

Special Congregational Meeting

February 27, 2011

Call to Order and IntroductionMichael McDonald, Moderator

Confirmation of Quorum Kim Henney and Alice Demi

- Quorum was established at 2:32pm with 93 members in attendance and the meeting was called to order.
- Moderator reminded members of rules of debate.
- Paul Caskey manned the microphone.
- Branches were not connected to this meeting telephonically.

Chalice Lighting and Opening WordsRob Leland, President of the Congregation

- Read our mission and covenant and communicated the Board's perspective regarding the Capital Campaign and Master Plan.

Building Planning Task Force II Presentation.....Nancy Kilpatrick

Linda Skye

Micah Boutillier

Rick Kennedy

Angela Herrera

- Recognizes members of Building Planning Task Force I and individuals who have assisted with the task force mission:

Gwen Sawyer

Lynne McLaughlin

Judy Groves

Ken Callahan

June LeCrone

Christine Robinson

Reed Atherton

Geri Knoebel

Paul Caskey

Mara Hoffman

Kim Henney

Carl Henney

- Provided history of Building Planning Task Forces and their charge.
- Master Plan was developed to meet the needs of the congregation in 2008, but also to build out our space to capacity. Estimating full capacity to mean approximately 1,000 members for this site.
- Our membership is growing, gradually but steadily.
- The need for more and better space exists right now to meet our current needs.
- The Task Force conducted surveys, pulpit editorials, and elicited input from the congregation to determine needs and wants of members and staff.

- Master Plan study was completed in 2009 and the Master Plan was approved by the congregation in January 2010. The Master Plan is a vision of what this campus should look like in 10 years.
- The Capital Campaign was delayed last year.
- Three staff members work from home, two staff members share a closet, and the bookkeeper has a space in an open, unsecured area. We have four offices for 12 staff members.
- Insufficient meeting area.
- Our rental income has declined because we are using our space and are unable to rent it.
- BPTF II has worked to inform the congregation of the Master Plan through presentation at the January Annual Meeting, Town Hall meetings, a blog, information in the Social Hall, pulpit announcement, pulpit skit, and handouts.
- Plans A, B, and C are not our only options for building. These options represent the range of outcomes that we might have given how much money is raised in the Capital Campaign.
- The vision of the task force is a flexible, inviting, and a wonderful place to worship, work, and to socialize.

Presentation by the Architect.....Doug Heller

- In 2009, his firm was hired to develop a Master Plan for our congregation.
- Spent six months interviewing committees, held congregational meetings, and solicited information from the congregation.
- Compiled this information into a document and multiple site plans. This resulted in the current Master Plan.
- Master Plan is fluid and can change.
- Some things are important to the congregation and will not change. Some things that are important to the congregation include sustainability, which may include LEED certification, meeting rooms, natural landscaping including wildlife habitat, and a new sanctuary.
- The three visions are simply options depending on how much is raised.
- Design and construction committee will be the next phase to decide on the details, such as the audio visual system, how many outlets are needed, etc.
- The Master Plan meets the building code minimum requirements.
- Addressed concerns about parking. Zoning code requires one parking space for every four seats in the sanctuary. What we have meets zoning code, but parking will be expanded in the new Master Plan.

Motion from the floor: The Congregation authorize the conduct of a capital campaign to finance Phase I of building toward the First Unitarian Master Plan, provided that the results of the Financial Feasibility Study indicate readiness to proceed.

Margo Milleret moved, seconded, floor was opened for discussion on the motion.

Q: Can you explain what Phase I means?

A: Phase I is the first step of this process. What we will build in this Phase depends on how much money is raised.

Q: Why has there not been a financial feasibility study before this vote? Also, if we can't pay decent wages to our staff and we can't meet Fair Share, how can we think about building?

A: In order to do the feasibility study, there has to be an informational campaign. Part of the feasibility study is how informed the congregation is about these issues.

Q: What are the plans for sharing the results of the feasibility study with the congregation? Also a comment: I was involved in the purchase of a building for another UU congregation. We found people had different sources of money for capital than they did for operating budget.

