



“Building a Friendly Home”

FRIENDS MEETING OF WASHINGTON RENOVATION

MARCH 2010

In 1930, Friends from the Washington DC area came together to form a new Meeting, Friends Meeting of Washington, with the following Statement of Purpose:

“The purpose of the Friends Meeting of Washington, D.C. is to foster simple spiritual worship and such activities in various fields of service as Friends may feel themselves called to undertake. As a help to these ends we purpose to maintain a place of worship where Friends and others who are like-minded may meet in religious fellowship and seek through a waiting worship the renewal of their spiritual lives and the quickening of their powers of service to the Divine Father and to their fellow men.” [We have left the original gendered language and vision of the divine intact for historical accuracy.]

In the years since, Friends have periodically invested additional resources to maintain and expand the Friends Meeting of Washington (FMW) facility. In 2002, the Faith, Facilities and Financial Realities task force took another look at our campus. Since then, an enormous amount of work, research, discussion, and seeking transpired. With broad unity proving to be elusive, in 2008, the Meeting for Business approved the Property Committee’s tightly focused proposal that it and the Planning Committee engage architects to develop plans for an elevator and new entrance, items on which there was unity. Shortly thereafter, the Planning Committee was formally recognized and charged with pursuing the accessibility project with additional attention to flooding mitigation and sustainable design.

This brochure presents the results of those charges for the Meeting’s consideration, in the hope that accurate information and a good understanding of the proposed work will provide a solid foundation as we

discern together where the Spirit leads us as a community.

This is not about a building and not about the money to fix it. It is about what it means to be a welcoming community and our responsibility to be good stewards.

The Process

In 2008, the Property Committee led the Meeting to address specifically for the Meeting House the goals of accessibility, flooding threats, and environmental responsibility.

Through an extensive competitive process, the firm of Quinn Evans Architects (QEA) was hired in mid-2008 to address these matters within the context of a long-range comprehensive plan for the FMW campus that included Quaker House as well as the Meeting House. In preparation, QEA immersed themselves in background materials, previous reports and analysis of the campus; presented a questionnaire to FMW committees and other

interested Friends; and conducted a late-January 2009 charrette in which about 30 Friends had the opportunity to interact with the architects in small groups.

As a result of this process, the recommendations presented below, developed by the members of FMW and QEA, focus on accessibility, flood control and security of the Meeting House and surrounding gardens, doing so in a manner consistent with principles of environmental sustainability. It is understood that measures to address these ends will not interfere in the long run with the future uses of the rest of the Friends Meeting property.

These recommendations are “concepts.” One should expect evolution and refinement as this project proceeds further through the design phases.

PROPOSED FACILITY RENOVATION AND REHABILITATION

This architectural description is presented as follows:

- Site Work and Gardens
- General Building Upgrades
- New West Addition (Elevator)
- Ground Floor Work
- First Floor Work
- Second Floor Work
- Roofing

At the outset, it is important to note that no work is indicated for the Quaker House and Carriage House properties. Although their repair and improvements could be warranted, the focus of this project is on the Meeting House itself, as charged by the Meeting.

Outside Agency Reviews

Comprehensive projects on historic buildings in Washington DC must have certain outside agency reviews and approvals after a reasonably firm plan and execution schedule can be

finalized. It would be premature to consult with these agencies based on the concepts presented below, but the design concepts are well within accepted historic preservation standards and are expected to be approved once submitted.

Building Code:

Virtually any repair, alteration or expansion project proposed (even very modest projects) will be designed and constructed to meet the building code in effect for Washington, DC. Part of this process is obtaining a building permit, after the full engineering and architectural drawings and specifications are complete.

Public Space Permit:

The property line coincides with the actual face of the building walls on the west and the wall around the Florida Avenue lawn and garden. New underground utility connections are needed on the south wall, so a public space permit will be required. These permits can take 4 to 6 months to obtain, but they are usually

secured after a construction contractor is about to commence work. This application process is well in the future.

Historic Preservation Review:

Because this property is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the local regulations require review of any repair and alteration project by the Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB) of Washington, DC. Typically they are most concerned about exterior treatments, but they also can comment on interior changes to historic buildings. In the required process, they review projects while they are still in the formative stages. This occurs when design drawings are about 35% complete. QEA have already met once with the staff of the HPRB, but an actual application and review is still required. The architects recommend that the formal application be made after FMW takes action to endorse/ approve the proposed work. The proposed design has been prepared to meet the design standards applied by the HPRB.

Site Work and Gardens

See Site Plan on page 17

Decatur Place Entry:



Perspective from Decatur Place. The existing Meeting House is on the right, the new west addition is in the center. A new iron fence and gate, with new signage is proposed along the sidewalk. The old entry door will only be an emergency exit.

