

REDEFINING QUAKER SIMPLICITY:  
THE FRIENDS COMMITTEE ON  
NATIONAL LEGISLATION BUILDING, 2005

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ABSTRACT

In 2005, the Friends Committee on National Legislation, the major Quaker peace and justice lobbying organization in the United States, completed a substantial remodeling and expansion of its office building on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC. The building exemplifies a self-conscious effort to express Quaker values of simplicity and stewardship in architectural choices. Examining the changing meanings of simplicity as expressed in Quaker meeting houses, this article argues that contemporary Friends in the United States have given nontraditional meanings to the concept and now associate simplicity with environmental stewardship in personal and community life. For example, the use of natural light now takes on a multitude of symbolic meanings in addition to practical functions. The decision by FCNL to accept the costs and complications of ‘green building’ grew directly from this commitment to understanding of simplicity, even though the new structure itself is not necessarily simple in design and engineering.

KEYWORDS

Quaker, green building, plain style, simplicity, Washington, DC, environmentalism

In 2005, the Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL), a major national religious lobbying organization in the United States, completed a \$3.7 million remodel and expansion of its office building<sup>1</sup> designed to make it the first Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)-certified building on Capitol Hill (silver level certification).<sup>2</sup> Portions of the 10,000 square foot building date originally from the American Civil War era and it retains its National Register standing as a contributing building after completion of renovation in 2005.<sup>3</sup> This architecturally and technically complex project was undertaken as an expression of Quaker spirituality, particularly the testimony of simplicity (Figure 1). As Executive Secretary Joe Volk said in 1998:

The building is so much more than bricks and mortar. It is a manifestation of the practice of faith. The way to the religious life is not only through the contemplative life. People of faith are called to be in the world.<sup>4</sup>

The FCNL building offers an opportunity to explore the meanings of architectural simplicity as one way that contemporary Quakers express their faith. Simplicity has remained a central Friends tenet and practice for 350 years, even as its theological basis has changed substantially to accommodate ideas of environmental stewardship as well as individual spirituality. The building also demonstrates some of the tensions between simplicity as a spiritual concept and plainness as its material manifestation as FCNL worked to define what sort of building would be both ‘green enough’ and ‘plain enough’ in its specific historical context.



Figure 1. Friends Committee on National Legislation Building, Washington, DC, after remodeling

### I. PLAINNESS AND SIMPLICITY

The Religious Society of Friends originated in England in the middle of the 1600s, in a time of great social upheaval and religious ferment. This is the era in which the Puritans were contesting the character of English Protestantism (and some of them emigrating to the New World to found Massachusetts and other New England colonies out of frustration with the progress of change in Britain). It is also the era of irreconcilable conflict between the Crown and the rising middle class acting through Parliament, leading to the English Revolution and temporary overthrow of the English monarchy by Oliver Cromwell.

The Religious Society of Friends was one of many radical movements that sought to recover the essence of New Testament Christianity. The most notable leader was the powerful preacher George Fox. His message emphasized that everyone had the ability to experience the love and leadership of God directly, through the Light of Christ in the human heart, without the intermediaries of Popes, bishops, priests, or paid clergy. It was an approach that took the Protestant Reformation doctrine of the priesthood of all believers to its logical extreme. Members of the movement called themselves ‘Children of the Light’ and ‘Publishers of the Truth’.<sup>5</sup> They came together in ‘Meetings for worship’ in which anyone might feel called to speak and minister to the group. The term ‘Quaker’ was applied by critics who ridiculed the fact that such speaking sometimes involved physical trembling.

The Quaker movement spread rapidly in England and began to make converts among the wealthy as well as the poor. Notable was William Penn, who used his high position to acquire the right to settle what became the Pennsylvania colony in the 1680s. Philadelphia has since been the center of gravity for Quakers in America, although many Quakers also settled in New York, New Jersey, and North Carolina. Large numbers of Friends later migrated to Ohio, Indiana, Iowa, and Oregon as the frontier moved westward and are now spread across the continent. Today in the United States there are roughly 90,000 people with formal membership in a Friends Meeting or church,<sup>6</sup> although many more participate in Quaker worship or activities.<sup>7</sup>

