

2006 December Meeting for Business Minutes

The meeting opened with a period of silent worship. Out of the silence, the clerk read the following queries: Are meetings for worship and business fundamental for us and are we diligent and punctual in attendance? Is Meeting central in our lives?

Those present were: William Seltzer, Matthew Scanlon, Eunice Laughlin, Tom Abernathy, Michael Morgan, Lucinda Antrim, Robin Alpern, Loomis Mayer, Alice Clague, Carolyn Andrews, Bowen Alpern, Robert Lohaus, Norma Ellis, Mary Eagleson, Bryan Kennedy, Elin Waring and Harriet Ross.

1. **William Seltzer** and **Tom Abernathy** were appointed as the Naming Committee to recommend new members for the Nominating Committee.
2. **Bowen Alpern** asked to resign from his position as representative from our Meeting to Purchase Quarterly Meeting. The Meeting accepted his resignation and approved appointing **Robin Alpern** to serve in his stead.
3. **Mary Eagleson** reported for the Peace and Social Concerns Committee that it will hold a sandwich seminar at 12:30 on Sunday, Jan. 21. The topic will be Climate Stewardship Starting at Home. Peace and Social Concerns recommends that the final \$75 of the contributions budget (see minute # 6 from November 10, 2006) be given to Powell House for the Anna Curtis Center remodeling project. The Meeting approved.
4. At the suggestion of the Ministry and Worship Committee, the clerk asked for one volunteer to write the State of the Meeting report; a second will be appointed by Clearness and Counsel Committee. A session for sharing thoughts about this topic has been scheduled for January 7. No one felt led to volunteer, so the Meeting approved allowing the clerk either to approve a volunteer or to work with the person from Clearness and Counsel herself.
5. **Loomis Mayer** reported for the Ministry and Worship Committee that it had considered feedback from various Friends on the experiment of holding Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business on Friday evenings. Although many Friends do appreciate meeting on Friday evenings, others find it very difficult. The committee therefore decided that Meetings for Worship with a Concern for Business be held five minutes after rise of worship on second Sundays for the next two months (January 14 and February 11) and, in March, on the evening of Saturday, March 10. In April we will have the meeting on a Friday evening, with the date to be decided so that it will avoid Spring Session of Yearly Meeting. After a few comments had been made, the Meeting agreed to undertake the experiment as outlined by Ministry and Worship.
6. **Matthew Scanlon** reported for Advancement Committee that over the past few months the Committee identified a number of steps to make the Meeting more welcoming to newcomers. It seems to the Committee that the task of identifying ways to welcome newcomers is finished for the time being and now it is a matter of implementing

these steps. The Committee will prepare an article for the newsletter describing these steps and asks Friends to read the article and familiarize themselves with these steps. The next task is to invite members of the wider community to the Meeting House. Advancement Committee will meet with Peace & Social Concerns and some of the recent attenders to the Meeting to discuss hosting community forums on a regular basis on a variety of topics.

7. **Lucinda Antrim** reported for Trustees on two items, one for information and one for discussion:

At the business meeting of October 13, 2006, the trustees were instructed to take appropriate steps for the safe keeping of important documents. Trustees met and considered several courses of action to safeguard documents, including rental of a safe deposit box, purchase of a fireproof safe or file cabinet, microfiche, and electronic storage. They have designated a sub-committee to inventory to documents we need to safeguard. Papers are stored in various areas of the Meetinghouse. Some of the papers may have historical interest more than legal, but may merit safekeeping. Upon completion of the inventory, trustees will meet again to decide the most appropriate method of storage. We will consider the accessibility of the documents as well as their safekeeping.

The trustees would also like to alert the meeting community to the new "trustees box" located just above the bank of mail slots in the entry way. We hope this box will improve the meeting's ability to identify and respond to correspondence which arrives addressed to the trustees of the meeting.

Secondly, for discussion: North of our Meeting House is the home that once belonged to Gardiner and Helen Angel, founding members of our Meeting. North of that home is the back yard of a historic home in Scarsdale, 60 Crane Rd. We do not know its exact age, but it is believed George Washington once visited.

Recently, 60 Crane Rd. was sold by owners who had carefully maintained the property to someone who, it was believed, would similarly maintain the site. Instead the new owner has formed a development company and wishes to subdivide the property and build a very large house, in the range of 30 ft. high and 7000 sq. ft.. of floor space, in the back yard area now occupied by grass and trees. These plans will have to be approved by the Scarsdale Planning Board, and the Board has invited comments.

The Trustees have the responsibility of dealing with issues related tot he property of the Meeting-house. We have tried to learn about this situation and consider how the Meeting should respond, or not respond. We do not believe that the Meeting House is in any particular danger from these developments.

We suggest that the meeting spend some time considering the following queries arising from the testimony of the community. Trustees will meet again after the discussion (if

necessary) and recommend action based on the meeting discussion of these queries:

Who are our neighbors in this instance?

What does being a good neighbor to them mean?

What can we do to bring community to, using Howard Brinton's words, a "modern society [that] finds itself to be an incoherent mass..."

How can we get to know our neighbors in this instance better?

The clerk asked Friends to speak in worship-sharing format about their responses to the above queries. After a number had spoken, Lucinda commented that Trustees now had thoughts with which to work at their next meeting, and that they would report back to the next business meeting with a recommendation.

8. **Elin Waring** reported for Renovations Committee as follows:

1. The Committee has begun to circulate a kitchen-use questionnaire among all users of the building. This will aid the committee in designing the layout of the new kitchen and in suggesting what appliances should be bought. We invite everyone who ever uses the kitchen to fill in this questionnaire, which is located on the bookshelf at the bottom of the stairs.

2. At our last meeting, we began working on the division of the master plan into phases. The process cannot be completed before we have at least rough estimates on some parts of the work, but the outline which has emerged so far is this:

Phase 1: Maintenance items including removal of the tree by the social room door, replacing the shutters, installation of energy-efficient windows in the meeting room and classroom wing, replacement of exterior doors, moisture abatement, and blocking heat loss from the fireplace. Development: installation of a new exterior door from the "2's" classroom (required by code), possibly installation of insulation and ducts for forced-air heating of the classroom wing. We are working to obtain estimates for the installation and heating, and our final recommendation will depend on the costs involved. Without the insulation and heating, roughly \$30,000.

Financing and Fundraising: During this phase, we must begin to raise the capital needed for the investments to be made in phases 2-5.

Phase 2: Development: Reversing the stairs and enlarging the kitchen. \$156,000 - 170,500, plus architect's fees.

Phase 3: Development: Lift, storage addition, wheelchair ramp from parking lot to entry level: \$150,000, plus architect's fees for phase 4.

Phase 4: Development: Vestibule, porch at end of classroom wing, insulation (if not installed in phase 1), hydro-air heating, cooling and dehumidification system. \$50,000 - \$150,000.

Phase 5: Development and Maintenance: all other work outlined in the master plan; to be divided into phases when we reach that stage.

3. The Financing Subcommittee has been working to locate grants and sources of loans, but it would be very helpful if Friends would indicate to the Treasurer how much they are able to contribute to this work, both this year and as pledges for ongoing support. Renovations Committee understands that Finance Committee will soon be sending annual appeal letters which will include a line for building renovations. We hope that Friends will respond generously, without decreasing the amount they normally contribute to the operation of the Meeting.

The Meeting accepted the report.

The next Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business will be held January 14 at 12:05.

Mary Eagleson, recording clerk