A new entry gate and walkway is proposed to become the main entry into the Meeting House and Gardens. By proceeding toward the north, one can enter the Meeting House or the gardens, both accessible to all Friends and visitors. When using the new main entry to the building, way-finding within the Meeting House will be greatly simplified. New directional signage along Decatur Place will be provided.

Florida Avenue Lawn & Garden:

Many repairs and improvements are planned for the landscape elements. For the Florida Avenue (front) garden, a replacement stone ramp will be provided that allows wheelchair users access to the front lawn area. Other general repairs to the front flagstone pavers and landscaping elements are envisioned. In addition, a stone walkway will be extended around the north end of the Meeting House to join the front and rear gardens to Friends and visitors.

Carriage House Garden:

Many changes are planned in this space which will become more connected to the Meeting House. In order to address the ground water problems that are affecting the Meeting House, an excavation parallel to the rear wall that separates the adjacent embassy property from the Meeting House property is planned. A new retaining wall would be built creating an upper terrace garden for the existing holly trees. This retaining wall will both provide extra structural support to the hill and also provide additional interceptor drains for the ground water. Incorporated with this retaining wall will be an underground cistern to collect rain water which will then be available for irrigation. This is a specific “greening” action.

Just below the upper terrace will be a walk and garden area. At the lowest level, the play yard will be improved to provide a large open space for use as an outdoor space by the Meeting. This area and the garden area will be fully accessible to those with mobility problems.

Decatur Place Sidewalk:

Because of required new underground utility connections along Decatur Place, much of the public sidewalk immediately to the south of the Meeting House will need to be replaced.

Landscape Plantings:

There will be an opportunity to transplant existing plant material that is in the construction area. New plantings will focus on plants indigenous to this area. There will also be areas for annuals, vegetables and perennials.



The boxwoods and roses could be transplanted. The holly trees along the back wall will remain.

Quaker House Garden:

Improvements are not anticipated at this time, but the existing garden areas could be used for outdoor functions of the Meeting.

General Building Upgrades

Exterior Drains and Roofing

Downspouts:

There is evidence that some of the existing exterior drains may be clogged or partially blocked with debris. Also, regulations now require that stormwater be separated from the sanitary sewer at each building when there is a comprehensive building renovation. Therefore, a new stormwater sewer system will be installed to collect site and roof drain. This will be connected to the city stormwater line under the sidewalk along Decatur Place.

Interior Painting and Plaster Repairs:

All the rooms of the Meeting House will be repaired or re-plastered as needed. Doors and door hardware will be repaired or replaced as

needed. New carpet will be provided in selected new classrooms and meeting rooms.



Plaster and paint damage in the Decatur Room. This is the typical of damage found in other spaces.

Heating, Cooling and Ventilation:

Equipment that is beyond its service life will be replaced and a new stand-alone unit will be provided for the three-level building addition. Most of the existing ductwork and piping will be re-used. Where equipment is replaced or new, the most energy-conserving units available will be used.

Electrical Service and Distribution:

Most of the electrical systems throughout the Meeting House have not been updated since the 1930s. Therefore, any electrical devices or wiring that do not meet current codes or new loads, will be replaced. At this point, it is assumed that most of the existing system will be upgraded.

Automatic Fire Suppression:

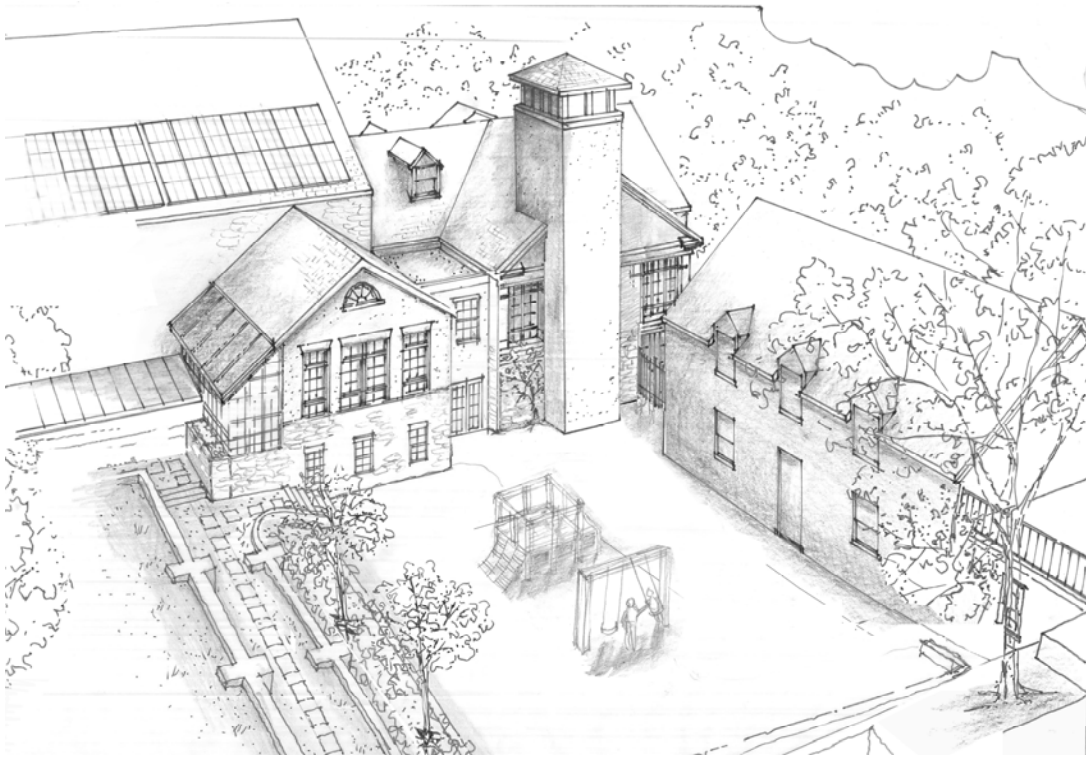
A fully compliant fire suppression and alarm system will be installed throughout the building. This is an extra measure of safety that is very cost effective.

