



DECATUR PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

205 Sycamore Street
Decatur, GA 30030
404-378-1777 www.dpchurch.org

MEMORANDUM

TO: Our Neighbors on Cook Road

FROM: Trustees of Decatur Presbyterian Church

DATE: July 19, 2024

RE: Update on Church's Retreat Center property at 3475 Cook Road

In April 1968, Decatur Presbyterian Church purchased a 13+ acre site on Lake Lanier on which to build a Retreat Center. The 36-bed building was completed in 1970 and that first summer over 500 church members and guests visited this special place, enjoying recreation, study, and fellowship. The Retreat Center was used extensively for youth retreats and other gatherings in the following decades. But then use of the facility declined for a number of reasons.

In the mid-2000s, the Church had a conceptual design made of six separate parcels, and entertained the possibility of selling three of these parcels. Ultimately, the church leadership decided not to sell any of those parcels.

With ministry focus changing and under-use of the property continuing, the Congregation recently voted to accept a task force recommendation that the entire property be sold, with proceeds being redirected to future ministry programs. We are still in the very early stages of planning for a future sale. But as a part of this process, the Church needs to obtain formal approval from Hall County to subdivide the property into six separate parcels. Therefore, you will be seeing a sign providing notice of upcoming meetings of the Planning Commission and County Commission at which the Church's application for a conditional use permit will be considered.

We wanted our neighbors to know about these developments and to provide you with contact information in case you have questions. A long-time member of the Congregation, Bryan Downs, is the point person for this administrative proceeding. Please direct questions about this process to Bryan at 404-377-3638 or bdowns@wmdlegal.com. We are also planning to host a Q&A session for Cook Road neighbors and will let you know as soon as we have a set date.

For almost 60 years, Decatur Presbyterian Church has sought to be good stewards of the retreat property and to be good neighbors to those who make their homes nearby. We have every intent to continue in that spirit and look forward to keeping you informed throughout this process.