

Growth & Facilities Task Force - Progress to Date

Feb. 6, 2018 2.06.2018

Background The Growth & Facilities Task Force (GFTF) was appointed by the Unitarian Church of Montpelier (UCM) Board in Sept. 2017. Members are: Brenda Bean, Liz Benjamin, Sam Clark, Steve Gold, Ryan Kane, Brian Prendergast, with Paul Ohlson and Nancy Sherman, Co-Chairs.

Authorization for creating the Growth & Facilities Task Force is in the “Growth Trajectory Study” (June 2017). This document states that “the Board feels that it is wise to plan for modest continued growth. . . [and] the Board will appoint a task force to investigate the items noted in the Strategic Plan. . . regarding the physical space of our church” (pp.10-11). (Document available at ucmvt.org).

In addition, the “UCM 2020 Strategic Plan” Vision Outcome #5 states, “We create a long range, comprehensive plan for accessible, sustainable physical space to assist us in fulfilling our mission.” Action Step 3 authorizes the Board to appoint a task force and assigns the following responsibilities:

- a. Identify, examine, and prioritize the long range physical space needs of the congregation.
- b. Creatively investigate and list a full spectrum of strategies for accessible, sustainable space to assist us in fulfilling our mission, and include estimated costs for each strategy.
- c. Report its findings and recommendations to the Board.

Progress Since October, the GFTF has been meeting regularly and working to build an inventory that identifies the long range physical space needs of the congregation, in accordance with our charge. We sent out a questionnaire and gathered input from the UCM Board, committees, and staff, as well as UCM members, professionals, and experts, in accordance with assigned responsibilities. The “Inventory of Long Range Physical Space Needs” (12.12.2017) is the list of UCM space needs brought to the attention of the Growth & Facilities Task Force.

GFTF also heard about the church building’s current inadequacies and suggestions about possible changes and improvements. The following list is an initial step toward addressing the physical space needs and making improvements, incorporating information gathered during the fall of 2017. This preliminary list includes physical space needs that can be addressed within the church building’s current footprint and those for which new construction and new space are required.

Next steps To proceed with examining UCM’s long range physical space needs, creatively investigating a spectrum of different strategies to address them, with cost estimates for each, it is essential to bring in an architect who has the professional skills and resources to work with GFTF. This requires the congregation’s authorization

to commit funds for architectural and engineering services. When funding is approved, GFTF can proceed to develop the report requested by the Board.

Growth & Facilities Preliminary List: Serious Physical Space Needs

Standards, Values, Criteria:

- UCM mission driven
- Greater accessibility
- Enhanced safety and security
- Respect for the historic nature of the building

Phase 1: Serious Space Needs within church building's current footprint

1. **School Street entrance and 1st floor traffic flow.** Need to create a welcoming and safe entry way; redesign the general traffic flow pattern; eliminating major traffic through the kitchen work area and the RE classroom.
2. **Kitchen.** Need to redesign the kitchen to meet Vt. Health and Safety requirements and accommodate meal preparation and serving for large groups eating in the vestry.
3. **Accessibility to the 2nd floor.** Need to plan and designate space for new elevator to achieve accessibility on 2nd floor; add 2nd floor accessible bathroom.
4. **Progress toward NetZero Energy Usage.** Need to reduce and ultimately eliminate fossil fuels from the UCM energy mix; design and convert heating system to advanced wood pellet system; design and construct solar photovoltaic system.
5. **Basement.** Need to renovate and upgrade areas in the basement to increase usable space as feasible.

Phase 2: Serious Space Needs requiring construction outside the building's current footprint

6. **Design and construct new addition on north side of building (extending 1980 addition)** Staff and church members presented needs for new and larger office spaces, spaces for children and adult learning, play and activity spaces, rooms for a library and archival materials, small spaces for conversation, and more storage space.