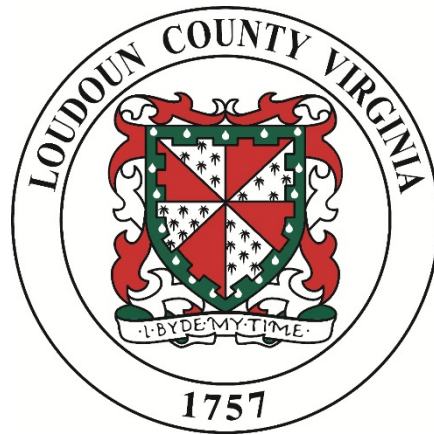


# Grace Methodist Church Restoration & Reuse Design Charrette Summary

Charrette Date: Friday, April 22, 2016

Summary Published: July 8, 2016

Loudoun County Department of Planning and Zoning and  
Loudoun County Design Cabinet



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Design Charrette Summary**

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## INTRODUCTION

### ROLE OF THE DESIGN CABINET

The Loudoun County Design Cabinet fills an important niche in supporting the planning and development activity occurring in Loudoun, with members volunteering time and energy to projects having a substantial public benefit. The work of the Design Cabinet aims to help reinforce Loudoun's sense of place, identity, and community, as well as encourage the highest quality physical environment through urban, architectural, landscape, and ecological design. To assist the Department of Planning and Zoning, and the Department of Economic Development, the Design Cabinet provides a forum for discussion and advice on design related issues, projects, and opportunities from its volunteer group of design professionals.

### CHARRETTE ATTENDEES

Design Cabinet Members attending: Al Hansen, Al Gooden, Kevin Rudisueli, Zac Lette, Mark Thomas, Martha Semmes, Milt Herd, Rick Conrath and John Martin.

Members from: Lincoln Preservation Foundation, Lincoln Community League, Grace Church Annex Congregation (site property owners), and residents/property owners of the Lincoln Community

Loudoun County Staff: Christopher Garcia, Lauren Murphy

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Goose Creek Historic District is nearly 11,000-acre rural historic district where Europeans settled in the 1730s and Quakers established a meeting house in the village of Lincoln, then Goose Creek, by 1750. Eventually, Goose Creek became home to the largest concentration of Quakers in Virginia. In the mid-19th century, Lincoln was a thriving village offering a variety of services to its residents and surrounding farms. These Quaker farms were typically a few hundred acres – large enough to provide an income but small enough to be farmed by a family, as Quakers did not believe in slave labor. This farm pattern is still evident on the landscape today. Mainly of stone or brick construction, simple early farmhouses and more elaborate later dwellings, as well as Quaker meetinghouses, vernacular Victorian village architecture, and agricultural outbuildings, are protected in the District. The village of Lincoln originated in the mid-18th century as the site of the Goose Creek Meeting House of the Society of Friends; the second oldest Quaker meetinghouse in Virginia. Lincoln has always had a significant African-American population. In 1815, Lincoln area Quakers opened a private school that was open to both black and white students. After emancipation, Lincoln acquired one of the first African-



Photo Description/Source: Church in 1973, Photographs by John Lewis, categorized as “threatened” due to deterioration

American public schools in Loudoun County. Supported by the Society of Friends, the 1865 schoolhouse still stands on Cooksville Road (053-0845).

In the late 19th century, two African-American religious congregation formed in Lincoln. Grace Methodist Episcopal Church was founded circa 1872 under the leadership of Rev. Henry Carroll. Services were originally held in the village's African-American schoolhouse. In December 1884, the church trustees, Oscar Carry, Jesse Palmer, George Parker, John Lewis, and James R. Hicks purchased a half-acre lot in



Photo Descriptions/Source: Church in 1973, Photographs by John Lewis, categorized as “threatened” due to deterioration

Lincoln from Mary E. Birdsall (Loudoun County Deed Book 6-W, p. 483). The cornerstone of the present stone church was laid on July 30, 1885. Early members of the church came from the Thomas, Cooper, Brady, Lewis, Carey, Gordon, Dade, Simms, Bell, Furr, Moore, Coates, Hicks, Henderson, Cook, and Mitchell families. The basement of the present church building was used for vocational classes that included shoe repair, sewing, and cooking. The Quaker community in Lincoln sponsored the vocational classes. The church continued to serve Lincoln's African-American community until 1942, when, due to dwindling membership, the congregation moved to Purcellville. Special events continued to be held at the old stone church until 1951 when the new Grace Annex church was opened in Purcellville. Today, Quakers still live in and around Lincoln community and maintain an active Quaker Meeting at Goose Creek Meetinghouse.

The old stone church stands at the end of Brooks Lane in an area historically associated with African Americans. The still active Mount Olive Baptist Church stands directly south of the now vacant Grace Methodist Episcopal Church. The two churches may have shared the existing cemetery that stands between them. (Text/Data Source: *Loudoun County African-American Historic Architectural Resources Survey*, History Matters, LLC, Washington, DC, September 2004)

Special events continued to be held at the old stone church until 1951 when the new Grace Annex church was opened in Purcellville (see DHR #053-1037-0230). Grace Annex Church (DHR #286-5001-0230) replaced the original 19th century Grace Methodist Episcopal Church in Lincoln that closed in 1942 because of dwindling membership. The congregation moved to Purcellville where more members and potential members lived. The new brick church was completed in 1957 and continues to serve the congregation today. (Text/Data Source: *Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Cultural Resources Information Sheet / Architectural Survey Form 1980 Excerpt*, Downloaded June 13, 2016)

## GOOSE CREEK RURAL HISTORIC DISTRICT

The Goose Creek Rural Historic District is an architecturally and scenically cohesive rural area in central Loudoun County that sustained the largest concentration of Quaker settlers in the Commonwealth. The

