

Graceful Growing Together, Inc. (GGT)

2011 was a year of significance for GGT governance, community expansion and for the future as numerous plans came together in concert with CELC's vision, goals and overall development project.

Members of the Graceful Growing Together, Inc. (GGT) Board and the Development Steering Committee provided the congregation with details on the state of the development project and CELC Council approved upcoming milestones at the November 5, 2011, Town Hall Meeting on Development. The congregation was advised that a number of these elements would come together in 2012 to assist the CELC Council leadership in further development decisions. All of the milestones notes have also been shared with our bridge loan partner, Thrivent Bank and the Synod leadership.

Specific GGT actions in 2011 and for 2012 plans include:

Market Assessment Phase I Demand for Community Center Space. This study as approved by the CELC Council is moving forward under the guidance of the NonprofitCenters Network (NCN) with cooperation from Nonprofit Montgomery. NCN works closely with a network of over 300 fully operating and planned nonprofit centers in North America to help detail similar facilities for their own communities. A survey of 43 questions has been sent to over 1000 Montgomery County nonprofits to help determine the need to lease future administrative and function space in our planned facilities. Those survey results will lead to focus groups and a full analysis report by April, 2012. If endorsed by the DSC and GGT, Inc. and approved by CELC Council, a further Market Assessment Phase II would detail 2016 to 2025 required community center staffing, job descriptions, leasing policies and a ten-year Operating Plan budget.

Seek Creative Partnerships. Another key part of the GGT work is to reach out to various sectors of the broader community to gauge interest in long-term partnerships in the planned center. Exploratory meetings have been held with a number of entities, including the Montgomery County Office of Community Partnerships, The Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Service Center, Bethesda Green, and the Montgomery County Departments of Recreation, Housing and Economic Development. Additional meetings with these parties and many other corporate, government and nonprofits groups are being scheduled for early 2012.

Capital Campaign Pre-Feasibility and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ). In preparation for a future capital campaign, GGT Board members managed a pre-feasibility project to outline our readiness to move to an outside consultant driven project. Deliverables from that internal project included over 30 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) and answers all related to the planned re-developed and enhanced combined church and community center, including specific focus on the planned multi-tenant nonprofit center (MTNPC) portions of the facility. That document will be updated to record related queries about the planned development.

Capital Campaign Feasibility Study. To determine the level of congregation and community philanthropic support for the planned church and community center facility, CELC Council approved a Request for Proposal (RFP) to seek bids from local and national consultants who specialize in this area. Proposal reviews and interviews with candidates were held in November and December and the CELC Council approved a GGT, Inc. recommendation to engage the firm of Community Counselling Services, Co, LLC (CCS) headquartered in New York, NY, and with a regional office in Washington, DC, to conduct a 10-12 week survey. That is currently planned to start in March 2012.

Deliverables from that survey will be the expected levels of gift support from a wide range of potential congregation and community donors. It will also detail such areas as readiness, communications, staffing, volunteers, etc. that GGT, Inc. needs to address, as well as optimal timing for any capital campaign launch. Before taking public the project's feasibility for funding, CELC and GGT leadership will be asking key focus groups to evaluate our readiness in part by reviewing the feasibility FAQs. This in turn could be used as a market assessment and fundraising prospectus during future feasibility and campaign phases.

Graceful Growing Together, Inc. Board Expansion. As the role of GGT and its Board becomes more essential for the future of the community center project, the GGT Board passed two Bylaw changes that were approved by the CELC Council to allow the Board to expand from its previous 6 CELC Directors to the present 11 Directors in 2011 and further up to 13 Directors in 2012. In early 2011 that initial board expansion was completed with the addition of 4 well-known community advocates and 1 additional longtime CELC member.

The majority of the current and future GGT Board will continue to be held by CELC congregation members and the Board will provide further GGT outreach, awareness and funding opportunities with the community. A search is currently under way by the GGT, Inc. Nominating Committee for the 2 additional community Directors. All 7 current GGT, Inc. Board members from the Congregation and 4 members from the community have been approved by the GGT, Inc. Board and CELC Council for additional terms, and along with two new community member positions. They will stand for election by the congregation at the annual meeting on February 5, 2012.

The GGT Board has been encouraged by the increased show of support of our vision and future plans. 2012 will see many of the plans analyzed for risk to plan for CELC's community vision and mission. We will endeavor to keep all informed on the progress. Please do not hesitate to submit any questions or comments to the CELC Council of GGT members.

Respectfully submitted by the Graceful Growing Together, Inc. (GGT) Board, January 27, 2012.

Ray Albright, Don Cuming, Melanie Folstad, Ken Hartman, Dave Heffernan, Pastor Jon Hundt, Barry Lemley, Andy Masetti, Paula Mathis (GGT, Inc. Council Liaison), Mark Miller, Reverend Tim Warner