

Annapolis Friends Monthly Meeting (AFM)
Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business (MfB)
Forth Month, Twenty-Ninth
Day, 2026 (3/29/26)

Present were: Ellen McBride (clerk), Phil Caroom (recording clerk), , Martha Baer, Derrick Williams, Mark Taylor,, Theresa Sise, Fahima Gaheez, Mike Baker, Nan & Sky Ellsbree, Martha Lurz, Cairn Krafft, Joan Miller, Dot Walizer, Steve Poe, Barb Thomas, Margaret Holmes, Sylvia Oliva, Mary Barbera, Cindy Barry, Katie Kretler; Patricia Robinson, Kathleen Hudson, Kim Finch, Kathy Trimmer, Dan Campbell,, Colleen Lyons, Angela Hicks, Karen Cunnyingham, Connie Hudson, Jean Christianson, Jenny Isaacs, Barbara Stavac, Marcia Ormsby, Marjorie Kehoe, Jo Anne Schnieder, Judy Brown, and Minette Clark-Swindell.

We met both in person and via Zoom, beginning worship with centering silence and a display of Faith and Practice queries as to our personal spiritual lives. In introductory comments, our Clerk reviewed our anti-racist queries and welcomed Friends to our Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business (MfB). She also thanked us for our flexibility in moving today's MfB meeting one week sooner to avoid Easter Day conflicts. She also recalled the "nugget of wisdom" from a Pendle Hill clerk training program that "the clerk cannot clerk well unless all also are clerking" – inviting Friends to help us achieve centeredness in our gathering today.

As two preliminary items, our Clerk first noted that Julie Rouhi has sent a resignation of her membership in Meeting on March 15, 2026; it is so recorded.

Second, she noted a Friend's request during the third month MfW wAtB for Quaker Market committee to consider whether it might provide an additional donation to Meeting House costs for time involved in Market operations. This will be considered by QMC with a response to be provided in the future.

For Peace & Social Concerns committee (PSC), Margaret Holmes related two announcements and two requests from the Committee:

As to HB 1455 "Break the Bonds," this Maryland General Assembly bill would have asked the State to divest our government funds from Israeli government bonds; subsequently, this bill died in the Md. General Assembly. Now, AFM is requested to add its name to a petition endorsing the Break the Bonds movement in Maryland which continues on an administrative (for example, with the Md. State Retirement System) and local level. The national movement was started by Jewish Voice for Peace.

One Friend noted that, with the complexity of modern mutual funds, she was unsure whether she is invested in conflict with the integrity testimony; another urged that Meeting examine its own investments. Four Friends (Dot Walizer, Marcia Ormsby, Dan Campbell and Barbara Stavac) asked to be recorded as standing aside while they examine their own personal investments and investigate their own questions; another asked whether Friends Fidiciary fund has divested from Israeli bonds. After much discussion including a comment on Israel's founding history, another as to the need to rebalance the political situation, our Clerk noted the limited time remaining for our MbB and discerned that P&SC take this up for additional threshing.. Another Friend suggested that we set personal deadlines for ourselves to pursue questions as to our own investments. We also agreed to ask S&F to examine AFM's and Friends Fiduciary's investments to see whether these include Israeli government bonds.

A Friend (Angela Hicks) has written a letter titled “A Quaker Witness in a time of Constitutional strain.” She asked permission for herself and our Clerk to sign and publicize this letter on behalf of AFM. Friends who have read the letter praised its contents. Friends approved the requested action. One urged even more strongly worded letters in the future. Another Friend encouraged circulating the current letter widely.

Finally, Margaret noted that PSC has observed our AFM roadside banners (rainbow-pride and Black Lives Matter) again have become tattered and she proposed installing new ones. Friends approved. Friends approved the minutes to this point.

Our Clerk noted that, with just a few minutes remaining, there was insufficient time to receive our quarterly Stewardship & Finance (S&F) Committee and requested that this be circulated by email before consideration at our next MfB.

