

**PNMC Board Meeting
Peace Mennonite Church
July 10, 2010**

Present: Linda Dibble, Moderator; Jeryl Hollinger, Moderator-Elect; Board Members: Mario Bautista, Joseph Penner, Jeanne Rempel, Pat Senner, Jennifer Sottolano, and Isaac Hooley, via phone; Iris DeLeon-Hartshorn, Executive Conference Minister; Ed Miller, Treasurer; and Charlotte Derksen, Secretary

9:00 am Welcome

Linda

Reflection and Prayer

Iris

Decisions – Solomon and the two mothers (I Kings 3:16-28) God gave Solomon the wisdom of God to execute justice in the case of the two women, each of whom claimed the living baby. We need to trust that God will also give us the wisdom as to what to do. What is the best for all parties, for the congregations involved, for PNMC, and for the community? Iris opened the meeting in prayer.

Introduction of Board Members and Guest

Linda

Linda introduced the new board members: Jeryl Hollinger, moderator-elect; Mario Bautista, (Wilsonville); Joseph Penner (Salem); and Jennifer Sottolano (Albany). Guest Tim Manickam, (member of Portland Mennonite Church), a real estate expert was present in order to give advice on the value and possibilities of the Peace Mennonite Church property. Each board member then quickly introduced himself or herself.

9:30 am Introduction - Purpose of meeting

Linda

Several church groups have expressed interested in the Peace Mennonite Church (PMC) property; some had had conversation with PMC before the resolution to turn the decisions regarding the property over to the board. The Peace congregation has one unsecured loan outstanding, with Mennonite Aid in Reedley. Thirty days from today (July 10, 2010) the PNMC board must complete the paper work.

Walk Through of Property

Tim Manickam

Introduction: There are three property parcels, including two house parcels and a church parcel, the latter uniquely large (commercial lots are now hard to sell). The presence of the barn is not an added value. Churches in Portland are currently selling slowly; \$800,000- \$890 is probably the real value of the property; the assessed value is too high for the current area market. The property is located too far from the city core and local values are currently low.

The front house needs a lot of work. Tim estimates a value of \$130,000 or the front [small] house; if sold separately, it would best be priced to sell as a fixer-up.

The parsonage (off the street in the back) also needs upgrades; the current price is \$185,000; a relative of the current renter had made an offer to purchase it. One additional problem with the parsonage property is that the city may decide that a formerly planned street may have to be put through, which would lower the value of the parsonage parcel.

If the board decides to sell the properties off as separate parcels the selling price probably will be lower than the current assessed value. For this area of Portland, the best time to sell is late March through late June. Unfortunately this area of Portland has one of the highest unemployment rates in the city.

Walk through observations:

- The church building is in reasonable shape; it does need regular maintenance, but there are no serious problems. The group admired the lovely light fixtures (chandeliers?) in the sanctuary as well as the evidence of careful planning on the part of the builders.
- The house on Glisan, is very small and is in bad shape; it would need a lot of attention to bring it up to sale.
- The parsonage is in “lived in by a renter” shape – but is definitely in better shape than the front house. Tim suggested selling the parsonage as a separate parcel. He further suggested selling the church and the small house property together.

Putting Property on the Open Market

Tim Manickam

The question was asked as to what to do with the barn, which is on the church property? Response – leave it as it is.

Suggested option: tear down the barn and sell the wood/lumber. Would PNMC recoup the money from the tear down? Response – probably not.

Should the interior of the church be repainted before putting the church on the market? Tim’s response was that we wouldn’t get the money back. He recommended that the property should be sold “as is”.

What about the state of the church building structure? Response – there is no apparent problem in the structure.

What are realtor fees for churches? Response – commercial fees are higher than are fees for house sales. The church market is small; but the property could legitimately be sold on the commercial market.

10:40 am Break

11:00 am Clarifying Questions (by phone)

Duncan Smith

Question: How large was the congregation at the time of closure? What has happened to those congregants? Duncan Smith – There were 15-20 active participants at the time of closure. Most of these participants have now found another place to worship: Jeanne Zook and a couple of others are attending a local Friends Church; several others had partners and/or other family members attending elsewhere close by, and therefore have places to worship. PMC also included “shut-ins”, who are still in need of pastoral care; these latter won’t have other nearby resources. The Peace Mennonite congregation would like the church [buildings] to continue to be in use as ministry; if some kind of ministry didn’t continue at the Peace facility, the church closing would be yet more painful.

