

## Long Range Planning Team Recommendations to Church Council

October 2009

### **Summary Recommendations:**

- Retire our existing debt in the next two years (or sooner)
- Appointment of a Building Committee charged with the responsibility for Phase I construction and design
- Convert the Long Range Planning Team into an ongoing “Vision Team”

### **Background:**

The Long Range Planning Team (LRPT) was formed by the 2006 Charge Conference to develop a master plan for best utilization of our 19-acre campus. The team received approval from the 2007 Church Council to contract with a planning consultant, and John Templeton of Foxhollow Goodson (Knoxville TN) started meeting with us.

The LRPT met with various ministry leaders to understand statistics of the various ministries – actual current facilities usage and realistic future opportunities. We also found and utilized area demographic statistics.

This work became the input for a document by Foxhollow Goodson entitled “**Program Narrative**” that set the basis for possible future facility needs here for a 10-15 year timeframe.

With the Program Narrative as its basis, facilities were proposed and located on our property to hopefully best meet our current and future needs. This master plan was graphically presented in a 9-slide presentation titled “**Master Plan Development.**”

(The developed master plan needs to be understood as conceptual *planning* drawings of a possible solution and not detailed construction drawings. In The United Methodist Church process, it is up to a specifically formed *building* committee to convert design concepts into actual building designs.)

The above-referenced documents plus focus group feedback and other information can be seen on our website under the “Long Range Planning” tab.

The facility as presented in the Master Plan Development was roughly estimated (based only on square footage and in Spring 2008 dollars) in excess of \$10,000,000, so it was obvious that construction would need to be completed in a phased approach over a number of years. The Program Narrative presents one suggestion for this construction schedule.

During the same time the Master Plan was being presented to Long’s Chapel focus groups, Rob Fuquay, our Sr. Pastor of 13 years, was transferred, and Chuck Wilson was assigned as our new Sr. Pastor (effective April, 2008).

A recommendation by our Church Council’s administrative leaders was approved by the 2008 Church Council: to do one additional study, focusing on the personality of Long’s Chapel, and a consultation with The Armstrong Group (TAG) was initiated. This study was completed in May, 2009 with implementation work continuing.

The LRPT has been tasked with reviewing/incorporating the results of the two studies and presenting team recommendations based on “what we know now.”

## **Recommendations Details:**

### **Retire our existing debt in the next two years (or sooner)**

Prior to spending on an additional major building project, first **pay off our existing \$659,000 debt**. We recommend that we initiate an aggressive fundraising program to retire this debt by the end of 2011 or sooner.

*This recommendation is not meant to limit Long's Chapel reasonable response to timely future opportunities (purchase of adjacent property, additional parking expansion, etc.) while the debt is being paid.*

This action demonstrates to the congregation that we are being good stewards in addressing the use of church funds. It allows the church to proceed into a building program "debt free" thereby allowing financial focus to be on the current and future rather than having to also consider ramifications of past indebtedness. Further, it answers the question which was raised by the congregation in the LRPT's focus groups of, "What are we going to do with our current debt?"

There are two major considerations that should guide our time frame efforts in this debt retirement.

First, we must remember that time is of the essence due primarily to the fact that a great many space utilization needs require attention on a current and/or in a short term basis. This means that while the program to retire the debt is ongoing we will need to constantly seek temporary means of solving these current and short term future needs. With our current needs at the level in which they exist this is a program that cannot function adequately for our congregation for an extended period of time.

The second consideration facilitating a quick debt resolution program is that when any future construction takes place the time utilized by the capital program will have caused a delay in the bid, approve, construct process and that in turn will cause an increase in the final price due to the escalation of building costs.

### **Appointment of a Building Committee charged with the responsibility for Phase I construction and design**

Supporting the phased construction approach as referenced in the Program Narrative, we recommend that a **Phase 1 construction package** be prepared by a future Charge Conference-approved Building Committee. Because of our existing campus overcrowding in all ministries, this Building Committee's work should be initiated with expenditure initiations to coincide with the debt elimination schedule.

New building locations should be influenced by the concepts of the Master Plan.

New structures should include the ability to either expand horizontally (removable walls) or, where space to build is limited, vertically (adding on floors) as the future needs may require.

Consideration should also be given to the impact of future phased construction on each preceding or current phase so that the campus' use is as minimally impacted by future construction phases as possible.

Our recommendation of components for consideration of a first phase of construction is as follows:

- Creation of a **multi-use area** (gathering area, coffee ministry, fellowship hall, etc. adjacent to the existing sanctuary).

The approximate square footage should be enough to support 70 removable tables with 550 people seated.

There should be allowance for storage areas for the tables when not in use.

There should be men's and women's lavatories and, towards the front wall, a reference room and a welcome center.

Construction should compliment the existing sanctuary. The east wall (facing the parking lot) should be removable to allow for future construction.

