

**MINUTES FROM THE FIFTEENTH STREET COMMUNITY MEETINGS OF 5/31/2012 AND 6/7/2012, AS AMENDED AND APPROVED BY THE MEETING FOR WORSHIP WITH A CONCERN FOR BUSINESS OF 6/10/2012**

**2012.05.31-01**      **We hear the history of the Property Task Group and clarify the distinction between process and a specific proposal for property division.** The Quarterly Meeting asked Fifteenth Street for a proposal for a rightly ordered process to guide the Quarter's meetings and committees as they labor over the resolution of all property issues related to incorporation. Fifteenth Street Monthly Meeting minutes the following:

**We fully support** the following minute by Morningside Meeting with regard to how best to guide such a process:

"In response to the New York Quarterly Meeting clerk's (Nancy Black's) request at the First Month Quarterly Meeting 2012, for discerning the way forward for the Property Task Group, Morningside Monthly Meeting brings forward the following for Quarterly Meeting's worshipful consideration:

***Preamble:***

All members and attenders of the New York Quarterly Meeting's Monthly Meetings share the stewardship responsibilities in our spiritual and business relationship with Friends Seminary. Although 15<sup>th</sup> St. shares the physical space with the school, the scope of responsibility for right sharing and proper care of these resources includes all Monthly Meetings and Friends within the Quarter. The Quarter as a body must acknowledge and affirm this as we move forward.

The decisions to be made will shape the future of the Quarter for many years to come, affecting the Quaker community of Friends as individuals, children, families and Monthly Meeting participants now and into the ongoing future. The individual parents, teachers, students and administrators of the school community bring a more specific and immediate focus on the school while they are part of that school community. We recognize that the school is under the care of the Quarter and as such is, and will continue to be, part of our Quaker family. We also acknowledge and respect that there are two distinct communities involved, with some Friends in both at times, which necessarily see the concerns through different lenses, with different time scales, and with different priorities and different backgrounds. Quaker practices of discernment and decision making can guide us in a Spirit-led process toward understanding and right action.

In the light of our information meetings and with worshipful consideration and seasoning at two Meetings for Worship with a Concern For Business, we affirm that we strongly support the Property Task Group and recommend that it continue forward with the following considerations:

***Specific recommendations:***

- Its membership be composed of Friends and regular attenders of the Quarter currently active in Monthly Meetings of the Quarter. In addition to including Quaker School Committee members and Friends from Trustees, Audit and Budget, and the 15<sup>th</sup> St. Property Committee, members should be sought from each of the Monthly Meetings.
- We suggest that the clerk be from Quarterly Ministry and Counsel to support the meetings being conducted with conscious and worshipful attention to acting in the manner of Friends.
- We offer our support for the committee's regular reports to the Quarter and on-going and regular meetings with Monthly Meetings, so that Friends will hear about its work and hold its process in the Light.
- We encourage the group to engage with and listen to interested representatives of the school community, and to engage outside consultants as needed for professional advice and/or technical or clerical support, to be empowered to address all its concerns without the demand that an expertise necessarily be available within the group itself.

In addition, to underline the renewed commitment, we respectfully encourage the Property Task Group to consider adopting a process-focused name, perhaps such as the Property Concerns Committee, as they undertake this important work."

**We also make three additional suggestions and one modification:**

1) We ask the Property Task Group, going forward, to keep in mind our concern for the financial sustainability of the Quarter, its meetings, and schools.

2) We suggest that the Property Task Group may, at times, a) invite non-Quaker members of the School Committee to provide information and confer with the PTG, and b) engage outside consultants to report to the PTG as they discern a way forward.

3) We also suggest that the Property Task Group's name be changed to the Property Concerns Committee.

4) We replace the first bulleted "Specific Recommendation" of the Morningside Meeting minute with:

"Its membership be composed of Friends and regular attenders of the Quarter currently active in monthly meetings of the Quarter, and members of the Friends Seminary School Committee. At least one of the Friends Seminary School Committee representatives should be a Quaker member of that committee. In addition to including Friends Seminary School Committee members and Friends from Trustees, the Quarterly Meeting Audit and Budget Committee, and the Fifteenth Street Meeting Property Committee, members should be sought from each of the Monthly Meetings."

### **2012.06.07-01**

We hear the recommendations from the Brooklyn Property Committee.

Our interest is in a property arrangement that would as much as possible insure the financial sustainability of all—Quarterly Meeting, the monthly meetings and the schools.

We emphasize that the body that the Quarterly Meeting will have carry these concerns forward should be encouraged to hire neutral professional experts—attorneys, accountants, etc.—as it feels the need for their advice.

We are in unity that the group or committee that the Quarterly meeting charges with carrying these concerns forward should include members of all concerned bodies of the Quarter, and we are in unity that all members of the group should be held to the discipline of New York Yearly Meeting *Faith and Practice* and commit to remaining accountable to each other and to the work that needs to be done.