

# **Marian Pritchett Booth Home Redevelopment Prospects and Vision**



**Prepared by Idaho Smart Growth for the  
North End Neighborhood Association**



*Google satellite image of current block.*

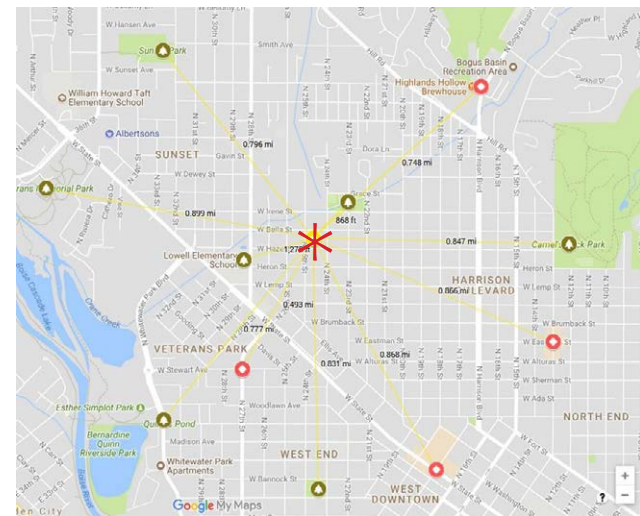
## Summary

Marian Pritchett Booth Memorial Home is located in Boise's North End on the block bounded by W. Bella St. on the north, N. 24th St. on the east, W. Hazel St. on the south and N. 25th St. on the west. After 97 years here the Salvation Army, the property's owner, decided the location and the facilities no longer serve their mission well and plan to move to new facilities that are more centrally and conveniently located for their clientele. The move will allow them to expand both the programs they provide as well as the number of people they'll be able to serve. This decision dictates that they sell the property as they no longer have any use for it and the value will help fund their new location. This change means the property will redevelop, which opens up many questions and concerns for immediate neighbors as well as the broader neighborhood. However, it also presents unique opportunities for the neighborhood.

They must better understand what is desired for this block and the existing buildings.

NENA contracted Idaho Smart Growth to conduct an outreach process to engage the neighborhood and other stakeholders to identify what is and is not desired for this block. The goal of this process was to define a clearer vision for redeveloping the block where the Marian Pritchett Booth Memorial Home is located that is supported by a majority of the North End neighborhood. While a specific vision has not resulted, the process has affirmed some of the conclusions from NENA's initial survey and provided greater clarity and specifics of residents' preferences. Additionally, the process has provided the neighborhood an opportunity to talk with two prospective developers of the property and share their views, concerns and desires, and offer both developers a chance to understand that the neighborhood is a willing partner in support of redeveloping the property in the best way possible.

This report presents conclusions from that effort and recommends action steps for the NENA board regarding the redevelopment of this property. Salvation Army put the property out for bid through Thornton Oliver Keller. That bid process closed April 27, 2018. NENA hopes Salvation Army will consider this report in their final decision and encourage whoever purchases the property to work them on a development proposal before taking it to the city. Additionally NENA intends to use the report to provide the city with an understanding of what redevelopment the neighborhood could support.



*Parks and activity centers within one mile of Booth Home.*



# Property Background

## History

The original Booth Home was built in 1921 as a maternal hospital for unwed mothers. In 1928 a new home and hospital were added and the name was changed to the Booth Memorial Hospital in 1947. As many of these facilities were closing across the nation in the 1960s the Booth Home evolved to become a fully accredited school as part of the Boise School District in addition to Salvation Army ministries. In 1969 the facilities were expanded with four new buildings, including the chapel, daycare, dorm rooms, commercial kitchen and cafeteria. In 2002 the school's name was changed again in honor of Marian Pritchett, a long-time head teacher who taught at the school from 1974-2002.



*Chapel building with 75th Anniversary mural; below mural directed by local artist Liz Wolfe.*

While the original home was both a residence and a hospital, in recent years it has served largely as a school. This more commercial use raised the question as to whether the neighborhood would like the block to become residential or continue with a new commercial use or perhaps some mix of both.