English Friends who came into the area beginning in the 1730s formed a compact society that differed markedly from the more diffuse settlements of slave-holding planters to the east and the south. Faithful adherence to fundamental Christian principles, wise stewardship of the bountiful land, and studied preference for the cultivation of wheat and other grains on small farms worked by free labor gave the Quaker community a distinctive cast that is still reflected in the district's wealth of architectural and geographical resources. Retaining much of the Quaker ethos of simplicity, harmony, and industry, Goose Creek remains a predominantly agricultural region of small farms, many of which are still defined by the boundaries of the original land patents of the 18th century. Nearly every farm still possesses its early stone or frame barn. The narrow, winding, unimproved roads which laced the settlement from the 18th century have remained virtually undisturbed for generations. Known during the 19th century as an area of outstanding grain production and outspoken antislavery and Unionist sentiment, the district centers on the village of Lincoln (changed from Goose Creek during the Civil War) which served as the hub of Quaker religious, educational, social, and commercial activity. Architecturally, the district is significant for its rich collection of 18th-, 19th- and 20th- century rural vernacular and town architecture, ranging from the earliest crude log outbuildings to the most refined brick mansions. Of particular interest is the superb stone masonry craftsmanship peculiar to Quaker settlers and descendants. No other section of Northern Virginia contains more examples of stone architecture and few other settled rural areas of the Commonwealth possess such a high degree of unspoiled pastoral beauty. The recent adoption of a local preservation ordinance has assured both the continuous agricultural use of the land and the protection of the area's scenic integrity, while the restoration and renovation of many historic structures has greatly contributed to the preservation of Goose Creek's distinguished material culture. *(Data Source: Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Cultural Resources Information Sheet / Architectural Survey Form, Downloaded June 13, 2016)*

## ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS

A very interesting example of late well done local field stone construction. The date stone in the NE corner of the front of the building reads "MEC-July 30, 1885. One pair of doors in an opening 4' -0" x 7' -0" with a three light transom above. The frame is solid, 3" thick, beaded and mitered at the top joints. Windows are 41"x88" 6/6 light 20"x12" glass. Basement windows are 40 1/2" x 45". These are under all the first story windows. The three in the NW basement wall are opening into a stone walled trough. There are two on the SE basement wall; one under the front and rear windows above with an entrance door under the enter window above. And there are two in the basement wall opposite the front entrance above. The basement, or rear half of it was finished with plaster on stone; wooden ceiling and floor and three chamfered supporting posts. A very interesting example of late well done local field stone construction. *(Data Source: Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Cultural Resources Information Sheet / Architectural Survey Form, 1973 Excerpt, Downloaded June 13, 2016)*

Grace Methodist Church is an excellent example of regional stone architecture of good quality. The one-story church has a full basement below. Windows are tall 6/6 double sash types with louvered shutters. A small frame belfry with flared pyramidal roof adorns the gable roof. The church has been vacant for many years. A single front entrance at the east gable end has a three light transom above it. *(Data Source: Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Cultural Resources Information Sheet / Architectural Survey Form 1980 Excerpt, Downloaded June 13, 2016)*





Photo Descriptions / Source: Grace Church survey photos (c. 2004); Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Cultural Resources Information Sheet / Architectural Survey Form, History Matters, LCC, Intensive Survey, 2004 Excerpt

This one-story, stone, front-gable church rests on an exposed stone foundation. The 1-bay façade features a double-leaf door with only one of the original arched-panel doors remaining. A transom that is missing its glass tops the entrance. Beaded wood trim frames the entrance and a wood lintel is embedded in the stone wall above the opening. The only other opening on the façade is a lunette window that is centered in the gable and aligned vertically with the door. A square belfry topped by a pointed roof stands atop the roof ridge at the east end of the building.

The building's corners are accentuated by large stone quoins and a series of three single windows extend down the church's north and south sides. In addition, two windows and a central door open into the basement level on the south wall. Two small windows are centered on the rear or west basement wall, and an additional three small windows light the basement on the north side. Two brick chimney flues pierce the north and south slopes of the roof.

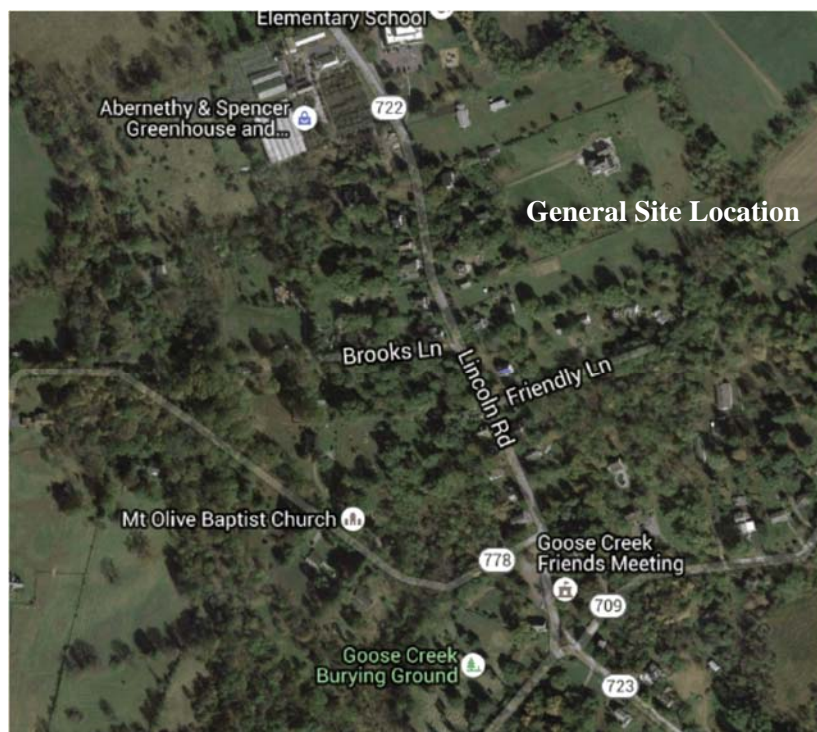
The church's interior consists of a single open sanctuary with a raised dais located in the southwest corner. The interior stone walls are plastered and the cove ceiling is finished in tongue-and-groove board. The floor consists of random-width wood plank flooring that ranges from 2 to 4 inches in width. The windows and door are trimmed with square-edged wood trim that features a peaked lintel above each opening. Plain 8-inch high baseboards encircle the room's perimeter. *(Data Source: Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Cultural Resources Information Sheet / Architectural Survey Form, History Matters, LCC, Intensive Survey, 2004 Excerpt, Downloaded June 13, 2016)*

