

Discussion Profile

Status of Vancouver Mandarin Church

Issue:

To determine a path forward for the relationship of Vancouver Mandarin Church of the C&MA (VMC) with the CPD.

Why It's Coming to DEXCOM:

DEXCOM input into the pathway forward with VMC is desired.

Background:

VMC became a CPD developing church on November 1, 1990 and moved to organized status as of November 25, 1990. It is a separately incorporated church, and on February 22, 1998 the church transferred the property title to the CPD.

In the past, there were significant connections between the district and the church, including a donation from the CPD for \$50K for the church's building renovation in 1997. The church had an Official Worker for their Senior Pastor until the resignation of Paul Zhong on May 31, 2013, and there has not been a pastor of the church since that time.

The relationship with VMC has continued to grow distant after 2013, and the congregation has shrunk. At this point, it is estimated that there are approximately 10 church members who are predominantly elderly. The church has not been paying into the District Operating Budget for at least the last two years but does pay a relatively small amount for liability insurance (\$647 for the 2023-2024 year).

From 2016 on, the church has been requested to complete the DEXCOM-mandated bylaws review and the district-wide requirements for implementation of a church privacy policy and safety and risk management policy. The church has not responded to these requests or reminders and does not have bylaws in place that are in alignment with the mandatory clauses of the *Model Church Bylaws*, nor required policies in place.

In an effort to engage with the church and encourage compliance with the required governance documents, Genghis Chan made a connection with the church and attended one of their services. He noted that the church no longer believes that it is a C&MA church, despite its legal name signifying otherwise. He also observed that the church building is in a state of disrepair. Given the state of the church, the District Superintendent moved the church back to developing church status effective December 31, 2022.



In December 2022 the CPD received notice that the City of Vancouver approved 25 childcare spaces for children ages 30 months to school age on the ground floor of the church provided a number of building bylaw, plumbing and sprinkler, electrical, and fire requirements were met.

Given the ongoing lack of connection and response from the church, the allowance of a daycare highlighted concerns about risk and liability for the district. Paul Townsend reviewed the situation and believes there is significant liability for the CPD, especially when compared to the small premium the church is allocated. Paul and Erin Knott also met with Reg Esau, the CPD's insurance broker regarding his assessment of the liability. Reg agreed with Paul's assessment and noted there is an additional risk of reputational damage to the CPD.

Reg suggested that several potential options for the CPD to address the issue:

- Have an insurance inspection completed through a third party.
- Move VMC to become tenants of the church building.
- At a minimum, require a safety and risk management policy be in place.
- The CPD request from the daycare a hold harmless indemnification agreement.
- Ask the daycare to provide the CPD with evidence of liability insurance.

The property is located in Vancouver in the Grandview-Woodland area. Given its address, it has a high value and is in a strategic location.

CPD staff have been looking at options to address this situation, including:

- Continue with the church as things currently are while working to strengthen the relationship between the church and district.
- Seek DEXCOM's direction and support in requiring the church to meet the minimum requirements for all churches, including a safety and risk management policy.
- Should the church not respond favourably, to lower liability risk, return the property to the church and determine the best status for the church moving forward.

Questions for Discussion:

1. What is the priority for DEXCOM in its relationship to VMC (ex. retain relationship with the church, strategic use of the church property, reduce district liability, etc.)?
2. What form of relationship does DEXCOM desire to have with EBC (ex. maintain the existing relationship of the CPD to a developing church, separate from the church, etc.)



3. How heavy-handed does DEXCOM desire to be if VMC is asked to come into compliance with the minimum requirements for churches regarding church bylaws and policies?