## Architecture and Art

The buildings are all over 50 years old—the original building is nearly 100—and historic preservationists consider all the buildings on the property to have historic value. The original building built in 1921 is in the neoclassical Colonial Revival style, with characteristic symmetrical design, two stories and a rectangular floor plan. The 1969 buildings were built in the Modern style and are considered historic in their own right as examples of this specific style. Two ceramic tile murals are on the façade of the chapel; one was made by students under the direction of artist Liz Wolfe as a memorial to a child that died and whose mother attended the school. [Sources: Preservation Idaho IAP, Idaho Statesman, TOK prospectus.]



## Facilities

The site is 1.86 acres with four buildings that encompass a total of 25,276+ square feet served by city geothermal heating. The original dorm buildings are not currently in use as residences today, but could be repurposed. Inside the church building there is a commercial kitchen and larger room that serves as a cafeteria and large meeting room. In the 1921 building the original fireplaces, many of the original windows and the original entryway are still intact.

There are a number of healthy, mature trees on the site, along the street as well as several large trees on the southern, undeveloped portion of the property where there also is an outdoor pavilion and garden. This portion of the property is very park-like. There are 24 parking spaces on the north side of the property.

## Regulations

**Current zoning:** R-1CH (Single Family Residential, Urban with Historic Preservation overlay), minimum lot size 5,000 square feet and 7,000 for corner lots.

**Land Use Map Designation:** Compact - this designation could potentially allow a rezone to R-2H (Medium Density Residential with Historic Preservation overlay) through City Council approval. A Planned Unit Development might allow smaller lots or attached units up to eight dwellings per acre. A rezone to R2H would allow up to 14.5 units per acre.

**Historic District:** The Historic Preservation Commission would require a Certificate of Appropriateness for any new development. Demolition of original structure, lot coverage with new structures greater than 35%, and any alteration to the landscaping, especially mature trees, must be approved by the commission.

## Blueprint Boise Goals and Objectives

NE-CCN1: Ensure future development compliments the established character of the North End.

NE-CCN2: Encourage a mix of housing, employment, and recreational opportunities to serve the North End.

NE-NC1: Continue to preserve and enhance the character and livability of North End neighborhoods.



*Central building commercial kitchen.*



*Mature trees and garden, SW corner.*



## Project Description

From January to March 2017 the NENA board conducted an online survey to learn how their residents felt about the value of historic preservation for the buildings as well as other redevelopment questions. They received 215 responses with a breakdown that showed a balance of representation from throughout the neighborhood. Twenty-five percent of respondents live within two blocks of the site, 31% within five blocks, 23% in the North End west of Harrison, another 18% from the rest of the North End and a small 3% either outside the North End or unknown. In addition to their location respondents were asked six other questions.

- How they felt about preserving the “historic 1921 building” - 65% strongly agreed, 17% somewhat agreed, 12% were neutral and only 6% disagreed.
- How they felt about preserving “the modern additions” - 23% agreed with only 8% strongly agreeing, 37% were neutral and 39% disagreed.
- They were asked their ideas for redevelopment of the site. Generally there was not strong support for any one idea, however “community center” was chosen by 21% with “small business” receiving 15%, “preserve/renovate the historic building” 14%, single family housing 12% and park 11%. All other ideas were less than 10%.
- When asked what they did not want to see, “high density housing” was opposed by 37%, “commercial” by 20%, housing by 14% and high-end housing by 10% and the remainder under 10%.
- Respondents felt the strongest about “mixed-use development” with “some commercial” and whether an increase in density would be OK if it were necessary for a “creative use” like this to be developed; 60% said “yes” and another 17% said “maybe.” This question only had 138 responses out of 215—perhaps the rest didn’t have an opinion.
- The final question asked about what services “this part of the North End” needed. Forty-one percent said a “community/arts center,” another 15% selected “coffee shop” and the rest were below 10%.



