

GENERAL MEETING APPROVES COMMUNITY CENTER ONCE AGAIN

by Fred Nelson

The May 5 General Meeting gave final approval for the Community Center project. The following outline was submitted to the meeting, to update previous published information.

BUILDING RENT

\$750 per month on a three-year lease (\$375 for each floor, 4,000 square feet each). The rent might be negotiated lower if this will not jeopardize the owner's commitment to contribute substantially for alterations. First and last month's rent needed before work may begin.

CAPITAL FUNDS

Three sources--all are needed to acquire and renovate the building.

- \$5,000 anonymous gift: to renovate, decorate and equip downstairs artists and craftsmen's area. May used to temporarily subsidize last month's rent deposit required by owner, which artists would otherwise have to pay in addition to first month's rent. Cannot be used for other areas.
- \$3,000 budgeted by MFU: \$750 for first and last month's upstairs rent, \$200 to cover first month's rent for unoccupied artists' space, the balance for kitchen and sound equipment, upstairs and exterior decor, first insurance and utilities payments, and renovation not paid for by owner.
- \$3,000-\$4,000 estimate committed by owner to bring building up to code and expand bathrooms. We will trade our labor for his money so it will cover some of our renovation needs.

LEASE RESPONSIBILITY

The lease, and control of the building will be vested in the Midpeninsula Free University, a non-profit corporation. According to MFU legal counsel, no liability will accrue to MFU members, officers, artists or any other individuals in case of default of rent. Further, in such an instance, the owner is required by law to seek another tenant before pressing claims against the MFU. According to authorities contacted, the building, as renovated, would be a considerably attractive rental property. The building is designed, within limits defined further on, to be entirely self-supporting by conservative estimates, and a reasonable profit is highly likely.

TAXATION

Sales taxes in coffee house or artists' area, as required. The MFU is currently not exempt from income taxation, but deductions virtually eliminate the tax. The same would hold for the Center. In addition, in light of recent, relevant court decisions, the MFU might be closer to tax-exempt status. Income taxes will cause no problem in the center, at any conceivable level of success.

COFFEE HOUSE: GENERAL

Layout unchanged from previous descriptions. Open for widest variety of entertainment or silence -- flexible floor plan for multiple uses. Integrated arts and crafts displays along with basic menu of coffees, teas, cold drinks (non-alcoholic), soups, sandwiches at the beginning with more as we develop the capacity. LOW OVERHEAD, MADE POSSIBLE BY ELIMINATION OF PROFIT, AND BY MINIMAL SALARIES, WILL ENABLE US TO HAVE EXTRAORDINARILY HIGH-QUALITY FOOD AND BEVERAGES FOR BELOW-NORMAL PRICES. This is not a gimmick. Community ownership and elimination of high profits make this possible. Seating: Roughly 120. Full capacity: Roughly 275.

BASEMENT: GENERAL

Layout unchanged--open work-display marketplace concept, MFU Press enclosed.

EXPANSION AND FUTURE OCCUPANCY

Three options will be asked for in the lease:

- First refusal on re-rental of second floor, now occupied by Stanford, if what we are doing now succeeds, for performing arts.
- First refusal on subsequent leasing rights.
- Option to buy, at request of several MFU members. Involves no commitments.

FINANCIAL: GENERAL

We have adhered more or less to our original proportional rent concept: A given activity pays rent in accordance with the percentage of total space it occupies. Artists sharing some space will share rent. Coffee house pays for all of ground floor, including arts and crafts display area. However, charges will be made for suitable activities in the multiple-use area. The MFU will pay directly for art space it occupies as an organization, i.e., the downstairs press-room.

FINANCIAL: COFFEE HOUSE

Basic Monthly Income is based on conservative income estimates for sales of three staple items: beverages, soup, sandwiches. All figures are tentative, and might vary according to variety--some soups, for example, are more costly.

- Beverages--15¢ price less 3¢ cost
100 mugs/glasses per day = \$12 = \$360 monthly
- Sandwiches--Average 40¢ to 50¢ price less 15¢ cost
50 per day, 30¢ profit = \$15 = \$450 monthly
- Soups--30¢ price less 5¢ cost
30 per day, 25¢ profit = \$7.50 = \$225 monthly

TOTAL BASIC MONTHLY INCOME: \$1,035.00

If beverage price is 10¢, basic income is \$885. Prices may mislead: quality will be extremely high--we have good recipes and sources--and portions will be substantial. Even with selective price increases, we will be highly competitive in cost and quality.

