
<td>53.3</td>
<td>56.5</td>
<td>49.5</td>
<td>43.2</td>
<td>72.6</td>
<td>68.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent black</td>
<td>38.1</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>46.6</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>27.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Hispanic</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent younger than 18 years of age</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>28.5</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent 18 years of age and older</td>
<td>89.2</td>
<td>91.3</td>
<td>73.1</td>
<td>71.5</td>
<td>76.1</td>
<td>75.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent 65 years of age and older</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>15.7</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ratio of adults to children</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of families</td>
<td>1,019</td>
<td>956</td>
<td>122,952</td>
<td>111,998</td>
<td>370,083</td>
<td>354,615</td>
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</table>
### Residential Mobility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>University 1990</th>
<th>University 2000</th>
<th>Cleveland City 1990</th>
<th>Cleveland City 2000</th>
<th>Cuyahoga County 1990</th>
<th>Cuyahoga County 2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percent of persons aged 5+ that moved within the past 5 years</td>
<td>64.0</td>
<td>72.4</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td>44.2</td>
<td>39.2</td>
<td>40.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of occupied housing units with a householder* in current unit for less than 1 year</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>32.0</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>17.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Economic Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>University 1990</th>
<th>University 2000</th>
<th>Cleveland City 1990</th>
<th>Cleveland City 2000</th>
<th>Cuyahoga County 1990</th>
<th>Cuyahoga County 2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percent of individuals with incomes below the poverty level</td>
<td>32.8</td>
<td>41.7</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>13.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of families with children* with incomes below the poverty level</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>37.6</td>
<td>37.7</td>
<td>32.3</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>16.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median household income** ($)</td>
<td>17,727</td>
<td>19,111</td>
<td>23,129</td>
<td>33,651</td>
<td>37,112</td>
<td>50,835</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment rate</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Housing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>University 1990</th>
<th>University 2000</th>
<th>Cleveland City 1990</th>
<th>Cleveland City 2000</th>
<th>Cuyahoga County 1990</th>
<th>Cuyahoga County 2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of housing units</td>
<td>3,911</td>
<td>4,155</td>
<td>224,319</td>
<td>215,856</td>
<td>604,538</td>
<td>616,903</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of occupied housing units</td>
<td>88.0</td>
<td>90.3</td>
<td>89.1</td>
<td>88.3</td>
<td>93.2</td>
<td>92.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of vacant housing units</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of owner occupied housing units</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>47.9</td>
<td>48.5</td>
<td>62.0</td>
<td>63.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of renter occupied housing units</td>
<td>83.1</td>
<td>86.3</td>
<td>52.1</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td>36.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median gross rent ($)</td>
<td>308</td>
<td>507</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>465</td>
<td>397</td>
<td>541</td>
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## Educational Attainment

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<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>University 1990</th>
<th>University 2000</th>
<th>Cleveland City 1990</th>
<th>Cleveland City 2000</th>
<th>Cuyahoga County 1990</th>
<th>Cuyahoga County 2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percent of population aged 25+ with at least a high</td>
<td>61.0</td>
<td>76.4</td>
<td>58.8</td>
<td>69.0</td>
<td>74.0</td>
<td>81.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicator</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>Cleveland City</td>
<td>Cuyahoga County</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of population aged 25+ with at least a college degree**</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>37.8</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>25.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Housing Investment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>University</th>
<th>Cleveland City</th>
<th>Cuyahoga County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average dollar amount of conventional home improvement loans originated</td>
<td>12,593</td>
<td>19,800</td>
<td>10,616</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of conventional home improvement loan applications originated</td>
<td>56.3</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>48.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average dollar amount of conventional home purchase loans originated</td>
<td>95,164</td>
<td>207,200</td>
<td>50,476</td>
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<tr>
<td>Percent of conventional</td>
<td>57.1</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>73.7</td>
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### Public Safety

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>University 1990*</th>
<th>University 2007</th>
<th>Cleveland City 1990*</th>
<th>Cleveland City 2007</th>
<th>Cuyahoga County 1990*</th>
<th>Cuyahoga County 2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Serious violent crimes per 100,000 population</td>
<td>1,693.5</td>
<td>793.8</td>
<td>1,817.1</td>
<td>1,520.2</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Serious property crimes per 100,000 population</td>
<td>9,592.6</td>
<td>3,772.8</td>
<td>7,434.0</td>
<td>5,825.9</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug arrests per 100,000 population</td>
<td>686.9</td>
<td>205.1</td>
<td>1,305.9</td>
<td>1,228.1</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child maltreatment per 1,000 children &lt; 18 years of age*</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 5: Case Study 2: St. George Lithuanian

Cleveland Lithuanians

The settlement of Lithuanians in Cleveland follows historical patterns similar to those of other East European nations. The first wave of immigrants came here at the turn of the century (1890-1910), and the second wave arrived in the wake of World War II (1948-50), after the USSR had forcibly annexed Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia in 1940. Lithuanians, (which are recorded as early as 1871 in Cleveland) became part of the masses of cheap labor into thriving local industries. They concentrated around St. Clair and Oregon Ave. (now Rockwell) and ranged eastward to about E. 71st St. between Oregon and Cedar avenues. The overwhelming Catholic sentiments of the early community were evidenced in the establishment in 1895 of St. George Lithuanian Church, which was housed at several locations until a cornerstone was laid in 1921 for the present structure at E. 67th St. and Superior Ave. The church was the center of social, civic, and community activity. By the first decade of the 20th century, about 50 business establishments (many of them taverns that also served as informal community centers) boasted Lithuanian ownership. That was at a period when little more than 1,000 Lithuanians lived in Cleveland.

The postwar period brought an added vitality to the Lithuanian community, whose members became acculturated quite readily while still preserving their heritage. A new community center, Lithuanian Village, was built and dedicated in 1973 along E. 185th St., and community activity shifted to that area and into the eastern suburbs, as the area around old St.