Alternative Energy Systems:

The rear roof surface of the Meeting House is well positioned to support a photo-voltaic panel array. There is enough surface area to produce power to fulfill a good portion of the Meeting House electrical needs. Since this system is exterior to the building and visible, it will be subject to review by the neighbors and the city's HPRB. See Roofing Plan, page 16.

New West Addition

See First Floor Plan on page 14



Perspective drawing of proposed west addition, taken from the garden. The tall slender element to the right is the new elevator enclosure

An addition with about 800 SF on each of three levels is proposed to the west (rear) of the Meeting House. This will include a full-sized automatic elevator and decorative stair between Ground floor and First floor.

This addition will be connected at each level of the Meeting House providing accessibility to disabled Friends and visitors to each level. At the middle or first floor, an existing window into the Meeting Room on the west wall will be altered to become a door. This will provide a direct path from the Meeting Room to the new lobby, stair and elevator addition. A wide connecting hallway is provided here that will become an active, social place before and after meetings for worship.

The elevator can also be used by the elderly and others with mobility problems or to move materials between levels. The size of the elevator will accommodate 7 to 10 persons easily although it is the smallest one permitted for this building type by the building code. The shaft structure is tall because there is a required 4 feet of overrun above the upper level that is served, thus, the elevator shaft is always at least 12 feet tall for the upper-most level served.

At the ground level, two accessible restrooms will be placed providing additional facilities required by the building code for this size building and occupancy type.

The exterior walls will include many individual window units that will provide abundant natural light and ventilation to the space opposite. The stairs are wide enough to easily permit two or three people to pass.



The Visitor's Center at nearby Hillwood Mansion. The same type of graceful stair with many adjacent windows will be captured in the proposed west addition.

Future Improvements to the Carriage House

The Meeting House west addition and elevator have been located strategically so that in a future project connections could be made with relative ease to the Carriage House. This would make the upper level accessible within an enclosed connection between the two.

Ground Floor Work

See Ground Floor Plan on page 13

The room use and sizes will remain almost unchanged on this level. However, the main point of entry will move a few yards west along Decatur Place. Friends and visitors will enter the rear garden through a new iron gate and proceed northward to the center door on the new addition. Entering here will provide direct access to the main stair and elevator to the Meeting Room upstairs, or one could pass nearly straight ahead and turn left into the Assembly Room. Congestion at the exit of the

Assembly Room to the lower hall will be eased, thus greatly improving egress in the event of an emergency.

A Receptionist's office will have interior windows that will provide direct visual connection to the main entry door and the lobby. Of special interest in this space will be the exposed wooden ceiling timbers that were original structural members of a room at the White House. They were salvaged from a demolition pile and re-installed in this location when the Meeting House was first built.



Existing wooden ceiling joists originally used in the White House. These will be highlighted in the proposed project.

Other work on this level includes: adding a new access ramp in the Decatur Place Room to make it accessible; completely renovating the existing restrooms and renovating the kitchen space to accommodate new equipment and additional storage. The small toilet room used by children near the storage will also be renovated.

First Floor Work

See First Floor Plan, page 14

The rooms within this level of the Meeting House remain mostly unchanged, with the exception of the general work discussed above. However, with the addition of the new lobby, elevator and stair to the west, two connections are made – one by changing the existing window in the south-west corner of the Meeting Room to a door, and the other by creating a cross hallway through the former “Parlor.” The new lobby and cross hall are large enough for Friends to gather before and after worship. This also becomes the core circulation path to access the

rooms of the lower or upper levels via the stairs or the new elevator. The west addition will have abundant windows to provide natural light and ventilation for this and the adjoining spaces.