Five groups expressed interest in using the Peace Mennonite Church facility and grounds: Abundant Life Church, Morning-Star Church, Hope Church, and Freedom Ministries, both talked of possibilities, but didn't put in a proposal. Overtures from three other groups have recently been received.

Pat asked how the management of the property is being done until the property is sold? Duncan's responded that Anawim participants are taking care of the lawn; PNMC Board contracts for custodial and security duties. Duncan also has certain responsibilities still. If things continue as they are, for a short term, then things are functional.

Jeryl asked how Peace members feel about what's going on now? Duncan tries to be respectful of the Peace members; keeping them informed, recognizing their interests, but he is making independent decisions. PNMC is not bound by Peace members' wishes. Iris thinks that they do not fear the board's decision making; they trust the Board now. There is a good faith agreement in place (written by Duncan); they are relying on that. The members maybe now have a sense a relief – as they are no longer burdened by the care of the buildings and property.

Is the Peace Reference Council the group to whom the Board will report progress and decisions? No, Duncan feels it will be important to give the final report to the broader Peace community.

What about Peace Mennonite's financial commitments? Duncan replied that some have been paid off already: MMN has been paid off, Snow Cap payments have been completed, the AIMM commitment may have been paid off, but some other commitments are still in process.

Could PNMC have done something to help Peace Mennonite, so that it would not have to close? Duncan responded that the decision making process took over a year. Peace Mennonite was a very independent congregation, 82 years old; it was probably the "season to close" (i.e. "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted; Ecclesiastes 3:1-2). The members spent time studying the scriptures, they gave opportunity (public and private) for all to speak; and reached a consensus to close. Then the congregants released the property for the work of God (preferably Mennonite).

Further, the PMC group made a decision to all the groups current using the property ~~still~~ here; no addition to or from the property should be made until decisions have been made as to what to do next. The board has about 30 days from today until Iris and Linda (representing the board) must notify the interested parties as to what decisions have been made.

Before the members of PMC reached a decision to close the church, they had previously begun the process of selling the parsonage; they had already talked this over with the current renter. The renter's father will come soon and look at the house for possible

purchase; Duncan had offered him that house at the price of \$185,000. If the renter/father does want the house, then he'll pay cash.

The board asked Duncan who the Peace Mennonite Reference Council were at the time of closing? They were: Davina Carroll, Chair Peace property reference council, Jeanne Zook, member Property reference council; Jim Subject, member Property reference council.

Duncan reported that PMC members would like to see some sort of ministry continue at the facility: possibilities might include a peace and justice ministry, justice for the environment ministry, and/or a homeless ministry. Peace Mennonite members had welcomed the Hmong Church and the Bethel Church, as well as Anawim to use the Peace facility.

As an alternative to selling part of the property, the Board could decide to sell all three properties as one. The Peace Mennonite Church Council has expressed the following desired priorities in event that the property and/or properties are sold. Those priorities include AIMM; CIEMNM has a building project in Cohiumbampo that the Council would like to see \$10,000 go toward; consideration given toward proposals from Anawim and Bethel; bulk of the sale dollars to go toward new church starts and outreach; and toward PNMCs goals for nurturing healthy congregations, fiscal strength, spiritual development of leaders/members, multi-lingual capability/connectivity, and expenses. Three questions should be used to evaluate to proposals before the board, regarding PMC.

What would be the impact of this proposal to PNMC?

How would the work/functions of the proposal relate to PNMC's mission?

What is the financial viability of the offer?

Recommendation of Property Reference Council

Linda

The first proposal, submitted by Dr. E S Joachim, was carefully considered by Iris and Linda and the Property Reference Council; it was then rejected as a non-viable proposal.

The board members do need to recognize that once a decision has been made, the actual use of property becomes the purchaser's decision as to what actually happens.

Skatechurch (Eden Bible church is 501) Proposal

This proposal includes a written stipulation that Anawim and Bethel would continue to have a place to be.

They have offered \$500,000 and countered.

PNMC would be the financiers.

Anawim already does have a relationship with Skateboard

The PMC Council considered this proposal viable and asked the board to consider it.

Anawim Christian/Bethel Proposal

This proposal meets the PMC and PNMC vision stipulation.

Anawim Christian fellowship already meets the stipulation of meeting local needs. The Community has less crime in neighborhood, as Anawim's outreach grows.

Rent will be difficult for Anawim to meet; multiple additional renters would help this problem.

