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, Isaiah Kuperstein, Tyson Domer, David Kosene, Al Polin, Leigh Riley-Evans, Bernard Mickle (MFCDC Public Ally)

Our discussion focused on:

1. Organizing, distilling and encapsulating the thinking from our Visioning Meeting of January 24 and our Board meeting of February 20, as the basis for...
2. Developing an outreach strategy that will elicit the opinions and concerns of our constituent communities as we shape our work plan for reuse of the Temple.

The Board must reach a consensus on Values, Mission, and Vision so that we may succinctly present our thinking to the neighborhood and community at large in order to elicit useful feedback.

inform ?

What is our Mission? What is our unchanging goal in restoring the Temple?

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

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*ing*

*ing (what about collaborations?)*

*ing (this is already covered in #1 above…)*

…

**Mission**

In all the discussions, there is a belief that our mission in restoring the Temple must serve some greater 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 Mission 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 will focus on. Our Vision today may change 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 continuously reading the pulse of our communities.

We need to reach a consensus of what our Vision for the building is today. 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.

**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. . Communities include:

 Mapleton-Fall Creek neighborhood

 Indianapolis Jewish community

 anchor institutions – eds, meds, arts & culture

 Mid-North churches

 **other communities???** **does this cover the intended geographic reach of our project???**

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?”

**Introductory Meetings – Accomplished and Planned**

Mapleton-Fall Creek Neighborhood Association – August 8, 2013

Indiana Jewish Historical Society – October 27, 2013

Dorcas Society of Redeemer Lutheran Church – January 23, 2014

Temple Heritage Center, Inc. Visioning Meeting – January 24, 2014

Shaarey Tefilla Congregation – February 11, 2014

All-Neighborhood Meeting of 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 with Museum Studies department at IUPUI– April 3, 2014

Our schedule and format for our wider community forum has yet to be planned.

one large meeting or several?

what is the best day/time (Sunday is a bad day…)?