

A Report on Our Four Campus Meetings, January 2018

January 23, 2018

Dear Friends:

You are holding in your hands (or gazing at on your screen) an act of generosity and an act of faith. It is these things, first, because getting ready for these four meetings was an enormous amount of work by an almost all-volunteer team. Big, big thanks to our extraordinary and energetic Vestry, to our dedicated and wise Campus Planning Team, and to our meeting facilitators, the brilliant Kirstin Greene and Peyton Snead.

This document is, second, an act of generosity and of faith because of you. We are at the very beginning of this conversation – but it is a conversation that is encountering some big ideas and the possibility of big change. It would, therefore, have been easy enough – and maybe even understandable enough – for you and me to have come to this conversation from a place of reactivity or of suspicion. But we chose not to do that. We chose to bring, instead, our curiosity, our imagination, our prayers, our questions, and yes (thank you for the phrase, Kirstin!) a few of our beautiful anxieties.

Thank you for that. As I said to you on Sunday, no matter what happens next, this conversation has already been a success. Through it, we reminded ourselves that we are an emotionally mature community, a spiritually mature community, a Christ-centered community.

To recap: We met on four occasions to talk about an opportunity that Vestry is considering, that of entering into a time of discernment with the City of Portland around the possibility of redeveloping our campus. If Vestry chooses to enter into this time of discernment, we will be meeting with you again on a regular basis in the coming months. We are a long way away from making a big decision, entering into a contract, or otherwise locking Grace into a plan. If we move closer to a decision point, you will be involved early and often.

Our meetings looked like this. We met:

- On Sunday, January 14 at 12Noon: 60 people signed in, although it appeared that a somewhat higher number were in attendance – perhaps 65 or 70;
- On Wednesday, January 17 at 12Noon: there were 16 attendees including members of the Vestry and Redevelopment Team. 5 of the attendees were not at the Sunday meeting;
- On Thursday, January 18 at 6pm: there were 10 attendees including members of the Vestry and Redevelopment Team. 2 of the attendees were not at a previous meeting;

- On Sunday, January 21, at 9am: there were 30 attendees including members of the Vestry and Redevelopment Team. 15 of the attendees were not at a previous meeting.

The attached document contains the flip charts that you completed in your small groups. The square brackets that say “1 dot” or “8 dots” indicate how many data dots you put beside a comment or question as a way of “underlining” it. There were no rules about how many dots you could attach to a given question, so 5 dots may mean that 5 people were interested in question or that 1 person was really excited about it.

The attached document also contains your responses to the feedback forms.

Both the flip charts and the forms are reproduced verbatim here. (Thank you for your neat handwriting! There were very few instances in which we were unsure of what you wrote!)

The next document that you will receive from Grace regarding this matter will come at week’s end. In that document, we will begin to answer some of the questions posed in this document – bearing in mind that some of them cannot be answered until such time as we are much further into our explorations.

With gratitude for your enthusiastic and prayerful participation in this work, and with equal gratitude for your fidelity to Grace Memorial, I am,

Yours in Christ,

Martin Elfert

Sunday the 14th Comment Cards

When I think of Grace, the first thing that comes to mind is:

Raising the roof and putting in a second floor for more space. This would bring in Rental office space & money

Community

Church

Community, My dads work

Preserve visual access to the beautiful church bldg.

I think of friends, family and community. I also think of faith and love that really ties this church together

Our wedding here in 1985

Wedding in 1985, husband's baptism, potlucks in homes to get to know members

History of family, worship, fellowship, music, diversity

A place for all people

God's house

Physically – only ¼ of site is developed to highest & best use

The questions I would like answered through this process are:

When will the Kitchen be remodeled?

Who makes the final decision on design

How can we keep all our groups involved during the building process

How can we use this process to increase our congregation numbers-wise

What are the choices

Who are the possible players?

If this happens I still want there to be a courtyard and other open space.

What will happen to G.A.C.?

Utilize the unused asset of horizontal space – parking etc

If Art Camp is going away

How much money it will cost

What makes this priority

Bell tower

Will these plans involve assumption of debt?

Has a contractor been selected? If not, will there be a viable unbiased bill process?

