

Building Committee Minutes June 27, 2018, 7:30 p.m.

Attending: G. Boyd, A. Bullock, D. Miller, J. Piraino, J. Vander Veer, M. Withington.  
Excused, Dean Vang, F. Horne.

The Minutes of the May 23, 2018 meeting were accepted for the record.

Boyd reviewed the regulatory status of the housing initiative. The application for an 18-month extension of the site plan approval was filed June 11 at City Hall. It should appear on a Planning Board agenda in the near future. The Zoning Code entitles projects to receive the extension. Our present approval expires in September.

Boyd recounted the meeting of May 24 that he and Horne held with city planning staff Brad Birge and Kate Maynard. The church's plan for supportive shelter/housing in the NPH was broached. The current zoning (T-6) allows 'religious institutions' to conduct business without need of a special use permit. Our task is to demonstrate that our housing/shelter mission to assist the indigent is part of our core religious mission. Staff asked the church to submit a "narrative" as to the religious basis for the plan, recounting the church's history of this mission, the scriptural basis for it, and other elements. D. Miller and Boyd have begun work on the narrative, along with outside counsel James Cox, Esq. (Snyder, Kiley, Toohey, Corbett and Cox). The narrative will be reviewed by the Vestry when ready, and submitted to the city at the appropriate time, probably after the approval extension is granted.

At D. Miller's suggestion, Bethesda will host a breakfast meeting at 8:30 a.m. Thursday July 12 at Saratoga National Bank to present and discuss our NPH floor plans with leaders of BEST, TSA, Wellspring and Veterans Housing. Billie Taft from SNB will attend, having provided the conference room for the meeting. Members of the BC to attend will include Miller, Boyd, Bullock, Piraino and Dean Vang. The goal of the meeting is to provide the four groups with the design and management information, and move toward developing Letters of Intent to secure their roles.

The committee reviewed a draft Presentation Outline prepared by Boyd. The outline provided opportunities for comments and reporting on various elements of the project. Attorney Cox is preparing the structure of a 501-c-3 corporation to manage the rented spaces. Architect Brown's sketches were reviewed, though they are now in substantial revision after the initial review by BEST. Bullock mentioned the prospect of an additional round of New York State grant funding available for capital projects. The application period will begin later this year.

Brief discussion of the 'church door' project was held as electric service went out. Our proposal to permanently open inward the wooden doors on Washington Street, replacing them with glass doors is being questioned by the architects. Brown has instead suggested the wooden doors be removed, reversed and open outwards. Further consideration of all viewpoints will be given.

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