#### ‘LET YOUR AYE BE AYE AND YOUR NAY BE NAY’

From their origins, Quakers placed a strong emphasis on simplicity and integrity as ‘testimonies’ or behavior integral to everyday life and practice which served as a witness of their faith.<sup>8</sup> Plainness was both a theological and social concept. One lived and acted simply to remove anything which fostered pride or might distract from the relationship between oneself and God, be it wealth, striving after success, or fashionable dress. As Emma Lapsansky has phrased it, the imperative was to ‘dampen the noise of everyday life’ in order to be open to the voice of the Inward Christ.<sup>9</sup> One also eschewed outward distinctions of class status because of the belief that God can speak directly to individuals through the Inward Christ. Expressions included plain dress, plain speech (using ‘thee’ and ‘thou’ as the familiar forms of the second-person pronouns in place of the formal ‘you’ was an expression of integrity), and denying ‘hat honor’ (the expectation that one doffed one’s hat to a social superior). Friends refused to swear oaths in court, arguing that a true Christian would tell the truth in all situations and need not make special claims in a legal setting (their biblical confirmation was in Matt. 5:37).

This approach to faith had specific implications for religious practice. Early Friends scorned a paid or ‘hireling’ clergy both as corrupt (not an unrealistic judgment in seventeenth-century England) and as an active impediment to connection with God. Meeting places were not to be ornamented with crosses, stained glass windows, or other adornment that might substitute aesthetic pleasure for religious experience. Friends saw church ritual as a distraction and money spent on ‘steeple houses’ as irrelevant to their spiritual journeys. Meeting places were to have no spaces set aside for baptism, communion, or any other church sacrament because Friends believed

these transformative experiences were only real if experienced inwardly rather than through the outward practice.

Through the closing decades of the seventeenth century and the course of the eighteenth century, these theological beliefs were codified as a doctrine of plainness. To choose always 'plain and sober' dress and food, said Quaker theological writer Robert Barclay, was to battle vanity.<sup>10</sup> For wealthier Quakers to forgo the pleasures of the world was a way to mortify and humble the soul. To go beyond utility in worldly possessions, wrote William Penn, was to succumb to pride.<sup>11</sup> Plainness thus became a path of *personal* virtue. In the form of specific admonitions about clothing and other possessions, it evolved into a tool of discipline and group cohesion. By the early nineteenth century, the theologically radical plainness of early Quakerism had become a social tool for preserving the group by maintaining a distinct outward identity.

#### THE SEEDS OF WAR

If plainness was a social tool for institutional Quakerism, some of the most important Quaker thinkers were simultaneously deepening its implications for social life. As early as 1669, William Penn noted that 'what aggravates the evil [of adherence to fashion] is that the pride of one might comfortably supply the needs of ten'.<sup>12</sup> He later argued for plain living by asserting that the production of luxury goods impoverished the realm by making wealth more unequal. In his words, 'the very trimmings of the vain world would clothe all the naked one', an argument for redistributive economic policies with biblical roots.<sup>13</sup>

The eighteenth-century American Quaker John Woolman augmented Penn's ideas about the political and social dimension of plainness. A dedicated anti-slavery activist in the mid-1700s, Woolman authored one of the earliest analyses of the structural roots of poverty in his pamphlet 'A Plea for the Poor' (written in 1763 and published in 1793). He argued that the accumulation of wealth was itself a form of violence and advocated what we might today call 'right sharing' of economic resources in the interests of social justice: 'May we look upon our treasures, and the furniture of our houses, and [our] garments, and try whether the seeds of war have any nourishment in these our possessions'.<sup>14</sup>

Woolman incorporated this understanding into his own life. He was one of a number of Friends to voluntarily restrict his thriving trade when he found he was earning more than needed to support his family.<sup>15</sup> Over the years as he became more committed to ending the evil of slavery, he refused to deal in or make use of goods such as sugar, produced by slaves. As a consequence his dress became a matter of significant note and testimony (and a matter of personal discomfort because of the reaction it generated) when he stopped using dyes, another product of slave labor.<sup>16</sup>

#### SIMPLICITY AND STEWARDSHIP

Over the course of the twentieth century, plainness as a requirement of personal behavior gave way to a broader concept of 'simplicity' as an outward-looking testimony. Rather than something—plain style—that was peculiar, sectarian, and enforced, twentieth-century Friends increasingly valued simplicity as an approach to

life that was natural, unaffected, and uncluttered.<sup>17</sup> There were practical reasons for the shift as Friends found their numbers dwindling in competition with holiness and evangelical churches and cast off self-isolating practices. There was also a positive dimension as Friends began to attend to, or appreciate more, the imminence of God in the natural world and in the artistic creations of human beings.