As to the Advisory Group for the Selection of the Plan (AGSP), Mike Baker reported that AGSP has met numerous times since January to examine the three AFM needs – i.e., accessible restrooms, storage and a new worship / classroom space and to provide a recommendation for a plan to address these. AGSP now recommends what it calls Version 7, but also has provided an option known as Version 8. The difference between plan 7 & 8 is that 7 recommends a worship/class-room that is slightly smaller in square footage than the current MPR and Version 8 recommends one that is slightly larger. The AGSP recommends that Versions 7 and 8 be used, as directed, to obtain a more accurate cost estimate for an addition. The clerk noted that we were not making a decision to build or not to build, but were following Meeting’s instruction from the 2025 12th month MfB for the AGSP to recommend a plan and to then get a more accurate cost estimate.

Mike personally has made some preliminary inquiries with the County as to PERC tests and has made preliminary contacts with some contractors who could provide cost estimates, but AGSP has made no financial commitments as yet. One Friend expressed concerns about Version 8 possibly getting too close to the property’s steep slope line.

Jo Ann Schneider, who has professional experience with accessibility concerns, offered to provide accessibility inspections “for free” if AFM chooses to go forward. She also urged that AFM should consider four points for better accessibility: 1) accessible chairs for those with physical disabilities; 2) up-to-date hearing assistance systems; 3) built-in technical-equipment for remote accessibility; and 4) to correct the current parking lot accessibility issues.

Friends thanked Mike and the AGSP group for all their work so far. As a current “baby step,” Friends approved: a) that AGSP should continue to get informal, preliminary (no-cost) estimates from builders as to Version 7 and the option of Version 8 – including the aforementioned accessibility features; and b) that a later called-meeting should be scheduled after informal estimates are received for possible approval of a plan, subject to further discernment by a new advisory group as to possible financing. (Our Clerk requested volunteers for this financing advisory group.)

Noting that we had run out of time, our Clerk and other Friends offered brief announcements as to our April 5 plans for an Easter Walk, brunch, Sacred Chant and Dance, and more. We deferred approval of the latter part of these minutes until the next MfB and closed with brief centering silence.

-These minutes respectfully submitted. - P.Caroom, Recording Clerk

**AGSP Report MfW wAtB April 2026
(moved to March due to Easter falling on First day)**

Friends,

The Advisory Group for Selecting the Plan was established by this Meeting in December with a clear charge: to ensure a sound process, review the available drawings, and bring forward one plan for cost estimation.

The group was intentionally composed to reflect the Meeting's full structure, including leadership, Stewardship and Finance, Meeting House and Land, Trustees, Ministry and Pastoral Care, and members at large.

Over the past three months, the group has invested significant time and care in this work. We held six listening sessions and three threshing sessions, gathered input both in person and in writing, reviewed twelve design options and one physical model, and met eleven times to discern a path forward. In total, this represents more than one hundred hours of collective effort.

A central contribution to this process has been Mike Baker's work. He developed multiple design iterations based on community input, engaged directly with Anne Arundel County on zoning and environmental constraints, initiated a PERC test required for building, and began preliminary conversations with builders and an architectural firm to better understand feasibility and cost.

After reviewing all input, constraints, and design options, the group came into unity on a recommendation. Please see the Comparison Chart (attached) with the various features.

We recommend that the Meeting move forward with Mike Baker's Version 7 as the single plan for obtaining a more accurate cost estimate from builders. This plan includes the three essential features identified through community input: two accessible restrooms, storage, and a worship/classroom space for approximately 40 people.

In addition, recognizing that some Friends expressed interest in a larger space, Mike has agreed to also obtain a cost estimate for Version 8, which includes the same essential features with a larger room accommodating approximately 70 people and a more square layout to support circle seating.

At this stage, four builders have agreed to provide rough cost estimates for these plans. If those estimates are available, they will be shared; if not, they will be brought forward as soon as they are received.

The group has also informed Trustees of a recommendation to consider a change in architectural firm, based on our experience in this process. Trustees are in communication on that matter.

AGSP Report

Friends, this report does not ask for approval to build. It reflects the completion of the task you gave us: to bring forward one plan so that the Meeting can move from ideas to grounded information, particularly around cost.