Friends and visitors, ambulatory and non-ambulatory, can enter the Meeting Room from either Phelps Place or Decatur Place with these improvements.

Second Floor Work

See Second Floor Plan, page 15

The new elevator will connect to the upper level, providing access to the existing spaces of the second floor. These meeting rooms can comfortably accommodate 5 to 10 Friends. We have confirmed that a second exit stair is not required by the building code.

Roofing

See Roof Plan on page 16

The existing asphalt shingles are nearing the end of a normal service life, and there is evidence that the existing ridge vent has allowed wind driven rain into the attic, which has in turn damaged the ceiling of the Meeting Room. The new slate shingles will be installed, as well as a custom ridge vent. The gutters and downspouts will be repaired or replaced if necessary.



The asphalt shingles are about 20 years old and are beginning to crinkle, the first sign of age.

BUDGET

Over the 18 months that this proposal has been in development, both the architects and an outside independent estimator have provided estimates of construction costs. Based on these earlier concepts and estimates, the Planning Committee has directed a modest reduction in the project scope in order to arrive at a project which meets all the objectives but without extra or premium features. The summary below is based on a detailed estimate for this project, mindful that the design is only a “concept” at this time and is subject to further refinement. This summary should be taken as a “budget.” It is credible for planning and fundraising purposes, but will obviously be updated as the architect/engineer work becomes more detailed. This assumes the project would be undertaken presently. Should the project be delayed, the costs below should be escalated about 4% for each year the project is postponed.

Estimated Project Budget

All Site & Garden Work	\$ 790,000
Elevator Addition	\$ 960,000
Meeting House Renovations	<u>\$ 1,170,000</u>
Sub-total Construction	\$ 2,920,000
Construction Contingency @ 10%	\$ 292,000
Arch /Eng Fees	\$425,000
Legal, fundraising, permits, etc.	\$ 125,000
TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET	\$ 3,762,000

Proposed Funding Plan

The Planning Committee expects that funding for the Meeting House project will come from a number of sources. Proceeds of a capital campaign will be the lynchpin. The Meeting’s financial consultant, Henry Freeman, has done a survey of a small group of Friends associated with the Meeting to explore their ability and willingness to contribute to a capital campaign and the likely size of their contribution if they were to do so. It is encouraging that a sizable majority of potential donors approached for the survey responded favorably to the project and were at least willing to talk with Henry Freeman. It is also significant that a representative group of Friends are willing to work on the project. The results of this survey suggest that about \$2 million can be raised in this way.

The proceeds of a capital campaign will need to be supplemented by funds from other sources. The Meeting’s listing in the National Register of Historic Places will stand it in good stead. There can be a modest

amount of historic preservation proceeds based on city funds (technically, sale of the Meeting's historic preservation tax credit). Some identified local foundations also are interested in supporting historic preservation and are willing to donate to local religious as well as secular institutions.

Given economic uncertainties at the present time, from which the national economy is only slowly recovering, a realistic assessment of the potential donors' economic situations and outlooks argue for conservative estimates of what can be raised either from Friends associated with the Meeting or from foundations. Additional funds can be taken from the Meeting's existing financial assets. Calculation of the amount available must take into account both restrictions on some bequests (particularly the Ross bequest, which is the largest but from which little, if any, funding can be taken), the desirability of the Meeting having emergency reserves, and the impact of using these earning assets on the current income of the Meeting.

In view of the limitations on funding from the sources mentioned above, it is possible that a modest amount of debt financing may need to be considered. The merits of the alternatives of debt financing (from Friends General Conference and/or local commercial sources) and using existing assets of the Meeting will be weighed carefully as will be the future budget implications for the Meeting overall.

