

Report of Office Master Plan ad hoc Committee, October 2007 (from the President's report to the BOG, 10/13/07)

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Progress

1.) Items reviewed (history)

- Space & duties now in Huntsville
- Space & duties now in members homes
- Paid Staffing
- Short term volunteer staff

e.) Long term volunteer staff

Finding's of 1.)

Although we have two buildings in Huntsville, one houses the office, book store, library and some archives. The other, which is zoned residential, houses archives and is used for storage.

The main building is at capacity. This building is in good condition

The second building is in poor condition and only a portion of it is usable.

The paid staff's time is taken up with the day to day office duties, member services, the book store, and shipping & receiving.

We fall short on long term volunteers to handle some other items that are now housed at the office.

The short term volunteers continue to support the office staff on days when we receive shipments of books, helping to unload trucks, and stacking the boxes wherever they can find space. They also help in packing & loading trucks for transporting material to and from remote locations (i.e. Conventions)

We have approximately 2500 sq. ft between the 2 buildings and they are filled to capacity leaving little space for work stations.

When we looked at all the hard items located at members houses and the space they occupy, we found that we have about 8,000 sq. ft., most of which are in storage only. These items are handled by long term volunteers (Most have had their job 15 years or longer).

Building for the future.

- a.) Expanding our present location
- b.) Building on our property in Huntsville
- c.) Building on property that adjoins our parcel's in Huntsville, if we could buy them.
- d.) Building at a new location (i.e. on parcels we own around the country.
- e.) Asking to build on member's properties that will come our way in the future.
- f.) Rent warehouse space in an industrial park
- g.) Buying new land and building on it.

Finding's for #2.

After checking with zoning, planning, storm water management & permit in Huntsville the finding is, although we own many parcels of land, some adjoining some not, they are individual lots. Each lot carries its own building restrictions, set backs and most are zoned

residential. Even though we own them all, they are still subdivided. Each would have to go through the above process as a separate lot.

It is easier to subdivide a large parcel than to rejoin lots. This rejoining can take 3 to 5 years and cost many thousands of dollars.

If we were successful then we could apply to build a new building and start the permit process.

When we looked at the other properties we own around the country, we found that most were unsuitable for building because of their size or remoteness.

We asked a member who was going to will his hand to the NSS, if he would allow us to build before his will was read. He replied he planned to sell his land to the NSS for \$1.00 and they could do as they saw fit.

We got prices on land in different parts of the country. Based upon 10 acres, the price range was from \$6,500 per acre to \$30,000 per acre for commercial property. All were build able lots.

We got process on renting warehouse space in an industrial park in different parts of the country. Again prices range from \$2.00 to \$3.00 per sq. t. per month without any fitting out of the space. Based on 20,000 sq. ft, it would cost \$40,000 to \$60,000 per month or \$480,000 to \$720,000 annually with a 5 year lease.

3.) What we need in a building

- a.) Bring all holdings under one roof
- b.) Work stations
- c.) Display area
- d.) Conference rooms
- e.) Storage
- f.) Shipping & receiving
- g.) Education
- h.) Book Store
- i.) Rooms to stay in for out of town researchers
- j.) Something to be proud of and be able to show off.

Finding's of 3.

Everyone on the committee had consensus on what space we needed to allot for. Based on what we have and the space for display, store and be able to work in, the figure of 15,000 to 20,000 sq. ft. was arrived at.

4.) Location

- Close to major N. S. & E. W. highways
- Close to major airport
- Should have a cave on the property
- Close to a large city or town
- Close to a major university
- Close to a large active grotto
- Should attract the general public

Finding's of 4.)

The committee recommended several locations, all were investigated

In regard to item g.) this was an unexpected specification. When questioned about this, what came up was the need for public education, programs for school groups, getting out the conservation message, a source for revenue, and attracting new members.

5.) Price & how to finance the new building.

- a.) National building costs are \$150 to \$200 per sq. ft. For a building size of 15,000 to 20,000 sq. ft we are looking to spend 2.5 to 3 million dollars.
- b.) If we have to buy land, the cost goes up
- c.) We have 2 building concepts. One has been built and we could modify the plans to fit our needs. This could save us 15 to 20%
- d.) We could borrow or our own money and pay ourselves back
- e.) With 20% down, we could take out a mortgage over 10 to 30 years.
- f.) We would have to fund raise

Finding's of 5.)

The price of a building is large, at the top end of 3 million

If you break it down to per member it comes to \$250 per member. To pay it off now.

If you break it down to a ten year note, it comes to \$2.08 per member per month for 10 years.

This is based on 12,000 members. This it seems is very doable.

6.) Recommendations of the committee

- a.) We stop talking about it and do it.
- b.) We build in Indiana on our land
- c.) We build a 20,000 sq. ft. building
- d.) We bring all holdings under one roof
- e.) We increase paid staffing
- f.) We keep trying to find long term volunteers
- g.) We use short term volunteers as needed
- h.) We start fund raising ASAP.
- i.) We appoint a project manager to control the project. The project manager should have on their staff a fiscal person and a lawyer
- j.) The BOG should pass a motion to give control to the project manager. The board should get updated reports on the progress, but should stay out of the day to day activities. This accomplishes many things. It takes the politics out of the building process and, when finished, all can say job well done.
- k.) We feel the NSS can afford this project. In fact, the NSS can't afford not to do this project.
- l.) We feel with the right project manager this can be done in 2 years and on budget
- m.) We recommend John Scheltens to be appointed the project manager, if he is willing to take on the responsibility. He may have recommendations on how to accomplish the project in stages

Recap

This report was compiled from hundreds of pages of e-mails, many phone calls, many personal conversations with the committee and conversations with members at large.

There were many phone calls places to zoning departments, permit & planning and storm water management departments in the three different areas if interest.

Internet searches were done for rental space and pricing.

When you take out the cost of land, the average cost of material & labor are very close together. The difference between the 4 areas looked into; the price difference was nil \$.08 per sq. ft. The 4th area was S. Dakota. to get a comparison to the areas of interest.

problems: None