

## **Draft 3----Report to the Long Range Planning Group from the Outreach Dream Team**

**November 16 2008  
Update Second Hour**

This report summarizes the work of the Outreach Dream Team, and includes preliminary recommendations for the long range planning at Adelphi. We also explicitly address the queries of:

What do we want to keep?

What do we want to create?

What can we let go?

In doing this we take an approach of asking how can we build on our past work, work from our strengths, or transform what we have to achieve the outreach goals deemed most important at this point in time. Once we have received feedback from the meeting community we will finalize the recommendations.

### **Process**

Our team and occasional meeting attendees consisted of Amity Hall (convener); Mary Leonard; Mosi Harrington; Harold Confer; Ann Marie Moriarty; Laine Duncan; Anne Dunne; Jolie Robinson, Diane Walsh, and Maggie Cahalan. Over the early summer and fall, we met 8 times at various members' houses. Our meetings were characterized by an honest and supportive sharing recognizing and respecting some differences in approach. We also sought to be inclusive and to seek input from the meeting. In our first meetings we reviewed the detailed notes from the threshing session. At an early meeting we also each shared our personal ideas about our outreach mission. Later, we also talked to some members of other congregations in the area to get a sense of their outreach work. We also shared information and observations about past and current outreach efforts at Adelphi. We developed and conducted a survey that was completed by about 25 members of meeting attendees and members on the topic of outreach. We also took some time to put on the table questions about the current committee

structure of outreach efforts in Adelphi and discussed the Strawberry Festival history in that it was begun as a funding source for outreach work.

### **Focus Dream Team on Outreach**

Broadly speaking, we implicitly defined outreach as encompassing activities of the Adelphi member and attendee community in which acting individually or as a group we engage in working or supporting activities that reach outside of the meeting to achieve goals with a focus that embody Quaker testimonies. We strongly recognize, however, that Adelphi meeting is itself in constant interaction with the wider community of which it is apart; but our primary focus in this Dream Team was on projects/actions with regard to the wider community beyond Adelphi Meeting. Although we recognize that our internal decisions have a direct impact on the wider community. For example, a decision to reduce our Carbon Footprint by buying wind energy or to have vegan food potlucks and snacks effects global warming, Chesapeake watershed pollution, world hunger, and animal cruelty issues—all of which are very clear outreach concerns related to Quaker historical and evolving testimonies. Below is a summary of our themes and observations from the discussions at the meeting organized under the three headings requested by the Long Range Planning group.

### **What Do We Want to Keep and Enhance?**

1. **Commitment to Inclusiveness.** Adelphi has a history of trying to involve the entire community in outreach planning and implementation; We especially note the need to continue to involve children and youth in service project planning and implementation; and our team would have benefited from having this involvement
2. **\*Activities that recognize and support the on-going work of Adelphi community members who in their professions and as volunteers for other organizations are directly attempting to work for the common good reflecting Quaker testimony.** Adelphi is and has been blessed with a very high proportion of creative innovative members who are doing substantial outreach work through other organizations or as individuals. **They rely on Adelphi as a spiritual well to help give them the support and community they need to sustain this work; and this should continue to be recognized and fostered as an outreach contribution of Adelphi Meeting.** One

- example is the project of Peace and Justice Committee asking members of the community to share their journeys with others.
3. **\*Commitment to focus on projects that reflect the unique contribution of the Quaker's historical testimonies but also focus on emerging testimonies related to our unique challenges at this point in history.** We want to do things that might not be done by other groups; but at the same time to be sensitive to changing and current outreach needs of the community.
  4. **\*The threshing session and the surveys indicated that Adelphi folk expressed interest in three interrelated clusters that had about equal interest levels expressed:** 1) the historical peace and conflict resolution testimony; 2) work on social issues including work on world and local poverty and preventing violence in our neighborhoods; 3) the evolving Quaker testimony on earth care and the environment.
  5. **Survey completers (about 25 persons) did indicate that if there were projects they cared about some of them would have time and additional money to contribute.** Those who said they had time averaged about 2 hours a week. Others indicated they were maxed out on time but could give extra money (about \$500 per year on average).
  6. **Having a mix of projects some of which involve only a few interested folk and others that engage the whole community contributing in different ways.** The survey and threshing session indicated there was an interest in both projects that involve the whole community and those that might involve only interested smaller groups;
  7. **\*Having a mix of short and long-term projects.** The survey indicated there was an interest in keeping mix of projects that were one-time efforts as well as having longer-term on-going efforts. .
  8. **\*Keeping a focus both on the immediate neighborhoods around Adelphi and on the international global community.** There was an expressed desire to focus outreach on the local area around Adelphi, and well as toward the international global community. It was expressed that it was helpful if the international efforts could have a personal connection with the meeting or one that potentially could be developed—adopting of sister meetings for example.
  9. **\*Adelphi community openness and support for the ideas and commitment to new projects about which individuals or small groups of individuals feel passionate.** Significant outreach efforts have taken place by Adelphi over the years. These projects such as:

Emergency Housing; Martha's table; Safe Haven; Sanctuary and helping to start CASA; Friends Community School; Mother Jones Tutoring/Earth Squad; Adopt a Trail; Support of African student scholarships by young friends; Quaker Work Camps; Prison Ministry and Patuxent visits; Friends Peace Teams; Listening Project; *have all typically been initiated and kept going by a small group of committed persons who were passionate about the outreach service project and were able to engender support from the wider community for some period of time.* Given this awareness, we believe that the Dream Team can suggest ideas for longer and shorter terms projects, and try to set up a structure to foster the projects---but to succeed they must have Responsible Persons, or Committees who passionately want to do the outreach project.

**10. \*Commitment to Principles in the Sustainability Minute put forth by QEW and following through with very concrete actions to implement**

**11. Help with sustainability of effort.** Recognition that over time most of the projects, sustainability has eventually become an issue over time; folks burn out; conditions change; persons leave or grow older. Adelphi has provided a continuity of purpose when individuals transition in or out of projects

### **What Do We Want to Create and or Do More of?**

We want to create a caring community of folks who respect the interconnectedness of all forms of life and who are focused on service to the community in which we live and to the wider global community. The community outreach takes inspiration from the historical Quaker testimonies on equality, peace, simplicity, and the newer testimonies on sustainability and earth care.

**\*In the area of outreach, we'd like to create the infrastructure, spiritual and physical energy, and financial resources to move Adelphi towards a more focused and radical outreach effort that involves:**

*A) Making Adelphi a demonstration green and open religious community;*

B) Making more effective use of the meetinghouse facilities for service to the community—opening up our doors to the community;

C) Engaging in co-learning about and partnership direct actions with other members of the local community about the special needs of all persons who share the bioregion in which we live.

D) Making a much stronger commitment to international global outreach efforts recognizing our increasing interconnectedness.

**We believe that unless we set specific outreach goals we will not achieve them and would like to see specific commitments and plans made that stretch us both financially and in terms of our energy. We believe that we are living in times that require something more than business as usual. We seek to foster a: Yes we Can attitude.**

Following from these general goals the following are some specific ideas and recommendations, we like to see discussed, and commitments made to enact some of them.

1. **\*Increase our partnering with other meetings, churches or like-minded organizations with similar goals is a way to increase our effectiveness and to build community; and could enable us to do more than we could alone.** There is a need to recognize in planning that there are now many secular organizations to which our members belong--- doing what might have once been outreach done through a religious body; and this may be one of the reasons Adelphi sometimes has trouble filling committee shots or finding volunteers for outreach efforts. Partnering with these groups is one way to avoid duplication and fragmentation of efforts.
2. **Build from our strengths and diversity of talents. Provide direct opportunity for members to do service work through Adelphi as a community.**
3. **Create culture of recognizing that the individual community members will have a diversity of time, talents, and money to contribute and that these will change over time for individual members**
4. **\*Routinely incorporate multi-generational and youth only outreach planning and service projects into religious education curriculum and yearly planning** (examples include: Participating in QEW Northwest Branch adopt a trail clean ups; Planting trees or vegetation; raising money to sponsor a student in a Quaker school in a