61 Ibid.
George's parish went into decline. The Lithuanian community, which presently numbers about 16,000, remains active in civic, social, artistic, political, and community affairs, with a vast majority of the children of postwar immigrants holding degrees in higher education and well-situated in the professions. Cleveland's Lithuanian community is recognized as one of the most active and productive in terms of organizational activity, community consciousness, political and civic involvement in the general affairs of Greater Cleveland, literary activity and the arts, and folk art ensembles, and is the home community of numerous persons prominent in various fields among the Lithuanian nation worldwide.

The St. Clair-Superior Neighborhood

St. Clair-Superior is a near east side neighborhood of Cleveland, Ohio. St. Clair-Superior is one the oldest and most culturally diverse neighborhoods in Cleveland, and is the location of Cleveland's present-day AsiaTown. The neighborhood is bordered by Interstate 90 to the North, Payne Avenue to the South, and East 27th Street to the west. The eastern border is Rockefeller Park and its main street, MLK. Drive. The neighborhood had a population of 11,410 in 2000, a 6% decrease from 1990, and nearly the same rate as the City of Cleveland. It has been reported that the 2010 census will show a slight growth in population. In 2000 it was 19.9% white, and 76.5% black and 40.5% of residents had incomes below poverty level compared to 26.3% in the City of Cleveland and 13.1% in Cuyahoga County. The median household income was $23,831 and unemployment was at nearly 20%. The neighborhood lost 372 housing units from 1990-2000 and boats a 17.9% vacancy rate with 62.3% of the housing stock renter occupied.

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62 "Encyclopedia of Cleveland History: St. George’s Lithuanian Church."
63 Ibid.
* See Neighborhood Map Index
64 NEO CANDO system, Center on Urban Poverty and Community Development, MSASS, Case Western Reserve University (http://neocando.case.edu).
* See Neighborhood Demographic Index
Recently, the Asian community has been a growing population and economic force. The Asian community has a long history in Cleveland and over 25,000 Asians live in the greater Cleveland area. According to the 2000 census, 1,122 Asians (25% of the overall population in Cleveland) call the AsiaTown area in the St. Clair-Superior area home. Around 7,000 now live in the city of Cleveland, Coming for reasons including education and job opportunities. The AsiaTown community is predominantly Chinese, though judging by the restaurants, shops and associations, many other Asian cultures call the area home. The Chinese are the oldest Asian immigrant group in Cleveland dating as far back as the 1860's. In 1880 their census numbers totaled only 22. Their first settlement was started on West 3rd Street. Later but as the population continued to increase, an area known as Chinatown developed between East 21st and 22nd Street on Rockwell Avenue. Starting in the 1970's businesses and residents began to shift east and establish the area now known as AsiaTown.65

The Korean American Association of Greater Cleveland headquarters can be found in the neighborhood. Over 5000 members belong to this group stretching across the region. The neighborhood has a long history of attracting people from throughout the world with its proximity to manufacturing jobs and downtown. As manufacturing has taken new form in the neighborhood and the city, this area is now attracting new immigrants, artists, small manufacturers and people who want the vibrancy of a city neighborhood with terrific cultural appeal.

Site and Congregation History

The first church for Roman Catholic Lithuanians in the Diocese of Cleveland was established in 1901. Lithuanian Catholics immigrated to the area beginning in the 1880s but affiliated with Polish churches before 1901. Fr. Joseph Maszotas, a Lithuanian seminarian ordained by Bishop Richard Gilmour in 1889, served briefly at St. Stanislaus, a Cleveland Landmark. He organized a Society of St. George for other Lithuanians, but there were not enough families to support a self-sustaining congregation. Visiting Lithuanian priests provided services for several years until in 1901 the community had increased to the point where a parish could be maintained.66

Fr. Joseph Jankus (1901-05), the first pastor, built a small wooden church at E. 21st St. and Oregon (Rockwell) Ave. Fr. Joseph Halaburda became pastor in 1907; he acquired additional property at E. 65th and Superior Ave., where the present church stands. He also began a school staffed by the Sisters of Notre Dame. Fr. Halaburda was succeeded in 1919 by Rev. Vincent G. Vilkutaitis, pastor for 40 years. The Sisters of St. Francis of the Providence of God, who replaced the Notre Dame Sisters as teachers in the school in 1932, staffed the school until it closed in 1970. The parish of St. George was divided in 1929, and the parish of Our Lady of Perpetual Help was established to serve Lithuanians living in Collinwood and Euclid. In 1982, the church established the St. George's Hunger Center which, by the 1990s, served over 1,000 regular customers.67 In 1995 Rev. Bacevice served as pastor for the 200 families of the congregation.

66 “Encyclopedia of Cleveland History: St. George’s Lithuanian Church.”
67 Ibid.
Project Site

St. George's Lithuanian Church and School, is located at 6527 Superior Avenue. The original asking price of the Catholic Diocese was $175,000 for the church/school building, rectory, and four car garage which sits on 2.73 acres. According to the Cleveland Architects Database, the church was designed by architect J. Ellsworth Potter, in 1920. Potter specialized in churches, and built several in the Cleveland area, including Sacred Heart of Jesus Church on East 71st Street. He was primarily a church and school architect with offices in Cleveland, Los Angeles, and Gary, Indiana. The St. George parish was the oldest functioning Lithuanian Parish in North America. I saw that the property had been sold, in December, for a mere $35,000 which can be a bad thing as it seemed close to the value of the land meaning someone probably bought it to demolish the historic church and house. Upon further review I discovered that the new owners, Community Greenhouse Partners, had positive plans for the site.

The church / school structure features a sanctuary on the upper level and classrooms on the lower levels. It's an interesting building with some nice architectural details, but isn't so ornate that it would be difficult to use for something other than a church. It is around 10,000 square feet of space which is a large area, but it is split up into multiple levels so it is not too cavernous to be used for many other purposes. The large lot also allows for flexibility and an abundance of parking. Another advantage of the site is that is on a main bus route, just minutes from downtown Cleveland.