The 'new simplicity' took on corporate or community aspects. Plainness had been an individual choice, made in order to come closer to God. In contrast, individuals, Meetings, or an entire society could choose to live simply—meaning to apply just enough means to achieve a desired and proper result. The American Friend, Richard B. Gregg, writing in the 1930s, tells us:

Voluntary simplicity involves both inner and outer condition. It means singleness of purpose, sincerity and honesty within, as well as avoidance of exterior clutter, of many possessions irrelevant to the chief purpose of life. It means an ordering and guiding of our energy and our desires, a partial restraint in some directions in order to secure greater abundance of life in other directions.<sup>18</sup>

Moreover, to practice simplicity as a community may require more than a sum of personal choices. It may require institutional change and political action on behalf of socially equitable and environmentally sustainable goals. Contemporary Quaker simplicity, in other words, may be rooted in historical Quaker beliefs, but it has much in common with secular concerns for social justice.

The new simplicity is environmental as well as social. It extends John Woolman's insights to look at the full range of inequitable impacts of high per capita consumption, including impacts on the natural environment as well as social relations. 'Stewardship' is a concept that can link all Friends, for the word and concept are used both by theologically liberal and by evangelical Quakers.

Among the more evangelical Friends, the concept of 'stewardship' underpins any discussion of environmental responsibility. The *Faith and Practice* of Northwest Yearly Meeting, which is part of Evangelical Friends International, asks the reader: 'As a Christian steward, do you treat the earth with respect and with a sense of God's splendor in creation, guarding it against abuse by greed, misapplied technology, or your own carelessness?'<sup>19</sup>

#### UNITY WITH THE CREATION

The shift in the meanings of simplicity is also very clear in the historic core of American Quakerism. In 1997, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, one of the largest Yearly Meetings, published a revised version of its book of *Faith and Practice*. The section that had previously been labeled 'Simplicity' became three new sections, 'Stewardship', 'Right Sharing', and 'Walking Gently Over the Earth', and:

Friends were asked to consider whether their lifestyle was a seedbed for war, economic inequality, and destruction of the environment: 'Voluntary simplicity in living and restraint in procreation hold the promise of ecological redemption and spiritual renewal'.<sup>20</sup>

Modern Friends have thus added environmental sensitivity as another dimension of the ethical implications of simplicity. There is a strong desire to live 'in harmony

with nature' by reducing one's ecological impact. This may involve simple consumption choices (wear Birkenstocks) or lifestyle choices (no television). It may also slide into something with a resemblance to nature worship involving a self-conscious identification with Nature as the manifestation as well as the creation of the Divine. In effect, simplicity is not only a way to allow God closer to the individual by paring away unnecessary material trappings but also a way for the individual to come into more direct contact with God as present in the world.

This understanding of the sacred dimension of nature does have roots among the earliest Friends. For instance, James Nayler, one of the first generation of Quaker leaders, stated in 1656, 'God is in the life of every creature, though few there be that know it'.<sup>21</sup> Other seventeenth-century Friends expressed a concern for the well-being of animals or became vegetarians, having an awareness of God in all things. The eighteenth-century anti-slavery activist, John Woolman, is also well known for his concern for animals, refusing to ride in stage-coaches because of the poor treatment of the horses as well as the post-boys and even 'cautioned Friends... not to send letters to me on any common occasion by post'.<sup>22</sup> This concern was grounded in the knowledge that 'The Creator of the earth is the owner of it... Our gracious Creator cares and provides for all his creatures'.<sup>23</sup>

While not all modern Friends agree on the existence of a Creator, this thread of concern for the well-being of the earth and its creatures has always been present among Friends. Though often not particularly visible, it has found increasing expression in the twenty-first century as more and more Quakers raise up protection of the environment as a high value and essential testimony.<sup>24</sup> Contemporary Quaker publications are filled with articles about environmental stewardship. West Coast Friends recently published *EarthLight: Spiritual Wisdom for an Ecological Age*, a compendium of the best of *EarthLight*, a magazine founded by Quakers and which features 'articles by many of the world's seminal figures in secular and religious thought about the place and participation of humankind in creation'.<sup>25</sup> Organizations such as Quaker Ecology Action Network in Canada and Quaker Earthcare Witness in the United States promote 'conscientious protection of our planet' as a parallel to conscientious objection to war.<sup>26</sup>

