

# Kansas City Star parking lot is slated for new church building

## HIGHLIGHTS

KC Plan Commission endorses rezoning for church use of downtown lot

Church of the Resurrection will initially use the space for parking

Church plans new building south of 16th and Grand



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The Kansas City Plan Commission endorsed plans Tuesday to rezone and redevelop a Kansas City Star parking lot for use by the United Methodist Church of the Resurrection.

The preliminary development plan, which is likely to go to the City Council in early January, calls for the church to use The Star's surface parking lot between 16th and 17th streets and between McGee Street and Grand Boulevard.

City planner John Eckardt said The Star's employees are no longer using all the spaces. Meanwhile the Leawood-based Church of the Resurrection, one of the nation's fastest-growing churches, is outgrowing its downtown location at 1522 McGee and wants to expand.

Eckardt said the church has an agreement to buy some of the parking lot west of McGee for a new church building and will lease the remainder of the southern portion of the lot from The Star when the media business is less active on Sundays and nights.

Dick Cooper, the church's director of facilities and construction, said the church hopes to complete the purchase of part of the lot next spring. It will continue to raise funds and hopes to begin construction on a new 15,000- to 18,000-square-foot building in the fourth quarter of 2016, with possible completion a year later.

Cooper said the church would also like to continue using the McGee Street building.

In other action Tuesday:

- The Plan Commission supported a rezoning and preliminary development plan to restore two buildings south of 21st Street between Central and Fort Scott streets into a 124-room hotel, restaurant and bar.

The developer would be Aparium Hotel Group from Chicago. Kansas City lawyer John McGurk said the development group is going through the city process to determine appropriate tax incentives. The plan still requires City Council approval.

- The Plan Commission voted 4-1 in support of a Best Western hotel planned for east of Troost Avenue and north of 24th Street in the Beacon Hill neighborhood.

The Sunflower Development group, which is pursuing new-markets tax credits to help finance the project, plans for the hotel to serve families with patients at Children's Mercy Hospital, Truman Medical Center and other facilities on Hospital Hill.

People living nearby were very concerned about the hotel attracting vagrants and transients. The commission was assured that the hotel will make security a priority and that there is pent-up demand for a hotel at that location.

The City Council still must approve the development plan.

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