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* See Figure 5.1 & 5.2
The rectory is just as interesting as the church. The Italianate-style structure was built between 1874 and 1881 by Henry and Catherine Beckenbach. It remained in the family until 1917, when it was purchased by the Diocese of Cleveland. It is a wood framed structure with asphalt shingles that resemble brick covering the exterior. It is 4600 square feet, with seven bedrooms. The front porch was added later, probably in the 1920s. The 1912 Sanborn fire

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71 “Cleveland Area History: St. George's Lithuanian Church or: the Beckenbach residence.” Cleveland Area History.
* See Figure 5.4
insurance map shows a small porch, about half the width of the front house. This porch would have been of a similar style to that of the side porch. The map also illustrates a two story barn to the rear of the house and a henhouse. Further, it appears to retain many of the original 2 over 2 windows.

Figure 5.4: St. George Rectory (Beckenbach House) c. 1885

The house appears to have been used until relatively recently, so is likely in reasonably solid condition. I suspect that the house hasn't been subjected to the numerous renovations over the years that a privately owned house might have had. As such, it retains quite a bit of historic detail. * When asked what made this site and building attractive for his project, new owner and Community Greenhouse Partner’s Executive Tim Smith replied: “in short, it was cheap; it's big enough, is on public transportation, is near schools, and is in the middle of a food desert.”72 This map illustrates the property in question and the extant buildings. The church is green, the house yellow, and the garage blue.73 *

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* See Figure 5.5 -5.7 (Photos courtesy of Cleveland Area History)
72 Email with CGP Executive Tim Smith 3/13/2011
73 Ibid.
* See Figure 5.7
Figure 5.5: Rectory Doors

Figure 5.6: One of three rectory marble fireplaces

Figure 5.7: Overhead view of project site showing church, rectory, and garage
**Community Greenhouse Partner’s Mission**

The Community Greenhouse Partner’s (CGP) mission is to improve the quality of life of those around us by growing vegetables year round and selling them at low cost to urban families, employing local residents and teaching sustainability and earth science to young people. CGP is a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization that creates products that help satisfy local needs, including low-cost quality vegetables, protein in the form of fish, natural fertilizer for local gardens through their composting and non-polluting energy through renewable energy systems.\(^{74}\)

**Commercial Greenhouse Enterprise**

CGP operates a large-scale commercial greenhouse complex year-round beginning in May 2011, and will raise thousands of pounds of vegetables and fish for sale via the Visiting Nurse Association and City Fresh networks and operate a market to bring fresh food into the St. Clair Superior Neighborhood, an area recognized as a “food desert” due to the lack of stores selling fresh food within a reasonable distance.\(^*\) Approximately 60% to 70% of their output will be distributed through the VNA and City Fresh, while the remainder will be sold on-site and to area restaurants.\(^{75}\)

CGP will hire and train at least 15 local residents and pay them a living wage with full benefits. They will generate approximately $1 million in taxable wages and $2.5 million in sales revenue annually. The CGP will implement sustainable practices such as composting and on-site, renewable energy generation toward a goal of operating off-the-grid. Through the organization’s extensive education program, middle school and high school students will learn

\(^{74}\) Community Greenhouse Partner’s Executive Business Plan Summary

\(^*\) See Figure 5.8 (Courtesy of CGP)

\(^{75}\) Ibid.
about sustainable, commercial greenhouse practices and acquire the skills necessary to pursue employment and further education in this sector. They will also receive school science credits.\textsuperscript{76}

CGP contains a community kitchen that teaches cooking skills with the goal of increasing nutrition levels in urban households, and offer local gardeners and farmers the opportunity to create value-added products from their crops. Using the kitchen, CGP also operates as an aggregator of crops for area gardens and urban farms, helping market gardeners expand their marketability, offering training on season extension and yield maximization and opening opportunities for insertion into larger area markets. CGP also assists area market gardeners in accessing and utilizing economic development grants from the City of Cleveland designed to create micro-businesses. Their ultimate goal is an effective business model that will serve as a template for other cities and communities in the U.S. that would like to replicate the commercial greenhouse initiative.\textsuperscript{77}

\textbf{Figure 5.8: CDG’s conceptual plans for St. George site Competition/Market}

\textsuperscript{76} Community Greenhouse Partner’s Executive Business Plan Summary
\textsuperscript{77} Ibid.
Nothing like this currently exists in Cleveland. All other urban agri-business in Cleveland is ground-based, with late spring, summer and fall production only. CGP is the first in the area to grow a full range of vegetables using organic methods year round. CGP is also the first large-scale, high-yield, commercial grower within county limits. Other urban farms are small, employing 3-5 people, whereas CGP will employ five times as many. None of the other farming operations connect with the schools to give credit to students for learning practical applications of science. Community Greenhouse Partners is exploring a new approach to urban farming, food production, and job training in Cleveland. It addresses people in almost every neighborhood in Cleveland, and many in the inner-ring suburbs. 78 It also has some potential to bring different racial groups and class groups into more frequent, constructive contact. In addition, CGP plans to generate the following effects in the community:

**Healthy Food:** CGP is distributing nutritious, freshly picked food to our low-income neighbors. A proper diet is critical for mental and physical health and development, so our products will have a direct and positive impact on our community.

**Building a new industry:** $6.7 billion was spent in northeast Ohio on food in 2008, and only $200 million went to local farmers and food producers. In order to capture a greater share of that market, CGP must produce food year-round, in a way that’s affordable and readily available.

**Supporting entrepreneurship:** CGP will spearhead this effort by offering an education program wherein CGP will help train people to start their own high-yield gardens using funding from the City of Cleveland’s “Gardening for Greenbacks” program. CGP will help these micro-enterprise entrepreneurs maximize the effectiveness of their grants, supply technical assistance and manpower, and act as an aggregator for their crops. CGP will buy their output and combine it

78 Community Greenhouse Partner’s Executive Business Plan Summary
with other small gardeners into a larger share that will then be sold to partner organizations and retailers.

