

Pope John XXIII Parish

—The English-speaking Roman Catholic Parish in Geneva

Ch. Dr-Adolphe-Pasteur 35
1209 Geneva
www.johnxxiii.ch

Telephone: 0041 22 733 04 83
Fax: 0041 22 919 19 39
Email: office@johnxxiii.ch

General Assembly Meeting - draft

Draft Minutes of the Meeting
Wednesday, 21 January 2009
Parish Center, 19:15 – 21:05

Attendees

| | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| ABRAHAMIAN, Anna | FILLO, Heidi | NOLAN, David M. |
| ACAMPORA, Katherine | FRANCIS, John | O'CONNOR, Stephanie |
| ACAMPORA, Tony | FRANCIS, Meg | ODHIAMBO, Jane Lucy |
| AIELLO, Bob | GANNON, Jane | ONYANGO, Adelheid |
| AIELLO, Cindy | GAVINIO, Ramon III | PASCUA, Victoria |
| ALBUQUERQUE, Sushila | GEMMELL, Stephanie | PASCUAL, Ana |
| ALVAREZ YANCE ROBERTS, Corazon | GIBBONS, Declan | PASQUALIN, Edi |
| ANAEDU, Adaora | GOYENA, Rosalina | RIVAT, Anthea |
| AQUI, Jessica | GRUBER, Rudolph | <i>RONEY, David</i> |
| BAPST, Mary Evans | HIGGINS, Helen | RYAN, Roy F. |
| BELL, Bill | HILL, Denis | RYAN, Patricia |
| BENDO, Wencie | HOHBERGER, Pamela | SANDOVAL, Arthur |
| BENDO, Vivian | KAIGAI, Joseph | SANDOVAL, Celeste |
| BENITEZ, Joselito | <i>KASTORYANO, Katherine</i> | SARTORIUS, Yvette |
| BENITEZ, Lyn | KAUTOKE, Makalita Falasima | SAVERIMUTTU, Vasanthi |
| <i>BERNASCONI, Mary</i> | KAYONDO, Moses | SHAVE, Tony |
| <i>BERRIG, Lourdes (PAC Chair)</i> | KAYONDO, Jane | SILLANO, Nellie |
| BIRKETT, Eileen | KEATING, Bernard | SOLANO, Adriana |
| BOSCHERT, Cyril | KHERA, Popsy | TABLANTE, Yolanda |
| BRADY, Pauline | KLEKR, Christine | TECSON, Lizzie |
| BRAUNWALDER, Edith | KOFI, Frank | THIEL, Anne |
| BUCHANAN, Dave | LAVERTY, Genny | THOMAS, Janet |
| BUCHANAN, Cecilia | MANISCAN, Cecilia | THULLEN, Sylvia |
| BULLOCK, Theren Marshall | MAPANAO, Maribel | TIBERGHEN, Pierre-Yves |
| <i>BURCI, Gian Luca</i> | MARCHETTI, Ann | TIBERGHEN, Susan |
| CABRERA, Flomel | MARCHETTI, Fabio | TITUS, Craig |
| CHALLO, Stephen | MARTINEZ, Lizanne | TWOMEY, Joan |
| COBBE, Marjorie | MARTINEZ, Elizabeth | UHOMOIBHI, Perpetua |
| CROWE, Raphael | MASON, Elizabeth | URETA, Tomas |
| DAYRIT, Elvira SN | MATOVU, Olivia | WALTHO, John |
| DE BELEN, LUZ | MATTHEWS, Patricia | YEOMAN, Denise |
| DE GUZMAN, Auring | MATTHEWS, Geoffrey | ZIMMER, John |
| DE MELLO, Peter | <i>MBECHE, Oscar</i> | <i>Father Richard De Lord</i> |
| DIAN, Librada | MCSHEE, Margaret | <i>Father Tony Sequeira</i> |
| DOLORES, Rachel Hanna | MENSAH, Stephen M. | |
| DRAGO, Calogero | MORENO, Thelma | <i>Member of the Parish</i> |
| DRAGO, Neema Nyerere | <i>MURPHY IVES, Christopher</i> | <i>Administrative Council</i> |
| ESCALANTE, Pauline Anne | NANTULYA, Florence | |

Opening prayer

Fr. Richard opened the meeting with a prayer at 19:15.

Introduction

Lourdes Berrig, PAC Chairperson, welcomed those present and provided some history of the parish and the building of the John XXIII Center.

Background, Explanation of the recommendation

David Roney, chairman of the Expansion/Relocation Committee addressed the three challenges in space for the parish which gave rise to the formation of the committee:

- 1) Sunday morning catechism program – with the selling and relocation of the German School, the facilities were no longer available to the parish, as of September 2007
- 2) Overcrowding of the 10:00 and 11:30 Masses over the past several years
- 3) Growth and pastoral activities in the parish – there has been expansion and increase of programs in the parish. Groups are being turned down when they want to meet as part of the parish community.

Committee members - Dave Buchanan, Carol Drake, Katherine Kastoryano, Jason Mettler, John Zimmer, Bill Bell, Fr. Richard De Lord

The committee also worked to a certain extent with an independent American-trained architect. David expressed thanks to the committee for the good work of the past two and one-half years. In total the committee has met some 22 times during this period years.

