

BUILDING COMMITTEE (VISION 21)

Our committee spent 2007 trying to get our Site Plan approved by Fairfax County. We had received our Special Use Permit in September of 2006, and hoped that the Site Plan could be approved in a matter of 6-9 months. That would have allowed us to start demolition and construction in mid-summer and would have necessitated a move of the Day School in May.

The delays with Fairfax County, however, put a halt to all those plans. We submitted the first Site Plan documents in January. The county responded in May, denying approval and listing their concerns. We began a series of meetings and re-submissions to meet those concerns. Starting in October, we began to make some headway, with tentative approvals from the Water Authority, Fire Marshal, and Urban Forester. We were also granted a waiver so we don't need to widen the sidewalk along Franconia Road. Finally, in December, we received verbal indications that our latest proposal to VDOT would meet their approval. We are, at this writing, still waiting for official approval. If it is received soon, we will begin the final county process—the building permit. That should not be too lengthy (we hope) and thus we finally may be able to prepare a bid package and seek construction bids.

Our main challenge now will be to establish a solid financial base for the project. In the four years we have worked for county approval, construction costs have risen steadily, so we now face a more significant budget challenge. When we have the final estimates, we will share them with the church as we seek the necessary Session, Congregational, and Presbytery approvals for the financing plan. In the meantime, we will sponsor an audit of the church's books, since both Presbytery and the bank will require a current audit.

The Building Fund has continued to grow throughout the year as members fulfill their pledges. As of December 31, preliminary reports indicate a total of \$753,244 in cash, memorials, and securities in the building fund accounts. Since we have paid all the necessary engineering, architectural, and county fees as we went along, this represents our net fundraising. Our goal for 2007 was to hit \$750,000 net, and we are grateful for the wonderful support the congregation has given the project.

For most of our members, 2008 represents the third year of their 3-year pledge to the Building Stewardship Campaign. As this first phase winds down, the Committee will begin plans for Phase 2. We hope everyone will stay with the vision that is coming ever so much closer to reality and renew their pledge of support in Phase 2.

Respectfully submitted,
Neil Sampson, Chair, Building Committee