## DESIGN CABINET CHARRETTE

The design charrette for the Grace Methodist Church occurred on April 22, 2016 at the Goose Creek Friends Meeting House Complex where the Design Cabinet, Lincoln Preservation Foundation members, members of the Grace Methodist Episcopal Church, members of the Lincoln Community League and members of the Lincoln community met to learn about the history of the church and the community, and participate in a hands-on brainstorming session of possible site plan configurations, new use characteristics and potential design solutions. The day began with a walking tour of the Grace Methodist Church Site with participants walking to the site to see the structure and surrounding area first hand. The collaboration began with a presentation on the history of the site and a comment session for individuals to provide input on various considerations for the site and building. This discussion provided some excellent insight into the wide range of consideration for future use of the site which included new uses for the site, architectural design considerations, and impacts to the surrounding neighborhood.

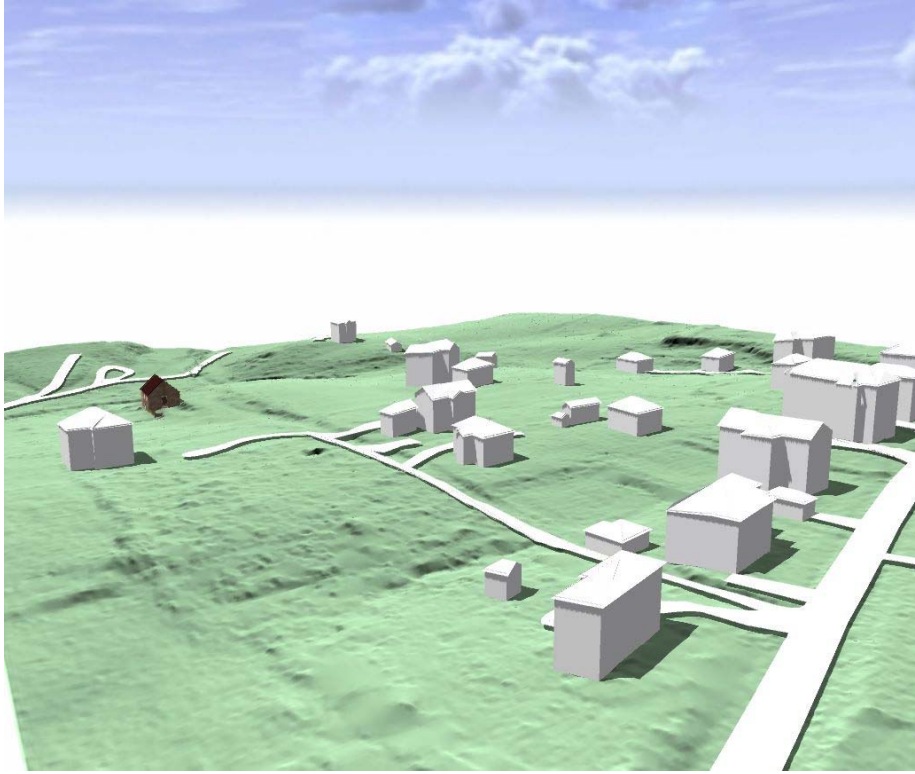


View of Grace Church during walking tour before the design charrette, April 22, 2016.



Grace Church Vicinity Map and Site Location; Image source:

<https://www.google.com/maps/@39.1154679,-77.6969417,18z/data=!3m1!1e3>



CityEngine Web Scene View of Grace Church and surrounding building volumes in the immediate area

## SUMMARY

### Notes Taken at the Charrette

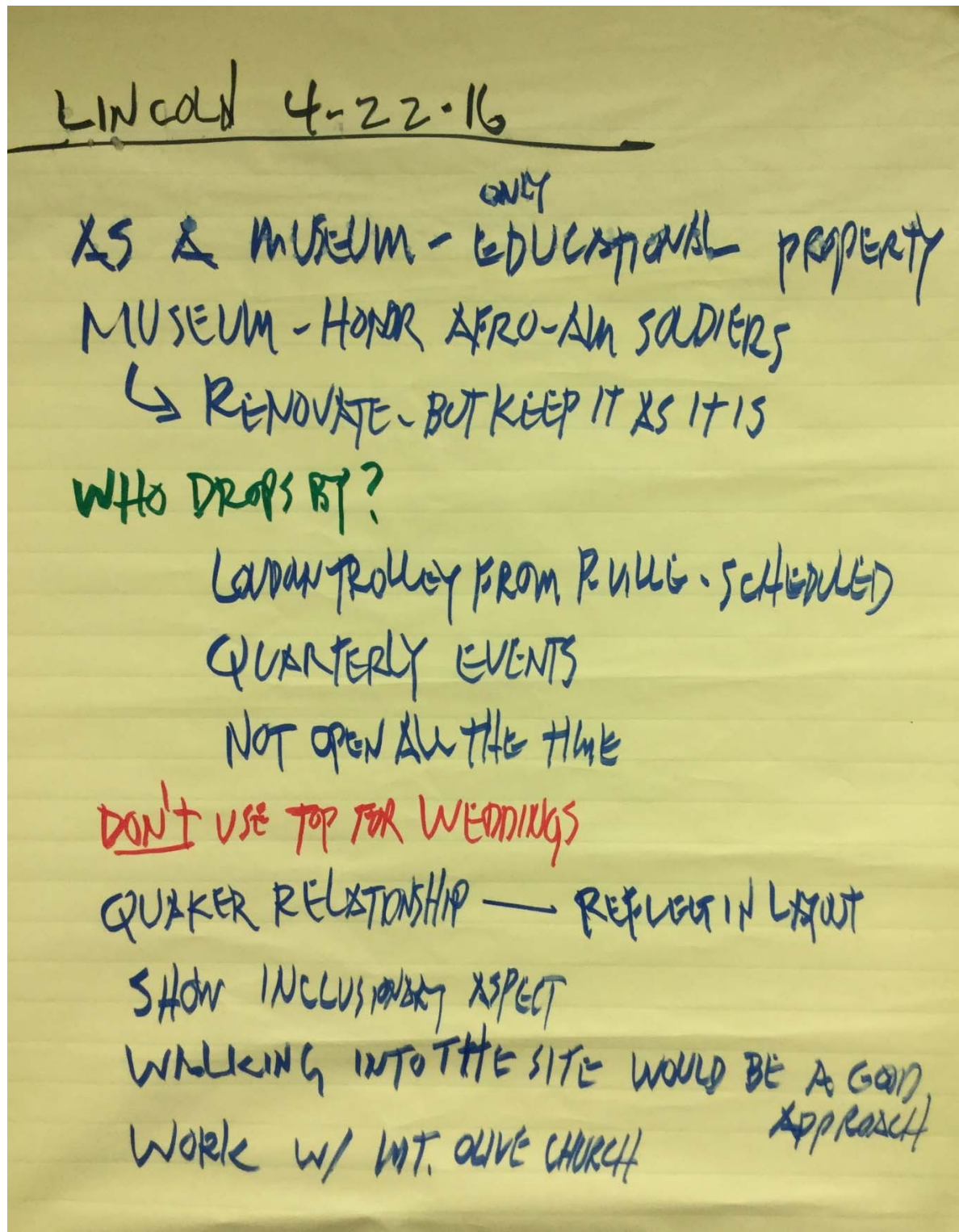
The summarized comments from the introductory session included:

- Potential for using this building as a museum of the history and heritage of the area and the church
- Renovate the structure to be usable, as required, but keep it as close to its original design and current state
- Facility should not be open all the time; use the site for events on an occasional basis
- Discourage use or events that generates a lot of traffic (20 or more vehicles)
- Encourage pedestrian access over the need for vehicular access to get to the site and on the site; use of the site should be limited to pedestrian access
- Redevelopment or certain uses may be disruptive to neighbors and surrounding area
- Consider opinions of others that are not present at the charrette
- The surrounding neighborhood and area has changed over time and the area is now dominated by single family homes with owners that like the calm environment and do not want to see increased traffic
- The Church property owners already conduct funerals on the site which generate traffic
- The Church was constructed first and the surrounding neighborhood was developed after the church
- There are opportunities to share parking off site in the immediate area to allow for parking for events and ensuring the site is accessed by walking to the Church
- Restore the Church to its original state (to the extent possible) and have someone live in it to act as



a caretaker as an option that will generate need for funding to support this use configuration

The full range of comments are shown in the photographs below:



2

THIS MAY NOT BE THE RIGHT FOR  
THESE FUNCTIONS - TRAFFIC, FOOT TRAFFIC  
IS DISRUPTIVE

↳ CONCERNED ABOUT EVENTS, ETC.

PIPESTEM OFF COOK'S LANE (13 FT)

MIGHT NOT PERC

↳ ACCESS LIMITATION

GRACE ANNEX - WHAT DO THEY THINK

PLACE FOR AN ANNUAL GATHERING

DOESN'T LEND ITSELF TO PLACE FOR GATHERING

PRESERVE IT BUT DON'T  
COMMERCIALIZE IT

↳ IMPACT ON NEIGHBORS

MIGHT REQUIRE MANAGEMENT & SCHEDULING

PORTABLE TOILETS FOR EVENTS

FOUNDATION JUST WANTS TO PRESERVE THE BUILDING



3

3

SITE & N-HOOD HAS CHANGED - SURROUNDED  
BY HOUSES NOW ∴ DON'T INCREASE  
TRAFFIC

DO FUNERALS NOW

TRAFFIC IS TERRIBLE NOW - BROOKS LAND  
LIMIT TO FOOT TRAFFIC

WE'VE DONE WALKING TOURS FROM TROLLEY  
CHURCH HAS BEEN THERE; HOUSES CAME LATER  
PARK & MT. OLIVE, SCHOOL, ETC, & WALK IN