- developing country; preparing a talent show/play or music event to raise money for world hunger).
5. **\*Set up an outreach planning and facilitation group at Adelphi, either through an existing committee accepting the responsibility (*Peace and Social Concerns for example*) or through a new group, an *Outreach Planning and Support Group*.** Part of the role of this group would be to:
    - a. Finding out and making the community aware of the on-going activities of attendees and members outside of Adelphi; and supporting these efforts
    - b. Holding a yearly second hour to discuss these outreach activities of Adelphi community and to formally hold this work in the light
    - c. Facilitating interest groups ---maybe holding a weekly or bi-weekly meeting to develop and implement service work in areas *Form interest area teams under the care of the outreach planning group or Peace and Social Concerns--- and let people choose areas of interest*—more likely to contribute time and money if have interest—could ask for donations
    - d. Planning short term outreach events/projects and also on-going projects based on interest of groups
    - e. *Establish a yearly planning cycle for outreach projects—short-term yearly themes and on going.* Members could propose projects for support
  6. **Explore the possibility of taking a systems approach to work in the neighborhood---and one that would make the receivers' experience transformative.** For example, work with an apartment complex that serves immigrants in the Langley Park area---- Campus Gardens might be a possibility—where we have tutoring; but we might also do this at Adelphi; approach management and develop program to provide more services such as tutoring; nutrition; ESOL; international, housing, massage, environment/ecology/. This would have to be an interfaith effort and might involve hiring a coordinator. Apply for government or foundation funding to support this work—partner with others.
  7. **\*Hire a part-time coordinator for outreach that might also work with other meetings (Sandy Spring; Bethesda???) or other churches in the area.** Ask people to share small portion of their salary to support

- the person hired to do this work. Explore obtaining a Quaker or other volunteer for a specific project sponsored by Adelphi and other churches in area.
8. *Start an investment—micro-lending club* to help international or local projects
  9. *Set up mediation program*—could donate meeting house space and talent in this effort
  10. **\*Use Adelphi buildings and yard for service during the week or weekday nights**—like aftercare and weekly program for children. Possible to get funded to provide tutoring supplemental services—would have to be professional **Open Adelphi meeting house and yard more to community**--- **Earth Squad Tutoring there; Dome greenhouse project**----*STEM science enrichment project. Start community garden at Adelphi*
  11. **Set goal of making Adelphi Carbon Neutral and set up teams to accomplish this**; be a demonstration program for churches in area—partner with them—work with other churches.
  12. **\*For this year’s—specific outreach short term project—support and raise money for Street Scholars project which would pay for high poverty neighborhood young people to attend community college for one course for semester. Coordinate with Prince George Community College in program.** Help get students in the door who may not have thought college was an option. Mosi has done this in past years. Adelphi could organize for start of next semester???
  13. **Identify an international Quaker school or other school and begin to support a student.** Follow the student through school.
  14. **Support African Great lakes Initiative special project** coordinated through participation of meeting members volunteering.
  15. **Work on water-quality monitoring in area we have adopted and partner with Sandy Spring Young Friends** who are already working on northern part of Northwest Branch with Audubon Society.
  16. **Consider ways to revitalize Strawberry Festival perhaps into more of a Green Festival**; and/or with have a focus on supporting a specific outreach program (could be different each year) Include music and art???. Partner with some other groups???
  17. **Sponsor or co-sponsor a monthly film series to educate others and ourselves on peace, justice, and environmental issues** (for example, seven environmental groups in Greenbelt have partnered to sponsor a Real and Meal film series with a vegan meal, film, and discussion that

- draws about 40 folk once a month). Do a Real and Meal on Wheels to other churches.
18. **Raise additional \$10,000 per year for outreach work; Make money available to older students to work on outreach goals**
  19. ETC—Elderly Transportable Cottages—partner to build one at Adelphi

### **What Do We Want to Let Go Of? What is Hindering Outreach at Adelphi?**

1. Tendency to fear opening up Adelphi Meeting for neighborhood community service uses
2. Tendencies to go it alone and not explore partnering with other churches, environmental groups, meetings, community organizations
3. Complacency of resting on past Quaker leadership in social justice efforts; and not taking a leadership role on more current social justice and environmental issues
4. Lack of openness to a new spiritual story that has an earth centered spirituality respecting that of God in all species rather than an anthropocentric focus
5. Lack of appreciation for the work done outside of Adelphi by members of the Adelphi community
6. \*Tendency to believe that we never could raise enough money or energy to function in any way other than the way we have been functioning in the past –that we can not do more than we are already doing—the opposite of “Yes We Can”
7. \*Tendency of the committee structure to sometimes put us in silos rather than taking an integrated approach to community needs/that’s someone else’s responsibility—Lack of openness to shared responsibility for projects
8. Sometimes critical attitude toward those who do engage in activities; knit-picking at what was lacking or could have been done better
9. Reluctance to set bold goals that will challenge some members
10. Over-emphasis on internal needs of members without providing remedies—outreach might be way to help with problems—eco-psychology



11. Lack of openness to new ideas; lack of willingness to think out of the box and admit we may need to rethink our committee structure with regard to outreach
12. Let go of notion that whole meeting needs to be involved in everything; recognize different interests