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SUPPORT THE COMMUNITY CENTER

by Bob Cullenbine

For the past 3½ months over 100 Free U members have been working on the Community Center. Official support has been strong from the first mention of forming an arts and crafts center and coffee shop. Both proposals received the unanimous support of the Coordinating Committee and have received repeated votes of confidence in the General Meetings. Clearly, we have not committed ourselves to specific dollar spending, but just as clearly we have told the Community Center Committee that if they present a viable plan, and we have funds available support will be voted. Some of our members are suggesting that if we have available funds they be voted instead to support other projects. I contend that any such action will seriously inhibit people from working hard on any large scale Free U. project which must be funded long after much planning has been done. Furthermore, we will probably have to return the \$5000 gift which supports the Community Center. Certainly the Community Center Proposal must stand the closest scrutiny, but if it is a good plan I think we must support it. Finally, I strongly oppose spending Free U. funds on projects where very little personal commitment - like work and time - accompany the money.

COMMUNITY CENTER PLANS

(Continued from page 9)

- The following will increase income over the basic:
- a) Volume-- the figures above are slightly conservative.
- b) Beverages will also be sold in pots to encourage lingering guzzlers.
- c) Exotic pastries will be sold at coffee-break hours and evenings. Also bagels, and crumpets for tea freaks (the MFU crumpet crowd is too big to be overlooked.)
- d) As resources develop, we might expand to salads, and onward.
- e) Entertainment--3 kinds (our entertainment sources are large)
 - free
 - benefits for us
 - benefits for the performer or other causes

Basic Monthly Expense:

- \$375 Rent (maybe less)
- 100 Utilities and insurance (tentative)
- 200 Principal manager's salary
- 100 Weekend manager
- 50 Sales tax on base income
- (100) Repayment of \$3000 to MFU to begin after six months

\$825 Basic Expense

(925) Basic Expense after MFU loan repayment begin

Customer prices are left at rounded figures if sales tax is accounted for in this way. The coffee house will also sell loaves of bread baked by MFU members, at little or no commission, if health codes allow. A pointed effort will be made to include macrobiotic items in each day's menu.

In addition to the basic expense, \$50 will go to the general fund, discussed below.

FINANCIAL: ARTISTS AND CRAFTSMEN

Artists or cooperatives of artists responsible for month's rent in advance, last artist in a particular craft area must give one month's notice before vacationing. The committed artists have agreed on the following:

- Active space 3400 feet; rent \$375, utilities and insurance \$70.
- Minimum rent 11¢/ft.; 2¢/ft. for utilities and insurance.
- Agreed base charge = 15¢/sq. ft.?month (rent, utilities, insurance)

This means that downstairs costs are covered if 2,966 feet are filled. We have received commitments for 2,530 feet for cooperative areas although we are only in the planning stage:

- | | |
|--------------------|------------------------|
| 500 painters | 330 printmakers |
| 100 textiles | 100 jewelers |
| 500 MFU Press | 400 woodworkers |
| 200 cinematography | 100 furniture makers |
| 100 mobiles | 200 super candlemaking |

The list of additional interested artists is large, and more are appearing daily, as we inch from fantasy to reality. We have achieved our goal of producing the cheapest possible studio-sales space in the area for our artists, to help them make a full-time living doing what they do best. The MFU will collect no commission from sales of resident craftsmen. The 15¢ rental rate will be reviewed after 6 months and adjusted, we hope, downward. If occupancy exceeds 2,966 feet before then, excess rent will go to the general fund.

FINANCIAL: GENERAL FUND AND MISCELLANEOUS

The coffee house must be intended to provide maximum support and patronage for the artists who have staked their livelihood in the building. After subtracting the basic expense, \$50 for maintenance and, after 6

months, \$100 plus interest for repayment to the MFU, other monthly income from the coffee house will go into a general fund, which will be used for:

- rent, utilities and insurance for unoccupied craft areas.
- advertising of the coffee house, arts and crafts, and entertainment.
- further structural and decorative improvements downstairs.
- the slow acquisition of MFU-owner arts and crafts equipment.
- rent and supplies for open media areas.
- of second priority: additional improvements to exterior decor and coffee house facilities.
- "scholarship" rent subsidy for talented artists without rent money.

Income from art sales, less sales tax, will go directly to artists, but sales will be reflected in community center books. The general fund will receive the income from the upstairs multiple-use area. We have been authorized to spend up to \$1000 of the budgeted \$3000. We have spent \$500: \$300 on deposit for furniture, equipment, and decor, \$200 refundable deposit on the building. If for some reason the center's total income gets all out of hand and leaves us with an embarrassing profit margin, the General Meeting at that time may consider accelerating the repayment of the \$3000 and/or using part of the funds for acquiring the second floor, or for other MFU uses. HIGH PRIORITY SHOULD BE GIVEN TO ADDING A SECOND PRINCIPAL MANAGER, TO AUGMENTING MANAGERS' SALARIES AND TO PAY FOR SME COFFEE HOUSE SERVICE HELP.

