

South Hazelton Property Information

The South Hazelton property is the site of the former Mount Rocher Alliance Church that closed on June 1, 2006. After the closure, the property was transferred at the book value of \$46K to the CPD. A new non-Alliance church called Mt. Rocher Church (MRC) was created and started to lease the South Hazelton property from the CPD for \$1,200/year. In addition to paying the rental of \$1,200, MRC paid for all the taxes and utilities on the property. In 2015, the CPD proposed to sell the property to MRC for \$46K, but they declined.

MRC lost many of their congregants in the past several years, particularly during the pandemic, which meant sustaining the church financially became very difficult. In 2021, MRC asked the CPD to share the cost of utility expenses and taxes. The Finance Committee decided to waive the \$1,200 lease payment for 2021 but didn't agree to share the taxes and utilities.

By June 2022, MRC had shrunk to six people, and they notified the CPD that they could no longer afford the rent. They also struggled to find other rental groups for the property. In December 2023, MRC notified the CPD that they would not be renewing the lease for 2023 as they could no longer afford the rent. The CPD has been covering all costs for the property since that time.

The Finance Committee has had multiple discussions about the property and after exhausting efforts to find other renters or church groups interested in using the property, explored the option of selling it or subdividing the land.

It was discovered during the process of determining the property's value that there was a reverter on the title. The reverter states that the land was given to the CPD as a grant "for as long as the land is used for public worship." Investigation into the reverter was done, including seeking legal advice. It was determined that there was no option other than to return the land to the Crown as the CPD has no ability to sell or subdivide the land.

As the CPD is incurring ongoing costs for maintenance of the South Hazelton property, the Finance Committee is actively working to return the land to the Crown.