*Participants in second workshop discuss a development option.*

Building on the efforts of this survey, ISG conducted two workshops to engage neighbors as well as other stakeholders and created a second survey to provide a more specific vision for redevelopment. The first workshop was well attended with nearly 70 people. Participants identified their concerns and desires and then worked together at five tables to create their vision for the property. At the second workshop the outcomes from the first workshop were reviewed and developers were invited to bring proposals in for attendees to view and ask questions. One developer took the opportunity to get this public input. The attendance at the second workshop was much lower, so ISG created an online survey to ask more people the questions of community uses, mixed-use development and density. This survey was shared with attendees from both workshops by ISG. The NENA board also shared the survey with their social network. This report includes a summary analysis of results from that survey gathered through April 27, with a total of 151 respondents. The complete responses of the survey created by ISG and a workshop report from the first workshop are in the appendix.

## Outcomes

This process provided some clarity on which redevelopment prospects have strong support from neighbors, which have a mix of supporters and opponents and those which have strong opposition. The prospects identified as having strong support were heard consistently through both workshops and identified in the survey that ISG sent out following the second workshop.

Other redevelopment choices have both strong support and opposition which are represented here as having mixed support. At both workshops and in the survey we attempted to get more clarity around preferences for community uses and mixed-use development but without success. There continued to be quite diverse opinions, making it unclear what level of support exists for these ideas.

At the second workshop and in the survey, we used word clouds to draw out these preferences. Survey respondents were asked to respond to seven word clouds including “gathering,” “meeting,” “café,” “garden,” “senior,” “daycare” and “residential” to acquire more clarity for types of mixed-use and community space desired. Respondents were asked which type of use they most desired, however, none of these reached a majority. “Café” and “garden” were rated highest with 29% and 22% of respondents indicating their preference for these uses. “Residential”—an option provided to indicate a desire for single-use residential (as opposed to mixed-use)—was rated third highest with 17%. Using the same word clouds we also asked whether respondents were opposed to any of the use categories. All of these categories received more opposition than support with responses near or greater than 30% except for “garden” and “café.”



Finally, redevelopment prospects with clear opposition are noted here as such. A few are not redevelopment ideas as much as consequences of development the community wants to avoid.

### Strong support

**Historic preservation** of the original 1921 building is clearly desired by a significant majority both among nearby residents as well as the larger neighborhood. This support appears strong enough to allow slightly denser housing on the property with the building being converted to multifamily residential. As previously stated no other use received strong support. Preservation of the modern architecture structures has minimal support; this has been consistent throughout the process and was echoed in the previous NENA survey.

**Residential** use on the block is the only land use that received consistent support although the preference for housing type is varied. Some prefer single-family while others would like to see smaller units that could serve seniors and those who today cannot afford to live in the North End. Some even were open to live-work housing. Support for some higher density grows if it means preserving the Booth Home.

**Trees and open space** were very much desired. While there was not a strong interest in outdoor community space, saving the mature trees on the property as well as keeping some of the parklike sense of place it has today is very much desired.

**Historic character** of the neighborhood is important to both nearby residents and the community-at-large.

## Mixed support

**Community space** was expressed by many as something they would like to see as a part of a redevelopment, especially in the original building. However there was no clear consensus on the type of community space. Ideas ranged from meeting space, a gathering place and senior services, to an outdoor gathering place. There does seem to be broader tolerance for and even interest in the idea of having a gathering space for the neighbors, including perhaps community use of the original building for meeting space and other quiet uses.

**Neighborhood commercial**, e.g. a coffee shop, has avid supporters but others clearly oppose a commercial use included in the redevelopment. Those who like the idea are looking for a quiet, nearby gathering place to which they could walk or bike.

**Creating an alley** was favored but does not seem to have significant importance. During the first workshop nearly all the ideas included an alley and when asked about this there was clear support for an alley to be added with redevelopment. However in the survey there was almost no interest expressed in having an alley and many more stated they would give up the alley if it was necessary to preserve the original building.