I do not want the Parish Hall torn down, we need to set priorities for remodeling. It will take time, we can't afford to have it torn apart for two years.

Why now?

Will this project further the work and ministry of the gospel?

What would investment cost?

What is the site:

How will zoning change: Post CP

What are deed restrictions

When the Grace campus is alive and full of the Spirit, I can tell because:

We hug each other a lot

Multiple uses, all days of the week

People are talking, hugging and socializing

Everyone is happy and smiling

The parking is full

Parking lot is full, church is full

People are happy, the church is full, many outreach activities happen

There is more people space than car space

When you walk onto the Grace campus ten years into the future, and you can immediately tell that Grace is successful, what does that look like to you?

Lots of people & a bit of creative mess

Clean well maintained & in full use

Affordable housing/great homeless project

It will look like a apartment building and a church next to it

A seismically strengthened sanctuary

Same as today
kitchen revamped

It depends on what you mean by successful. Successful to me means a happy parish family worshipping in joy

Church is self-sustaining economically

People – activated – no asphalt

I would ask Vestry to keep these things in mind:

Some people need change to be gentle

Phasing in of future plans to insure continuity of Grace Institute, funding programs

Diversification of occupants – Retail?

I don't think that there should be affordable housing very tall and modern

Please make no decision without every voice of the parish and people out the church

Avoid debt financing

Being used the same: chapel, restrooms

What will happen to our parish family when we don't have a parish hall for the two years of no hall

Knowing site perimeter, difference between existing & allowed development – post – CP acknowledgement

Anything else we should know:

Thank you for dealing with the issue instead of kicking it down the road

I don't want it to feel so new that it's not nice looking

Me and Mimi believe that a large affordable housing structure will look gross and unchurch like

We feel left out of the planning process

Has anyone talked to the standing committee at the diocese

Whether or not a part of housing project goes, good to establish site perimeter, zoning, utilities etc.

Sunday the 14th Flip Charts

Chart 1

How much of the campus will be included? Is it negotiable? [1 dot]

What about the oft-reputed concept of there being a part of the original land bequest that there never be a mortgage on the property? [1 dot]

Need to ensure adequate parking [2 dot]

Concerns re: chapel, preservation of historical elements: windows, alter, cross. Imperative that any rebuilding create chapel as sacred space, not shared as community meeting space. [2 dot]

Chart 2

Grace Institute – many needs to consider [2 dot]

Retain positive relations with neighbors, Sullivan's Gulch NA [3 dot]

Ownership issues / deed restrictions, who owns what? [2 dot]

If partnership with CoP, what are benefits to them? [2 dot]

Importance of environmental / sustainable aspects, ie: trees, bioswales, “an oasis in the city” [5 dot]

Chart 3

Built-in indoor labyrinth [2 dot]

Imperative to extend & enhances Grace’s mission in community [12 dot]

Chart 4

Parking structure or underground parking [2 dot]

Financial turnaround?

If there are NO financial limits is this wise for the Parish? [3 dot]

Can we save the chapel? Remove and Replace [4 dot]

Preserving visual access is a priority. How can we make sure the sanctuary is not dwarfed or hidden in this development? [4 dot]

Chart 5

Have plans been developed already? [2 dot]

Can we Redevelop only the Parish Hall and the two houses and save the entire Parking Lot? [4 dot]

Describe the inconveniences to the Parish during construction:

*Coffee Hour

*Children & Senior

*Porta Potty?

[4 dot]

How do we replace income from Art Camp-Phame [2 dot]

Chart 6

How do we keep Grace Institute as part of Grace (GMEC)? [4 dot]

Can we focus on affordable housing for seniors? [3 dot]

Can we get some diversification in housing? [3 dot]

Chart 7

How about Retail [1 dot]

Is the plan from the past (6 yrs) still in the works/mix? [1 dot]

How much support are we getting from the Diocese (Does Bishop know)? [5 dot]

When will the kitchen be remodeled? [2 dot]

How will relocation costs be covered? [1 dot]

What about parking? [4 dot]

Will we maintain primary control throughout the process & after? [10 dot]

What are the choices – partners/design? [2 dot]