As currently written the proposal is tenuous as best; on the positive side, there is an unusual amount of community support for the homeless ministry in this area.

Would it be wise on PNMCs part to give Anawim more platform for funding raising? Further Anawim and Bethel both need to be aware that there a number of maintenance issues on the property.

The Property Reference Council is now divided on these proposals: one member leans heavily toward Anawim; one member is on the fence, but does like the Skatechurch proposal; the third member leans heavily toward Skatechurch proposal.

At time there has been a fair amount of tension between/among Anawim, Bethel and PMC.

12:00 pm

Lunch

At Iris'

1:30 pm

Discussion of recommendation

Linda

The Skatechurch financial proposal is very tenuous. Proposed purchase amount is very low. Furthermore, board members felt that a mix of homeless and kids is a bad or potentially dangerous mix.

Next Steps

3:30 pm

What is honest? If we had been looking for finished, fully viable offers, the general consensus of the PNMC Board is that none of the offers are fully viable.

Steve Kimes' proposal includes the assumption that this proposal is to be considered as a partnership with Bethel Church. It seems that this relationship would need mentoring and is not fully formed or equal. The property, in its present condition, needs considerable repair as well as ongoing maintenance. Iris has talked with Steve about the ongoing maintenance; Steve doesn't take into account expenses of insurance, roof repairs, etc.

Council members suggested selling the parsonage; paying off the loan, clearing any other debts and liens against the rest of the property and then applying the remaining funds to as seed money to keep up the rest of the property – which would then go with the joint Anawim and Bethel proposal.

At present there is too little data in the Anawim-Bethel proposal, it was suggested that a group be set up to work with Steve to get a realistic, complete proposal fleshed out.

The question was raised: How much, are the council members, for PNMC, willing to do and to provide financial support for to make the Anawim proposal successful? Is this a core ministry of PNMC?

If such an effort is to succeed, then the board needs to have a structure/group that can handle the concept/proposal, to further flesh out the proposal, as well as to deal with property issues.

The board members expressed consensus on the proposition to sell the parsonage, if the current purchaser does agree to buy at the price proposed. If the current purchaser is no longer interested and or if he wants to lower the price then, the board would to revisit the proposition for that parcel.

If we proceed with the Anawim proposal, and other groups also become involved in the Anawim/possible Bethel consortium, then the council would want to specify that the additional groups be Mennonite. It was suggested that [Iris?/ Linda?/Steve?] talk with CIHAN about a mission plant. It was also suggested that perhaps one of the already established Hispanic churches would appreciate joining the proposal.

Other suggestions for additional groups to become involved in the Anawim-plus-proposal could be a Mennonite/other peace church group interested in environmental concerns. Another possibility for use of the facility could include the location for a summer peace-building institute.

It seemed clear that a Board to run the Peace facility should be made up of equal partners. The terms for the partner group should consist of a long-term lease not a bunch of individual renters.

Pat moved that we go back to Skateboard and tell them that at this point in time we are not considering their proposal. Jeryl seconded the motion. Linda called for the question. The motion passed unanimously.

Jeryl moved that we authorize Duncan Smith to work with the current interested party/buyer, through July 15, 2010, to negotiate a proposal for a purchase agreement for the parsonage. Pat seconded the motion. Again the motion passed unanimously.

Pat moved that the board authorize ECM, and/or Linda, to work with Tim Manickam to negotiate a fair purchase price and accept the offer, on behalf of the board. Jeryl seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The PNMC board has a desire for the Anawim and Bethel proposal to be successful. Jeryl moved that the PNMC board appoint a task group [?to work Steve Kimes and Anawim?]

to further develop the proposal and bring back a recommendation to the Board. Jeanne seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The board affirms Steve Kimes' vision and the work that he has done and will work with him to bring the updated recommendation to the board to move or not move forward with this proposal. The Property Task Force members are: Jeryl Hollinger, Ed Miller, Duncan Smith, Pat Senner, Iris DeLeon-Hartshorn, and Jonathan [or Melanie] Neufeld as a resource contact. Rod Stafford will be asked for suggestions.

The board agreed that in the meantime, International Bethel City Church will be allowed to move to Sunday mornings; the Board therefore, increased the rent to \$500 per month each for Bethel and Anawim.

The Board meeting was then adjourned.

* The walk through included all the properties except the "parsonage." Tim and Iris been through the house and can give us a brief report on the condition of that specific property.

Submitted by Charlotte Derksen, secretary