

*We did not put our ideas together  
We put our purpose together  
and we agreed  
then we decided.  
Mayan Quote*

**Background Discussion for UUCB  
Congregational Meeting Sept. 18, 2011**

The purpose of the Sept. 18 meeting is for the Congregation to give direction to the architect so that he can develop three concepts for building by (1) defining building location, and (2) if appropriate, voting on how much of the existing building should be retained.

Implementing our decision is contingent on the approval of the Village Review Board. Based on the congregation's decision and results of the VRB review, the architect would then create three concepts and cost estimates leading to the congregation's decision on building design.

This meeting is a very important step in making progress toward rebuilding the church. Although there are many decisions to make and steps to take in the future, the Recovery Team has defined two discrete issues that must be decided before moving forward.

**Question 1**

Proposed motion:

**Where should UUCB rebuild the church?**

- 1a. 15 Pleasant Street, Brunswick (the in-town property)
- 1b. the Gurnet Rd. property

UUCB owns property on Gurnet Road which was purchased several years ago as a possible building site for a new church. Because we have two potential building sites, the architect needs to have clarification from the Congregation about which site we want to use. This is a summary of advantages and disadvantages of each site. It is not an exhaustive or conclusive list, but is intended to be instructive in a comparison of the two sites.

Location, not design, is the issue here. Both sites could incorporate designs to maximize light, create large dry spaces that could be used for many purposes which promote our

mission, incorporate green sanctuary principles, accessibility, and flexible use of sanctuary space.

**Gurnet Rd. Advantages:**

- Accessible to natural areas to be integrated into RE curriculum and for worship services
- Potentially larger footprint available
- Larger parking area including handicap spaces
- Space to hold outdoor services and outdoor gatherings
- Room for sacred space for our dead - memorial garden perhaps

**Gurnet Rd. Disadvantages:**

- The cost of design/permitting is conservatively estimated at \$29,500 above the cost of required design/permitting on Pleasant St.
- The cost of site preparation (water, septic, parking, Rt. 24 turning lane) would add \$228,000 to the expense of the building over what would be needed in-town
- The insurance settlement will not cover expenses for demolition on the Pleasant St. site if another site is chosen
- The time required for the planning, permitting process would lengthen the project by many months
- Potential environmental limitations or zoning restrictions

**Pleasant St. Advantages:**

- Construction of new parking is not required, as long as building construction is completed within two years
- In-town visibility may better promote our mission and make it easier to connect with the community
- Closer connection to UUCB historical roots
- Less environmental impact by building on our current site

**Pleasant St. Disadvantages:**

- Village Review Board requirements may limit design choices of the façade
- Potential expansion is limited to the existing lots (church and Pennell House)
- No more parking is available than currently exists
- Current Religious Education space is still substandard unless we rebuild or renovate our RE space
- There is no safe outdoor space for young people

**In voting on Question 1 (if no amendment alters the basic choice) the congregation will decide the location of our new church.**

## Question 2

**What should UUCB do with our in-town property before rebuilding?** (This is a vote to guide the architect in creating building concepts, and the vote will inform our application to the Village Review Board. Based on the wishes of the congregation and the plan accepted by the Village Review Board, the Recovery Team will take the appropriate steps to secure the building for the winter.)

2a. Leave as much of the current structure intact as possible

2b. Take down all but the front section (bell tower, Pleasant St. wall and narthex, which is the entryway and the area up to where the arches opened into the sanctuary)

2c. Take down the entire structure including the front and build a new structure

We have options with our Pleasant Street property that range from taking all of it down to leaving as much as possible and rebuilding. In the three choices presented in the proposed motion #2, the first (leaving as much of the structure intact as possible) would be the most limiting to changing the footprint from the existing configuration. The other two choices would allow more footprint flexibility. The Recovery Team urges that whatever we do, we solve the wet basement problem for our building. That can be done even with some of the existing structure in place.

Here is what we know about the structure you see now:

- The entire roof structure is unsound and will need to be taken down and replaced.
- The structural integrity of the side walls is questionable (especially if the roof is removed), although some of the wood is certainly salvageable
- There is no back wall any more. The hole is covered with plywood and then a tarp.
- The floor of the sanctuary is sound and the materials can be reused.
- The steeple will need structural work but can be left in place, as can the Pleasant Street side of the building (up to about where the arches were inside the sanctuary).
- We do not have setback limitations on our site, so the footprint of the building can be enlarged, meaning that side walls would have to be taken down and moved anyway.

Our architect strongly recommends that we take off the roof and the side walls, salvaging any usable wood, then cover the floor and stabilize the steeple side for the winter. He recommends this because he says that it is often more expensive to save walls that have suffered some damage than to build new walls and because he would like us to have the option of a larger building. He also indicates that we will spend more money to stabilize it as it is for the winter, and that is money we could better spend on rebuilding.

The Service Master/Elite Construction folks indicate we could leave the side walls and roof for the winter. The side walls have not been completely stripped to the studs, so we do not know how much of the framing structure will need to be replaced or shored up in the future. They also say they can take down all but the Pleasant Street portion as described above.

The biggest question mark in all of this is what we will hear from the Village Review Board. We have reviewed the information available on the town web site, and Noel Smith has worked with them before. He does not anticipate huge problems. He does think they will probably prefer us to leave the Pleasant Street side of the church.

The Village Review Board (VRB) will not be able to meet with Noel until their October session. We need to understand that changes made over the years have made our building nothing like the original 1880s building it once was, so it is unlikely that we would be held to a standard of restoring it to that degree.

Given that the Village Review Board will have significant input, here is what we propose regarding the September 18 vote on Question 2:

- We should each vote for the option we think best moves us toward the building we ultimately want, not necessarily what we think will be acceptable to the VRB.
- The three options will be prioritized by our votes.
- We will present the number one option to the VRB in October.
- Other options will be presented in order if the VRB rejects our first option.

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF BRUNSWICK  
MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION  
SEPTEMBER 18, 2011

Following the church service, Minnie Brown Center, Bath

**AGENDA**

1. Call to Order, establish a quorum, Opening Words
2. Purpose of the meeting: for the Congregation to give direction to the architect so that he can develop three concepts for building by (1) defining building location, and (2) if appropriate, voting for preference of the parameters of the building site.

Explanation of meeting process and written ballot.

3. Recovery Team Report
4. Proposal of Question 1

Where should UUCB rebuild the church?

- 1a. 15 Pleasant Street, Brunswick (the in-town property)
- 1b. the Gurnet Rd. property

If 1b prevails we can entertain a motion to direct the architect to propose plans for building.

If 1a prevails, then the following motion is proposed for a second written ballot vote:

5. Proposal of Question 2:

What should UUCB do with our in-town property before rebuilding? (This is a vote to guide the architect in creating building concepts, and the vote will inform our application to the Village Review Board. Based on the wishes of the congregation and the plan accepted by the Village Review Board, the Recovery Team will take the appropriate steps to secure the building for the winter.)

- 2a. Leave as much of the current structure intact as possible
- 2b. Take down all but the front section (bell tower, Pleasant St. wall and narthex (entryway and area up to where the arches opened to the sanctuary)
- 2c. Take down the entire structure, including the front and build a new structure

6. Other Business
7. Closing Words, Adjournment