If the city is so interested, could we get a variance to go p.g. higher/more open? [3 dot]

Is there a detailed plan w/leadership to ensure community thrives during relocation / disruption and after? [6 dot]

Chart 8

Westside Façade – Art installation [3 dot]

A labyrinth? In courtyard:[5 dot]

Finances must be controlled..... [2 dot]

Chart 9

Underground Parking [4 dot]

Grace’s role as Landlord [2 dot]

Priorities to (Protections for):

Beauty

Trees

Light

Interactions/gathering

Architectural features – archived, re-purposed [13 dot]

Art Camp – What happens during construction? [2 dot]

Community use / 12 Step Type programs [1 dot]

 Same questions

Chart 10

What will the process of decision-making look like? Will the parish have a chance to vote? [12 dot]

Do we need /Would there be a lien – may not be able to lien or borrow against, may be prohibit by deed titles – purchase agreements [7 dot]

Maintain character – carrying design through the rest – consistent with current design – Consistent church n’hood [8 dot]

Historic register potential eq. chapel due to people of Grace, history & community consider [4 dot]

Original purchase docs [6 dot]

Where have we (vestry) looked for support – city, Holliday Park?

Chart 11

Will there be an elevator to the basement? [1 dot]

Chart 12

What control / contribution does the church have in who lives here? [3 dot]

Where is the space for Art Camp and other programs? [3 dot]

Will any of this provide seismic strengthening for the Sanctuary? [4 dot]

Wasn’t there a limitation from the original donor on our property? [2 dot]

What will be the parking situation? [6 dot]

Could parking be part of the revenue stream?

What will happen to memorials, i.e. the library, Ella Brown Room, Chapel ect. [3 dot]

Chart 13

What happens to the Parish Community while we don't have Parish Hall? [10 dot]

Does the parish have financial exposure?

Will the Vestry guarantee that no debt will be incurred by the Parish? [9 dot]

Chart 14

How do we get past "75 feet limit"?

Can we somehow exceed zoning?

Bell Tower [1 dot]

Need to have chapel the same [1 dot]

How much space will Grace keep in Partnership? [2 dot]

What about Art Camp [2 dot]

What about Parking

Chart 15

What does the renovation figure (\$1-1.5 Million) include?
Kitchen, parish hall, etc [1 dot]

How can we include congregation on final decision? [2 dot]

How much space will Grace keep in Partnership? [5 dot]

How do we get more informed about Portland Affordable Housing Commission?

Should our 1st step be to learn about our potential partners? [8 dot]

Chart 16

How can we ensure Grace (specifically sanctuary) is safe for(m) natural disasters? [3 dot]

How do we communicate clearly?[2 dot]

Potential partnership with Parks & Rec.? [2 dot]

How can we get an update on status of other partners? [4 dots]

Chart 17

How much parking will be preserved? [2 dot]

What is the big overarching vision? [2 dot]

What control will Grace have over the leased-out portion? [5 dot]

Will / could there be commercial usage included in the property? [1 dot]

What are the benefits of partnering with another entity? [1 dot]

What will be required from Grace “up Front”? [1 dot]

How can we do it in such a way that Grace better – more visibly – serves our community? [5 dot]

Chart 18

What ongoing financial benefits would this create for Grace? [2 dot]

Are there any legal / founder’s constraints on what we can do, and on what portions of the land? [1 dot]

What alternative partnerships might there be? [1 dot]

How we will deal with the construction period? [3 dot]

Will there be clergy housing? [3 dot]

Wednesday Night Comment Cards

When I think of Grace, the first thing that comes to mind is:

That it is close to the bus lines. My God is there.

A welcoming place where gifts of creativity are nurtured.

Community.

The questions I would like answered through this process are:

How long will it take? Does the existing building need rebar? (Planning Division)

What are the estimated costs of renovating our existing buildings? What would be our ongoing costs in a shared facility? How can Grace ensure that management & maintenance of affordable housing will be adequate years from now?

What is the purpose – who are we here to serve? Who are our neighbors? What does being a good neighbor mean?

When the Grace campus is alive and full of the Spirit, I can tell because:

As an [unclear] minister I can feel the Lord is watching us.