In these efforts to give new meanings to the old concept of simplicity, Friends have been struggling with the differences between simplicity or 'plaining' and 'plain style' as explored by Peter Collins. The latter refers to an aesthetic concept of architecture and furnishings with few if any embellishments—work that is simple rather than grand. Most Quaker meeting houses have been designed in a plain style. However, 'plaining' goes beyond aesthetics to embrace moral, ethical, and spiritual dimensions, now including environmentalism as a spiritual concern and practice.<sup>27</sup>

Quaker plaining stands in a long tradition in the historical discourse and in the religious realm reaching back at least to Paul, whose epistles were an important influence on Quaker thought. This tradition associates the plain with the spiritual. The earliest Friends were clear that the spiritual impulse was the essential dimension of their use of plain style, plain speech, and plain dress, not the outward result. As Robert Barclay wrote in his *Apology*: 'The chief purpose of all religion is to redeem men from the spirit and vain pursuits of this world, and to lead them into inward

communion with God'.<sup>28</sup> These words introduce Barclay's discussion of why Friends disdained hat honor, theatre productions, and all embellishment and excess that nurture arrogance or otherwise draw the individual away from God. Over the centuries, Friends have at times focused on the outward manifestations, but the moral and spiritual dimensions are at the heart of Quaker simplicity and their architecture is an expression of theology and a reminder of the centrality of moral and ethical behavior. The meeting house itself is not sacred, but the purposes and spiritual behavior that it facilitates are very much so.<sup>29</sup>

## II. QUAKER MEETING HOUSES AND SIMPLICITY

Early Quakers built meeting houses far more than they talked about them. They used up much ink over the goals and strictures of plainness in personal lives, monitoring both their own behavior in spiritual diaries and journals and the behavior of others through meeting committees. In contrast, early Quaker documents say relatively little about architectural choices, although Catherine Lavoie has found an early admonition from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting against 'all superfluity & excess in buildings'.<sup>30</sup> Nevertheless, commonly shared architectural choices created a meeting house style that marked Quakers as distinctive in a manner parallel to plain dress and plain speech.

### QUAKER ARCHITECTURE AND QUAKER BELIEF

From the start, Quaker architecture was a statement of Quaker belief. Friends have always understood the church to be the gathered people, not buildings or institutions. They have never consecrated structures and often speak of 'meeting houses' rather than 'churches'. Throughout much of the seventeenth century, Quakerism was illegal, and Friends met in whatever building was available: homes, barns, and even the open air. George Fox seemed to prefer open-air Meetings and definitely saw no need for distinct buildings for worship. He wrote a treatise, *Concerning Meeting in Houses, Ships, Streets, Mountains, By-Ways*, citing how Jesus and the disciples preached in the open.<sup>31</sup> He also suggested that barns were the most suitable places for sheltered Meetings because their size could accommodate what he hoped would be large crowds.

The initial indifference to meeting places developed into the belief that the most simple and plain place of worship created the fewest barriers to welcoming the Inward Teacher, although in the United States, explicit comments about new structures expressing 'simplicity' don't appear until the turn of the twentieth century.<sup>32</sup> In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, as Friends began to build dedicated structures, they were distinguished by their difference from the predominant Anglican architecture.<sup>33</sup> The common architectural manifestation in Britain and America became plain, rectangular meeting rooms and meeting houses with dominant horizontal lines. Because Quaker worship had no liturgical program, interiors needed no decoration or specialized subareas. Catherine Lavoie claims that these early 'meetinghouses were created in harmony with the local built and natural environments',<sup>34</sup> an approach that would appeal to ecologically concerned Friends today. They were certainly built with locally available materials and vernacular skills, but the most straightforward

explanation is that Friends sought to build as quickly and cheaply as possible. A more direct connection with contemporary practice is that meeting house design was a community process through which members of a meeting congregation came to unity on site and design, sometimes taking many years to reach a decision.<sup>35</sup>