DIRECT EXPENSES TO THE MFU

- In addition to the repayable \$3000 capital:
- a) Free use of the MFU press for advertising.
- b) 1/2 of advertising costs for the first 6 months, unless the General Meeting at any point thinks this unnecessary because of high profits.
- c) Rent, utilities and insurance for areas occupied by the MFU as an organization - i.e., the press.
- d) For the first 4 quarters the center is in operation,

a budget for emergency uses, incidentally providing an opportunity to review any part of the center's operations that may be in bad shape. The advertising costs may come from this fund. NOTE: after 6 months, this will be partially offset in the center budget by repayment of the \$3000.

MANAGEMENT

This is only a sketch summary; details will be worked out by the community center committees. We have two guidelines: the need for strong, effective coffee house management, along with building management, and the need for effective community ownership and supervision.

The artists and craftsmen will have complete autonomy downstairs, including decisions on:

- ...how new artists will be admitted to use the area
- ...hours
- ...floor management, supervision and key control
- ...use of upstairs and basement display areas
- ...whether consignments from non-resident artists will be accepted for display and sale. Artists of media similar to those considered will have veto.
- Artists will become members of the governing cooperative after paying rent.
- Building policy will be decided by an open community center committee, with artists guaranteed downstairs autonomy and serious consideration regarding other matters, with all decisions reviewable within the normal MFU structure.

Two managers to begin:

- a) principal manager - will oversee personnel, doors, keys, hours, codes and other policies determined by

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POETRY

by ann thrift

STAR TRAILS

threads
of gossamer
swirl
into a vortex -
twisting
turning

writhing upward

grey-white
in the darkness
like
galaxies
in microcosm

dew
on a spider's web
wearing strange patterns
of silver
smoke trails
like
hair of the stars
dissipate
into the air

my cigarette is out

LAMENT

last night we loved
and i found
peace
with myself -
when i told you i wanted
your child
you kissed me
gently
and gave me the essence
of you

but this morning
your seed
lies dead in my womb
and my secret acquiescence
has dried on the
blanket

STARSCAPE

millenium
light-years
of
black velvet

separated

by
pearls of life

a lady
lifts
the cosmos in her hand
and
places tham
upon her neck

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY CENTER?

by Jenny Deupree

The events of the past week have left me completely disillusioned - the whole idea that we had a "community" with which and for which to build a center seems to have been a false assumption. The open hostility and malice at the General Meeting, and the near-reversal of the General Meeting decision by the Coordinating Committee leave me with the feeling that the Free U is not a "community" at all in the sense that there is any "sense of the meeting" that carries over from one meeting to another. Somehow we seem more bent on hurting and undermining each other - than in supporting each other. I have been willing to work long hours for little pay because I believed that there was a community that needed a center. It is sad for the enthusiastic high school and college kids who were eager to work on the building and in the coffee house, for the members who came out of the wood-work because it looked as though we might REALLY get something done, for the two Stanford art students who might have joined, but walked out in the middle of the General Meeting. It is heartbreaking for the serious artists and craftsmen who had both commitment and hope, and especially for those whose lives have been hanging in the air for months while the Free U continually undermined the project. I suggest that in the future, if the Free U tries again to start a community center, that it first seriously consider whether or not it is a community; and second, single out which of its many communities the center is for, and give that "community" a strong hand in getting the thing going.

The Free University does not make decisions. It kicks an issue to death, inspects the corpse, and epitaphs in one way or another. FN

SEMI-ANAL AWARDS PRESENTATION JUNE 31

The ad hoc committee to bestow awards on unsuspecting heroes has met and resolved that:
ALFRED NELSON, whereas he has brought the Community Center Project from a jaundiced embryo to a kicking fetus, and
Whereas he has battled the most impossible odds with unswerving fortitude in the face of most impossible odds, and
Whereas we are posting guard in the persons of the Free U Softball Team to prevent him from tearing this article out of the Newsletter,
We HEREBY bestow on said Nelson the award of
SOLID GOLD HASSLE WITH OAK LEAF CLUSTERS
and wish him well on his subsequent unpredictable endeavors.
There, I told you I'd submit an article, Fred. LT

MFU ELECTIONS WILL BE HELD AT JUNE 9 GENERAL MEETING

All 5 MFU elective offices (Coordinator, 2 Associate Coordinators, Treasurer and General Secretary) will be filled by election at the June 9 General Meeting. The positions are somewhat defined in the by-laws (see the catalogue.) Coordinator Vic Lovell is in charge of the elections committee; all nominations or self-nominations should be submitted to him at the MFU Store in time for publication, with statements, in the next newsletter (deadline May 29.)

It is far easier to take the clothes off the body than to take the clothes off the mind.

Pete McCarron