

**Philadelphia Quarterly Meeting**  
**Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business**  
**Sunday, January 28, 2018**  
**Held at Friends Center City Riverfront,**  
**22 S. Front Street. Philadelphia, PA**

**DRAFT Minutes**

<b>Meeting</b>	<b># of attendees</b>
<b>Green Street MM</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Germantown MM</b>	2 (plus 1 for program only)
<b>MM of Friends of Philadelphia (Arch Street)</b>	1 (plus 3 for program only)
<b>Chestnut Hill MM</b>	4 (plus 1 for program only)
<b>Central Philadelphia MM</b>	4
<b>West Philadelphia MM</b>	1
<b>Frankford MM</b>	3
<b>Visitors</b>	2 (plus 3 for program only)

**PROGRAM on Friends Center City Riverfront**

Ted Reed, the former Board Chair of and dedicated volunteer for Friends Center City, opened the program by inviting Friends to consider what it is they want to have in place as they grow older. Thoughts shared included having friends and acquaintances nearby for social activities; living on one floor; easy access to cultural programming and locations; good health care; affordability. These are all factors that influence “life plan communities” (a new name for continuing care/retirement communities).

Friends Center City Retirement Community (FCCRC), now usually termed Friends Center City, was founded over ten years ago by individuals who were looking to stay present and connected in central Philadelphia without having to live in a suburban location where they would receive continued care services. The initial idea was to start out with a new building, but in the wake of the 2008 recession inspiration came to match up the group seeking space with already vacant space in a Center City building.

Now ten in number, this group of households within the Riverfront condominium building meets for meals twice a week, hosts exercise classes, and work together on issues of mutual importance.

Members hail from a variety of Friends Meetings. Within the Riverfront are thirty other units owned by non-members of FCCRC.

FCCRC treats the city limits as the perimeter of its campus, though the primary focus is on the area river-to-river. Some Friends who have entered the community have existing links to local organizations and activities, but some who have come at retirement to settle in the city do not—these individuals benefit greatly from the connections Friends Center City.

An additional entity, Friends in the City or FitC (website friendscentercity.org), emerged early on to encourage mutual support—a “community without walls”—among both Friends Center City Riverfront and other centrally based Quakers. There are 130-140 events that happen every month under the aegis of FitC. From its beginning, the FitC website has drawn interest and enthusiasm from across the country. Annual cost is \$70 per year.

FitC partners with Friends Life Care to furnish care services that would be usually handled by the assisted living facility of a retirement community: either coordination of health care or direct services.

Friends Services for the Aging is a nationwide organization of Quaker-based institutions that provide services to older people; Friends Center City Riverfront is a member. There is also the Friends Foundation for Aging, a fund that supports organizations addressing the needs of older people.

FitC Plus (at a cost of \$175/year) has recently been set up as a way of managing navigation of health services for those who can't afford insurance coverage or have a pre-existing condition or other issue that disqualifies them. It now has a membership of more than 70 individuals. This is a fee-for-service policy rather than insurance coverage.

Options for participating in Friends Center City Riverfront include: (1) buying a condo; (2) buying lifetime tenancy (in which the estate still recoups a percentage of the value of the condo); and (3) rental. There are efficiencies, one-bedrooms, and two-bedrooms.

A Friend inquired about financial sustainability within FCCRC. Ted reported regarding financial sustainability that Friends Center City, Friends in the City, and FitCPlus are currently self-sustaining. Riverfront has more financial challenges involved. There are two individuals of color currently residing at the Riverfront; the rest identify as white.

**In response to a query about diversity:** Riverfront seeks a more racially diverse pool of members, and also seeks to include LGBTQIA+ members. There is also a need for participants at the younger

end of the senior spectrum to join and take on the legwork for FCC Retirement activities, all of which are run by volunteers.

Riverfront resident Mary Ellen McNish described Friends Center City Riverfront as an “experimental, do-it-yourself retirement community.” Ted added that the participants themselves constitute an amazing talent pool.

There was a suit by previously arrived residents of the Riverfront that kept the community from taking residence for year and a half, though the court ultimately found in favor of FCCRC. As part of the negotiated agreement with the Riverfront property, there can only be a total of twenty units assigned to FCC members. Practically speaking, FCC is a retirement community within an intergenerational building.

FCC members pay a condo fee and a Riverfront fee that cover the cost of two community rooms, two shared meals (one inside the community and one out on the town), and exercise classes. To move in at the Riverfront, either Friends Life Care coverage or another long-term health care coverage package is required. FCC members are currently closely involved with the building’s Condo Association.

The question was raised as to whether consideration was being given to establishing Friends Center City clusters of units in other buildings. The idea has come up from time to time, but momentum for any additional location would need to come from a new crop of Friends. However, de facto Friends in the City populations have “infiltrated” a number of what are called Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities, or NORCs—condominiums in which long-term residents have lived for decades, eventually reaching retirement age.

Friends closed the program with appreciation for Ted Reed, Mary Ann Hunter, Mary Ellen McNish, and others from Friends in the City who helped put together the presentation. There was a brief break.

### **MINUTES of MEETING for WORSHIP for BUSINESS**

Friends opened the Quarter’s meeting for worship with attention to business with a period of worship in silence.

