Report to Temple Heritage Center Board

From Visioning Strategy Committee

The following attended a meeting at the CDC offices on Tuesday, March 3, 2014

Paul Richard, Tyson Domer, David Kosene, Al Polin, Leigh Evans, Bernard

The discussion revolved upon arriving at

1. A consensus on what has already been discussed at our Visioning Meeting of January 24 and Board meeting of February 20.
2. Develop a plan of action that would elicit the opinions and concerns of communities as we shape our vision for how the building will best be used in the future

The central question is: Once we restore the Temple, the building, what should its use be. How do we repurpose the building to serve the needs of the neighborhood and communities at large. The Board must reach a consensus on these points before allowing them to resonate in the neighborhood and community at large.

Our first task is to agree on three fundamental concepts.

What is our Mission? What is the unchanging mission in restoring the Temple.

What is our Vision? How do we see the building’s overall role in the lives of people and communities

What are our Values? What are the principles by which we will live by in finalizing our mission and vision. What are the underlying values that will operate to help us achieve our Mission and Vision.

**Mission**

In all the discussions, there is a belief that our mission in restoring the Temple must serve some great purpose. Restoring the building is not an end in itself. In a sense we are engaged in a social enterprise. An excellent definition was put forth that merits restatement.

*A social enterprise is an organization that applies commercial strategies to maximize improvements in human and environmental well-being, rather than maximizing profits for external shareholders. Social enterprises can be structured as a for-profit or non-profit, and may take a the form of a co-operative, mutual organization, a social business, or a charity organization*.

If the statement above is indeed our purpose, then our mission should be clearly stated.

The statement proposed by Rabbi Dennis resonated for all.

*The restored Temple will become integral to our neighborhood and city as a place to remember, learn, educate, connect, convene, host, and welcome, serving as an inclusive center and model of inspired citizenship to our diverse Indianapolis community*

We need to discuss this and agree if this is indeed our Mission

**Vision**

Our Vision is what we want to focus on. Our Vision today may change over time as we constantly seek to stay relevant to the communities we serve, or as we strive to set goals with other partners over time. Inherent to our vision, we must always keep in mind to deliver on the promise of our mission and always strive to be sustainable through, not only a constant stream of revenue, but also through innovation, relevancy, and reading the pulse of our communities.

We need to reach a consensus of what our Vision for the building is today moving forward. A number of points have been made:

Restore the Temple to honor its history, the stories within, working with like-minded institutions to remember, learn and educate

Create a home base to form a new collaborative platform for our communities and faith based institutions to connect, welcome, convene and include.

Stabilize the Temple building in order to arrest ongoing decay and blighting influence in the neighborhood and remove non-historic additions to reveal the elegant and stately historic architecture so that majestic spaces may inspire future thinking.

**Values**

The core values that have consistently emerged in all discussion so far have been stated using the following words and phrases

*Honoring our diverse cultural heritage*

*Build strong neighborhoods*

*Create a unity of purpose through diversity*

*Make our past memories relevant today*

There may be more Values for us to consider

**Plan of Action – Outreach**

Presently, we must work alongside the various communities we hope to engage and serve in order to refine and develop a shared vision that resonates with residents, citywide stakeholders, potential partners, and funder alike. In essence this goal would be our outreach strategy as we finalize our Mission, our Vision, and our Values.

The following is an expansion of this thought as expressed by Tyson:

*We need to succinctly describe our core group’s interest in heritage, context, stories, identity (not just history, which is dry and boring) and ‘package’ it as a value statement. These interest areas also present tangible opportunities related to cultural and racial diversity, immigrant populations, tolerance, and fairness and other humanities issues that are relevant to all communities, but especially cogent given Mapleton Fall Creek’s socioeconomic history. Our conversations often migrate toward this topic, likely because although the concepts resonate with our group, the critical path to incorporate the concepts into our work plans is not obvious. Our job now is to succinctly describe these ideas and desires, and determine the extent that they resonate with our communities. Do these value statements allow us to use this concept as one of our main jumping off points during outreach conversations???*

*It’s important that as we go out into the community, we are leveraging the thinking we’ve already invested in defining our Values, Mission, and Vision so our outreach helps us to better understand our communities and refine our specific work plans.* ***Do our Values, Mission and (perhaps most importantly) Vision statements provide the proper starting point for effective engagement with our communities?*** *Remember that we are seeking to avoid repeating the baseline thinking and visioning we’ve already accomplished and refine our work plans. Remember also that a significant component of our future work will involve financing a $2M+ restoration of the Temple building.*

*A key outreach tactic will involve asking a series of directed questions that will help us to begin conversations and refine our vision (see Vision statements above), thus directly informing our work plan. Some core questions where we must ask our communities to help discern our “sweet spot” include:*

* What’s your perception of the safety of the MFC neighborhood? Are you afraid to travel to destinations or attend events there?
* Given the communities we are engaging, is our reach too broad, too narrow?
* What is the extent of our desire to give voice to the (unvoiced) narrative history of the Jewish community in Mapleton-Fall Creek? In Indianapolis?
* What is the extent of our desire to give voice to the narrative history of the Black community in Mapleton-Fall Creek? In Indianapolis?
* What honors history and heritage? What is the extent of our desire to provide a platform for broader humanities and socioeconomic issues?
* What is the extent of our desire to influence the end use of the Temple building?

stabilization --> sale/lease for any use (better than nothing, eliminates blight)

stabilization --> sale/lease for directed/controlled use (heritage/humanities vision)

stabilization --> restoration for any use (difficult to fund this without specific end use)

stabilization --> restoration for directed use (implies partnership/collaboration)

stabilization --> restoration for new heritage/humanities organization

* What will make people say “let’s go to The Temple?”

**Ongoing Meetings – Accomplished and Planned**

Mapleton Fall Creek Neighborhood Association – August 8, 2013

Indiana Jewish Historical Society – October 27, 2013

Dorcas Society Redeemer Lutheran Church – January 23, 2014

Visioning Meeting – January 24, 2014

Shaarey Tefilla Congregation – February 11, 2014

Midtown Indianapolis Inc. – February 24, 2014

Mapleton Fall Creek Neighborhood Association – March 13, 2014

Field Trip to Temple Israel in Lafayette, IN – March 16, 2014

Jewish Community Relations Council – March 18, 2014

Historic Meridian Park Neighborhood Association – April 1, 2014

Brainstorming Meeting with IUPUI – April 3, 2014

Our planning for a Community wide public meeting has yet to be planned. We envision a meeting on a Sunday, perhaps, that will bring significant number of people from the neighborhood and Jewish community to a planning