

Document 9

4-14 Town Hall Meeting--Comments from congregants

After 9:00 service:

Chuck Colletti – Do we have a ‘hard’ list of priorities? There are two lists, 1) must do 2) our wishes. We need to know these top priorities and in what order.

We see the priorities as: Roof, Skylight, Windows, HVAC, and Audio. We do have to fix a small number of code violations like carbon dioxide and smoke detectors. Safety is first and the skylight is a big factor in that decision. The sanctuary floor tile is not a hazard when waxed and unbroken.

Susan Pugliese – The roof and skylight have to be done. How much need is there to upgrade the entire electrical system?

It is certainly in need of repair, but probably a lower priority than the ones listed above. Our long range plan would be to move to a 3-phase system which reduces power usage.

Bob Hardin – How is this all going to affect me financially?

The amount you pledge to the campaign is up to you. It can be paid over three years.

Susan P – We also need a ‘bottom up’ list. Aluminum railings would be better. If we replace the floor we need to look at a cross-over electric conduit under the sanctuary.

Rev. John – The raised stage in the sanctuary is not ADA compliant. There is talk from GC about changing the pitch of the floor so that people in the back can see the choir. We will need to be careful about our changes to the acoustics of the room.

Chuck C. – How high on the list is taking care of the “wings” (the concrete patio around the second floor)

John Turmelle – the decks are repairable but should be looked at soon.

After 11:00 service:

Jean Caroon, Principle Architect; Pam Clemens, Project Manager; Tom Newbold, Engineer; Earl Gunnard, Landscape Architect

We can make small investments for big changes and big renewal

Pam – ideas for the project –

- The skylight is leaking and it needs to be repaired and cleaned, it is a safety issue.
- ADA accessibility throughout.
- Refresh the entryway around the foyer
- Make the building healthy and usable
- Review use of space for offices and meetings for more efficiency

Tom – our key findings are:

- Most of the building is heated with hot water, though there is electric heat in the sanctuary. Single thermostats control huge zones. A thermostat in the East Wing controls heat in the offices. We need to changes zones for better heat flow.

- The electrical system is original to the building -it has old style insulation and is undersized for an air conditioning system.
- Upgrade the fire alarm system

Earl –

- Many functional improvements are needed to give sustainable solutions to site drainage and reconnecting landscape to the building.
- The parking lot should be re-paved and re-graded to pitch away from the building. Consider rain gardens or other green solutions. It should be brought up to code
- The soggy lawn is relatively inexpensive to clean up. Piping is most likely trapping water now.
- Future visions are for front entrance revisions, making steps more handicap accessible. Celebrate this area more.
- Capture and move the water running off the decks
- Clean up overgrown trees and undergrowth

Steve Grathwohl – comment was made about signage – we’re sorry that your exact question was not captured. Please speak with someone from the CCPT.

Sudha Sankar - My concern is about safety and comfort.

Jean – bullet proof glass is heavy and expensive and what most people don’t know is that though it stops the first bullet, it doesn’t stop the second one. These issues will be addressed in our planning sessions: the safety of moving through this site, egress and evacuation.

Doug Davidoff – Our wetlands used to be developed as an amphitheater with railroad ties. We need more useful outdoor space. Bring back the sensation of fresh air under this roof.

Nancy McKeever – look at usage of meeting house as well. What exactly are we voting on?

To start a Capital Campaign for building improvements

Ravi Sankar – We need to use our space more effectively for rentals and community usage. For revenue.

Jean – Partners for Sacred Spaces provides information about how faith based buildings work better for the community.

Martha Constable – What can we do to make the parking lot more permeable and reduce impact on our wetlands?

GC – There are lots of products available, with pros and cons to each. For example, pervious asphalt requires lots of maintenance in terms of constant vacuuming, and would restrict the use of salt and sand in the winter. We would look at a combination of options. Green solutions such as swales and green gardens for proper water run-off will be considered. We want to keep in touch with nature.

Alan Brewster - We need to be spending more time thinking about energy efficiency. Current costs, and long term savings.

GC – We create matrices that look at options and energy returns, (ex – 5-8 types of glass). We will weigh possible solutions against a number of other criteria for the project and present options. Aesthetics is part of

our evaluation. We want to work towards a green grid, and use a whole life assessment about carbon impact and reuse to keep from releasing more carbon as well as saving carbon. Our concrete deck has a huge carbon impact.

Alan B. (cont.) We should consider borrowing money on top of the Capital Campaign to be able to be more energy efficient.

We will look at additional funding options later in the campaign

Jenna McPartland – Are we going to do work on the Meeting House?

John Turmelle – It is outside the scope of this campaign, but its usage will be considered as part of the whole evaluation.

Bob Simms – Consider new technologies for energy efficiency. What are the issues related to wetlands and installing geo-thermal? Is our tree cover an issue with the efficiencies of new materials?

GC – This is a challenging site. The sun angle needs to be available all day long and we would need to clear the site to gain this. Geo-Thermal is a closed loop system with no visible impact – we would need to be very careful of its location not to have an impact on the wetlands. We can give the names of groups who will give money to install energy efficient solutions.

Scott Singer – My biggest concern is only doing half the job. Will GC help us understand the impact of only going part way? Long term financing should be considered to complete the job. Our membership isn't big enough to do this.

GC – We can look at rebates from utilities and approach energy efficient groups for help

Kristi Hardin – Worried about code issues. Installing the lift became such a problem because we didn't know about these. (*Kristi – I'm not sure we have your question accurately. Please talk with us about your concerns.*)

John Turmelle – the design team will help us through the code issues.

Bob Hardin – How much money will it cost to make these improvements? How much will it cost each of us?

There were multiple voices in response to this question. The points that were made are:

We should start fundraising now, nothing is off the table for raising money. We just need to get started.

We should borrow money to pay for everything that needs to be done

A loan would mean we are responsible for payments for many years. The Capital Campaign is just 3 years.

Elena Rockman-Blake – I'm on the Stewardship Committee. We don't have enough money pledged yet for next year's operating budget. Making a commitment to a loan on top of another year of just trying to cover our expenses could be a major problem. I don't want us to have to make serious cuts because we got in over our heads.

Scott Singer – This has been a problem for many years, and we haven't been able to fund maintenance of the building. We are on the verge of doing this again. We should separate the funding of building maintenance from the operating expenses. Some fixed amount from each member would go to a building fund. Operating expenses would be treated differently.

Kristen Leddy – *The vote on 5/5 is to start the CC or not. We can talk about options for funding ongoing building maintenance in the future. This issue is not part of the Capital Campaign. It is a topic that should be taken up by the Finance Committee and the Board.*

Carrie McEvoy – We are making a hard decision that will affect the future of the building. Let's make these decisions with full hearts.

John Austin – We bought Shelia Lane at the peak of the real estate boom and had to sell at a loss....
Kristen said that we had to move on so everyone could talk, but that we hoped John would write down his thoughts and give them to the CCPT.

Alan Brewster – With regard to potential borrowing, are we looking at timing and how to structure it?

The door is not closed for a loan, but as we go through the campaign it isn't a priority.

David Vita – Increased storage is very important to me.

John Turmell – if there are any more questions please forward them to the Capital Campaign Planning Team.
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