

What: Town Hall and Potluck

Subject: 159 Pleasant Street Future

When: August 6, 2023 11:15-1:00 (Potluck 11:15-11:45 in Vestry)

Where: Sanctuary and Zoom

Since November 2022, the Board has been taking a fresh look at our use of the 159 Pleasant Street building. The Board hopes to reduce the impact of the building on church finances and to consolidate church operations in the main church building.

- Current Status of 159 Pleasant Street:
 - Second floor apartment rented.
 - Ground floor currently houses church office, meeting room, minister office, DRE office, sketchy bathroom, lots of miscellaneous stuff and clutter.
- Current expenses/revenue:
 - Expenses: \$17,000
 - Revenue: \$12,000

Ongoing changes to 159 Pleasant Street

- Meeting room already moved to Church building.
- Church office and minister office in process of being moved to Church building.

What to do with the ground floor?

- Rental apartment
- Church use (RE?)

Issues to consider:

- Changes to tax status
- Code issues
- Property line issues: cannot sell the building
- Cost of any renovation
- Lead abatement (not necessary)
- Need to be respectful of 2nd floor tenant

Some background***

The long and winding road that is the church's history with 159 Pleasant Street starts in 1998. Over the years, many congregation members have invested great amounts of time and energy into the 159 Pleasant Street project. Bob Thorpe, Greg Bianconi,

Anne Perron, and Peter Floyd deserve special mention.

1998

- March 1 Congregational Meeting
 - Capital Campaign approved by congregation; goal of \$450,000; spearheaded by Greg Bianconi.
 - Original goal
 - Build an addition for religious education in the parking lot at the corner of the church.
 - Construct addition with lobby entrance, elevator, and second level rooms.

- October 4 Congregational Meeting
 - Change of plan
 - 159 and 155 Pleasant Street come on the market just as Capital Campaign is launched.
 - Congregation approves plan to buy those two properties at cost of \$145,000.
 - At some point: demolish them, expand the church building and parking. Planned RE addition nixed.
 - Continue with plan to construct addition with new entrance, elevator, second level rooms.

1999-2000

- Renovation of 159 Pleasant Street required for relocation of office staff.
- Interim Minister, Hank Peirce, lives in upstairs apartment.

2000

- Minister office, Church office, and Board room move to 159 Pleasant St.
- Upstairs apartment rented.

2001

- 159 Pleasant Street
 - Basement insulated.
 - Deck jacked up to level the two sections.

2004

- 159 Pleasant Street
 - Upstairs porch and deck painted; panels installed in porch.
 - Electrical service upgrade – required by insurance carrier.

2006

- 155 Pleasant St. has required significant work; financial mismanagement of the rental property
 - March 7 congregational meeting
 - Congregation votes to sell 155 Pleasant St property. Use proceeds to help pay off mortgage on 159 Pleasant Street.
- 159 Pleasant St. lead abatement
 - 159 Pleasant St 2nd floor apartment requires lead abatement due to possible lead poisoning of former tenant (toddler); not able to rent the apartment.
 - September 24 congregational meeting
 - Congregation votes to work with City of Auburn and Community Concepts to carry out lead abatement of 2nd floor apartment.
- Partition added to provide additional storage room.

2007

- Construction of separate outside entrances at 159 Pleasant Street (apartment and church office).
- Lead mitigation of 2nd floor apartment (lead abatement loan from City of Auburn – paid off in 2011).
- Second and third floors completely refinished.
- April 26 – state approval to rent 2nd floor apartment.

2008

- 159 Pleasant St office porch and rear entrance to apartment need work.

2010

- 159 Pleasant Street chimney repair required.

2012

- October 21 congregational meeting:
 - Topics:
 - Conversion to natural gas
 - Compression heat box upgrade
 - Continue to have tenants?

- Clarity of finances.
- Congregation allocates \$400 for energy audit of 159 Pleasant Street.
- Congregation does not approve funds up to \$10,000 for repairs and energy upgrades (shift to natural gas) at 159 Pleasant Street.

2013

- June 3 – church receives \$10,000 matching grant from City Of Auburn’s *Curb Appeal Program* to improve visual quality of 159 Pleasant St.
 - June 30 congregational meeting
 - congregation votes to accept grant; congregation votes to accept anonymous gift of \$10,000 to cover match
 - Foundation and drainage work, new siding, insulation, front porch repairs, new side porch entry -- \$61,000 project.

2023

- Church office and Board room being returned to previous locations in main building.
- First floor in process of decluttering.
- July -- Significant sewer work required (sewer issue in the immediate neighborhood).
- August 6 -- Town Hall planned on use of first floor.

*****-- Information from First Universalist Church Annual Reports**