In the nineteenth century, meeting houses were less and less clearly 'plain' in their architectural style, but again politics was a factor. In 1818 the Church of England undertook a massive building campaign, with most church structures being of gothic style. In contrast, the 'classical' styles of Greek and Roman architecture were associated with civic buildings and the Baptists and other non-conformist churches adopted the classical style as a way of distinguishing themselves from the established church. The new meeting house built in 1812 by Manchester Friends (Figure 2) was one of several to follow this approach and was modeled on the temple of Ilissus in Athens, making a statement by its very appearance.<sup>36</sup>



Figure 2. Manchester Meeting House, Manchester, UK

In meeting houses as well as in clothing and furniture, the evolving Quaker style did not require the absolute austerity that early Quaker *plainness* might seem to have implied. As Quakers lived in the world, often with substantial financial success, they placed their emphasis on craftsmanship over fashion, sparseness over ornamentation, elegance over sumptuousness.<sup>37</sup> In meeting houses built by post-pioneer generations, the result was often simple lines but elegant materials and finish, creating the 'Quaker Plain Style' that has become a standard term in National Register nominations.



We can also note, following Susan Garfinkel's insights for the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and Pink Dandelion's for the twentieth century, that meeting house design and decoration has become an important way for Friends to express their commonalities, in part because members of unprogrammed Meetings are often reluctant to talk about doctrine or theology. Perhaps fearing to raise uncomfortable divisions by addressing disparate beliefs among worshipers, they utilize their outward testimonies and customs to define themselves as a distinct religious group. For more than two centuries, meeting houses have assisted in this 'collective creation' of Quaker identity.<sup>38</sup>

#### SIMPLICITY IN CONTEMPORARY ARCHITECTURE

In contemporary Quaker architecture, the interaction of the ethic of simplicity and stewardship with this architectural heritage can be competing aesthetic choices. Reaching back to Quaker origins is the belief that any place will do. At present, Friends may gather for worship in recycled factories, converted houses, community centers, and surplus school rooms as well as purpose-built structures. Such options very clearly reflect the long history of *plainness* in their lack of anything superfluous to basic functions. In contrast, many Friends now place great value on the classic meeting houses of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, whose spare rectilinear plan, unadorned interiors, and time-mellowed materials of clapboard and fieldstone are now seen as balanced, restful, venerable...spiritual.<sup>39</sup>

What links these superficially opposing values is the idea of simplicity as a political as well as spiritual choice. To use a pre-existing space is to free resources for other purposes. To worship in a venerable structure is to conserve the built environment while appreciating clean, spare meeting rooms. When Friends remodel or build new meeting houses, they may utilize new materials but often choose to recapitulate the spare forms, horizontal lines, light interior colors, and quality craftsmanship of older buildings. In addition there is a strong emphasis on abundant natural light. Indeed, *bright natural light* has become a guiding principle of many newer meeting houses. Natural light represents stewardship of resources, it substitutes the play of sunbeam and shadow for manufactured decoration, and it metaphorically reenacts the inward light of the Divine.<sup>40</sup>

University Meeting in Seattle, for example, is located amid apartment houses and commercial buildings near the University of Washington. The dominant feature of its meeting room is a floor-to-ceiling window wall facing south across a ravine toward Mount Rainier, bringing in natural light and inviting nature into the worship. The design of the 1962 building was inspired by Japanese temple architecture at the encouragement of member Floyd Schmoë, who had been active in rebuilding Hiroshima and also designed the Meeting's garden space.<sup>41</sup> The use of natural light is also evident in the two-foot clerestory window which circles the room just below the juncture of walls and ceiling as well as an opaque skylight. Even the curtains for the large south window are thin enough to filter the sunlight rather than exclude it on summer days. The original planners saw light and spatial relationships as integral aspects of creating a worshipful space.

Multnomah Monthly Meeting in Portland, Oregon, incorporates qualities of both plainness and simplicity.<sup>42</sup> It is plain in being converted from a factory building—the original 1912 original knitting mill for Jantzen swimwear. A membership with lots of families but little wealth has skimped on interior surfaces and furnishing. But the meeting room itself is centered on a large skylight whose original purpose was to light the factory floor but now seems to represent the transcendent experience of worship (as well as cutting down the need to consume electricity).



