

DREAM TEAM REPORT ON FACILITIES, RESOURCES, AND THE ENVIRONMENT

SUMMARY

We observe that the present physical limitations of Adelphi Meeting are compromising our community life in several regards. Our Meetinghouse is physically and socially obsolete and needs renovation to better accommodate worship, religious education, and social events for youth and adults. We seek to better express our testimonies by making our property accessible to people with physical challenges and by operating it in a manner that conserves precious resources. Additionally, we observe that our present methods of property upkeep are not adequate to the task.

We will develop a Master Plan for Adelphi Meeting. To heighten appreciation of what we have we will inventory and financially evaluate Adelphi's property. In this process we will take stock of needed repairs and improvements. Rather than approaching tasks as stop-gap measures that merely keep us operating, we will learn to think big and consider the possibilities for our space and our buildings. What this means in real terms will depend on what long-term goals the Meeting embraces. These goals might involve more intensive use of the property and the possibility that an auxiliary use would generate revenue for the Meeting.

A Master Plan is envisioned as a place to bring clarity to the financial effect of all proposed courses of action and to ensure proper stewardship of our resources and the economic viability of Adelphi Meeting.

A full picture of needed changes to our physical plant cannot be developed until all of the anticipated uses of the property are identified. Two key unanswered questions are whether Adelphi intends to grow in size, and whether we want to provide a home for an enterprise beyond our present scope of operation. Any such additional activity to be undertaken would have its own specific requirements. For example, housing a neighborhood day care would call for different physical accommodations than providing office space for a nonprofit organization.

We need to develop a process for long-term financial planning to identify and implement revenue sources: capital campaigns, fund raisers, bequests, and income from use of the space. We need to be more comfortable talking about money and to find ways to encourage reflection on members' and attenders' personal giving to Meeting in financial and non-financial ways.

As part of our on-going life at the meeting we would like to raise the bar on both efficiency and sustainability in our environment. Specifically, make the existing building more efficient by implementing our Energy Audit. We would like to purchase "Clean" electricity and explore solar and other alternative power and heating sources.

To better serve as witnesses for others in what we do we could also purchase only Green products, encourage alternate transportation options, and weave sustainability into the RE program. As part of the master plan we can also look at how we use the land we have, inventory existing vegetation, make the grounds lower maintenance and consider permaculture.

Overall, use Quaker SPICE principles to guide plans moving forward

FACILITIES

Stop:

Trying to do it all ourselves--relying on White House resident and House and Grounds to fix things

Doing crisis management repairs

Thinking small

Living in the past

Start:

1. Develop master plan—a comprehensive capital improvement plan

Bring property to code (deficiencies that need to be fixed)

Identify our own current use/space needs

Identify how to use property more intensively, efficiently, and sustainably

2. Improve regularity and intensity of maintenance—considering both ways to increase volunteerism as well as possibility of hired help

Create a welcoming atmosphere, Improve facility soon even for our own use—e.g. fix drainage problem—needed repairs make place less hospitable and not very functional

Goal should be safe, decent facility and adequate space for Meeting records, kids, library

Capital IMPROVEMENT, not just REPLACEMENT

Improve regularity and intensity of maintenance, esp. given volunteer nature of our Meeting—e.g. hold monthly work days, whoever shows up, shows up

Foster a better climate and structure for taking personal responsibility for and cooperating on upkeep and cleaning up after ourselves (job tickets, chore wheel)

Use property better/more intensively and efficiently—e.g. multiuse residences, daycare, row of classrooms in back, emergency housing, neighborhood picnics, workshops, volunteer house, expanded library

This could raise revenue, which would then enable the added maintenance needed to use it more intensively and also allow added improvements, making the dreams real

Would also create avenue for outreach to neighborhood, which can then improve cohesion as well as meet some of their needs, e.g. for daycare
Might create ways to reengage Young Friends and draw newcomers to Meeting and Quakerism

Even now, White House rooms could be used more intensively for workshops, etc.—for outside but related groups as well, possibly even neighborhood—such space is in high demand

Consider these possibilities and then begin to map out what comes first to allow them to happen

Consider our vision for growth—decide whether there is a maximum size for Adelphi (e.g. natural social limit of 150 cited in literature) and if we need a preparative meeting; and evaluate role of FCS and Takoma Park in that

Examine potential to share property management assets with other churches and organizations

Address accessibility issue

Continue:

Show up

Maintain

Have a resident, at least until we come up with something better

Keep making repairs, esp. those with legal liability implications, such as back door steps, sidewalks

Maintain the character of what we have already—its simplicity, our practice of taking responsibility to care for it

RESOURCES (FINANCIAL etc.)

Stop:

Thinking small

Living in the past

Being penny shy and pound foolish

House and Grounds has a long list of repairs and replacement needs that can only be chipped away at with existing reserve for replacement

Necessity and repairs have driven the agenda rather than possibilities

Imbalance in assistance we give to people

Current records stored in unmarked (but archival) boxes in classroom of White House and are not secure from temperature, humidity, or prying

Start:

1. Do survey of property and assets to take stock and heighten appreciation for what we have

Develop a strong corporate mission about our physical and financial resources

Acknowledge that our financial resources are a reflection of our spiritual health

Reconstitute Records Committee

2. Come up with a process for staged, long-term financial planning to identify funding/income avenues

Fund raisers

Capital campaigns

Endowment

Bequests

Revenue-generating uses

Aim higher!

Be more comfortable talking about money

Come up with process for bridging from crisis-oriented, day-to-day, fix what's broke and annual budget to better, staged financial planning that can address mid-term and long-term projects, instead of relying on unpredictable bequests

Perhaps do an annual and a five-year budget

Look at whether to continue to rely on "sweat equity" or pay someone/hire staff for work that needs to be done—House and Grounds is not a "maintenance crew" responsible for actually handling all of the upkeep—perhaps time has come for full-time handyman

Look at potential rent and revenues from more intensive uses that could pay for hired work

Consider endowment/in-house foundation that generates income we can do good with

Consider periodic capital campaigns for getting major projects done

Involve Junior Meeting—they love money

Continue:

Continue to refine a process for thinking about giving (not Finance Committee's job)

Encourage more personal reflection on financial giving responsibilities

ENVIRONMENT

Stop:

Thinking small

Wasting resources, using so much fuel, fighting weeds

Operating according to status quo--not good enough now

Start:

1. Raise the bar on both efficiency and sustainability

Implement the energy audit

Consider purchasing "clean" electricity

Explore solar opportunities

Use green products

To AC or not AC, that is the question

2. Serve as witness and model for others in what we do, both externally as well as for each of us individually

Take ideas from energy audit that was just done

Alternative transportation options

Weave sustainability into RE curriculum

Inventory vegetation and develop sustainable landscape plan

Make grounds lower maintenance

Look into permaculture

Continue:

In context of how we and our predecessors have used resources become more aware and redress those issues we haven't done well enough with, raise the bar on both efficiency and sustainability

Environmentally conscious purchasing as much as possible

Continue recent environmental focus for potluck