

Annual Report

Building and Grounds Committee

2018

Building and Grounds Committee has logged in another busy year dealing with jobs that occur on an annual basis, those that arise during the course of the year and a few that have advanced to the top of the “to-do” list. The Committee is comprised of a group of interested and talented members and as a result, we accomplish a lot without having to tap the Meeting budget.

Two sub-committees: the Playground Committee and the Burial Grounds Committee, accomplished a lot and we all benefit from their work. The playground is up and being used in nice weather . Chaired by Chiyo Moriuchi , it included Building and Grounds members Peter Vari, Dwight Good and Tony Wolf. Graveyard policies and records are in the best state they have been in for a very long time. Sharon Hulihan and Wendy Kane have been working on this on-going project for several years.

Annual inspections and maintenance of the sprinkler system and fire extinguishers, inspection by the Newtown Fire Department, an up to date list of responders made up of folks living nearby who can reset the Holicong alarm in the event it goes off in a non- emergency situation, new signage on the exits from the balcony, replacing heavy duty batteries in the lighted exit signs throughout the Meetinghouse and new contracts with our housekeeper, Kathy Mebs and our landscaper, Nature’s Grace.

Our Meetinghouse is used most days of the week by four different yoga groups, Tzedek v Shalom and our own committee meetings. Additionally, some of the other Quaker institutions in Newtown have used our space for retreats and Board meetings and the Peace Center has called on us for several public meetings. Despite our “hidden” location on Court Street, we seem to be pretty well known. Reservations for the use of the Meetinghouse will continue to be made by Building and Grounds.

Peter Vari is helping us to gradually improve our environmental impact by using his skills to install LED lighting and we look forward to more comfort and less noise from our new fans next summer. The 15 year old water heater was replaced with a more energy efficient one which we hope will provide better for kitchen usage. The kick plate heater to the left of the refrigerator was replaced.

Outside, we continue to have an arborist look after our trees on an annual basis, trimming when needed and removing those that interfere with space needed for other projects like the

playground and grave encroachment. The shrubbery and weeds on the east fence line were also encroaching on some of the graves on that side, so we had those removed and drainage addressed. It will make maintenance easier in all ways. And we actually got the leaves raked this year! However, it was troubling that only 18 folks showed up to do it. Fortunately we had hired three hard workers from Nature's Grace to help out.

The committee identified and played a role in the management of the homeless man who was sleeping on our south porch all Fall. We are appreciative of the response of the Meeting to his plight and to Care and Counsel for resolving it.

There are several large projects looming over the next several years that we will have to deal with including new carpet in the Worship Space, refinishing the hardwood floors, painting the outside, painting the inside, a new roof and then there is the whole issue of dealing with parking when our present arrangement is no longer available.