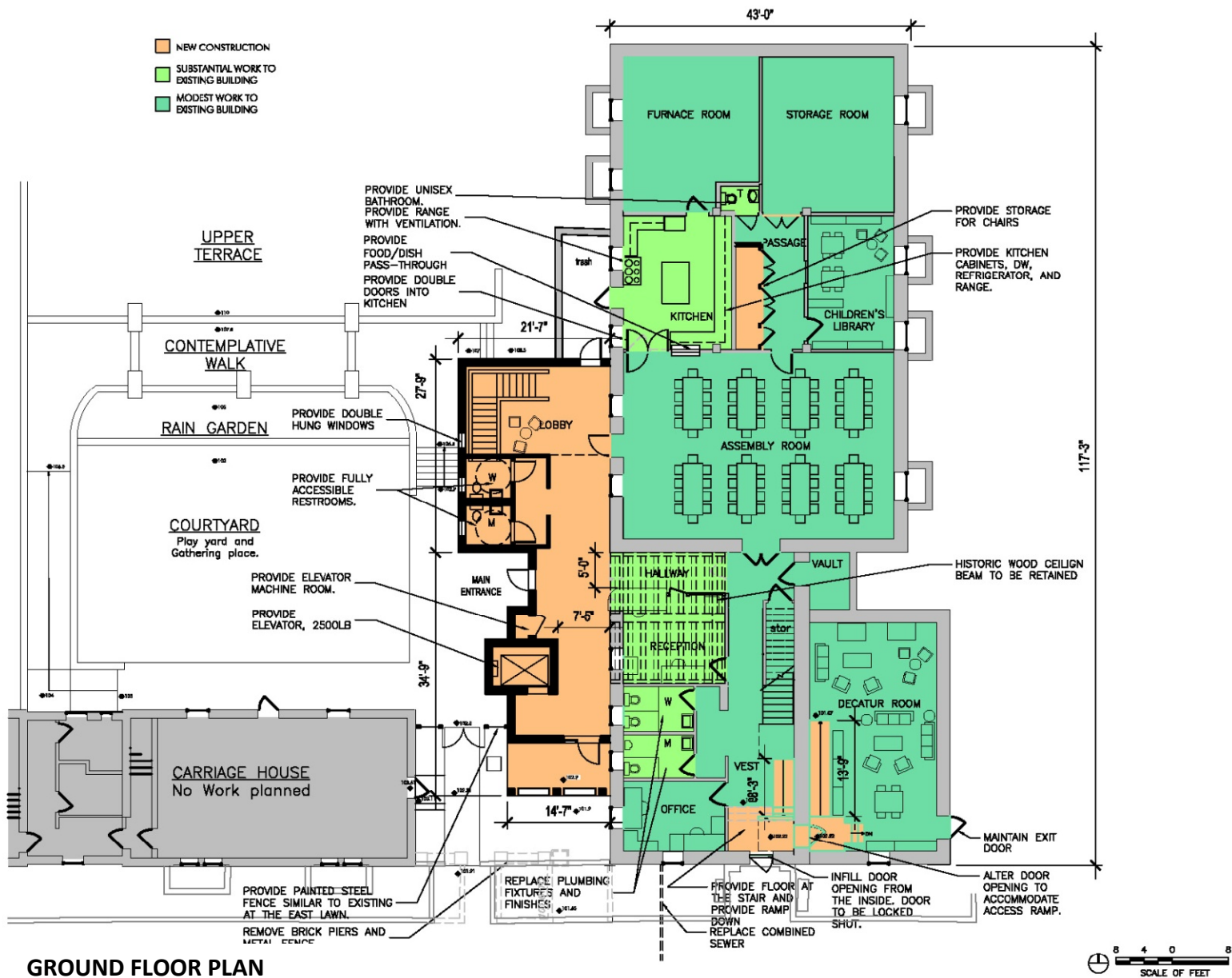
Conclusion

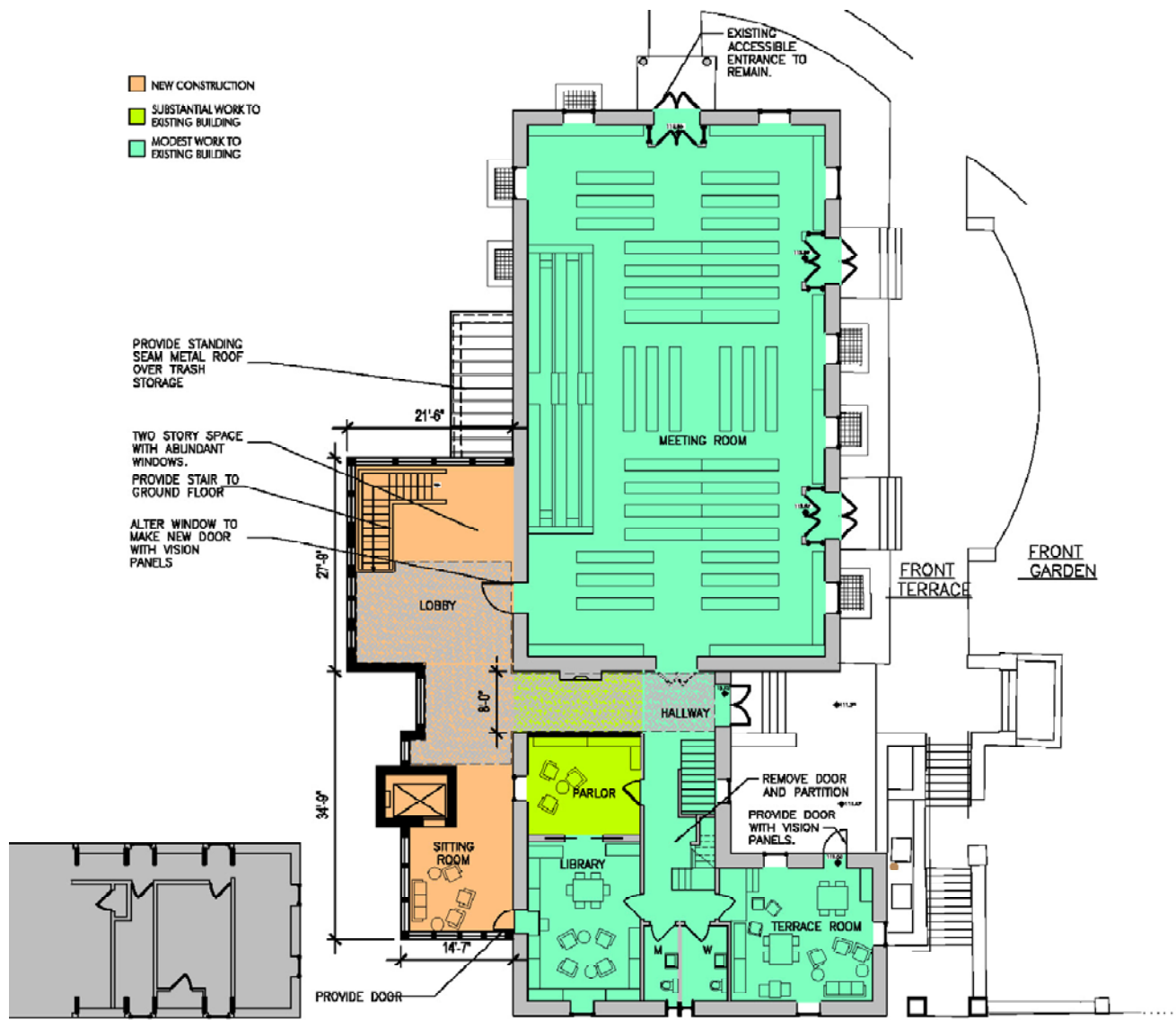
The proposed work addresses the identified problems and provides improvement that will allow the Meeting to flourish in future decades. We hope this brochure presents fully the data and information needed for an informed, thoughtful, and Spirit-led consensus within the Meeting.

