

Reports from working groups for the APC Open Mike (Congregational Gathering)

Sunday, April 26 2015

3:30 p.m.

Affordable Housing Team Report

APAH requested a one-month extension of the feasibility period in the Purchase and Sale Agreement to May 7, 2015. APC and NCP granted this extension and in return asked for, and received, a one month's extension to make the decision on whether or not APC will lease back first floor space in APAH's new building. We now have until August 1, 2015, to make this decision.

The reason for APAH's extension request was that their environmental report found some issues with contaminated soils on the APC property due to adjacent former uses such as a gas station, dry cleaner and automotive dealership. APAH's environmental consultant, ECS, confirmed the contamination and is working to determine the costs associated with remediation. It is typical that the seller pays for any cleanup costs or makes an adjustment to the sales price. APC's attorney, Mark Viani, is experienced with these environmental issues and will work with NCP and APAH to reach an agreement. APAH does not anticipate that the environmental contamination will affect their timeline. It is APAH's intent to file their initial plans on the development to Arlington County by May 15.

On April 1, APAH provided a Term Sheet for the leased space that includes details such as rent, square footage, landlord improvements, tenant improvements, utilities, taxes, etc. Members of the Affordable Housing Team are reviewing the terms and have held preliminary meetings with APAH's architects, KGD, on Monday, April 13. KGD is helping us refine some of our big picture ideas in an effort to bring some visual designs to the Moving Forward & Affordable Housing teams in the coming weeks.

We have a meeting scheduled on April 28 at 12:30 p.m. at APC with key members of NCP committees (Leadership Council, ACCP and CDC) to determine a process by which we can make the determination about leasing space in the building. We have shared APAH's initial term sheet and a list of questions we would like to have answered about process, approvals and the use of the sales proceeds.

If anyone has any additional questions on the sale of the property, they can contact Jill Norcross at jillnorcross@verizon.net or 703-587-4098.

Congregational Connections

There are two major emphasis for this group—the all church retreat and the listening campaign.

The retreat is scheduled for June 6 and 7. We are still working on place. Don Peebles is heading up this effort and would welcome any and all ideas and assistance.

Recognizing that we need to continue our engagement with the community, we are beginning a Neighborhood Listening Campaign. On Tuesday, April 14, Jeff Krehbiel (pastor, Church of the Pilgrims, DC) and Jessica Sarriot (VOICE organizer for Arlington County). We learned about relational meetings and the importance of listening to the other's story. 11 of us have committed to engage the neighborhood with intentional meetings and listening. We are: Blanche Anderson, Sharon Core, Stephen Cottingham, Kristine Gabster, Lorraine Gardner, Amy Grupp, David Gehrenbeck, Laura Gehrenbeck, Debbie Gueye, Manfred Soughe, and Steve Tuttle.

Mission Support Team

The MST meets regularly both as a group and individually to support Stephen as he navigates the community life of our Columbia Pike neighborhood. Stephen reports to us on the personal meetings and substantive issues, as well as gives us topics to discuss and think about as we try to identify and evolve ideas for our new worshipping community that is responsive to the needs surrounding us. We see ourselves as “hands and feet” of the work towards which God is guiding our congregation. As a group we pray for Stephen and his work, as well as for blessings and guidance for ours. As individuals, we have worked shifts with Stephen at A-SPAN, rode the major bus routes to meet riders, met community leaders and small business owners. Stephen and team members are also actively training through VOICE, which is increasing our ability to listen to concerns and is expanding our array of community relationships. In addition to meeting biweekly with Stephen, we communicate with one another during the week in order to keep our processes moving forward. We are committed to thinking as big as our imaginations allow and to being open to expansive, ambitious ideas, as long as we feel they are brought forth through faith. We invite anyone who feels a call to join in this work to please reach out to us. We'd love to hear your voice.

The task of identifying and bringing shape to our future is overwhelmingly open-ended, and our discussions have regularly expanded in ways that defy shape. We sometimes feel there is another/better idea that we just haven't been able to lasso. It frustrates us that our meetings haven't resulted in specific plans of "we will be in this kind of building," or "we will do this distinct mission/worship/outreach," so we pray and meditate daily for discernment. Despite the lack of a crystallized vision and plan, certain themes reemerge:

- "Feed my sheep." Sometimes we are thinking about that quite literally, as food insecurity is a theme of need in our community. One idea: a Café of Caring. We host the preparation of food, visitors pay what they can, or pay by volunteering (inspired by SoulKitchen).
- Use of our space to meet needs during the week: job training/counseling, a space for caseworkers to meet clients, a clearinghouse to match needs with services.
- "Mutuality of the helper/recipient relationship." If we are to serve others, God will be blessing both the one who needs care and the caregiver. We crave and need an active, real relationship with those with whom we will become involved. We do this together.
- Expansion of the idea APC's identity; we \neq a building anymore. (So what will be our "sacred space?" What is required for that?)
- An outward mission ministry may or may not be something in which members of the congregation participate. It might be external to our core congregation (which also requires nurturing).