We are grateful for the engagement of the Meeting community throughout this process, and we welcome continued questions and discernment as we move forward together.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen McBride, Clerk

Colleen Lyons, Assistant Clerk (AGSP)

Cindy Barry

Kim Finch

Jeanne Ward

Dot Walizer

Phil Caroom

Marcia Ormsby

Patty Robinson

Mike Baker

Attached: Comparison Chart

Comparison of Designs dated March 27, 2026		Rev032726_1430			
	SCHEME A-1	MB VERSION 7	MB VERSION 8		
ESSENTIALS					
Accessible Restrooms	2 of equal size	2 with one larger	2 with one larger		
40-Seat Worship/Classroom	40-seats	40-seats	70-seats (larger than current Meeting Room)		
Storage for 400 sqft + 400 sq ft; all on ground level	No, only enough for new build	Yes, >800 sq ft storage	Yes, >800 sq ft storage		
FEATURES beyond essentials				Existing Building	
Need for additional parking spaces	No new ones needed	No new ones needed	No new ones needed	52	TI prkg spaces
1 prkg sp/100 sq ft: TL spaces	35.86	35.86	40.57		
Occupancy Space (Sq Ft)	1066	1066	1537	2520	
Pitch of roof above restrooms	low (flat) pitch above restrooms	similar pitch to existing building	similar pitch to existing building		
Tallest Peak	5-ft taller than the peak of the existing building's peak	2-ft below the peak of the existing building's peak	1-ft taller than the peak of the existing building's peak		
Established Cut-Through used	No, different cut-through	Yes, cut-through established in 1993	Yes, cut-through established in 1993		
Solar - ability to install on roof	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Potential for elevator	No	Yes	Yes		
Permeable Surface (15% max)	Under 15%	Under 15%	Under 15%		
15% slope areas (line)	Within	Within	Within		
100-feet from the creek	More than 100-feet	More than 100-feet	More than 100-feet		
EXTRA Features					
Adult Changing Table	No	Yes	Yes		
Floor Drain in lg restroom	No	Yes	Yes		
Flexible shower hose	No	Yes	Yes		
SQUARE FOOTAGE / ROUGH COST				Existing Building	
Total sq ft of build (footprint)	2,000	2,100	2,625	3,950 sq ft	Footprint
At \$500/sq ft, Rough Estimate	\$1,000,000.00	\$1,050,000.00	\$1,312,500.00		

A Quaker Witness in a Time of Constitutional Strain

Members of the Religious Society of Friends – commonly known as Quakers – have long believed that seeking and speaking truth is a spiritual responsibility. Our faith teaches that every person carries inherent dignity and that governments must protect the conditions in which human life and liberty can flourish.

Recent events in our nation and around the world have deepened concerns about the strength of those protections.

Violence and loss of life in Minnesota have shaken communities and renewed urgent questions about accountability, civil rights, and the proper use of government authority. We mourn those who have died and hold their families and communities in the Light. Their loss reminds us of the ongoing need to protect the dignity and rights of every person.

At the same time, headlines recount growing destruction and loss of life resulting from the expanding war involving Iran. Such developments raise serious questions about the use of military force and about the constitutional responsibilities of our government in matters of war and peace.

Taken together, these events reflect a troubling pattern that extends beyond any single moment. They point to failures to protect First Amendment freedoms, failures to provide due process of law for all people, and the weakening of constitutional checks and balances that limit the concentration of power.

We have also witnessed rising tensions surrounding press freedom and academic independence, aggressive enforcement actions that have frightened immigrant communities, and reductions in programs that support the most vulnerable among us. Cuts to programs such as SNAP and Medicaid deepen hardship for families already struggling to meet basic needs.

For Friends, these concerns are not partisan. They are moral.

Quakers have long spoken when conscience compels us. Our tradition includes early opposition to slavery, persistent witness for peace during times of war, and advocacy for equality when it carried personal and political risk.

That history reminds us that democracy depends not only on institutions but also on the willingness of citizens to defend them.

Nearly 250 years ago, the Declaration of Independence affirmed that all people are endowed with certain unalienable rights – among them life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Those words remain both an aspiration and a responsibility. Protecting them requires vigilance, humility, and the courage to speak when the dignity of human life and the health of democratic institutions are at stake.

We offer this reflection not as partisans, but as people of faith concerned for our neighbors and for the democratic principles that have long guided our nation.