Keep in mind that the larger purpose, the most important purpose, of the building renovation is to create a setting in which all of us may sense the Spirit more readily and more

often. Though it is we, our individual openness to the Spirit, who are primary, the space in which we gather can deter or aid us in our search by removing obstacles and creating opportunities for our deeper understanding of each other in the Light .

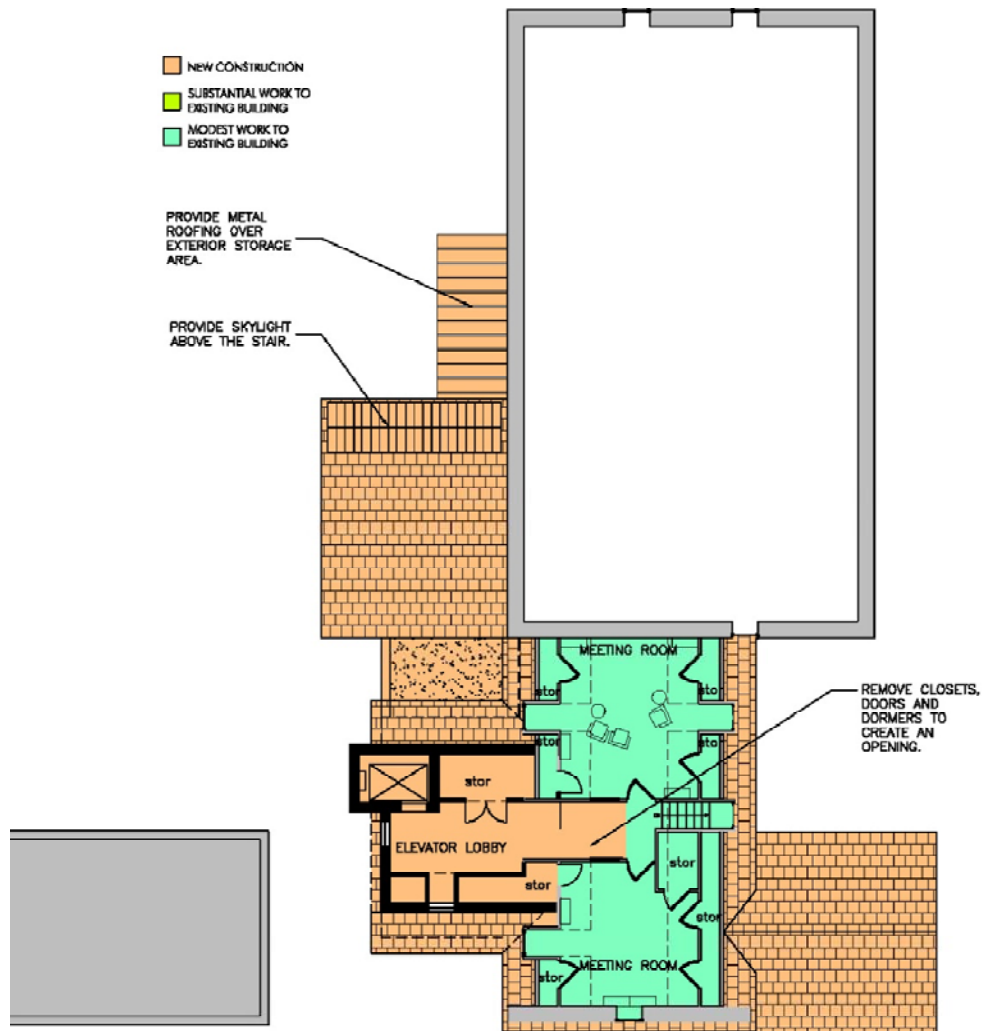
Comments are welcome; please send by e-mail to fmwplan@googlegroups.com or leave a hard copy at the Meeting House (2111 Florida Ave., N.W.)