*Potential future alley alignment looking south.*

## Opposition

**More traffic** was a great concern and was voiced by many. In the survey opposition to “development that increases traffic in the area” tied with “development that would demolish the original building.” (Both received the highest percentages of any other survey questions at 57.47% opposed.)

**Noise and late evening operations** were concerns raised in response to neighborhood commercial uses such as restaurants. There was clear sentiment that this area did not want to become another Hyde Park with its noise and congestion.

**Demolition of the original 1921 structure** consistently received significant opposition. This was clearly voiced at the first workshop and in NENA's survey. We used the second workshop and survey to ask what compromises participants would consider in order to save this building. We believe based on this the neighborhood would support a rezone to R2 if it were the right design and the original Booth

Home were saved. In the survey nearly 53.45% said they would oppose single-family houses if it meant demolition of this structure. This was one of the few responses that received over 50%.

**High-density housing** received strong opposition based on what was heard at the workshops and the responses to questions about housing density in the survey. We interpret this to mean not the possibility of R2 but rather a greater density that would bring mass and scale to the block not in keeping with the neighborhood character, i.e. no large multifamily structures or a block full of skinny houses.

## Vision and Recommendations

Based on the outcomes from this process it is clear that the only vision participants share is something that is residential and preserves the original building, the mature trees and the parklike open space. Redevelopment should conform nicely with the historic character of the neighborhood through design and spacing. Beyond these basics there does seem to be enough support for some density increase providing the housing fits well into the neighborhood character, i.e. apartments, townhouses and condos would need to closely resemble nearby historical context and scale. A blend of housing types might in fact be the better fit as there already is a fair amount of variety in the architecture and size within nearby properties. A mix of smaller cottage homes with the original building converted to multifamily might achieve the best match if density is increased.

NENA should maintain its goal of building relationships with all the stakeholders of this redevelopment including at least the future property owner, the city of Boise, Preservation Idaho and North End residents.

### Action Steps

- NENA should pursue efforts to collaborate on the Booth Home property redevelopment proposal with prospective buyers by requesting that Thornton Oliver Keller provide this report and encourage NENA's help reviewing proposals and engaging with the larger community.
- NENA should provide this report to appropriate city staff and encourage them to involve NENA in whatever redevelopment proposal comes forward.
- NENA should share this report with other interested parties.
- NENA should determine the conditions under which it would support a rezone and discuss thoroughly with the neighbors.
- If NENA would like to pursue a mix of uses on the property we suggest finding potential community partners interested in operating a community or retail space and bring those ideas to the neighborhood.





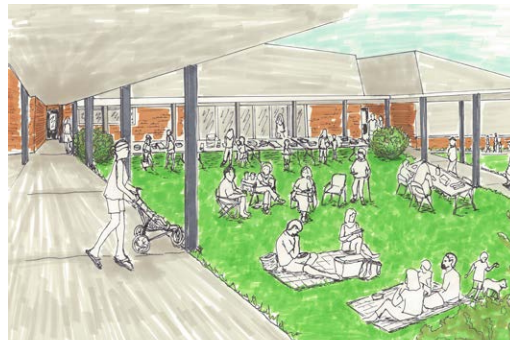


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Idaho Smart Growth appreciates the opportunity to have been a part of this process. The Booth Home is a unique and remarkable property and we appreciate the sensitivity that the Salvation Army, TOK, NENA, the neighbors and others are bringing to the effort. We hope to see this kind of attention devoted to other similarly interesting properties in Boise and elsewhere in Idaho. We would be glad to continue an involvement in the renewal of the Booth Home property should the occasion arise for our services.

*Idaho Smart Growth is an independent statewide 501c3 nonprofit organization whose mission is to bring people together to create great places to live. Smart growth is an approach to community development that makes sense economically, environmentally and socially.*

**May, 2018. Images: Idaho Smart Growth, Google, Jenette Danes**



*Participants in second workshop, left; artist's drawing of outdoor gathering space, right.*

## Appendix

Following pages: Results of ISG online survey; notes from first workshop.