

June 4, 2020

## A New Beginning for the Bethany Motherhouse Site

The Sisters of St. Martha of Antigonish are thrilled to announce the commencement of a project that will convert the now empty 15-acre site where Bethany Motherhouse once stood into a commemorative garden space designed for contemplative walking for the use of both the Sisters and the larger community. The 2-year phased project begins mid-June. The initial phase includes roadways and infrastructure and is expected to be completed by the end of November 2020.



*Bethany Motherhouse and the surrounding land before deconstruction*

Bethany Motherhouse overlooked the town and county of Antigonish, Nova Scotia for 97 years. This vibrant center of life and prayer was home for many Sisters, and it was also a welcoming place for many visitors who came as friends, people of faith or needing support and healing. Several years ago, the Congregation made the decision to relocate to Parkland Antigonish as it better met their long-term needs. The Motherhouse building was deconstructed in collaboration with *Colliers Project*

*Leaders* and *Dexter Construction Ltd.* This resulted in diverting almost 94% of the deconstruction debris away from the landfill. The Congregation received the 2019 Divert NS Mobius Award of Environmental Excellence for the Institution of the Year for this achievement.

Soon after, Sisters began envisioning ways of returning the Motherhouse site to a greenspace for community use. They engaged *Viridis Design Studio Ltd.* to create a welcoming garden space for everyone that will capture the historic and spiritual significance of the sacred ground. The Martha story will be highlighted through interpretive panels, landmarks, and salvaged elements from the Motherhouse building. For the landscaping part of the project, Sisters are pleased to continue the partnership with *Dexter Construction Ltd.* and trust the company's vast experience and current commitment to comply with Covid-19 restrictions during the construction period.

Through the dreaming and design phases of the project, the Sisters of St. Martha paired their charism of Gospel Hospitality with their desire to maintain a deep connection with creation. The project is expected to carry the legacy of the 120 year-old Congregation well into the future and serve an important role in the community.

### ACCESS TO THE PROPERTY DURING CONSTRUCTION:

If you visit the property by car during the construction period, please keep in mind that public parking may be very limited as the perimeter fencing will remain in place for the duration of the project. Please respect the road signage.

This is also a gentle reminder that the property is used by many walkers, so maintain very low speed at all times.

We ask all walkers to practice physical distancing.



*One of the design drawings for the garden on the Bethany Motherhouse site*