**Stakeholders**

Community Greenhouse Partners founder and Executive Director Timothy Smith first learned of the Milwaukee-based Local Food project Growing Power while watching the film Fresh in 2008, but he was no stranger to the local food movement. In creating the CGP, Smith will be fulfilling a life-long endeavor: to form a business that positively impacts the community around him. His passion for healthy, local food was born at an early age when he began raising vegetables with his family; a practice that they continue to this day. Smith spent nearly 20 years in the food service industry, cooking and managing at a number of high-end and chain restaurants, where he learned the importance of using the freshest ingredients possible.\(^{79}\)

In addition, as a life-long diabetic, he understands the devastating effects that obesity and poor diet can have on one’s body, particularly for children. Subsequently, his experience as a volunteer coordinator, special events manager, journalist, graphic design business owner and political activist has given him the knowledge, experience base and proven passion that is needed to see this venture through to fruition.\(^{80}\)

A premise of our organization is that CGP should strive to integrate into the fabric of the community through strategic partnerships with individuals and organizations. CGP has already developed several key community partnerships to build on the assets of each to more effectively develop our comprehensive capabilities. For example, CGP is working closely with the Visiting Nurse Association and City Fresh, Cleveland’s community-supported agricultural program, as primary clients, providing 2,000+ families combined with weekly shares of freshly grown

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\(^{79}\) Community Greenhouse Partner’s Executive Business Plan Summary

\(^{80}\) Ibid.
produce. The Green Triangle Project is our primary horticultural consultant, providing advice and assistance with crop selection, greenhouse maintenance, and education. Green Triangle is a social-profit (nonprofit) education organization based in Cleveland, Ohio. Their mission is to create social, economic and ecological sustainability through permaculture design principles.81

The New Agrarian Center is another key partner in their agriculture programs. The NAC was formed in 2000 as a 501(c)3 organization focused on growing a sustainable local food system in Northeast Ohio. The George Jones Farm is a partner that employs five social entrepreneurs who share in the responsibilities of providing education for local schools, applied research and learning for Oberlin College students and faculty, production for local markets, and a variety of learning workshops on topics as diverse as converting waste-grease to bio-diesel using a bike-powered converter to constructing buildings with straw bales.82

Among other key consultants are Doty & Miller Architects, LEED AP Architects, Chuck Miller, Principal, the lead architectural and engineering consultants; Launch House, providing financial advising and business plan development support; and Cuyahoga County Solid Waste District, providing assistance with grant writing and EPA certification for their composting operation. CGP also counts among its vital partners the St. Clair Superior Development Corporation, Cory Riordan, Executive Director, assisting in getting land transferred, zoning changes and community outreach; the Cleveland Catholic Diocese which, along with providing us with the land, is also helping us with access to their parishioners and parishes for logistical, volunteer and financial support. When asked what the CGP’s experience was dealing with the Catholic Diocese, Smith replied: “Our experience with the diocese was positive, though, frankly, a little slow. I think they were desperate to unload the property, as they were facing a major

81 Community Greenhouse Partner’s Executive Business Plan Summary
82 Ibid.
property tax bill for all of their decommissioned churches, and clearing 2.83 acres off the books was their paramount concern. Their development restrictions were of no real consequence to us.\footnote{Email conversation with Tim Smith March 13, 2010}

Adding to the extensive list of partners are: The Diabetes Association of Greater Cleveland, which will be providing diabetes educators and instructional materials for our nutrition education programs; Vel’s Purple Oasis, an educational community garden in the Fairfax neighborhood near University Circle run by civic activist Vel Scott, which is one of the first urban gardens in the Cleveland area to use Permaculture techniques while working with area school children; and the Trinity Community Garden run by members of Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, which grows and serves fresh vegetables at their hunger ministry “A Place at the Table,” and augmenting school lunch programs at Marion Sterling Elementary School in the Central neighborhood.\footnote{Community Greenhouse Partner’s Executive Business Plan Summary}

**Project Financing/Development Process**

When asked about finance methods, Smith replied in short “We'll take money from virtually anyone, but we're concentrating on individual donors and foundation support. Later, when we go into our Capital phase, we'll approach the corporate community and government assistance.\footnote{Email conversation with Tim Smith March 13, 2010}” The planning documents indicate Capital and start-up costs are estimated to be close to $5 million, with expenses of $900 thousand in new/greenhouse construction, $2.5 million in conversion costs for the existing building, and $1.5 million in labor and supplies for the first year.\footnote{Community Greenhouse Partner’s Executive Business Plan Summary} CGP believes the project is an excellent fit for various city, state, and federal programs. After the first six months of operations, the greenhouse will be able to fully fund its
operations and expansions through internally generated funds. CGP feels the project will be eligible for grants from various sources as it clearly addresses the following priorities:

1. Reducing urban blight
2. Workforce training
3. Inner city employment and job creation
4. Education
5. Sustainable Energy Production and Carbon Reduction

Once the facility is fully operational, CGP projects annual revenues of $2,131,803, expenses of $1,245,536 and earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization of $886,267. These figures are based on production volumes derived from yields using Growing Power’s model and market prices in the Cleveland area. In future years CGP expects to derive revenue from the sale of compost. Additionally, CGP will realize revenue from the following sources: education dollars from local school districts, tipping fees from companies delivering organic waste, sale of additional products including eggs, honey, and processed foods, rental of building space to other organizations, and rental of our kitchen facilities to area gardens and farms to allow creation of additional processed foods by partner organizations.87

The architects for this project look to have put together a good plan that maximizes space, allows for flexibility, and retains much of the historic character of the interior of the building.* The lower level is where most of the processing will take place along with kitchens and demonstration space. Fish breeding tanks for Tilapia and Perch will also be on this level along with locker rooms and restrooms. The first floor is the main retail space with a coffee bar, a

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87 Community Greenhouse Partner’s Executive Business Plan Summary
* See Building Plan Index
classroom, and subleased offices. The second floor is a conference/presentation area with staff offices and the third floor loft is mainly offices.