**PQM2018-1-1 Introductions:** Those sitting at the clerks’ table introduced themselves: Hollister Knowlton, PQM clerk, and Sara Palmer, PQM recording clerk.

**PQM2018-1-2 Approval of Minutes:** Friends approved the October 22, 2017, minutes without change. It was agreed that we include the text of Chestnut Hill’s minute along with previously

received minutes that emerged out of sessions called by PQM's member meetings on Philadelphia Yearly Meeting and racism.

A record of the Quarter-wide called gathering on racism, held January 6, was also received.

**PQM2018-1-3 Draft 2018-19 Budget Proposal.** A copy of the current draft budget was distributed for review, with the note that Friends' approval for the budget will be sought in April. The Quarter has so far received covenant contributions toward Fiscal Year 2017-18 from just two meetings: Chestnut Hill and Monthly Meeting of Philadelphia.

Friends approved the clerk's offer to get in touch with each of the monthly meeting's clerks and treasurers to remind them about the need to contribute. It was pointed out that a balance sheet would be greatly helpful in interpreting some of the content. Our treasurer is hoping to create one, but is recovering from surgery and anticipating a second surgery in February. Meanwhile she must also plow through stacks of data left unprocessed by her predecessors.

Grants to organizations under the Quarter's care were discussed. Friends Center City is not yet formally under our care but would like to be; the possibility will be explored further. We have laid down care of Delaware Valley Friends School. Tricia has initiated communication with George Garrettson about the monies that go to Friends at Stapeley.

Friends discussed the addition of a payroll expense to process payments to our coordinator. This was a condition of hiring required by our current coordinator. The clerk agreed (with help from Margaret Wood) to present more detail on this arrangement at our April meeting.

It was asked whether we still need the office space we rent from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. A former coordinator spoke to the extreme convenience of having access to physical equipment and infrastructure, meeting space, and the pulse of other Philadelphia Yearly Meeting happenings.

The clerk agreed to consult with others in Yearly Meeting regarding whether we can perhaps share the desk with Friends involved in the Yearly Meeting's Councils.

**PQM2018-1-4 State of the Meeting Reports.** The Yearly Meeting is reinstating the State of the Meeting Reports and asks that each Quarter gather the reports and use them to develop a State of the Quarter Report. Monthly Meetings will need to forward their reports to Philadelphia Quarter by May 15; by May 31, the eight monthly meeting reports and the Quarter's report will be due to Quaker Life Council. Green Street has already had conversation about the request and voiced the need to take the reports as a serious opportunity for self-examination. Some guidance is available in

a Quaker Life Council letter on the Philadelphia YM website. Our group of PQM representatives will look at how we feel led to approach the request.

PQM2018-5 **Organizations under the care of the Quarter.** This topic was largely covered during our review of the budget proposal. It was emphasized that there will be deeper exploration of our connection with Quaker Voluntary Service.

PQM2018-1-6 **Update on Minutes on Racism within the Quarter.** Friends shared feedback on the January 6 Called Meeting, with some strong positives expressed as well as resistance and confusion noted.

Current situation among our meetings regarding the original and subsequent minutes of concern on racism within Philadelphia Yearly Meeting: Green Street reported on their direct dialogue with Philadelphia Yearly Meeting leadership regarding their concerns. The officers of Green Street Meeting asked the PYM leadership to come meet directly with the GSMM community about the issues, which they did. One Green Street Friend has input into the currently slow-moving process toward the cultural audit of PYM. Until more substantial movement happens, GSMM's covenant contribution to the Yearly Meeting will remain in escrow. Even so, a Friend reported that Green Street Meeting's community is feeling more engaged than ever in Yearly Meeting matters.

Next steps within and among Friends meetings could also include training in nonviolent ways of expressing, with attention to reaching clarity within oneself as a vital step in communicating/engaging with others. There are existing resources such as Alternatives to Violence Project we might be able to tap into. (Laurent Hahn, who is an AVP facilitator, agreed that AVP tools could be relevant.) At the same time, perhaps we can move from an awareness of interactions at the individual level to awareness of what's happening at the system level. Can we let go of white fragility and build resilience in the face of difficult situations?

**Friends approved calling upon AVP facilitators, with an emphasis on people of color, within Yearly Meeting to help us organize such trainings focused on our needs, particularly the issue of racism.** There may also be the possibility of arranging for PQM members who have already undergone the first one or two trainings to take the final "train the trainer" workshop.

PQM2018-1-7 **Worship Sharing:** "What evidence of Spirit is alive in your meetings?" Tricia Walmsley shared a full page of varied happenings from Chestnut Hill MM. Sara Palmer of Central Philadelphia MM reported that her Meeting succeeded in raising over \$800 for solar infrastructure in Puerto Rico as part of CPMM's customary 12<sup>th</sup> Month fundraising for a selected organization. CPMM plans a "fun-raiser" (combining a play party, silent auction, and dance celebration) on

Saturday, March 17, to which the entire Quarter is invited. It was also noted that CPMM has issued a minute on mass incarceration that will be shared with other meetings in the Quarter.

Friends closed with a brief period of worship in silence.

Submitted by Sara Palmer, recording clerk