There is a sense of excitement and anticipation about what God is doing through us.

When you walk onto the Grace campus ten years into the future, and you can immediately tell that Grace is successful, what does that look like to you?

Bigger Better + Beautiful. What do we expect from the improvements?

An attractive campus being used by people of various ages, races, economic circumstances. A places that says, “Come join us on this journey.”

Diversity of ages, races, sexes. Adequate, not crumbling infrastructure.

I would ask Vestry to keep these things in mind:

Will there be an elevator to the lower level?

New development must not overwhelm Grace Memorial physically or in operations. The church must remain highly visible + its activities have priority.

Anything else we should know:

No answers.

Wednesday Night Flip Chart (One Group Only)

Do the existing buildings need seismic upgrades? [1 dot]

Is the affordable housing really affordable? (Subsidized) [1 dot]

Is it consistent with our values to serve the poor? [4 dots]

Why has Grace not been involved in this process? [1 dot]
How much of a priority is the congregation? [1 dot]
Can the chapel remain? Untouched Historic status [1 dot]
Could HUD be involved?
How well are we treating those in need? Need commitment [1 dot]
Where will we be during construction? [1 dot]
Can we as a congregation rank all the questions issue? [1 dot]

Thursday Evening Flip Chart (One Group Only)

With different space GI could be year-round, needs, accessibility
Potential Rehabilitation / Repairs
Lets not rule those out [3 dot]
Grace Institute growing } grow the capped / limiting factor [4 dot]
Think big – how can we? [3 dot]
Relationship & Bldgs.? Who is managing what as part?
Addressing accessibility [1 dot]
Elements not up to code
Benefits from Safety & Security? What is to be gained [2 dot]
Impacts of being non-accessible
What would being an inclusive community look like? [2 dot]
Could maintenance trigger need to come to ADA other compliance?

How to make the houses ADA compliant?

- Bathrooms – stairs / turning circles / elevator / lifts

How much say will Grace have in types of units (senior, disabled residents, persons living with disability?) [3 dot]

How would vestry conceive of being a relationship partner with the developer partner? [2 dots]

[No comment cards received Thursday eve.]

Sunday the 21st Comment Cards

When I think of Grace, the first thing that comes to mind is:

Family and community – this is the place we raised our children.

A place full of community spirit.

Community – Grace community and Grace as a vibrant member of the larger community.

Comfortable and traditional (at 8 am).

Sanctuary.

The questions I would like answered through this process are:

What is our commitment to low income housing? Senior housing?
How do we make the development plan work for everyone?

What kind of experiences are being considered? And how much will it impact the historic values of the property?

What would our baseline costs be to maintain the houses and the parish hall?

How far has the Vestry come on this project?

How can we design a process that keeps the Grace community together through the discernment and possibly design process?

When the Grace campus is alive and full of the Spirit, I can tell because:

We have a lot of children in church school.

There are many opportunities for fellowship, e.g., potlucks, men's group, quilting.

There is an enthusiasm for volunteering.

Interaction and support between parishioners.

Joy in worship and fellowship.

Everyone is friendly.

There is a sense of Holy joy. Joy expressed in greeting one another and in our prayers and search for redemption.

When you walk onto the Grace campus ten years into the future, and you can immediately tell that Grace is successful, what does that look like to you?

There is a variety of peoples, programs.

Our campus is clean and in good repair.

Full church attendance and grounds are well kept.

Comfortable, welcome space for Parish and community - to welcome and serve the community.

It is active, Church-centered, beautifully designed and maintained. Even for potential neighbors, they feel the safety and sanctuary of being able to live for a while on this hallowed ground.

I would ask Vestry to keep these things in mind:

If we have housing – provide a majority of low income.

Make sure programs e.g., art camp have a space we need (including Phame, quilting).

Reality

Carefully attending to members real concerns.

Anything else we should know:

How about a large community garden – maybe on the roof. ☺

Thanks to everyone for their hard work.

Make sure we know what we are getting into if we go into a partnership at all.

We hold the cards. There is no gun to our head, aside for the real maintenance needs. Daylight those costs, and other information. Be altogether transparent and as inclusive as humanely possible. I learned this citation or phrase from Father Martin - "When you do this for the least among us, you do this for me". Thank you.