**Community Commitment and Community Benefits**

When asked about the overall level of community commitment to the project, Tim Smith stated “So far the reception has been good, with widespread community buy-in and support. We've got the assistance of the local CDC, the church across the street, local restaurants and a number of city council members. We're meeting a number of needs in the community -- food, jobs, community and economic development, etc. -- and the neighborhood realizes that we're in it for the long haul.” He states that in terms of community benefit, the CGP is bringing $3.4 million in construction projects, $1 million in annual payroll and $2.5 million in annual sales to the site. The project also employs the latest in green technology and sustainable practices, and could act as an engine for further growth in the area, while acting as a model for other cities to follow. CGP also believes that, in acting as a regional hub for local food efforts, CGP will bring additional economic activity into the neighborhood and attract additional retailers and service providers.

Education is also a major aspect of this project. Smith claims the CGP will be teaching agriculture to local middle and high school students, offering a senior-level Vocational Education program in Agriculture. CGP also will offer job training for our workers, providing them with marketable skills. CGP will offer training, support and guidance for other area gardeners and farmers, in an effort towards creating a workforce that can eventually produce 20% of the local diet as envisioned by the City of Cleveland’s Sustainable Cleveland 2019 initiative. The last community benefit Smith noted was the importance of attracting and retaining

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88 Email conversation with Tim Smith March 13, 2010
89 Ibid.
talent. Endeavors like this will require people with technical knowledge, business acumen and specific labor skills. Educational programs at nearby colleges and downsizing in the region can provide a pool of these people to support our effort. Conversely, adding this industry to Cleveland can help reshape Cleveland’s image from an industrial rust belt to a Green City on a Blue Lake. 90

**Project Timeline**

11/01/2010: Acquire Land

11/02/2010: Begin Composting

11/15/2010: Build Hoop Houses

11/22/2010: Plants in the Ground

11/30/2010: Begin Phase One Building Renovations

12/22/2010: First Harvest

01/03/2011: Complete design work and submit for review and permits

01/03/2011: Management team begins employment

02/28/2011: Complete interior renovation of office space

02/28/2011: Begin work on remaining renovations

02/28/2011: Begin Greenhouse Construction

06/20/2011: Hire remaining Greenhouse and Kitchen employees

06/20/2011: Fish tanks stocked, Aquaponics staff begins full time

07/05/2011: Greenhouse opens

07/05/2011: Store Opens

07/05/2011: Begin hiring remainder of staff

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90 Community Greenhouse Partner’s Executive Business Plan Summary
09/01/2011: Classes start
11/15/2011: Operation running at full capacity

**Lessons Learned**

This case of adaptive reuse of a former church is certainly a feel good story in the City of Cleveland and could very well provide an excellent example for other similar projects nationwide. Unlike the Nottingham-Spirk Innovation Center in University Circle that was threatened with demolition because of its location high land value, St. George Lithuanian had the opposite problems, with extremely low land value, relatively high neighborhood crime, and being located in an area with high poverty and seemingly few other possibilities of practical uses for an abandoned church. Much like the University neighborhood case that required a progressive company like Nottingham-Spirk to promise a multi-million dollar investment and dozens of well-paid jobs, St. George was fortunate to attract the interest of the Community Greenhouse Partnership with an innovative executive like Tim Smith who has a true passion for work.

Another advantage this project has is that it has little competition in Cleveland or Northeast Ohio. Nothing like this currently exists in the region because all other urban agri-business in Cleveland is ground-based, with late spring, summer and fall production only. CGP will be the first in the area to grow a full range of vegetables using organic methods year round. Another factor of a successful adaptive reuse project like this is the stakeholders involved and strategic partnerships with individuals and organizations. CGP has already developed several key community partnerships as mentioned earlier. They are meeting a number of needs in the community -- food, jobs, community and economic development, etc so they have also received
an incredible amount of community support from local businesses and industry, support of the local CDC, the church across the street, local restaurants and a number of city council members.

Another factor of success for the project is the fact that the CGP had a comprehensive financial plan established going into the project. They estimated a need of close to $5 million to make the building, site, and program fully operational and had much of that sum secured before even buying the property. Unlike many other speculative small developers or individuals who often buy inexpensive properties such as churches only to later realize they have no financial means to do anything with it but let it further deteriorate, CGP went in with a comprehensive plan, appropriate stakeholders, partners, and community support making the neighborhood realize that they are in it for the long haul. In regards to money and finance, another factor of success is the fact that this is expected to be a profit producing organization. They forecast that once fully operational, they will generate $2.5 million annually in sales and have a $1 million payroll.

Another interesting factor of success that was opposite of the Nottingham-Spirk project was importance of historic designation and availability of incentives. When asked if they see local/state/federal historic landmark status as a help or hindrance to the project, Tim Smith said “neither, the building is not on the National Register, is not a local landmark, and is not in a local historic district.” By examining the blueprints of the renovation plans, it seems highly unlikely CGP would be eligible for the state and federal Historic Tax Credits because of the alterations of the main sanctuary interior space. This is not to say the project is a bad preservation project, in fact, I find it to be a good one, but it would simply not adhere to the strict Standards for Rehabilitation required by the Secretary of the Interior. I think the fear of development regulation and lack of development flexibility was a motive for the owner to decide not to pursue
the tax credits. The building could certainly be eligible, being built in 1920 by a fairly well
known architect, and significance, being home to the oldest Lithuanian parish in the United
States.

Lacking special historic designation could also be considered a factor of success for this
project. Often times in real estate, as soon as a historic label or special designation is placed on
the project, the seller automatically assumes the value of the building should be higher than it
might actually be worth. Also, as aforementioned, landmark and historic status can limit how
you can readily redevelop your project. In Cleveland, if it is a local landmark or lies in a historic
district all exterior alterations must first be presented to a local design/review committee and
then submitted to the Cleveland Landmarks Commission for final approval. In this project, the
notion of “sustainability” and being “green” and the location within a “food desert” take
precedence over the notion of pure historic preservation. Preservation, sustainability, and green
development share many common characteristics.