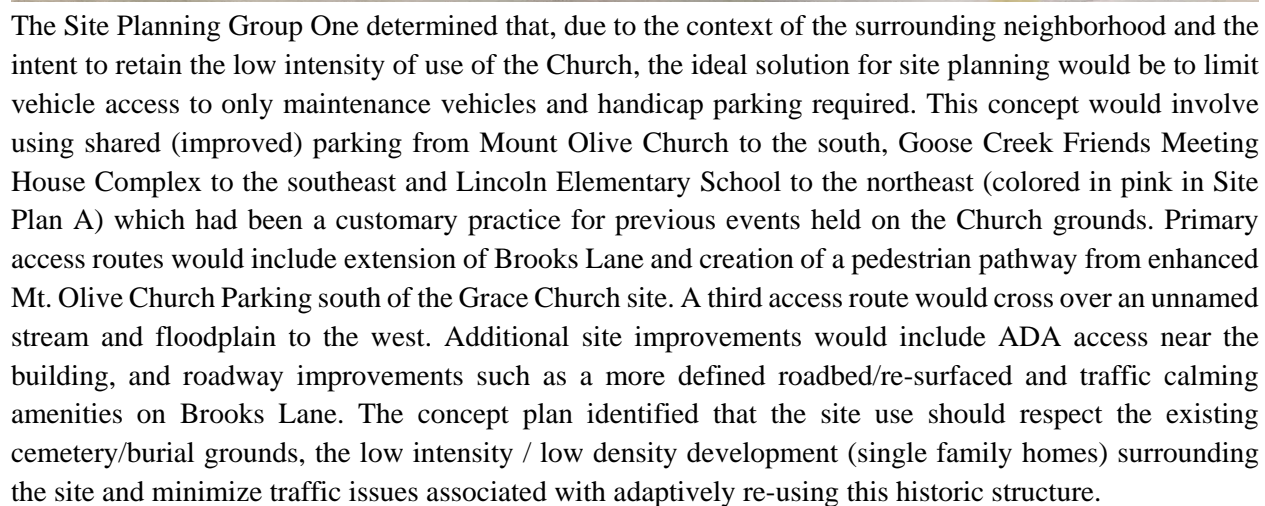
FUNDING NEEDS IMPLY TRAFFIC GENERATION

WE HAD "DIRT ROADS TOUR" FROM EVENTS  
BUT CLOSED IT DOWN DUE TO TRAFFIC

RESTORING THE BUILDING, HAVE SOMEONE LIVE IN IT  
OPEN TO PUBLIC USE/YR.