Sunday the 21st Flip Charts

Chart 1

What percentage would be affordable housing? What would the remainder be? [6 dots]

What would the cost to Grace be? Where would the revenue come from? (How much) [2 dots]

What pays: contractor or anybody else?

What would the details be on an incumberment agreement. [4 dots]

Can the sanctuary (chapel) included in the incumberment agreement?

Can we have a parish conversation about conflicts of interest on Vestry and Board? [3 dots]

Can we address security issues that could arise w/ new partners? [3 dots]

Chart 2

If Parish for all people: can this be an opportunity to more ppl. consistent with mission? [2 dots]

Parish hall is torn down – why? [1 dot]

What about parking?

Baseline of necessary expense? [2 dot]

Rehabilitation option? [1 dot]

How pay bills during construction if/when parishioners leave?

What would church vis as vis Art Camp and PHAME? [2 dots]

Can we make sure all work goes to competitive bid [1 dot]

What preference for affordable housing? Seniors, etc.? Apts or condos or mix (equity for 1st time homebuyers) [1 dot]

Can we draw in as much expertise as possible?

Who would the manager be?

Can we respect ppl. who have volunteered?

Where would we get the up front \$, cost, who pays [2 dots]

Grace Memorial – sacred elements throughout

Retain memorials, useful items [2 dots]

Can we work to retain all members? [1 dot]

Chart 3

Grace doesn't own the land, D.O. does

How will we make the final decision? Congregation? Vestry? Process? [2 dots]

Are we following our land use rules/legal reqs? Where does chapple fall?

What will we do w/ 2 houses?

What happens to older master plan? Can we use them still?

What kind of space would the parish have? [1 dot]

What's the timeline?

Who would manage the housing? [3 dots]

Who's doing the design? Do we have input? We want to look like church?

What effect does the neighborhood have on this process? [3 dots]

Can/will we do additional fundraising?

What happens to congregation during construction? [1 dot]

What vision is driving this process? [1 dot]

Who owns what after this happens? For how long? [1 dot]

Are there other large projects planned for the area? [1 dot]

Make sure our plans don't conflict w/ themselves.

What about the vacant lot kitty corner from us? [1 dot]

How are we going to preserve our autonomy during negotiations? After? Don't get steamrolled by carps, etc.

Who represents the parish in negotiations? [2 dots]

Chart 4

What will be changed?

Will accessibility be enhanced? [3 dots]

Will houses be dismantled? [2 dots]

What is the commitment to low income housing and how do we ensure we remain committed to it? [5 dots]

What happens to PHAME during redevelopment? Art Camp? Other groups? [2 dots]

What happens to parking? [1 dot]

Can we park underground? [1 dot]

How tall are we considering building?

How much input will Grace have in redevelopment plans? [3 dots]

Would it generate income for the church? How quickly? [1 dot]

How, as a community, do we increase buy-in? [1 dot]

Would it be easier to sell the land?

Would low income housing decrease property values? [1 dot]

Comment Cards Received During the Week

When I think of Grace, the first thing that comes to mind is:

Food! Service is available to parish, [unclear]; everyone can help because there are so many projects.

Our out reach ministries and how we are able to serve our neighbors.

The questions I would like answered through this process are:

What can be done with the large parking to generate revenue? Much of the parking lot is not being used Monday through Friday.

Financially how will this impact the church? How to be responsible stewards of God's property?

When the Grace campus is alive and full of the Spirit, I can tell because:

It is being used by others like Grace Art Camp; and many other groups

The campus is "buzzing" with activities; everyday of the week – morning to night

When you walk onto the Grace campus ten years into the future, and you can immediately tell that Grace is successful, what does that look like to you?

People grace the building!

I am drawing a blank 😊

I would ask Vestry to keep these things in mind:

Why build only for money that a [unclear] people on a negative way. Change is important; but so are core values.

Grace is a sacred space to me. I would like to see a chapel as part of the church property, keeping the stain-glass windows, altar and cross even though it will be moved to a new chapel.

Anything else we should know:

I think that the future of Grace needs to be added to our weekly prayers and prayer list.