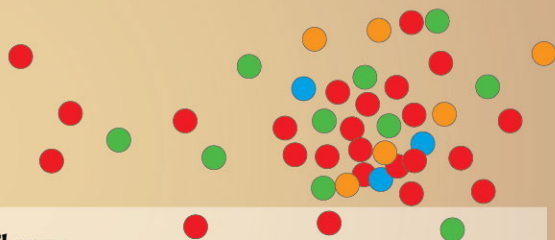


2008



An all-congregation event invited ideas regarding the future of our campus. We decided that we would stay at the present site, and create an overall plan for the future. We planned to keep the duplex property. Whatever the resulting changes and developments, we would be environmentally responsible.

We have respect for the interdependent web of all existence.

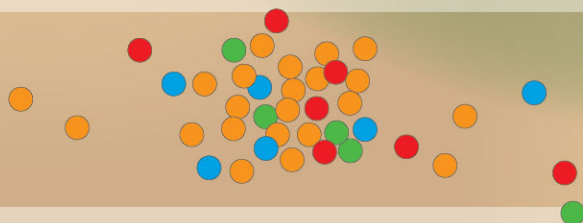


Imagination for Change

In 2007/2008, Colene Schlaepfer had been named Communications Chair, which historically, was to hold meetings where people could talk about things bothering them about the campus or ideas they wanted to discuss.

Colene had listened to many meetings of this kind. “We talk but we never do anything!” or “We should move to the suburbs.”

She arranged for Mike Malinowski, architect and friend of then UUSS minister Doug Kraft, to bring his drawings to one of her meetings. The drawings depicted various alternatives of how the campus might be developed. They were put up all around the Fahs Room. About 40 people came and were excited by the ideas.



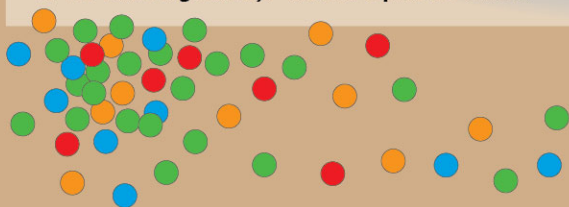
Starting the Conversation About the Future—and Change

Conversations about the future in years past were useful, but people grumbled because no action followed. An all-day Saturday workshop in January called “Searching for the Future” initiated new policies that progressed to action. Led by outside consultant Carol Czucko, we talked in small groups. Long-time members and newcomers participated. Finally, each of us received colored sticky dots. The goals were written on a big chart on the wall and we put dots on the things we most strongly wanted to see happen.

The goal that got most dots was for creating a master plan and delaying all repairs to the buildings and grounds until we had a long-range plan.

We no longer discussed moving our location. It was clear most wanted to stay on Sierra Boulevard. We wanted to be aware of our environmental impact. The duplexes next door that we owned for 50 years would remain as housing in some form yet to be determined as part of the master plan.

The chart with all the dots remained on the wall for congregants to see on the following Sunday. We had a plan for action.



2009



We sent up a trial balloon in the form of a new tall canopy to mark the entrance to the building. The congregation approved plans, then raised \$20,000 for the project. The balloon flew. We broke ground for the canopy in July of 2009. **“We can change things!”**



We travel together with open minds and helping hands.

We Can Change—a Trial Balloon

Doug Kraft suggested we create a small project costing no more than \$20,000—perhaps a new entry. Mike Malinowski showed videos of newcomers trying to find the front door of our sanctuary. Clearly, it was not easy. A survey was conducted to determine if Mike’s suggested plan for a tall canopy visible from the parking lot was acceptable as a project, and if so, where it should be located. We voted for the patio where we were accustomed to entering.

The project took shape. The tired planter beds were replaced with a new design—Annie Kempees was instrumental in making this happen. Bob Oyafuso spent many hours as Project Manager for completion of this project.

Mike designed the canopy and it became a reality with dedication in March, 2010. It rained hard that winter and the canopy was so full of water it threatened to burst. Mike convinced the company to replace it with a stronger canopy. It served us well.

