

# Concord Friends Meeting

## Code Compliance Plan for Childcare Program

June 11, 2023

### Introduction

The Canterbury Fire Chief and the Meeting are presently negotiating acceptable building improvements in order to host a childcare program. The Chief has asked the Meeting to create and implement a fire safety improvement plan under the guidance of a building specialist such as a licensed engineer or architect. The Childcare Planning Committee (Ruth Heath, Greg Heath, and Dave Woolpert) are working with an architect, Chris Carley, with whom the Meeting has consulted in the past, and he is consulting directly with the fire chief to create a plan consistent with applicable codes. As a place of assembly and as a childcare facility different codes must be considered and the more conservative of the various requirements must be implemented. Some of the items in the codes are open to interpretation; thus, we have referred to the process as a negotiation. The budget for the plan we present today is the most conservative interpretation that the Chief may land on, and he is the final decision maker.

### Summary

- In this proposal we will take you through
- The benefits and rationale
  - Details of requirements including
    - Substantially upgraded fire alarm system
    - Kitchen considerations
    - Fire separation between the mechanical room and the Fellowship Room
  - Comments regarding timing of our decision
  - The Budget, which comes to \$17,077
  - Our funding proposal
  - An offered minute that could be adopted

## **Benefits / Rationale**

The committee feels this plan is advisable whether or not the currently envisioned childcare program becomes a reality or not. For many years the Meeting resisted building a meetinghouse because it would probably sit empty much of the week and thus become an unfortunate use of resources. Once the Meeting decided to build, its intention was to attract an appropriate use such as a childcare program. Having coexisted with the Merrimack Valley Day Care Service for so many years, the need for and benefits of good childcare programs became embedded in our DNA. Whether the current program starts up or lasts, the Meeting will benefit by becoming an appropriate and approved space for such activities. A Hanover Friend recounted the experience of a meeting in Maryland that started a childcare program. The natural outreach began to attract families to the Meeting, and it has made a huge difference there.

## **Fire Detection/Alarm/Notification System**

The most costly item required will be a fire alarm system with smoke and heat sensors, alarm pull stations at exits, local notification (horns and strobe lights) and fire department dispatch notification. Additionally the photo-luminescent exit signs in the Fellowship Room do not receive adequate ambient light to meet code so lighted exit signs will be required along with emergency lighting during power outages. These points are clear in the codes. It will be necessary to run conduit along the ceiling tucked next to the beam in the Meeting room for the pull station alarm by the side exit and a smoke detector.

## **Kitchen**

Under discussion is fire suppression in the kitchen. This is an issue even though the child care program will not be leasing or using the kitchen. Such systems are extremely expensive (approx. \$2,500) and we do not recommend installing one. Chris takes the position that no suppression system is required. If that is denied, one possibility would be to remove the cook oven. Another would be to disable the range top and maintain it as warming oven with appropriate signage on the appliance and on the wall by the range power outlet. Guidance from the Meeting is needed in this regard.

## **Mechanical Room**

The wall between the mechanical room and the Fellowship Room is also under discussion. Under guidance from the state the Chief wanted an additional layer of sheetrock added to the boiler side of the wall to achieve a one hour fire rating. Our position is that with wall penetrations sealed, the wall is presently rated for one hour after the door, presently rated for only 20 min., is replaced. Additionally the supports and shelf for the air exchanger need to be sheetrocked and the opening to the attic above the lobby needs to be closed off. An option under consideration and in our budget is building a small room within the mechanical room to house the boiler, a solution easier to implement than adding sheetrock to the entire wall.

## **Timing**

Deb Follansbee has been working diligently to get her program up and running since February. Her experience with running a similar program in Hopkinton led her to believe that the fire codes were not going to be a problem. She was feeling the pressure to begin advertising because families are well into making their plans for the fall before this significant delay in planning cropped up. She cannot take deposits from families and therefore cannot advertise until she is licensed, and she can't be licensed until the fire chief signs off on fire safety. At this point, time is of the essence.

## **Budget**

We have budgeted conservatively. For instance all items are considered generous except for the Fire Alarm system which will be contracted for a set fee. We have built in a 10% cost overrun for unanticipated expenses. We may not need to create the room around the boiler. We should note that given insufficient time to gain proper approvals, the committee members have personally guaranteed the architect fee in case the proposal is not approved. See the line items with some additional notes on the next page. The total budget comes to \$17,077.

## **Funding**

We propose that the Meeting undertake a capital campaign to raise these funds. Any shortfall would be made up for in private loans with a five year term not to exceed 5% interest. If we were to borrow the full amount under these terms the monthly payment would be \$322.26. Our present mortgage will be finished in January 2025. That debt service of \$317.17 per month will end then.

## **Proposed Minute**

The Meeting accepts the proposed Code Compliance Plan for Childcare Program and approves raising up to the sum of \$17,077 through fundraising conducted by the Committee and private loans as required. Finance Committee will implement loans as needed and may advance funds from cash on hand to initiate work. The Childcare Planning Committee will oversee the work minimizing expenses to the extent reasonable through the use of volunteer skilled labor and report monthly to the Finance and Property Committees until the completion of work.

## **Budget Line Items**

See next page

## Budget Line Items

Item	Initial cost	recurring	Notes
Fire Alarm	11,841		Annual monitoring \$330 to be paid by Deb Follansbee, Two bids received; local company selected (Mango Security Service)
Additional Cost of Electric Usage	-	100	10% increase (estimated) to be negotiated with Oxbow Solar LLC
Replacement reserve	-	381	recommending 10% increase to account for accelerated wear and tear on walls and floors and doors.
Code Compliance Consultant	1,500		Architect presently advising. Heaths and Woolpert personally guarantee fee if proposal is not accepted.
Lighted Exit signs (4)	100		
Replacement reserve	60		
Electrician	1,000		
Fire door	1,000		
Fireproofing seal wall penetrations in mechanical room	50		
Fired Department keyed entry box	50		Not in narrative. Allows Fire Dept. key access for alarm response to avoid breaking and entering
Create room around boiler	1,000		May not be needed. See narrative.
Unforeseen	476		10% of total cost not including fire alarm
Totals	17,077	481	