Moving Forward Discipleship Group

Over the last couple of months, the moving forward group has been thinking of itself as the vision team for the next new thing. In our March meeting the focus of the discussion was to determine the questions we need to have answered in order to decide if APC will move back into APAH's new building. Primarily a brainstorming session, we ended with some conclusions (for ourselves):

We want to be a place that draws people in, we want to offer hospitality. The ideas of community/coffee/hospitality/meeting space/music keep surfacing. We want to

go back to 3507. We have the freedom to make decisions without relying on the money. We are still enthusiastic about figuring out what is next. We don't need to focus on the money, we never had it before. We are moving forward.

In April, we spent some time imagining our future - space and all. This in preparation for the AHT's meeting with APAH and the architects. After this meeting, Jill Norcross began a Pinterest page where we can pin images that appeal to us.

Last Saturday we visited Potter's House DC. We all agreed there was a lot there in common with what we imagined for ourselves. We continue to imagine and wonder.

Next steps, time for the congregation to wonder with us. Who would like to have some preliminary input around ideas - when?

Space in the Meantime

As we transition out of this space into temporary space (thinking 3 years), the session has identified aspects of that temporary space.

- As close as possible to current 3507 Columbia Pike space
- A “permanent” space where we can set up for worship and leave it up (as opposed to being in a space where we have to set up and take down every Sunday)
- A space that will allow us to continue with our 11 a.m. worship time

We are in the process of gathering information on available empty short-term lease space. Sharon has a meeting with Takis Karantonis, Director of CPRO on Wednesday, April 29 at 1 p.m. to begin scouting out possibilities. If you would like to attend that meeting, speak to Sharon.

Stewards of Stuff

I am reminded of a true story told to me by a professional organizer. One of her clients had her kitchen remodeled and so she had to empty out every single shelf and cabinet in her kitchen. Fortunately for her she had a back porch area that was just off the kitchen and she hauled everything out there. When the remodeling was finished she was very busy at work and just never had the time to bring everything back in. So she would go out to the porch every time she needed something in the kitchen. She would use and wash that item and put it away in its new home in the kitchen. At the end of six months she discovered that easily three-quarters of her

kitchen stuff was still out on the porch. She reclaimed a few specific things, such as the platter for the Thanksgiving turkey, gave the rest away, and felt free from the burden of “stuff”. I believe that this story is us.

Sometime in the next few weeks I will begin sending out emails about specific items and categories — for example, “books” or “furniture”. The congregation will be invited to take a look at those items and indicate if they want anything in particular. You **must** tell me if you are interested in something so I can keep the list. Obviously we will not be giving away Maria’s desk from under her, but I need to know who might be interested in having it so that when the time comes we can clear out quickly. Other things, such as books or dishes or coffee pots, etc., can go out now once we ask ourselves “when was the last time we actually used this?”

I will also ask the congregation for ideas. For instance, if you know someplace that might want some or all of the books please tell me. (but please wait till I send the “books” email). Or if you know of a place that might want to have fixtures, or doorknobs, or pews, or building materials, etc., I will coordinate ideas and possibilities.

Storage units are very expensive and we will not be paying to store things. A 5’x5’ unit is about \$85+ for each month. I invite you to measure the smallest room in your house and see just how small 5’x5’ actually is and then imagine how quickly we could fill that up. There is nothing that we own that would be worth paying that amount of money to store. We can give whatever it is to a good cause, and then buy what we need when we have our permanent home. If anyone feels very strongly that some particular item should be stored then they are welcome to do that in their own basement or attic.

Some other specific items that people have asked about:

Piano — Judy Robb has offered to store it in her apartment, and will take good care of it. We will have to hire a piano mover to get it there because you cannot just stick a piano on the back of an ordinary moving truck with people who know nothing about pianos.

Music — Steve is coordinating this. He and the choir will be going through the musical contents of the choir room. Choir members may take some of the music, and Steve will call in his contacts around the area, and beyond, to find good homes for all of it. This will include the old blue hymnals (as well as several boxes of the

really old red hymnals). We will be taking only the Glory to God hymnals with us. If you love music and would like to have any specific piece(s) please be in touch with Steve.

Organ — Manfred is coordinating this. There are four or five people who have expressed interest in buying the organ, and one who specifically mentioned the pipes. Steve will arrange for an appraisal.

Books — We are not keeping books. When it comes time to think about books everyone will have a chance to go through the library. If you feel strongly that we should not get rid of a particular book then please feel free to store it on your bookshelf at home and then re-donate it to the church when we have our permanent home.

Historical Records — We haven't really talked about this much yet, although several people have mentioned it to me. We will **not** be getting rid of anything that records the history of our church. This would include old Session minutes, documents and photos that were gathered together for our 100th anniversary a few years ago, etc. I will be in contact with PCUSA in Louisville to find out the best way of digitally preserving the old Session records, and someone with an ordinary scanner could take care of the old letters and other papers that are in boxes in the library.

Please let me know any questions and concerns you may have.

Lorraine Gardner