The last factors of success for this project were timing and intended use. The Cleveland
Catholic Diocese was desperate to unload the property as they were facing a major property tax
bill for all of their decommissioned churches, so clearing 2.83 acres off the books was their
paramount concern. Because they bought this church at a time when the Catholic Diocese was
preparing to get hit hard by property taxes, they were able to acquire the entire property for
$35,000, $110,000 less than the original asking price. Because the church hadn’t been abandoned
too long, the structure and systems are sound. This is a critical element for a project like this to
be successful. It allows for the new owner to be proactive in planned maintenance instead of
dealing with a comprehensive renovation which could bankrupt their operation. The use of their
project was the last factor of success for the project. Because they had developed a
comprehensive plan and presentation for the Catholic Diocese that outlined the community
benefit and “virtuous” intent of use, the sometimes restrictive development covenants were of no
real consequence to the project.
## St. Clair-Superior Neighborhood Demographic Index

### Population Composition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>St. Clair-Superior</th>
<th>Cleveland City</th>
<th>Cuyahoga County</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[1990] [2000]</td>
<td>[1990] [2000]</td>
<td>[1990] [2000]</td>
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<td>Resident population</td>
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<td>505,647  478,403</td>
<td>1,412,140  1,393,978</td>
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<td>NA -5.4</td>
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<td>Percent white</td>
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<td>49.5  43.2</td>
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<td>Percent black</td>
<td>57.7  76.5</td>
<td>46.6  51.5</td>
<td>24.8  27.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Percent Hispanic</td>
<td>7.0  5.7</td>
<td>4.6  7.3</td>
<td>2.2  3.4</td>
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<td>Percent younger than 18 years of age</td>
<td>31.9  37.2</td>
<td>26.9  28.5</td>
<td>23.9  25.0</td>
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<td>Percent 18 years of age and older</td>
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<td>73.1  71.5</td>
<td>76.1  75.0</td>
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<td>Percent 65 years of age and older</td>
<td>12.1  8.7</td>
<td>14.0  12.5</td>
<td>15.7  15.6</td>
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<td>Ratio of adults to children</td>
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<td>2.7  2.5</td>
<td>3.2  3.0</td>
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<td>Number of families</td>
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<td>122,952 111,998</td>
<td>370,083 354,615</td>
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### Residential Mobility

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<th>St. Clair-Superior</th>
<th>Cleveland City</th>
<th>Cuyahoga County</th>
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<tr>
<td>Percent of persons aged 5+ that moved within the past 5 years</td>
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<td>41.0</td>
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<td></td>
<td>49.0</td>
<td>44.2</td>
<td>40.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Percent of occupied housing units with a householder* in current unit for less than 1 year</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>16.6</td>
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<td></td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>20.7</td>
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### Economic Status

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<th>Cleveland City</th>
<th>Cuyahoga County</th>
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<td>Percent of individuals with incomes below the poverty level</td>
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<td>28.7</td>
<td>13.8</td>
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<td></td>
<td>40.5</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>13.1</td>
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<td>Percent of families with children* with incomes below the poverty level</td>
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<td>37.7</td>
<td>18.5</td>
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<td></td>
<td>49.0</td>
<td>32.3</td>
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<td>Median household</td>
<td>16,716</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23,831</td>
<td>33,651</td>
<td>50,835</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Income** ($)

| Unemployment rate | 23.9 | 19.6 | 14.0 | 11.2 | 7.5 | 6.2 |

### Educational Attainment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>St. Clair-Superior</th>
<th>Cleveland City</th>
<th>Cuyahoga County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percent of population aged 25+ with at least a high school degree*</td>
<td>53.1</td>
<td>58.5</td>
<td>58.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of population aged 25+ with at least a college degree**</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Housing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>St. Clair-Superior</th>
<th>Cleveland City</th>
<th>Cuyahoga County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of housing units</td>
<td>5,379</td>
<td>5,007</td>
<td>224,319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of occupied housing units</td>
<td>84.5</td>
<td>82.1</td>
<td>89.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of vacant housing</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>units</td>
<td>Percent of owner occupied housing units</td>
<td>Percent of renter occupied housing units</td>
<td>Median gross rent ($)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>39.7</td>
<td>60.3</td>
<td>286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>37.7</td>
<td>62.3</td>
<td>448</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>47.9</td>
<td>52.1</td>
<td>322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>48.5</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>465</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>62.0</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td>397</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>63.2</td>
<td>36.8</td>
<td>541</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Housing Investment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>St. Clair-Superior</th>
<th>Cleveland City</th>
<th>Cuyahoga County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average dollar amount of conventional home improvement loans originated</td>
<td>9,411</td>
<td>16,625</td>
<td>10,616</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16,625</td>
<td>10,616</td>
<td>22,697</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12,488</td>
<td>25,417</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of conventional home improvement loan applications originated</td>
<td>39.2</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>48.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22.9</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>54.6</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average dollar amount of conventional home purchase loans originated</td>
<td>35,369</td>
<td>33,500</td>
<td>50,476</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>85,980</td>
<td>90,989</td>
<td>146,852</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>90,989</td>
<td>146,852</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of conventional home purchase loan applications originated</td>
<td>73.2</td>
<td>42.1</td>
<td>73.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Public Safety

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Serious violent crimes per 100,000 population</td>
<td>2,462.3 2,080.0</td>
<td>1,817.1 1,520.2</td>
<td>NA NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious property crimes per 100,000 population</td>
<td>8,688.1 5,644.5</td>
<td>7,434.0 5,825.9</td>
<td>NA NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug arrests per 100,000 population</td>
<td>988.2 1,301.2</td>
<td>1,305.9 1,228.1</td>
<td>NA NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child maltreatment per 1,000 children &lt; 18 years of age*</td>
<td>57.3 15.4</td>
<td>44.4 13.3</td>
<td>26.3 7.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Neighborhood Map Index

Site Location and Surrounding Streets
Chapter 6: Findings and Recommendations

Site and Location Matter

The underlying land value of the church site may be high if the area is built out and the local supply of developable land is constrained such was the case in the First Church of Christ, Scientist case study where several developers were interested in the property, but with intentions to demolish the building for a residential development. Other churches in Cleveland that are located in desirable areas such as close to downtown or near expanding institutions (such as the Cleveland Clinic, Case Western Reserve University, or Cleveland State) that have high surrounding land values can be especially susceptible to demolition for institutional expansion. The lack of available area for parking or open space can diminish the development value of an otherwise viable building. The larger the site, the more space is available to distribute the costs associated with redevelopment. This was the case with the St. George Lithuanian church project. Its area of nearly 3 acres provided ample space for parking, greenhouses, composting facilities, and an orchard. Without this large parcel of fairly unobstructed property, it is unlikely the project would have been successful.