- Consideration should be given to constructing a new **kitchen** (reuse existing equipment?) to support this new fellowship space. (Kitchen located so as to not limit future phase construction.)
- To reduce the crowding between worship services and noise problems between the existing gathering area and the sanctuary, a new, wide (15 to 20 feet?) **hallway** should be constructed to facilitate easy access between the Venue, Sanctuary, and new multi-use area.

"Main building" entrances should be both from the Old Clyde Road side (the formal Sanctuary entrance) and also the parking lot adjacent to the sanctuary. The existing "gathering area" might be converted into additional sanctuary space.

Consideration should also be given to including a **bell tower** as part of the entrance from Old Clyde Road.

Additional space needs identified by the LRPT:

**Administrative space issue** – Because our existing office building is located where it potentially conflicts with the proposed new multi-use facility location, it likely will be necessary to relocate the existing building, or demolish it and construct a new administrative building, or else find some other immediate solution.

When new construction becomes necessary, consideration should be given to building a facility with adequate offices/cubicles (including space for future growth) and at least two 50 person capacity conference rooms with accessibility from the outside to maximize use.

A facility of approximately 6,000 +/- square feet should be adequate. Locating the building across the street would greatly facilitate further growth on the main campus areas. Again, this building could be cost effective through modular construction.

Although the following needs are being prioritized into later phases of construction, they are also currently demanding of additional space needs:

- **Children's Ministry** –

Currently Long's Chapel's Children program is hampered by the following:

- Classrooms that are maximally utilized
- Four classrooms being used that are remotely located (not in children's area)
- No room for future growth or expansion in current facility area
- No storage space, AV facility, library facility

Consideration should be given to the construction of a new Children's building with enough classrooms to meet the requirements of the current student population broken down by age / grade, etc. but addressing growth needs in all age groups utilizing an acceptable percentage based on our ability to handle growth in any area. Consideration should also be given to utilization of this area as Sunday school and nursery. These classrooms could be permanent in construction or be formed from joined modules. There should be a covered entrance with associated parking and a receiving area. The classrooms should enter and exit from one hallway and have access to an outside secure recreation area. The building should have at least one conference/training room and

adequate storage space. There should also be an audio/visual facility and a library. If the building could be linked to the Fellowship Building then food preparation facilities and the use of the multi-purpose nature of the Fellowship Building would be of great benefit.

Note: With minimal retrofit the vacated classrooms in the existing Children's Area could be immediately available as classrooms for adults/youth/groups, etc.

- **Adult Education space** – Some of this need might be satisfied by the freed up classroom space from the Children's Area.

Consideration should be given to a combination of demolition/reconstruction within the old building into new classrooms, or as a cost savings, strategically placing modular classroom units around the campus.

- **Worship space** – With the current growth of the 9:40 service it is only a matter of time before the Venue (our simulcast overflow facility for that service) becomes incapable of handling the need. If a change in attendance is not facilitated by other means then we may face the need for additional worship space.

Consideration should be given this eventuality as an add-on of contemporary worship/multi-purpose space to the new Fellowship Building (hence the removable east wall).

- **Prayer Garden / Meditation and Pic Nic area** – Consider setting aside an area with a garden and benches for prayer and quiet meditation with single-level access to convenient parking.

### **Proposed Timeline associated with Recommendations:**

October 2009              Church Council accepts LRPT Report

November 2009          Annual Charge Conference approves LRPT Report

January 2010 and going forward in 2010:

LRPT converted/renamed the **Vision Team** with membership in regular classes (that is, convert this team into a regular team supported by the Nominations process)

A Church Council-formed **task force** develops, promotes, and manages a major debt retirement plan that includes any significant Strategic Objectives funding needs plus the short-term financial needs of the (next year) Building Team

Significant debt retirement takes place

#### **Initial responsibilities of the newly designated "Vision Team":**

Vision Team addresses integration of Strategic Objectives into Long's Chapel Ministry Organization

Vision Team "owns" efforts to address ongoing overcrowding issues

Vision Team develops funding plans for the future Building Team

Vision Team serves as a resource for other teams that plan site construction

Vision Team addresses incorporation of the Bishop's "3" goals into the strategic activities going forward:

300,000 members in the WNC conference

30,000 more people in worship

3,000 mission teams

300 resurrected churches

30 new faith communities

All within the next three years

Fall 2010                      Nominations Committee proposes a Building Committee to address the building activities identified by the LRPT

November 2010            Annual Charge Conference approves formation of the **Building Committee**

January 2011 and going forward in 2011:

Significant Debt retirement continues (debt paid off this year)

Building Committee work begins

Capital formation plan delivered and executed

Year 2012                      Phase 1 building program begins

In conclusion the LRPT would like to state that there are many considerations that are adjunct to the areas of concern mentioned in this recommendation letter. We stand ready at any time to discuss or provide input to the Building Committee or any other appointed group so that together we can move Long's Chapel into the exciting growth oriented future that is surely awaiting it. Thank you for your consideration of our recommendations.

For the Long Range Planning Team, Bill Staib, Chairman

**LRPT:**

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