

Report from the Building Committee to the Session
Bush Hill Presbyterian Church
August 19, 2008

Situation with Fairfax Co. Site Plan Review

We have been working with Scott Robinson of Supervisor Jeff McKay's office, whose sources on the county staff are saying the same thing as Fred Kuntz is hearing – there are no remaining problems on the site plan, but VDOT has not yet returned a signed copy from Richmond, so it's not officially approved. In one form or another, we've been hearing that general story since December, and except for rattling cages, we've not known what, if anything, we can do about it. The local VDOT reps are reportedly satisfied, but haven't returned the signed documents yet, so that's the remaining issue. The final approval could come any day, or it might drag on for weeks and months. We're hoping for action soon, and will keep in touch with McKay's office if it doesn't happen.

Situation with the Second Stewardship Campaign

The follow-up subcommittee headed by Dick Szymanski and Cathy King began working with Jeff Newlin of RSI on the second stewardship campaign a couple of months ago, but encountered a lack of enthusiasm and support as they tried to recruit potential campaign leaders. The extended delay in obtaining Fairfax Co. approvals has made many people uncertain about the project. Coupled with changing economic conditions in the country, the uncertainty about potential construction cost increases as a result of the long delay, and the national problems with mortgage lenders, we have encountered many people who are uncertain about making commitments at this time.

It became clear that we need to re-ignite the congregation's enthusiasm and optimism levels before a successful stewardship campaign could be launched. We need to once again re-visit our vision for the future of Bush Hill and its role in bringing Christ into the community, and stoke the fires of determination to achieve that vision.

As the subcommittee contemplated the "re-igniting" process, it was suggested that success would be much more likely when we had full county approval and had construction bids in hand so that we could tell the congregation exactly what kinds of costs we will face, and be able to lay out a new plan for financing the project. An email poll of the Building Committee brought unanimous support for the idea of postponing the launch of the second stewardship campaign until those facts could be brought to the congregation. Jeff Newlin met with the committee and agreed that we could suspend paying the RSI billing until the campaign was re-started. He also agreed to help us with the "re-igniting" campaign.

The best guess from Fred Kuntz is that we could be ready with new cost estimates around the first of the year. That suggests that we should de-couple the second building campaign from this fall's Stewardship Campaign and the 50th Anniversary celebration, and launch it again in early 2009. We would like to start the "re-ignition" process as soon as we can get enough solid information to work with. That could possibly occur in late 2008 or early 2009.

In His Service,
Neil Sampson, Chairman