The closing and adaptive reuse of a church can be very emotional for all involved.

Because the closing of neighborhood churches and their proposed and rumored future fate, it is likely to encourage active citizen participation in any church redevelopment process. A wide array of people feels that they have something at stake when a church is closed and redeveloped. While the general public has a limited if any direct ability to preserve a church building or otherwise dictate reuse, citizens do possess the power to delay through regulatory and legal means which can prove an effective deterrent tactic to a reuse proposal that is not approved.
by the community. In many cases, the higher the land values of the surrounding area, the more well organized and well-funded the general public and the local government is likely to be, and the more likely that an engaged set of stakeholders will become involved in the process.

Churches draw emotions from such a wide array of people because the interior and exteriors are important to different groups of people. The community and general public (even those not living in close proximity to the building) value the exterior of the building for its architectural value, adding to a community “sense of place” while congregations’ value the interiors as well for their sacred nature and significance of rituals. In many cases such as St. George Lithuanian, the CGP made it a point to gain public support for the project to gain volunteer support, advice, and financial support. As we found out in both case studies, there are many sources of public funding available to assist with preservation and adaptive reuse projects in urban areas, and inclusion of the public and public support is a positive factor when trying to obtain these funds and support.

**Adaptive reuse of churches requires patience**

Because of the aforementioned emotions from multiple parties associated with urban neighborhood churches, and multiple stakeholders involved, the redevelopment process often takes longer than a conventional adaptive reuse or new construction project. Because of the rarity of neighborhood church closures and possibly being redeveloped, church projects garner a lot of attention from local television, newspapers, community bulletins, events, and word of mouth. Because churches infrequently convert to other uses, and have unique circumstances, the real estate market, community, and developers have no blueprint in place for addressing their unique circumstances. The long development process and the universal unfamiliarity with building

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91 Kiley, Christopher John. *Convert!: the adaptive reuse of churches.*

92 Ibid.
conversions of churches lead to churches being viewed by most developers as a high risk development project and sometimes attract less interest and lower valuation by developers.\textsuperscript{93} The process can also be slowed because of negotiations with Diocese ownership because the presence of restrictive deeds on the property and the fact all of their operational decisions must be approved by the Vatican.

\textbf{A church should remain a church if possible.}

Churches provide a public good which is largely a product of its spiritual activities and their role in the lives of people in the community. This public good is maximized when the church building is utilized as it was designed, for spiritual activities. Additionally, the long view holds that religion is not going away, that neighborhoods will repopulate and reorder themselves but will remain neighborhoods well into the future.\textsuperscript{94} While demographics and religious affiliation in neighborhoods may change, as shown in chapter two, religion and the demand for places of worship will not go away. This being said, the first and in many ways most appropriate effort for a congregation, community, planning office or anybody else involved within a congregation is to explore ways to maintain the building as a place of worship.\textsuperscript{95} This might include identifying other growing area denominations to purchase the building, combine multiple congregations of faiths into the structure, or increase the area served by the existing congregation in order to increase membership such as the case with the Catholic Diocese in Cleveland.

\textbf{Show me the money}

The redevelopment of churches is not for amateur speculative developers. When these kinds of developers purchase buildings (often because of sentimental or aesthetic reasons) often

\textsuperscript{93} Kiley, Christopher John. \textit{Convert!: the adaptive reuse of churches.}
\textsuperscript{94} Ibid.
times the buildings sit vacant for longer periods of time because the buyer lacks the funds to properly stabilize the building, much less give it a proper renovation. In our two case studies, the new owners had much of the capital required to complete the project secured before even purchasing the property. The average cost of complete renovation and adaptive reuse of the projects in Cleveland was around 6.5 million dollars. It is a positive thing that these individuals express interest in preserving these neighborhood landmarks, but at the end of the day they must think financially instead of acting on emotions.

Development costs are increased by the deferred maintenance conditions in the building as well as from the need to convert a large volume of space and address a low ratio of usable square footage. Churches are also difficult to subdivide for uses like residential or office because of the additional expenses incurred by the need to insert intermediate floors, add circulation and address lighting issues. Churches tend to be a high risk undertaking because of the deferred maintenance and the likelihood of containing unknown or undiscovered structural issues that will need to be addressed during rehabilitation. To compensate for these risks, a developer in many instances will require a higher return rate for a church project than for a comparable new construction project which limits the market for possible tenants. The added expenses create a funding gap between development costs and the projected future revenues or sales proceeds from the project, requiring a developer to identify additional sources of revenue or to secure funding offsets. Public and private funding sources are available, although many are competitive and need to be combined with each other to help fill the gap.  

96 Kiley, Christopher John. Convert!: the adaptive reuse of churches.
**Regulation is a double edged sword**

The land use process and code requirements can have negative consequences with respect to the desirability of the building as a development project. Building codes, safety and health requirements, modernization, and structural needs all present difficult redevelopment challenges for a church because of increase costs and the time and effort associated with additional levels of building permit approvals. Building codes are typically “cookie cutter” meaning they were thought of typically to be applied to new construction. These codes can limit flexibility and creative design solutions for adaptive reuse of unique spaces. Also, if a building has local, state, or national historic designation, or is in a local historic district, regulations such as local design(review) requirements, landmarks commission approval are required. If the developer wishes to pursue other financial incentives such as the state and federal historic tax credits, they must adhere to the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation from the National Park Service which can be somewhat difficult when converting the buildings to different uses.

