

Project Makes Strides

Leadership Retreat Successful

A "Spirit of Wildacres" is developing among the leadership of Charlotte's Jewish Community as the result of a Labor Day Weekend retreat attended by representatives of the five organizations that are planning to be together on one Providence Road campus.

The retreat may one day be remembered as the real turning point in the years — long effort to establish on one tract of land new homes for Temple Israel and Temple Beth El, a new Jewish Community Center, and a Joint Educational Facility to serve those organizations, the Hebrew Academy and the Federation.

There were quiet discussions, resolutions of differences, developments of plans, and much just plain camaraderie.

There were many crucial accomplishments:

- Representatives of the boards of Temple Israel, Temple Beth El, the Jewish Community Center, the Hebrew Academy and the Charlotte Jewish Federation hammered out the Joint Venture Agreements with surprising swiftness in a four-hour session. In a nutshell, the agreement spells out in legal language the accords reached in large measure during the many months of cooperative effort by the President's Council. But the document is also a historic first, since the kind of effort we're doing here has never been accomplished elsewhere. In fact, Mark Bernstein, who prepared the draft, had few legal models to follow. More about these agreements later.

- The site plan — the proposed location of the buildings on the Providence Road site — got another going over in a session with architect Gene Warren. Many of the Foundation board members present had been studying the plan for months, however their spouses and folks who were also at Wildacres for a parallel Devorah Hadassah retreat got

the opportunity to see the reasons why Warren is making his recommendations. The excitement was electrifying! Warren's plan, worked out in conjunction with the Foundation building committee chaired by Bill Gorelick, takes into account the topography of the site, the soil, the drainage, the existing woods, the slopes, and several other factors.

- The board members, at a Sunday morning session chaired by Foundation President Herman Blumenthal and Campaign Chairman Al Levine, began putting together the elements of the campaign, including the campaign team that will raise the money for the project. The group also began working on the budget — how much the project should cost.

- Unmet needs, as disclosed in the recently completed community survey, were the focal point of a Saturday evening discussion led by Public Relations Chairman Bob Conn and Foundation Executive Director Marvin Bienstock. For instance, there was a perception that many members of the community, both newcomers and oldtimers, feel socially isolated. So an effort was rapidly planned to beef up the social and cultural offerings through a joint coordinating committee. This committee would be formed under Foundation auspices, but in reality would be a federation of the member organizations. Besides more cooperation, the survey called for more emphasis on Jewish youth. A solution for this should be made easier by the project's evolution (including Track II discussions that already have begun.)

- With much of the critical work out of the way, there was a consensus to aim for a vote on the project at the individual institutions during October. At Temple Beth El, Temple Israel and the JCC, votes of the membership will be re-

quired. So one key task of the public relations committee is making sure that everyone has enough information to make an independent judgment. Furthermore, individual information committees are being formed within each organization to answer questions about the project from that organization's perspective.

But it was the rapid consensus on the joint Venture Agreement, the legal core of the project, that produced the greatest euphoria. It is that agreement and the still-to-be-concluded lease agreement, that will form the basis for the organizational votes.

The Joint Venture Agreement begins: "The institutions join together in this joint venture for the purpose of developing, constructing, maintaining and operating certain joint and individual facilities on a common tract of land...to provide an enriched opportunity for the institutions to design and promote a dynamic and rewarding Judaic experience in this community."

"The institutions further desire to create in this joint venture a constructive and harmonious relationship between the Institutions and other Jewish organizations in this community; to develop a heightened awareness of Jewish cultural, educational, historical and religious activities; to obtain an active and involved commitment by Jews in this community to affiliate with the Institutions and to identify and support Jewish charities and causes; and to create an enriched appreciation by the Charlotte Jewish Community of its Judaic heritage and the importance of the preservation and perpetuation of this heritage."

The agreement spells out who gets which tract on the property; describes the joint educational facility, the recreational facilities, and how maintenance and upkeep will be paid.

It spells out specific agreements between the foundation and each institution, so there is no question of who can do what. For instance, athletic facilities would be reserved as the JCC's area but Temple recreation program would have access.

It confirms the long-standing plan to build the educational and recreational facilities first, the sanctuaries and fellowship halls following

at a later date, with the Foundation pledged to assist the Temples in their fund drives.

The Joint Venture Agreement embodies the principles of autonomy for the individual organizations, the key passage of which states, "each institution shall maintain its individual autonomy and continue to have the right to determine the use and operation of the property conveyed or leased to it."



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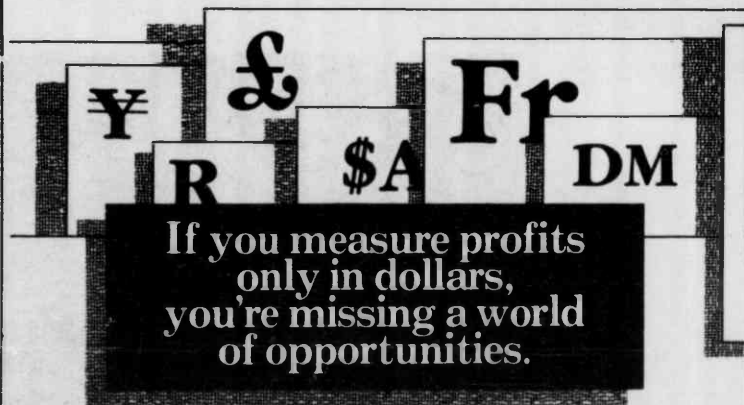
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