Mandate of the committee

- 1) Short-term solution for Catechism
- 2) Long-term solution for all three space challenges

The short-term solution at the Bell School and other sites is not tenable over the medium term. There are four different sites, which mean that classes are scattered around the neighborhood. This is especially difficult for families with more than one child.

The long-term solution involves emotional issues. Many parishioners have grown up here or raised their children at John XXIII Center. The committee realized that it needed to be transparent, and asked for input as the process moved forward. There have been regular announcements in the bulletin, at Masses, special consultative meeting of April 2006, interim report at the June 2007 General Assembly.

One output was the assessment of parish needs, compiled taking inputs from parishioners. The Needs Assessment document was released in December 2007. It made it clear that the many parishioners who contributed to the document understood that the parish needed to resolve all three problems presented.

That led to the feasibility study, which required professional assistance from an architectural firm. Details on this are written in the committee report. 2dlc was the firm chosen to help out.

The assessment set out the options that could meet the parish needs. It became apparent that a major option was an exchange with St. Nicolas de Flue. This had been discussed 15 and then seven years ago. As the committee discussed the options with Bishop Farine, it became clear

that the two most feasible sites were SNDF and John XXIII. 2dlc were given instructions to propose ways to meet the space needs at the two sites.

2dlc came up with two variants at each of the two sites.

David showed overhead photographic views of the two sites, taken from the architectural feasibility study.

JXXIII - 2426 m²

SNDF - 6282 m²

There are certain rights of way at SNDF for access to the park, and some restrictions on height, but the size of the property is much larger.

Variant A - JXXIII

Raise the roof and add a balcony covering about 2/3 of the floor space of the ground level. Add brand new building adjacent to the parish house and cover the garden. Falls short of the need for 600 seats in the worship. It offers only 508 spaces, but otherwise meets the parish needs. 1442 m² usable space in total. Total cost - CHF 3.4M, (all estimates at + - 20%)

Variant B - JXXIII

Has the same building in the garden, but adds worship space not by building up but by building to the side of the current center. Only results in 543 seats in the church. CHF 2.6 M, usable space 1,383 m²

Variant A - SNDF

This does not involve any external construction. It requires minor work on the church e.g. painting, lighting and sound. It does require renovations throughout the existing parish house and administrative building. Window wells would be put in on the basement level, plus painting, new lighting and ventilation. This solution meets all the needs documented in the Needs Assessment document. CHF 1.6 M, probably closer to CHF 2 M by the time it's done, 1915 m², Church seating is 600

Variant B - SNDF

This requires demolishing the parish house and administrative building, custom building something for the parish's specific needs. This solution meets all the needs documented in the Needs Assessment document. CHF 3.5M (they designed exactly to the specs, so as to avoid higher expense), 1744 m². Church seating is 600

Adding another floor to the existing SNDF building is possible within height constraints, but that estimated expense was higher than the rebuild of Variant B

General reasons for the ER Committee and PAC to recommend Variant SNDF A

1. There are big disadvantages to building at JXXIII - Garden would be gone, loss of daylight in parish house, cutting off of meeting space after Mass. And then there would be limited possibilities for further expansion.
2. At SNDF, less than 1/3 of the property is built up, with property 3 times greater than at JXXIII.

The variants at JXXIII and the rebuild variant at SNDF would also have created more disruption for the parish.

Questions from parishioners about the proposed plan

Is there a difference among the variants in the quality of accommodations for the priests, or the classroom/meeting areas?

- The idea would be to renovate at SNDF. The priests' quarters will be renovated at SNDF. Quality should be similar in the end.

Is there any issue with emergency exits out of the SNDF basement?

- There are two large staircases for emergency exit, plus there would be large window wells 2 or 3 meters wide. The security division of the Canton will give approval if safety and security measures are adequate

What are the lodging facilities for visitors?

- There would be room for two visitors.

Is a 600-seat church big enough for normal Sunday Masses?

- 10:00 Mass – averaged 400
- 11:30 Mass – averaged 450

Is the SNDF larger than the JXXIII chapel?

Yes. Firm numbers are not available but the space is certainly larger

How big are the classrooms in the SNDF basement?

- some 35 m²

Do any of the estimates include concepts like smart classrooms or solar power?

- No, not at this relatively early stage of a feasibility study

General reasons for SNDF Variant A vs. B

- The majority of the committee felt that, with difficult economic times, plus a large building at SNDF already, plus speed of result, the renovation was better. Those opposed felt that building new would give us a made-to-order facility.