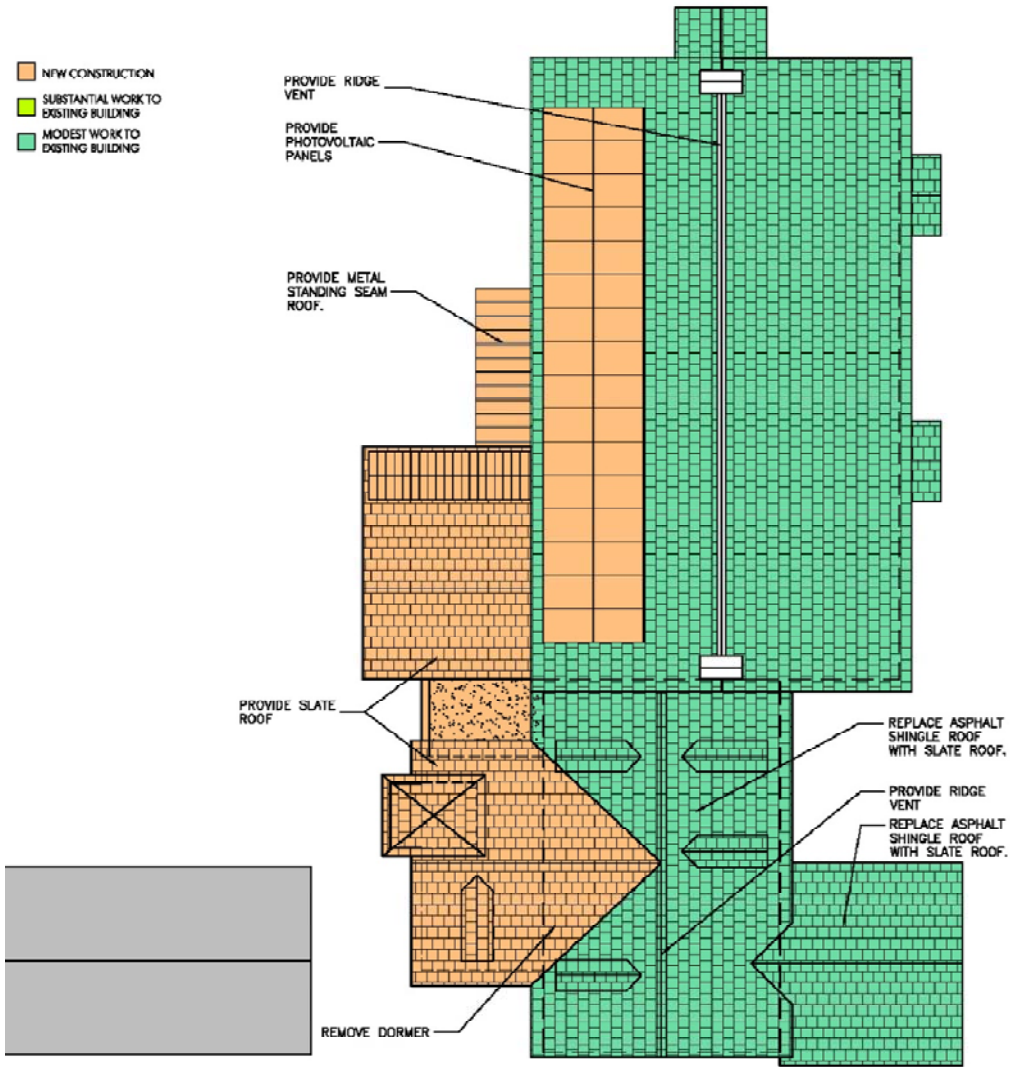


FIRST FLOOR PLAN

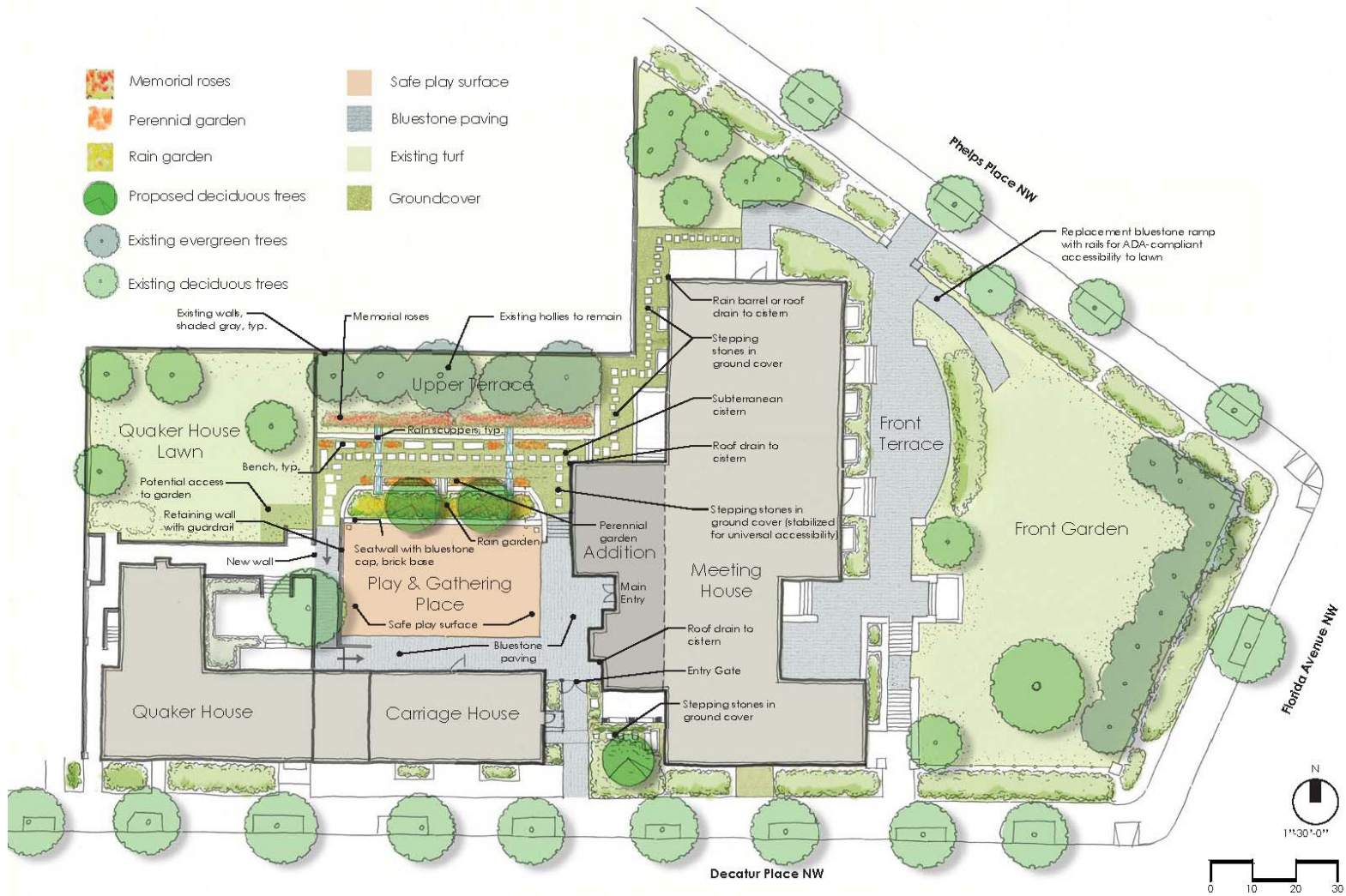




SECOND FLOOR PLAN



ROOF PLAN



SITE PLAN

“....a country meeting house dignified and suitable to the faith.”

Washington Star, December, 1930.



A Brief History

The Washington Friends Meeting is a colonial revival building decorated with Georgian elements. It was completed in late 1930 and the first meeting for worship took place on January 4, 1931. The building was designed by the architectural firm of Price and Walton. Walter Ferris Price is credited with the design, as well as nearly 200 other buildings, and was a recognized authority on design and restoration of Friends' meeting houses.

President Hoover and his wife were members and regularly attended meetings until his term ended in March of 1933.

It is relevant to note that the Price design had two distinct parts. He indicated that for the Meeting worship space, he specifically kept it very simple and true to the mid-19th century precedents. However, for the west wing, he added embellishments and decoration. This is especially apparent with the colonial revival pedimented door facing Decatur Place.

In 1950, a two-story addition was added, known as the Decatur Wing. Leon Chatelain, Jr., AIA was the architect.