

Grace Memorial Episcopal Church

Vestry Meeting Minutes

February 18, 2020

Members of the Vestry

Roosevelt Carter
Cameron Denney
Andrew Eshleman
Robin Gault, Co-Sr. Warden
Curt Germundson, Treasurer
Daniel Jones
Charles McGee
Holly Puckett
Louise Tippens, Co-Sr. Warden
Kathryn (Katy) Unbehaun
David Waldow

Clergy

The Rev. Martin Elfert
The Rev. Jeanne Kaliszewski

Others

Nancy Entrikin
Julia Mollner
Alicia Perkins Lehrle, Clerk

Members of the Vestry Absent

Kevin Walsh

1. Items

1.1 Development Update: Zoning Change

- The meeting began at 6:02pm, and, in deference to Julia's time, the meeting began with the report on the February 11th zoning change hearing with the Portland Planning and Sustainability Commission. Martin said ideally the Vestry would have been consulted before the zoning change request, but the timing of the request and the next Vestry meeting did not allow this to happen. Also, it should be noted that the application for a zoning change is not irreversible and can be withdrawn.

- Julia presented a chart explaining the parameters for the current zoning as well as the possible rezoning categories. She said CM3 are the best option and would avoid any conditional use issues. Rezoning would, among other things, increase the height limits from 45' to 75' and allow more square footage for commercial use, although commercial use is not required. Rezoning would also likely increase the property value. She was asked about FAR (Floor Area Ratio), which is the ratio of the site to allowable enclosed square footage. She explained affordable housing allows for a better ratio. Rezoning, as requested by Grace, is seen as a positive move. There was also a discussion about the proposed Black Box Theater, which was explained as a small, flexible, and basic theater space, usually having moveable seats and a stage. The one proposed for the development will have an accessible tech booth, and, as per information from PHAME, this would be the first theater with an accessible tech booth in North America.
- There was discussion as to whether or not neighbors could object and stop the rezoning. It's possible but not likely; the City wants to encourage churches to build affordable housing.
- After Martin's presentation to the commissioners, the commissioners agreed rezoning to CM3 was the best option. The Portland City Council is expected to officially approve the rezoning change to CM3 at their meeting in April. No further action is needed by Grace for the rezoning request.
- Andrew made a motion for the Vestry to support the proposed rezoning change, and Holly seconded the motion. There was no further discussion, and the motion passed unanimously. (Julia left at the end of this discussion.)

2.2 Opening Prayers

- The meeting continued with a reading from Acts 23 in an abbreviated form of lectio divina, and a prayer from Martin. Following this, everyone present introduced themselves and was asked to briefly say something about why they love Grace.

2.3 Ratification of Co-Sr. Wardens: Robin Gault and Louise Tippens

- Martin asking for a motion to ratify the appointed of the Co-Sr. Wardens Robin Gault and Louise Tippens. Andrew moved to accept the appointment of both Robin and Louise as Co-Sr. Wardens, and Katy seconded the motion. There was no further discussion, and the motion passed unanimously.

2.4 Ratification of Jr. Warden: David Waldow

- Robin said David has agreed to serve another year as Jr. Warden and asked for a motion to ratify him as Jr. Warden. Curt so moved, and Roosevelt seconded the motion. There was no further discussion, and the motion passed unanimously.

2.5 Consent Agenda Items

- The minutes from January's meeting were inadvertently left out of the Consent Agenda Items distributed to the Vestry via e-mail before the meeting. The minutes will be e-mailed to the Vestry after the meeting for review and acceptance. The Rector's Report and Jr. Warden's Report were included in the Consent Agenda Items, and Cameron moved to accept the reports as presented. Robin seconded the motion; there was no further discussion, and the motion passed unanimously.

2.6 Moment of Grace

- Andrew read a lovely poem by Marilyn Krysl entitled “She Speaks A Various Language.”

2.7 Treasurer’s Report

- Curt noted he e-mailed the financial statement late in the afternoon, so it was not part of the Consent Agenda Items. He provided printed copies of the financial report highlights, which he reviewed, and commented he does not see any red flags. He is still helping Jackie finish out the year-end reports and stock gifts to the parish. He added the final financial statement for 2019 should be completed in the next week or so.

2.8 Acceptance of Communication Covenant

- Robin briefly reviewed the Communication Covenant, and Martin added some explanation as to its origin. The version in use is much more positive than the catalyst for the current version. He asked the Vestry to accept it with the knowledge it can be amended at any time. No motion was necessary.

2.9 Sub-Committee Assignments for Bylaws Revision, Ministry Liaisons, and Equity and Inclusion Plan

- It was noted the proposed sub-committee members may be both Vestry and non-Vestry individuals.
- Andrew and Katy volunteered to be on the Bylaws Revision Sub-Committee.
- Charles will facilitate the Ministry Liaisons Sub-Committee and may include the leaders of the various ministries. Daniel, representing the Altar Guild, and Louise both volunteered to be on the committee with Charles.
- Martin explained that the development project has been the catalyst for forming an Equity and Inclusion Sub-Committee. He said the current welcome statement of Grace is a good launch point, and there is already a lot of information in existence for review on the subject and development of an Equity and Inclusion Plan. It was noted this could be a process for looking at all facets of Grace. Curt added the development project opens the organization up to review by investors and the public, so a strong equity and inclusion plan is very valuable. A discussion ensued regarding developers and equity and inclusion plans and how they work together. A committee is needed to work out a thoughtful plan. Robin, Louise and Cameron will be part of the committee. Martin suggested the Vestry give development of the plan some thought with further e-mail discussion taking place between Martin, the Sr. Wardens and Cameron. The results of the discussion will be shared with the Vestry.

- 2.10 Other Business

- Martin said there is now a capital campaign consultant, Dianne Alves, although there is not yet a contract in place for her. There is additional information about her in the Rector’s Report. She will be invited to an upcoming Vestry meeting. Part of her role is to represent all 3 organizations for the capital campaign and help create a unified campaign.
- There was a discussion about the capital campaign and the need to be both agile in the process but also allow the Vestry to exercise its due diligence. It was generally agreed this process needs to be worked out before the consultant really gets to work.

- Sharon Loomis-Malin shared a Grace Institute report through Martin, and the report included a flyer put together for Art Camp fund raising. It was noted there are lots of grants available.
- Jeanne noted the welcoming process needs work, including designated people to guide newcomers to coffee hour, and to collect completed pew cards. She would like to discuss this further, possibly at the next Vestry meeting.

2.11 Designate Members of the Vestry to Update the Parish

- Charles and Daniel will update the congregation on Sunday.
- Holly reminded everyone about the Pancake Dinner by the Youth Group on Shrove Tuesday.
- Cameron noted the need for improved lighting for the choir.
- Curt is still hoping for help updating the website – possibly Ben and Riley can help?

2.12 Closing Prayer

- Martin offered a closing prayer, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Alicia Perkins Lehrle, Clerk