A: Feasibility study will show us whether we are ready and what we are likely to be able to afford to do. The interviews will be with a cross-section of the congregation. If this were to show that people don't know much about it or if people feel that the money should be used for another purpose, then we will not proceed. Barry Finkelstein will not be asking people to make a commitment, but simply asking their views on a Capital Campaign and if they have considered a contribution. Barry will produce an official report and that will be on the website and the result will be shared with the congregation. It will certainly be shared beyond the Board with the congregation.

Leland added that we finished last year with a budget surplus of \$20,000 and we did increase our Fair Share contribution. We committed to cost of living increases for staff based on COLA numbers published by the Social Security Administration. Increasing ministerial salaries is very important to the Board, both because we feel that we underpay our Senior Minister and because we want to be able to offer competitive salary when our Senior Minister retires and we are seeking a new senior Minister.

Knoebel added that the Stewardship Campaign raised \$563,000 this year, on an upward trajectory from previous years. We also had 12 new members sign the book today. We hold dearly these concerns and this will be an aspect of the feasibility study.

Q: With this year's pledge drive being a combined pledge drive, it is difficult to gauge whether we can pledge more to give toward new building.

A: Knoebel stated the feasibility study is happening in March. It will be well ahead of the campaign, which begins in the fall.

Sawyer added that our campaign this year will include the Operating Pledge Drive for 2012, possibly even endowment fund, and Capital Campaign drive. We have many different types of families. Six families have already contributed to the Capital Campaign. We have some that have assets built up and are giving from those. Others are still in the income mode. We won't know until the feasibility study what we can raise, but it may come out of assets rather than income.

Leland stated that we will be very explicit in asking people not to reduce their operating pledge.

Q: How are we going to pay for the feasibility study? What other costs do you anticipate in the planning process?

A: This is coming from the \$200,000 that has already been raised. We anticipate approximately \$7,000 for running the campaign.

Q: Up until a few years ago, this was an income producing property in that we were renting out to outside groups. The new building will be large enough that we can do that again. Do you know how much income this might generate?

A: No. A good deal more than we are currently not producing. Knoebel added that we lost a renter that paid us \$7,000 a year. Given that we had 224 meetings in one month, we don't currently have the ability to generate rental income. We do rent to La Puerta de Los Ninos, a childcare provider.

Q: Two questions: How does La Puerta play into this? Also, projecting for max capacity is 1000 people, but we might reach that in five years and we would be here, needing more space and with debt to pay off.

A: We are on a path to renew the lease with La Puerta and are renegotiating the lease. If we were not renting to La Puerta, it would increase some meeting space during the day, but would not make a dent in our need. The rent is about \$47,000 yearly and the negotiations include parts of this Master Plan that affect La Puerta, particularly parking and the playground.

If we do go beyond capacity of the Master Plan, we would have to make a lot of decisions as a congregation.

Comment: This sanctuary hold about 250 and on average we have 180-200 people at the 11:00 service. With the new sanctuary, we could have almost two services worth of people at one service. If we kept with three services, we could serve many more people than 1000. The real question is, can we comfortably get more than 1000 people onto the site.

Comment: La Puerta uses our RE space, so we would not gain a great deal of space by getting rid of La Puerta. This is the space for the children of our congregation and most don't want to sit in the little chairs for meetings.

Comment: As we go into this funding campaign, it would be useful to have a summary of the mission of La Puerta to remind us of the real service it does for the community.

Motion from the floor to close debate on this question, seconded, majority agreed. Motion passes.

Vote on open motion. Motion carries with none opposed.

Next Steps.....Angela Herrera

- Feasibility study will happen next.
- BPTF II has now finished their work.
- A Design and Construction Committee will be appointed by the Board. They will work with Doug to shepherd the site plan through the city processes. The Capital Campaign will also begin.

Capital Campaign Committee Presentation.....George Bakula and Gwen Sawyer

- Acknowledges the concerns of the congregation.
- Asks that those asked to participate in the feasibility study schedule their appointments starting a week from tomorrow.
- Ask for involvement for the Combined Campaign. We need visiting stewards, enough to visit everybody in the congregation. We also need people to ask as receptionists in the evening while the interviews are being conducted. We need administrative help, help planning events, and other volunteers to help with interviews. Please contact George or Gwen or fill out an orange card if you would like to volunteer.

Closing Song.....Micah Boutillier

Meeting closed at 3:31pm.