

## **Special Vestry Meeting Minutes**

Tuesday July 7, 2020

### Attending (12)

Geof Fuller, Emily Pearce, Janice Musselman, Jim Suit, Bola Adeolu, Joyce Bryant, Emily Correll, Peter McCabe, Steve McNeal, Diana Locke, Rob Follit, Bayo Lanionu

### Topic 1: The Nave Project

Geof Fuller introduced the topic of using Capital Campaign funds to repair the church floor. He said we need one vote to use Capital Campaign funds to cover the costs, as opposed to the two votes required if we were to use endowment funds.

Joyce clarified that the carpeting would be removed. She believes there is parquet flooring under the carpeting near the choir pews. She asked about the difficulty of taking up parquet floor in the choir area.

Geof felt that working on that area would expose us to more risk regarding asbestos, so urged us not to work on that area now. He mentioned how the new flooring could change the acoustics.

Jim Suit revisited the idea of replacing the flooring in the balcony as part of this project. Jim suggests doing the balcony now so as not to duplicate costs at a later date. Emily Correll agreed. Janice wondered how much the balcony is used—she believes it is not used very much. Given that, Janice asked if it was worth it to spend the money on repairing the floor in the balcony. She said the floor in the balcony is not damaged, but the floor in the nave is. She said we need to prepare for unexpected cost overruns, as we learned with other Capital Campaign projects. Janice proposed we save the money we might use to repair the balcony floor so we would have it for unexpected overruns. Emily Correll wondered if the balcony floor is stable. Diana mentioned that we do use the balcony at Christmas and Easter. Joyce said she agrees with Jim. She mentioned remediation projects at the hospital where she worked and she feels doing it twice would be very expensive—she thinks it would be smart to go ahead and do the balcony along with the nave floor as one project. Diana agreed and said the church isn't being used now, so it is a convenient time to do this project.

Geof said we only have about 300k left in the Capital Campaign funds. 3/4 of that would be used for the nave floor. We need funds to handle the sale of the Jefferson building and he is concerned that doing the balcony will use too many funds. Janice said the balcony floor was not part of the Capital Campaign goals listed in the Capital Campaign brochure, so we can't use Capital Campaign funds for that. Peter McCabe agreed.

Geof brought up the topic of protecting the organ. He mentioned a previous project for painting that was originally part of the Capital Campaign—that project involved calling in an organ specialist. At that time, the company bid on removing pipes for 8k. For this project, we wouldn't be doing any painting. The asbestos dust also wouldn't be flying around. The organ company said if the saws can be moved away from the organ area, it would reduce the dust level. The contractor is going to put up ladder height plastic curtains between chapel and chancel, so that will also add dust protection. Jim and Jason West discussed the proposal for protecting the organ. Jim spoke about the proposal, saying the bid was down to 7 steps to protect the organ during the nave floor replacement and tune the organ after the construction project. Jim said Jason talked with the representative, Richard, and looked at the proposal—Jason felt we could

minimize the dust. Jason would prefer the smaller organ be pushed over to the choir room. Jim reported that Jason had raised the question of removing the red carpet in the chancel toward the altar. Jason supports the plan to protect the organ. Joyce asked for clarification on the plastic covering for the pipes. Geof and Jim gave more details. The reduced estimate for the organ protection is 4k. Removing the pipes would have been 8k.

Janice asked for any other questions or concerns about the nave floor.

Geof asked Steve if he agreed we do not need two votes for this. Steve said yes, he agreed.

Janice called for a vote. Diana clarified that the balcony is now off the table. Janice said yes, the balcony is now off the table.

Geof moved that we budget \$200k as outlined in Geof's email of June 29th to do the nave floor and narthex, as described in the email. Peter McCabe seconded.

The motion passed unanimously.

Geof said tomorrow he will get in touch with the organ company and contractor. He mentioned they have luxury vinyl tile samples and need someone to make a selection. Those are the next steps. Janice asked if two or three people could help select tile for the floor. Joyce, Emily Correll, and Bola volunteered.