Moving forward

Next steps in the process

- SNDF to have Special General Assembly 24 February
- Two new committees needed
 1. project/transition committee
 - (Building permits process could take up to nine months)
 - Some joint work needs to be done with SNDF
 2. fund-raising committee

Issues with a move which might affect the timing

- What to do with the current users of some of the rooms
- How to transition the living quarters of the priests

Optimistic timeline

- Get access to the admin building in summer 2009
- Get permits and start construction for completion September 2010

Decision-making process

Bishop Farine supports and admires the parish and its dynamism. He is committed to helping parish growth. He sees a positive point in putting the community so much closer to the international organizations, planting the flag of the Church so close to those organizations. He and Bishop Genoud have final decision-making power, according to Canon Law. But he's very interested in knowing what parishioners feel. He wants what's best for the parish, but also for the Catholic community of the diocese as a whole. That's why working with SNDF is attractive as a solution, since it helps SNDF out as well.

Per statutes, PAC must have prior opinion of bishop regarding transactions of this type read to the General Assembly. David read the letter from Bishop Farine to the two parishes. It described the current situation and the possibility of the exchange of premises. The bishop finds the solution reasonable and realistic.

Name change

We've been talking with Bishop Farine, who understands why the parish wants to keep the name of John XXIII. He's spoken with Bishop Genoud, since it's a question of canon law. Per oral understanding, the building names will not change, but we will be the parish of John XXIII at SNDF. There will be a practical way to reduce the confusion that may arise.

Finances

Options for fund-raising

- Funding from diocese – St. Joseph Purse 3% loan
- Fund-raising campaign within the parish
- Romandie Loterie has funds available for such projects
- Corporate funding

Fund-raising of 12 years ago raised CHF 1.6 M in six months, and pledges were paid off within four years.

Operating costs

Categorizations of costs between two parishes are not 100% equal, making comparisons difficult. Renovation would aim to reduce costs, e.g. window wells and insulation. Church space may not be heated. Expenses will be higher since we're moving into bigger space, but they won't be so much higher than they'll put the project in doubt

General questions from the floor

What happens to the older people who live in the neighborhood –

⇒ this situation exists for both parishes, but both parishes are willing to resolve this.

What assumptions have you made in profiling the parish demographically and ability to meet operating expenses?

- The committee looked at the growth in the catechism program, cantonal projections, parish directory (not so reliable), to project.

What will the operating costs be?

- Because of differences in categorization, it is not possible to make exact comparisons between expenses at John XXIII Centre and SNDF. The areas where we might see some increase in maintenance costs are heating, water and electricity (SIG expenses). On the other

hand, the project provides for replacement of all windows, doors and their casings which will certainly lower heating costs and, where electricity is replaced, we will put into place far less energy-consuming equipment. Moreover, our heating costs at John XXIII include keeping the Centre heated during the week. We will not heat the Church at SNDF: The Chapel is sufficiently large to meet our weekday needs- Our general intention, even were we to stay at our current location, is to increase our standard pledge efforts so as to involve more parishioners.

What are the terms of ownership?

Still needs to be determined

- Lease – SNDF association owns the property
- Ownership by JXXIII
- Ownership by diocese and then lease to JXXIII

JXXIII is owned by diocese, but SNDF is owned by SNDF association. JXXIII pays improvements.

How is this a win-win situation for both parishes? What does SNDF get out of it?

- SNDF is aging, there are almost no children attending Masses. There are four parishes in a pastoral unit, all of which have the same problems. The future vision is to unite the four parishes into one community. SNDF is unable to maintain the existing facility; it's too large with too many costs for the diminishing community. Once the financial effort is made to renovate at SNDF, the operating costs should go down. (answer given by Carlos Hans-Moevi, head of administrative council at SNDF)

What would be the interest of SNDF holding on to the ownership of the property if it costs so much to maintain?

- All parishes own their own property and building, paid for by parishioners of the past. There may be a possibility of exchanging property with the diocese, but if that is too costly, it will be inhibitive. The main goal should be to find solutions to help with worship, etc. of the parishes.

How big is SNDF?

- Normally 6000 families, but the Sunday Masses only have 80 people. Half the community comes to JXXIII on Saturday. The change would allow a chance to reunite the parish at one site.

Will the proposed renovation take care of all the updating?

- It may not include all the renovations necessary, e.g. toilets in the basement and eventual replacing of the heating system by oil with a system by gas (10 years down the line).

Will there be toilets at street level?

- It will be taken into account

Will there be the same facilities for major activities like the Kermesse and Advent Dinner?

- There is not as big a single space but overall space is much bigger at SNDF

One parishioner requested that the parish be careful about estimates provided by the architectural firm.

There was also a suggestion to put solar panels on the roof.

Comments from the parish priests

Fr. Tony and Fr. Richard both expressed their support for the change.

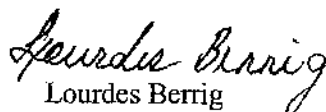
Reading of the two resolutions

David Roney read the two resolutions:

- 1) to support the recommendation of the Parish Expansion/Relocation Committee and the Parish Administrative Council (PAC) to exchange premises with the Parish of St. Nicolas de Flue and to renovate the premises there in accordance with Variant A of the Feasibility Study ("the Project")
- 2) to agree that the PAC be given the mandate to negotiate and finalize the parameters for implementing the Project, subject to appropriate reporting to the Parish.

Both resolutions were approved unanimously

The meeting was concluded with a prayer at 21.05H.


Lourdes Berrig
President


Bob Aiello
VP/Communications