This “Trial Balloon” moved us along. We learned we could raise money, agree on a project, and fix things when they went wrong. With that recognition, we also raised the funds and bought a new stove for the kitchen. We Can Change!

2009 to 2011



The Master Planners had three years of monthly meetings, moving from big dreams to realistic plans for the grounds, buildings, and duplexes. Throughout the process, open and ongoing communication between the planners and the general congregation was sustained.

Work In Progress—Meetings

In 2008, we formed the UU Master Planning Facilitators group, or UUMPF, chaired by Barbara Gardner. The work of implementing our goals proceeded. Going from the overall to the specifics of a plan on paper took a long time. All decisions were tested on the patio where people were asked to weigh in on the ideas. John McMillan, Ginger Enrico, and others talked about the lists or pictures.

Mike Malinowski came to many meetings and helped plan a “Dream Big” workshop about each area of congregational interests: Kitchen, Religious Education, Worship, Outdoors, Music, Adult Ed., and more. The results of the well-attended meeting left UUMPF with big charts full of ideas to work with.

We held a housing forum to obtain information about possibilities for the duplex property we owned next door. This meeting convinced us we should not continue to be landlords. We did not sell at that time, both because of the recession and that the rent from the duplexes was still useful to our budget.

In meeting after meeting in 2008, 2009, and 2010, the Master Plan began to take shape with buy-in from most in the congregation.

By the fall of 2010, we were ready for a site review to determine what underground work needed to be done as a first step to final plans. Architect Jeff Gold applied and was awarded the contract for the site review.

*We come together to deepen
our lives and to be a force
for healing in the world.*



2010

In October, we hired an architect who met with the Master Planners and representatives of each area of church life and who helped fine tune the Master Plan.

The use of the democratic process within our congregations and society.

2012

In February, the congregation voted unanimously to accept the Master Plan. **Hooray!**

We hired a fundraising expert whose “you can do it” focus set off the Capital Campaign. We reached our goal, however the cost of the project was higher than anticipated.

Hiring the Architect and Completing the Master Plan

In October of 2010, with the site review completed, it was time to hire an architect. Jeff Gold was hired since he had done the site review and successfully worked with Davis UU.

Jeff met often with the UUMPF group and also with leaders of each part of the congregation to pin-point the needs of specific groups, such as music, religious education, kitchen, worship, etc.

Under Jeff's lead, the Master Plan gradually took shape on paper. It included a new building to house support staff and many additions and modifications to all the buildings on campus, plus an amphitheater. A small chapel was included as part of the other additions made to the main hall. There was also a long-term future plan for a new sanctuary in the oak grove.

In February of 2012, the Master Plan was put to a vote of the congregation. It passed unanimously. Those who worked long and hard creating it were elated! The constant inclusion of the congregation during the process paid off. Happy day!



New Focus: Money!

The focus of the planning group changed and was re-named Implementing the Master Plan (or IMP) with an expanded committee and Joanne Rubenson as chair. To make the building happen, we now had to discover actual cost. That reality check caused us to limit Phase 1 to remodeling the Main Hall. The small chapel was cut. The rest of the building needed to be done at one time to reduce added costs in the future. The proposed new building to house staff was placed on hold, along with the amphitheater, additions to the Religious Education buildings, and paving the parking lot.

We had changed the scope of Phase 1, but it still was expensive. Can we raise the money? Bud Swank, a professional fundraiser was hired. After interviewing many of us, he said “You can do it!” We held a capital campaign beginning with a gala dinner. Carrie Cornwell headed this committee, and it was a big success.

Due to his wife's serious illness, Jeff Gold had to retire. Jeff Reilly, architect for Jackson Construction, took over seamlessly.

2014



We sold the duplexes in January, voted to borrow money for the needed funds, and applied for a building permit.

The Duplexes and Labyrinth

By 2013, the duplexes were in bad shape and rental income was down. It was time to sell and add the money to our building fund.