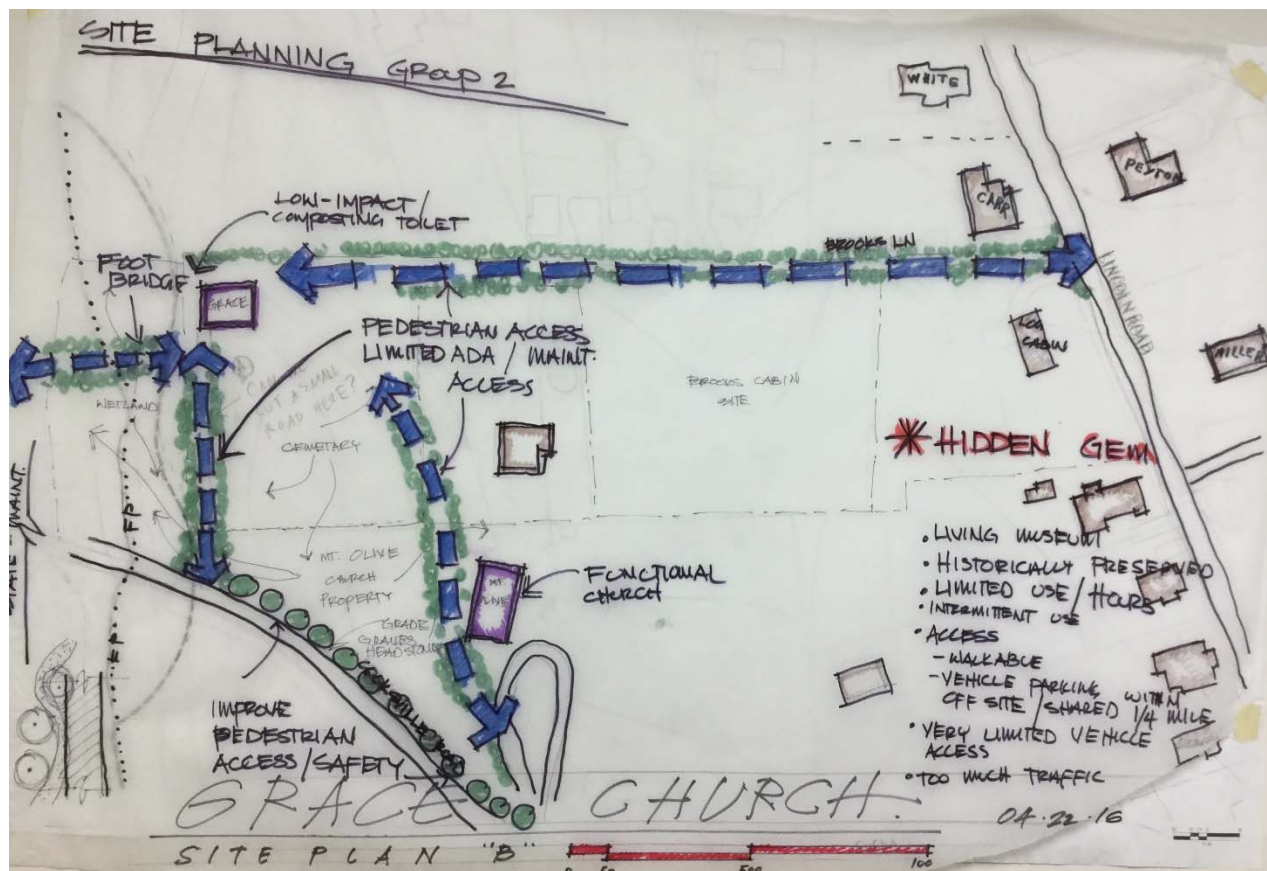
↓  
PRESERVATIVE  
ENVIRONMENT

### Drawing by Site Planning Group One:



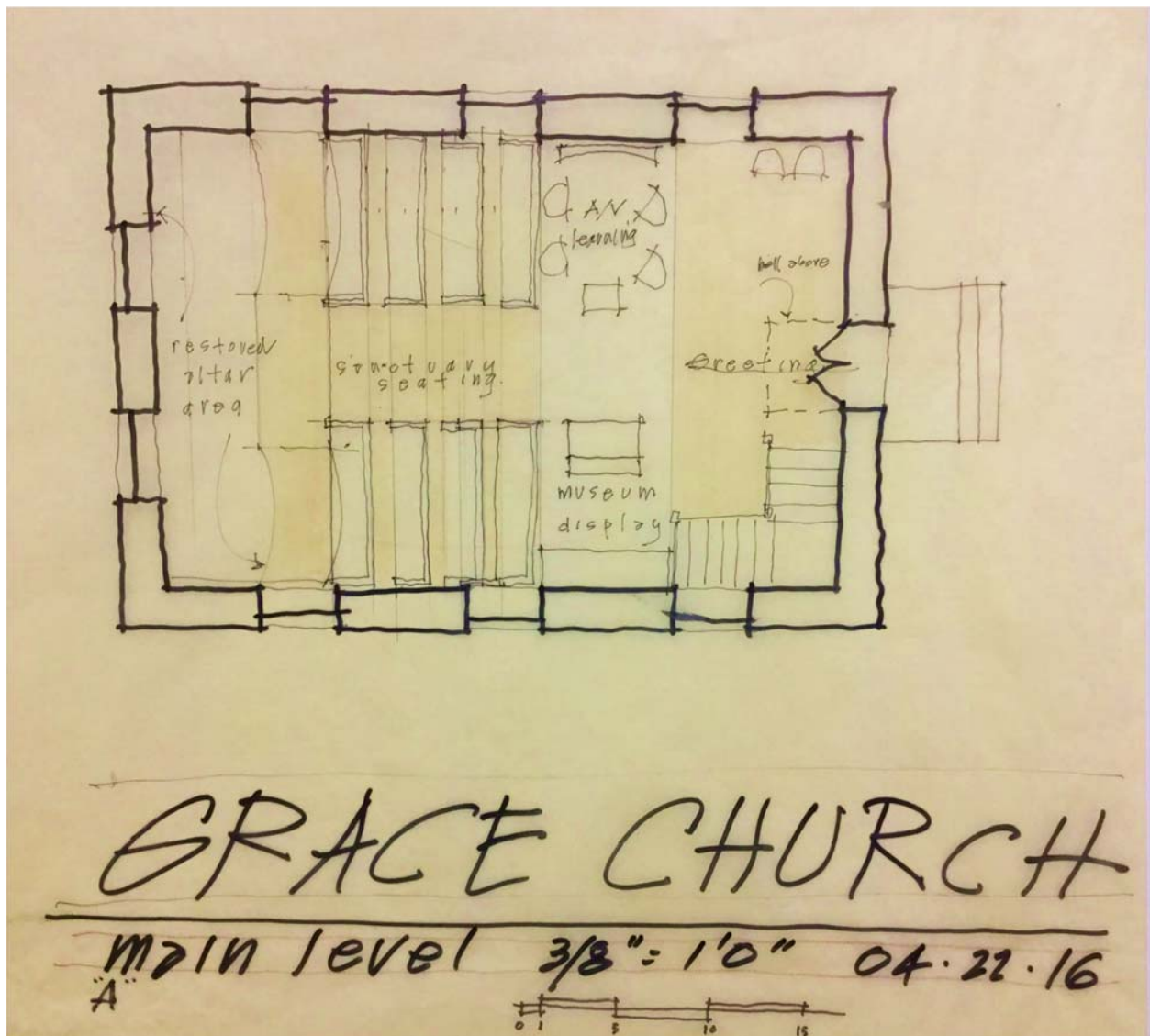


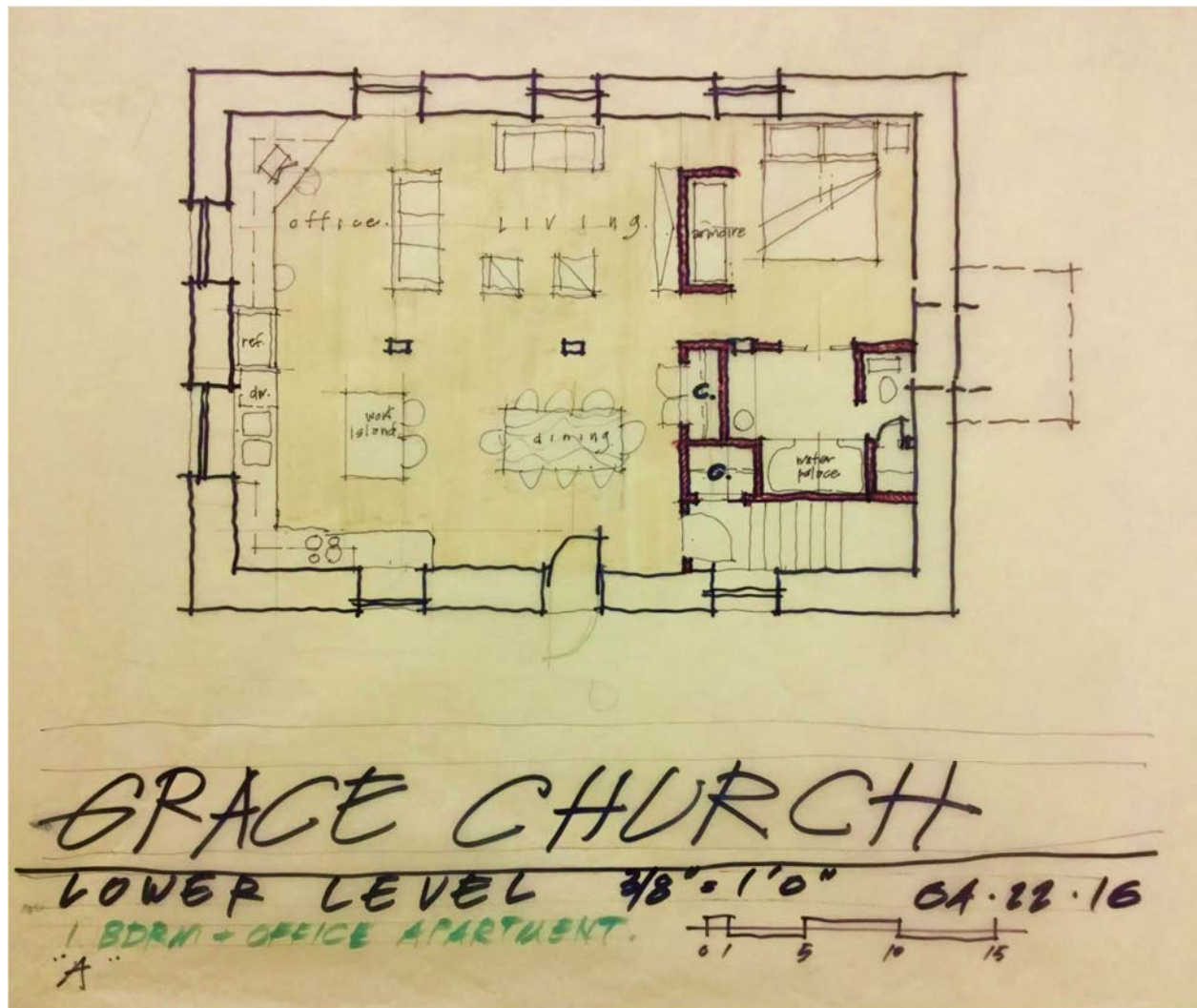
## Drawing by Site Planning Group Two:



The Site Planning Group Two developed site planning concepts very similar to the Group One solutions. Historically, this has meant that when congruent planning solutions are developed, the solutions are generally consistent with accepted planning and design practices. This group determined that the Church should be restored and preserved to its historical state to the extent possible and be used as a living museum of the history of the community. While public access was not necessarily desired by everyone in the work group, the team agreed that limiting hours of use and using the restored facility on an intermittent basis was a good solution. The desired site planning characteristics included creating a walkable environment to access the Church, limit vehicular traffic to the site, maximize pedestrian access and provide off-site shared parking within ¼ mile of the Church site. As with Site Plan A, pedestrian access is to be provided from parking area at Mt. Olive Church, Goose Creek Friends Meeting House Complex and Lincoln Elementary School. The access routes illustrated were virtually identical to Site Plan A with the exception of a north-south connection on Cooksville Road, directly south of the Grace Church Site.

Drawing by Building Planning Group One:

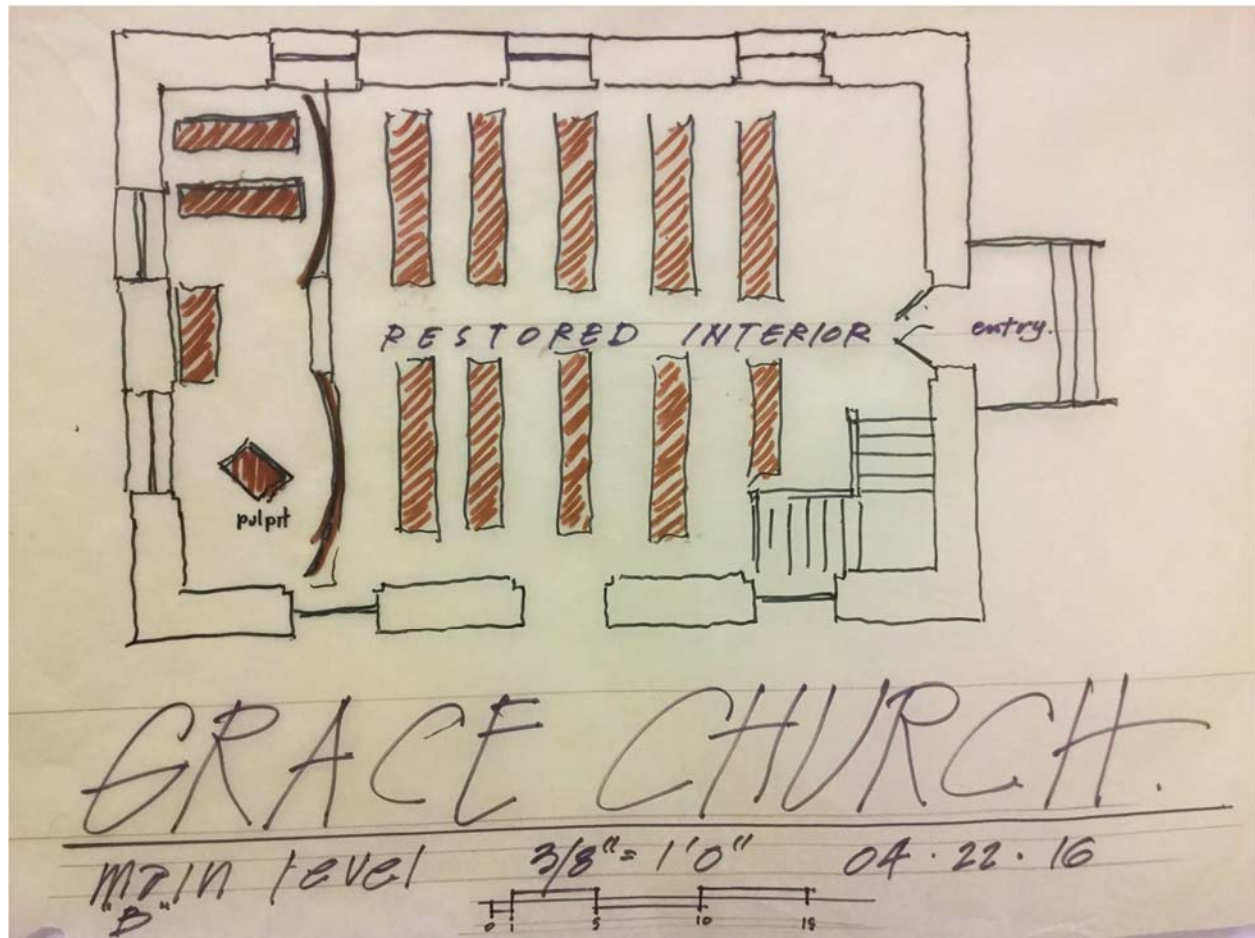




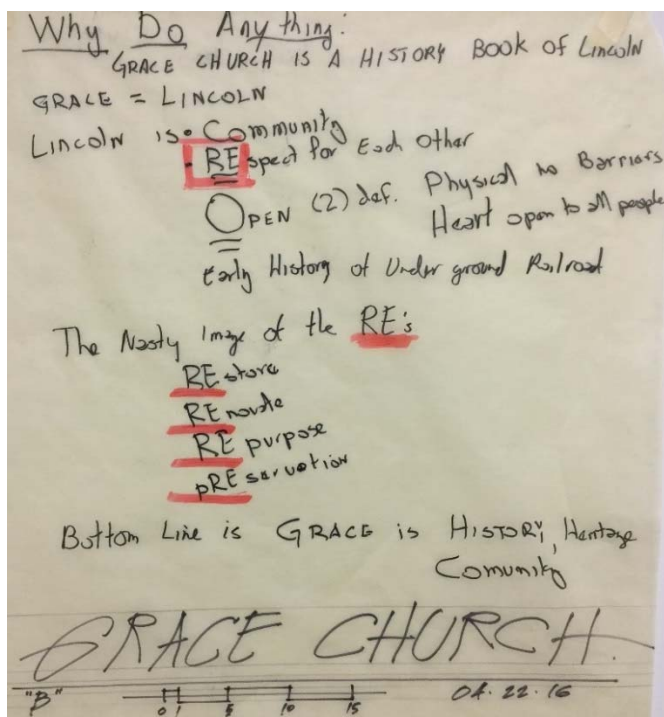
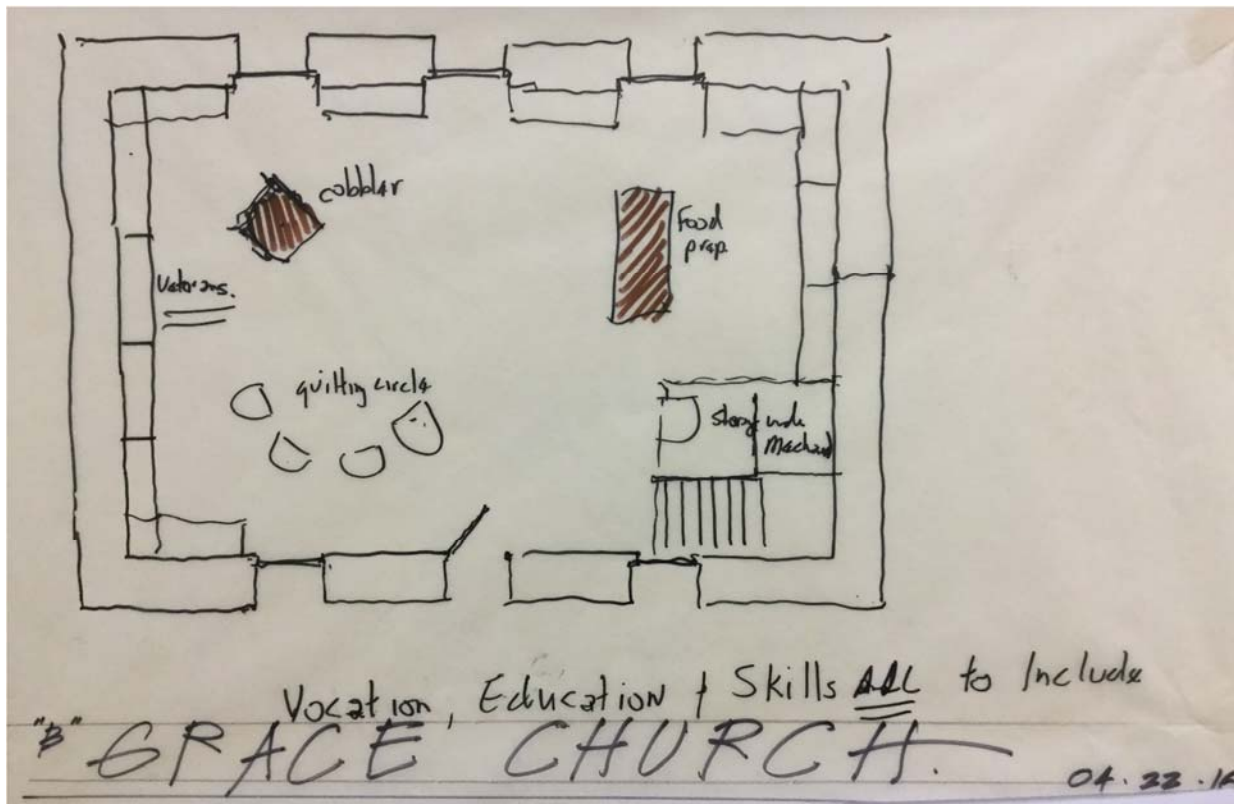
Building Plan 'A' concepts included restoring 50% of the Church to its original use and 50% as an education/historical information center on the first (main) level, creating living quarters for a facility caretaker in the basement sublevel, and restoring the exterior to its historical appearance to the extent possible. The group reported honoring the history and heritage of the Church and the community that originally built and used the Church. The objective of this design approach is to return the church to its original character, establish the church as a living museum of the past while restoring the use of the church as an occasional place of worship. The design concept included partially restoring the church configuration with a pulpit and altar, church pews for congregation seating on the main level and also developing media / learning space with audio/visual equipment and museum display space. The basement sublevel would be retrofitted to support a living space for one to two people which would include spaces for living, sleeping, eating (kitchen with a dining area) and hygiene (bathroom with a bath/shower) as well as office space for the facility maintainer(s).



Drawing by Building Planning Group Two:







Building Plan 'B' resulted from a different approach that included fully restoring the church for worship to include a pulpit, altar, and congregation seating on the first level and creating a living museum and place for education/teaching of vocations that may have been a part of the local heritage in the sublevel basement. The exterior would also be restored to its original character, but in this concepts space would restore the Church's main level to its original use as a fully functional church to respect the history of the area and the heritage of the community, though somewhat different now than what it was when the Church was originally built. The sublevel may include space for skill or vocational training such as shoe making/repair (cobbler's training), quilt making and food preparation. The restoration, re-purposing and

renovation should open the facility to remove physical barriers to accessing the church and opening the site to all people in the community, while respecting the surrounding context of the existing neighborhood. A nominal charge for admission to the vocational museum would help provide revenue to support the cost of building maintenance.

## ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION OF THE EVENT

Additional images of the charrette







