

UUSP Town Hall Meeting Minutes – Parking Lot June 25, 2017

32 present

Facilitator: Jill McCracken

Flip chart: Laurie Clement

Microphone: Reggie Craig

Minutes: Dani Skrzypek

PB Note: These minutes have only been edited to correct spelling and spacing.

If we keep parcel 1 and reconfigure, how many spaces would we have? How many spaces are we giving up?

Paul: We now have 35 and we'll still have 35. They will be shared. Most meetings are on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, and the most cars I've seen are 12. Can't reconfigure the garden.

Do we need to sell the property? No. Are we desperate for money? What would the parcel 1 cost to fix? What's the purpose of selling?

Jack: From an urban planning perspective, when you have gaps in frontage, it's less appealing for people to walk and gather. When you have storefronts and houses, you draw more people. If WJA extends their building, it would enhance the neighborhood and add to the safety.

Properties to the east of the office have been sold off. UU still owns prime property. It will be more valuable in future.

Can we envision a use for the property that UUSP might need in future generations? Are we giving up something valuable?

Laurie: We can still grow and develop. Can build more stories to Conway, add an elevator to Conway and a new entrance off the alley. We also have the playground and the little house that we can use better.

Jill: We have no resources if we have a handicapped child. The elevator is hugely important.

Won't WJA need a buffer?

Not if there's a building there. The building will shield the parking lot from view along Mirror Lake. Lori

Many ways we can add areas of interest for people walking by – wayside pulpit, blessing box, etc.

WJA has been a good neighbor. If we don't accept this offer, we're in effect kicking them off the block. Don't know who might move in.

On a Sunday morning, will we still have the full 35 spaces?

Yes

Big thanks for the FAQs and the visuals. Great that there was negotiation because this latest offer has so much to offer. It's great.

If there is a coffee shop and apts wouldn't that need more parking spaces? Per City code: need 1 parking space per apt. Those are already allocated. The apt. can't be a high rise, not enough space. Will maybe be 4 apts. The coffee shop will be less than 1500 sq. ft. and thus doesn't need parking. They will use the street.

Our pro bono attorney is handling the matter. While not a specific real estate atty he does handle routine real estate matters and says the LOI is straightforward and sound.

We are a growing congregation, it isn't who we are now only but who we are going to be.

A lot of us park on the side, will those still be available?

Paul: Yes

Laurie: Some of our spaces, those facing the alley, are not really legal spaces. We need the lot to be reconfigured.

Parcel 1 is the premium piece. It should be more valuable. Need to renegotiate the price.

Per Bylaws, we could vote today with 10% of those here. Strongly urge we have a consensus, not just a decision that wins by one vote.

Laurie: quoted from letter from her brother. Previous sales old appraisal was 33 to 39 per sq. ft., this sale (including paving the parking lot) comes out to 39 to 43.

Paul: Our Bylaws are written so that 1 vote can win. It's unfortunate that we can't use technology to comply with those "present" and for a "voice vote." That's our Bylaws and democracy. Also our Bylaws call for votes only by those physically present. Why can't we use Skype and other technologies? Arty says can't, would have to change the Bylaws.

Worried because we're supposed to be an inclusive and transparent church. We've made decisions that people can go to. We have no committees dealing with this, only the BOT meetings. We have no names, no person, to go to about our questions. The round tables were good but we have no information about the results of them. This isn't a transparent process. Our snowbirds aren't here and they'll be upset that we're voting when they're gone. How will people feel about this decision in the next generation?

Jill: Do you have a recommendation on how to handle this? WJA needs an answer in 60 days.

It is more important that we meet the needs of our congregation, not our neighbors.

How many snowbirds actually come to Town Halls when they're here?

If we sell this will diminish the value of the church as a whole.

Have had people trip and fall in the parking lot, paving and lighting the lot are very important. We agreed to the City to fix the lot. Our integrity and safety are paramount.

Howard: If we didn't already own parcel 1, and had 420,000 available, would we buy that property?

Parcel 1 looks crappy, why would we keep that instead of fixing the other two lots.

Would it be possible to sell 1 and all but rent the parking spaces so that they're still ours.

Laurie: BR concerned that we're giving WJA a "lifetime clause" to the parking lot. Perhaps there are alternatives, will talk to our atty.

Question re the 180,000 to pave and fix the lot. What happens if it costs more? Will WJA cover the cost?

Paul: Yes. WJA says they will pave the lot, the 180,000 is only an estimate.

Are we going to publish the results of the roundtable?

They're already on the website.

Who were the negotiators?

Paul: It started as a BOT function. BOT members and Darren attended most

meetings. As time went on, fewer people participated. Paul invites BOT to continue to join him.

I feel like I've been as involved as I want to be – InfoNet, church announcements, Town Halls, round tables. I really appreciate the process and feel like I've been represented. I know I can go to any B meeting to learn more.

Leasing vs. permanent is a key point. We should do anything we can to protect our property. If they have total access to our parking lot we may lose all spaces. I've seen high rises go up where no one thought they could.

On inclusion, it might be good to send an email asking people to respond with an opinion or even saying they're not interested, don't care.

If this process isn't a democratic process then what is? There's always someone who's not here and we can't change that.

Could we set aside 10% of our budget to cover emergencies so we're not caught unaware the next time there's a need.

Paul: I gave the results of the Town Halls and the round tables to WJA and they have crafted proposals to meet our concerns. There really weren't negotiations.

Howard: We're done some brilliant negotiation by simply not doing anything. WJA gave us an offer that's about \$90,000 better than previous ones.

Frustration with the Bylaws that we can't use electronic voting.

We need more steps in the round table process. Need more visioning and discussion of what's possible.

Looking at the process from the very first proposal by WJA, it certainly hasn't been a "one step process" There have been many steps, many meetings and presentations. I feel very informed.

If we sell this valuable asset, we're hurting our future. Already this property has increased over 10 fold in the last 20 years. What will it be worth in 20 more years?

"Buy land. There're not making more of it."

"The time to sell is when you have a buyer."

Real concern that something big and gaudy will be built. Loves the trees and garden.

Howard: WJA has built tasteful nice properties.

It can't be part of the contract that we determine what WJA builds. It's entirely up to them.

If someone other than WJA buys they couldn't use the setbacks that are available to WJA so we'd have to sell for a lot less.

Why can't we put conditions in the contract as to whether they can build a high rise, what kind of signage they use, etc.

Paul: I don't know what WJA would accept. The City codes would prohibit a high rise.

Perhaps we could retain the air rights above a certain level.

Are we afraid of WJA moving?

Laurie: WJA has a very good reputation with other non-profits. They will definitely move if we don't sell.

Jill: How will we move forward?

Paul We want to include every one of our congregants in the process, even if they can't vote because they're physically not here. This has been a good democratic process.

As I announced in InfoNet: We will have two round tables after Sunday services. We can have more during the week if people want that, and another Town Hall. People can join me in meeting with the lawyers and WJA. This will all be on the website.