

Community Liaison Committee
Minutes of Meeting #5
April 13, 2010

Attendance: Marlene Coffey, Shelly Sarwal, Joanne Syms, Roberta Sharp, Lawrence Dewolfe, Susan MacLeod, Louisa Horne, Rev. Linda Yates **Regrets:** Geoff Wilson, Hilda Power

1. Minutes - Minutes of the last meeting (Mar 17, 2010) were approved to be posted on the website.

2. Other options for the property – Marlene provided information from 2 developers as to what they would recommend for the site if the church development was not successful and the church sold the property. One suggested three 4-story town houses and other suggested a 4-story apartment building. It was explained that if the church’s plans are not successful the congregation would need to reconsider its future and begin another decision making process which may take up to 5 years. It was explained that the motivation for this outside developer research came as a reaction to part to the architect’s presentation, who suggested a taller apartment building may be an option for the property.

3. Collecting questions – Members have been discussing the plans for Spirit Place with community members and have heard a variety of questions and requests. The list is compiled below:

- a) Request that the visuals available at the upcoming open house show the new building superimposed over the existing building. Photograph format would be helpful.
- b) Could designated parking spaces for car share business be an option?
- c) Aesthetics
- d) Building height
- e) Green space
- f) Traffic
- g) Wind tunnels
- h) Building glare
- i) Parking
- j) Trees
- k) Property values
- l) Deliveries
- m) Timelines
- n) Underground waterways
- o) Depth of drilling
- p) Set backs

Susan offered to format the list into a question/answer arrangement knowing that some of the questions cannot be fully answered at this time. She will circulate her draft.

4. Open House - A preliminary discussion was held on April 12th at the home of Geoff Wilson, a committee member unable to attend the regular meeting on the 13th, who is a communications professional. Everyone on the committee was invited to participate in a conversation about best practices on facilitation formats for community engagement sessions. This discussion was attended by Louisa, Linda, Roberta, and Susan. Geoff

shared information on the format that he has found to be most effective in his extensive experience with community facilitation and those present were pleased with this shared information. Susan presented this information to the group at the meeting on the 13th. The best practice that Geoff recommended was to use an Open House approach with stations on the key categories of information, "staffed" by those who could provide factual information, with visuals as appropriate, and with ample opportunity for people to pose questions and comments (perhaps using stickies on a flip chart/easel). Attendees could circulate around the stations and focus on the areas of most interest to them. A one page factual handout on each topic area should be available.

It was acknowledged that there are many facilitation techniques including World Cafe, small group discussions, large group presentations with Q&A etc. In this case, there is a lot of information that could be presented and only a short time period in one evening and it is likely that additional sessions may be needed.

One committee member, Joanne Syms was not in favour of the Open House station approach and preferred a large group presentation, with Q&A, possibly followed by stations. Another community member preferred a short introductory presentation followed by stations. Two others from the community, in addition to Geoff who was not in attendance, preferred the Open House station approach. The three St. John's representatives were in favour of following Geoff's advice. After considerable discussion, planning proceeded with an Open House session, using the station format, with the understanding that additional sessions, using alternative formats, may be needed. This will be discussed following this first session when the compilation of the information gathered at it can be reviewed.

The event will occur on April 26 from 7 – 8:30 PM at the Conservatory. The draft invitation was edited and will be hand delivered to the community residents by April 18th. The stations will be:

1. Church - mission, outreach, social justice, Affirming etc
2. Background on the project – history of process, non-profit change, financial model
3. Seniors – needs, Saint Vincent's
4. Community feedback – needs of community, questions and concerns
5. Architects designs – pictures and models
6. HRM – plan amendment process and other zoning details and regulations

There will be a 'guest book' and an evaluation survey for participants to fill out before leaving. This should include what next steps may be required. Shelly will develop these components. The community feedback station will be developed by Marlene and Shelly. Susan will draft the questions (see section 3) and design a method to solicit information regarding need and use of community space.

The organization of the other stations will be done by church members. Other logistical details include securing more flip chart stands, signs or balloons to indicate each station, greeters and floaters, elevator operation, refreshments.

5. Next meeting – This will be decided by email and will not occur until after the open house.