## Topic 2: The Platting of the Jefferson Building and Church Properties

Geof introduced the topic of platting plans for the Jefferson Building and church properties. He gave some background about the replatting plan for the properties that originated with Caroline Chapin, former head of school of CEC, and our land use attorney, Soo Lee Cho. He reviewed the replatting plan, which would allow us to sell the Jefferson building with a smaller parking lot. Before we bought the Jefferson building, we were not in compliance with City of Rockville parking regulations but were grandfathered in. Now we must be in compliance. The Jefferson building is currently being marketed with the replatting plan that was arranged assuming a school would go in there.

Janice stated that since we are not going to be connected to the school as of June 2021, we do not need as many parking spaces as was originally planned. Geof pointed out that the renovated classrooms should be rented to a school, so a school would be operating out of the church building.

Geof showed the plat drawing to explain the lots of the properties. The replatting is good for the church, but makes it complicated to sell these buildings. The houses would need to be turned into condominium lots. Geof said Delia indicated it would be more difficult to sell the Thompson and Hillstrom houses under these circumstances. Joyce asked if we wanted to sell the houses outright. Janice said, yes, it is much easier to sell them as two private residentials. Peter asked why the plat had to include the two houses. Geof said that the parking spaces for those houses are needed for the church to be in compliance with City regulations. Joyce shared that when the Jefferson Building was functioning as an office building there weren't that many cars in the lot. When it became a school, that is when the parking lot became filled during the day. She is concerned this platting is not to our advantage. Geof said developers would prefer to buy the JB with the entire parking lot and realtors estimate we could get \$1 million more for the sale with all

the parking. Janice said the diocese said we cannot sell the entire lot with the JB because the church parking has to be preserved. Emily Correll asked about the Historic District Commission (HDC) and West End neighborhood opinions about this. Geof said it would likely be an issue. Janice said it is a complex issue. Geof said it boils down to whether or not we are willing to take on all the issues that would come with trying to get more money for the JB. The realtor is already marketing it with the smaller parking plat in mind. Joyce asked if there was a realistic expectation that the buyer would agree to a parking lot agreement. Geof said probably not—getting more money would be because of a tear down and redevelopment of the property. Diana said if an office bought it, we would have a better chance of getting a parking agreement. Geof said the office rebuilding market aren't doing very well, so it seemed unlikely that it would be an office. Diana informed the new Vestry members that both the Hillstrom and Thompson houses together would have netted us \$500K each as strictly residential. Emily Pearce asked about the order of sales of these properties. Geof said if the replatting does not go through, then we could sell the houses as residential houses, we could sell the Jefferson Building as is, but we would have issues when we tried to get building permits later because of the parking requirements. Realtors have told us that churches can get exceptions made, but the diocese would prefer we keep the parking. Janice said Soo Lee Cho said we could create 2 more parking spaces behind the church and satisfy this requirement. Geof said he didn't think the spaces would fit.

Geof said we have until November to make the decision about the replatting, but Delia needs an answer on how we will proceed, so she knows how we are planning on selling the two houses. Janice said we should aim for making a decision at the July Vestry meeting. Geof said we have all the information we need, but we need to have someone take the lead on studying these materials. Janice asked Peter McCabe if he would volunteer. Peter said he would, though he would need to review the papers and get up to speed in order to best contribute. Geof said he would give Peter the information. Diana asked about the playground. She asked, once June 2021 comes, would the basketball spaces be convertible to parking. Geof said that could be a possibility. There was further discussion of the details of where other parking could be located. Emily Correll asked if Delia could come back in to discuss this further. Peter said the thinking on the parking goes different directions depending on if another school came in or if CEC continues, or if a non-school entity occupies the space. There was some discussion of different options depending on who the buyer would be.

Discussion ended and Janice moved to end the meeting. The next meeting will be July 28 at 7 pm on Zoom.

*Geof Fuller*