The regulatory context can also be a source of benefit to redevelopment and reuse, however if a developer wants to maximize the financial incentives available for a project. These financial incentives include tax breaks, tax credits, grants, low interest loans, conservation easements, public/private partnerships, and gap financing. Jurisdictions can actively promote the preservation and redevelopment of certain areas by establishing historic districts or special zones such as empowerment zones of TIF districts that provide an avenue to obtain additional funding sources. Despite the many positives associated with these special districts, historic designation has also been attributed with being a cause of neighborhood gentrification because of the attributed sudden rise in property values. Developers and jurisdictions should consider these

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97 Kiley, Christopher John. *Convert!: the adaptive reuse of churches.*
impacts and use these funding sources and others such as the LIHTC to incorporate an appropriate amount of low-moderate income housing in the area.

**Developers and owners of churches should be eccentric**

While a church building can be a valuable presence to any neighborhood or development project, specific redevelopment challenges can overwhelm a conventional profit-driven developer. The lack of familiarity with these projects, unforeseen expenses associated with renovation, risks associated with finding a proper tenant, plus an unknown timeframe all add to the decreased desirability of taking on an adaptive reuse project of a church compared to the much easier method of demolition and new construction⁹⁸.

Demolition allows a developer to access the underlying site and develop a conventional building using familiar, conventional construction techniques. A specialized developer, or in the case of our two case studies, eccentric and progressive minded owners that either have experience with adaptively reusing historic buildings or having a vision along with the financial means to pursue it can use creative solutions to most best capture the value associated with a unique project in order to make reuse both profitable and provide a positive image of their organization to the community.

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⁹⁸ Kiley, Christopher John. *Convert!: the adaptive reuse of churches.*
Recommendations for Adaptive Reuse of Churches

Commitment is essential

In declining eastern and Midwestern cities there are many old buildings that would make good candidates for reuse, but the real estate market is only so big. All of these properties compete against one another for the limited number of potential developers and funding incentives required for a successful project. In many cases there may be no strong desire or compelling reason to save a church if there are no advocates for its reuse. In these cases, demolition of the church building and clearance of the site is likely. In the absence of a city or state level commitment to preserving the building, there are no means to obtain funding or interest to redevelop or stabilize the building. Unlike many western European countries, we do not have a National Trust that preserves vacated churches and maintains public access to them.

Due to the numbers of recent church closings, public policy is needed

With the importance of historic neighborhood churches to communities and the numbers of church closures in certain regions and cities, I find there to be a reasonable cause for legislative action. A public initiative could help to address the difficulties experienced by developers in regard to process, regulation, and funding. Although the National Trust for Historic Preservation named Historic Houses of Worship to its endangered building list in 2003, there has been no further effort to promote these buildings or create a policy for better preserving them. A public policy would be most effective if completed on the federal level, but because of the unique circumstances of each individual building and site they would function best if it was implemented at the local level. Similar to affordable housing tax credits, any federal funds directed towards encouraging the reuse of churches could be distributed in a similar matter which would allow for distribution by city and regional entities such as the Cleveland Restoration

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Society to ensure that the best projects were awarded funding. Other policy could include the relaxation of certain building codes and Standards for Rehabilitation to make investment more attractive and buildings more flexible for new purposes.

**Build partnerships within the community**

When adaptively reusing a former church building the community can be your greatest ally or worst enemy, it is important you are proactive in reaching out to them in the initial planning stages of the project. As aforementioned, these projects many times generate a large amount of public attention, particularly in churches that were more recently closed. People that have some kind of special connection to the church typically want to be involved, and will find a way through legal and regulatory means or otherwise. Solutions that use local input and recognize the unique neighborhood context in which the building exists are more likely to result in positive public support. As the two case studies showed, political support is also necessary to address development issues of gap financing, regulations, and community support. The Nottingham-Spirk Innovation project utilized political relationships to obtain financial support from the city for asbestos removal, and the CGP used council member and CDG support to help apply for grants and marketing strategies. Whether it be local councilmen/women, city officials, preservation offices ect, these actors will play a significant role in whether or not the project succeeds and are most critical in terms of finance.

**Creating and utilizing unique space makes successful developments**

In general two types of strategies have proven most successful in redeveloping former churches. The first retains the original single volume of space, and the second is subdividing the area into smaller units for other uses. While completing the literature review, uses that retain the original space include community centers, performance spaces, gymnasiums, restaurants and
bars, open plan offices, and nightclubs. Subdivided uses include residential units such as apartments and condos, offices, and certain types of retail.\(^9^9\) Typical design solutions include removing the obvious or overbearing religious objects while retaining the special character such as high ceilings, quality materials, and architectural details such as windows and spires.

**Create a plan that allows for use of multiple funding sources**

As has been a common theme in this thesis, although there are no church specific preservation funds currently available, many public and private funding sources and opportunities exist to assist with the preservation of historic buildings. Funding assistance can come in the form of grants, loans, waivers, or favorable terms. Historic preservation, community redevelopment, special needs, Business Improvement Districts, Community Development Block Grants, Empowerment Zones, and Tax Increment Financing district funds are all accessible for certain church reuse projects. Very rarely will one individual funding source cover all necessary expenses to make a project viable so it is in the interest of an owner or developer to layer them to create a financially feasible project.

**Further Research**

In order to better understand this increasingly urgent issue of church reuse, more research on the factors that influence successful adaptive church reuses should be done beyond the Cleveland area. Completing in depth studies on select internal and external development factors can be completed to compare their relevance. Another lengthy study could be completed by following the fate over a several year period of all 27 churches that were closed in Cleveland as a result of the Cleveland Catholic Diocese restructuring of 2009-2010. It would be a fascinating

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\(^9^9\) Kiley, Christopher John. *Convert!: the adaptive reuse of churches.*

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assessment to take findings from this study and apply them to this larger sample to test if the same principles apply in other cases over time.

For those interested in Catholic Church closures, a study or assessment of the impacts of the Catholic Dioceses’ central decision making body in the Vatican on local declining cities could be worth studying to see if having a more locally based planning and decision making authority could better serve the diocese. Lastly, studying the strategies of Arch/Diocese’s such as Philadelphia that have either hired planning consultants or developed internal planning and research offices would be a good means to test how viable planning theory and practices are in regards to better handling the shifting demographics of the Catholic Church.


National Trust Community Investment Corporation (2010).