Almost 50 years ago, UUSS originally bought the property to have a say over what was adjacent to our campus. The rental income had also served us for many years, but the up-keep and landlord duties caused problems.



Carrie Cornwell took on the task of a lot line adjustment so that the unbuilt half of the duplex property adjacent to our campus would remain with us. This allowed us to create a beautiful and accurate labyrinth on the newly acquired land—a dream of Diane Kelly-Abrams.

Colene and Fred Schlaepfer headed the committee to make the sale of the duplexes happen. Their attorney son-in-law James Hanschu volunteered his professional legal services for completion of the sale. The buyer, Steve Lebachski was also the builder who years before had appeared on our Housing Forum. The sale was completed in January 2014, and \$300,000 were added to the building fund. A bonus benefit was the beautiful remodel done by the new owner next door.

All the years of hand-wringing and “What will be do about the duplexes?” came to a satisfying conclusion.

*Respect for the inherent worth
and dignity of every person.*



We secured the loan and building permit, hired a contractor, and broke ground for the new project on July 27. We secured a church to be our home away from home during the construction period.

Getting Ready for Construction

The building permit our property never had was finally applied for. Many of us went to the hearing to see it granted. Jackson Construction was hired. We began planning our move away from campus for the year required to complete the new building.

Then we got BAD news! The contractor informed us that the costs had risen and we needed another million dollars. This put a hold on our plans to move to a rented church. Bring on the expert fundraiser Bud Swank again, who studied once more and said “You can do it!” Though it was scary, we voted and agreed to apply for a loan.

With the loan secured, we were on our way again. We moved out (a daunting task after 55 years), carried out efficiently and headed by Rich Howard with the help of many other loyal people. Glory Wickland and her amazing crew organized the myriad items in the kitchen. Glory also helped secure the loan and kept track of money.

The joyful ground-breaking that was both ceremonious and fun, took place on Sunday, July 27, 2014. Some people who had been at the original ground-breaking on August 23, 1959 were also there.

2015



In preparation for our September 6 return home, the congregation responded to a “Fill the Building” drive by buying chairs, audio/visual equipment, and donating money for general “Fill the Building” needs.

Decisions Had to be Made for Our New Building

While construction was underway from ground breaking in July 2014 to August 30, 2015, we held services at the Sierra Arden United Church of Christ on Morse Avenue. The congregation was busy with a “Fill the Building” campaign visible after services “selling” contributions such as “Buy your Chair,” a campaign headed by Mary Howard and ably assisted by Ginny Johnson.

The decisions about what we needed were proposed by the Project Development Team, headed by Rich Howard and Colene Schlaepfer, and included people from every aspect of the congregation. Their recommendations were presented to the Steering Committee headed by Margaret Wilcox. Aesthetics Committee chair Patty Taylor helped to provide a harmonious de’cor.

Architect and member Judy Moran suggested we reverse the position of our kitchen and open more space for the Welcome Hall. Tearing down the front of the old building made this easier and the Welcome Hall became a beautiful space overlooking the oak trees.

Audio/visual expert and member Tim Anderson bought and installed a/v equipment, including a T-coil system to aid wearers of hearing aids. His contribution saved us many dollars.

John McMillan, who was on all the planning committees and often on the patio explaining things, was the obvious person for Project Manager. He and Judy Moran met with the builders weekly and provided a conduit to the congregation. John completed many items needed for the new building.

Reverend Roger Jones and Reverend Lucy Bunch participated in many of the project activities, and provided continuous support to all those working so diligently on the project.

*To these ends, we pledge our
time, talents, and support.*

September 13, 2015

Members, friends, neighbors, and people from the larger community gather to re-dedicate the expanded and renovated building.

Completing the Project

On September 6, 2015, we held our first service in the new building—a “soft opening,” as some things still needed to be done.

On September 13, members, Reverend Roger, Reverend Lucy, friends, neighbors, people who helped with the process, and people from the larger community gathered to re-dedicate this remodeled, expanded, and beautiful, special space.

With gratitude, we celebrate a job well done!



Unitarian Universalist Society of Sacramento