Figure 3. Live Oak Meeting House, Houston, Texas

The most spectacular example of the incorporation of natural light as the centerpiece of design is Houston's Live Oak Meeting (Figure 3). This nationally recognized architectural gem opened in 2001. Designed by artist and writer James Turrell, a practicing Quaker, in cooperation with architect Leslie Elkins, this is a consciously aestheticized building. Its immediate referent is the Rothko Chapel with its own distinctive use of light. The main meeting room is a square with plain plaster walls, tall windows, and a high vaulted ceiling. At the center is a 'skyspace' that can be opened to the sun or stars, most regularly for evening Meeting for worship.<sup>43</sup> Financing of the building drew on contributions from the general public and the Houston arts community excited by its possibilities as architectural innovation. Turrell's version of simplicity sees Quakers as seeking a 'straightforward, strict presentation of the sublime'. He describes his thinking:

I guess I like the literal quality, or feeling, or sensation, in that I want to feel light physically... The Meeting is actually like...some of the earlier American Quaker

Meetings, like at Easton, Maryland, or Treylevon, which is 1680s, and one of the earliest structures that's been in continuous use... The top opens, and it makes a sky space where sky is really brought down to you; your awareness of it is made quite different... George Fox talked about the light, both in a literal and figurative sense... and again, talking about this idea of light, particularly the light not seen with the eyes, was very important... This idea, to go inside to find that light within, literally, as well as figuratively, was something that really propelled me at the time.<sup>44</sup>

### III. THE FCNL BUILDING

In this context, FCNL decided that it could please its constituents (who span the full Quaker range from evangelical Christians to New Agers) and express the current testimony of simplicity by creating a green building.<sup>45</sup>

FCNL was created in the midst of World War II when Friends throughout the United States felt a strong need for a Quaker presence on Capitol Hill to bring perspectives of peacemaking to bear on wartime problems. Its predecessor, Friends War Problems Committee, formed in Philadelphia in 1940, had already met fifty times as concern grew over conscription and the need for advice for conscientious objectors to the war.<sup>46</sup>

Founded in 1943, FCNL attempted from the start to represent as many Friends as possible from across the country and among the various branches of Friends despite sometimes strongly different theological positions between the more evangelical and liberal branches. Its current membership represents 26 out of the 33 Yearly Meetings (regional groupings of congregations) in the United States.<sup>47</sup> Staff in recent years has grown to approximately forty people. FCNL is governed by a General Committee which meets annually and an Executive Committee which governs between Annual Meetings. The closely related FCNL Education Fund, which prepares research reports and disseminates information to Friends across the nation, has its own board whose membership overlaps with the Executive Committee.<sup>48</sup>

The goals of FCNL are summarized in four 'we seek' statements: 'We seek a world free of war and the threat of war. We seek a society with equity and justice for all. We seek a community where every person's potential may be fulfilled. We seek an earth restored'.<sup>49</sup> Its approach to lobbying depends heavily on building trust with constituents and members of Congress and on a reputation for integrity. The Friends who established FCNL in 1943 were explicit that the Committee 'is not expected to engage in lobbying of the pressure-group character. Its purpose is rather to work by methods of quiet influence through personal contacts and persuasion to win the assent of reasonable minds and enlist sympathies with the objective sought'.<sup>50</sup>

FCNL offices have been located on Capitol Hill since 1952. When its row house on C Street was demolished in 1958 to make space for parking for Senators, FCNL acquired two Civil War era townhouses at 245 Second Street, NE, which had previously been converted into storefront businesses. The location has not only allowed FCNL staff and constituents to readily access Congress, but has also meant that Congressional staff and, occasionally, Senators and Representatives have been willing

to come to the building for informational or strategy meetings. The central location has made the facility a place for activists from across the country to meet. It also became a location for lobby-training, press conferences, strategy sessions, and other work with a wide variety of organizations with which FCNL works in coalition.<sup>51</sup>

By the 1990s, the structural deficiencies of the 150 year-old buildings had made it obvious that major renovation was essential, despite two previous upgrades since its purchase. Deteriorated foundations in some places and absence of foundations in other places, outmoded wiring, fire safety concerns, and the need for new heating systems were among the catalogue of ills needing correction. In addition, the juncture of two buildings from another era proved to be impossible to adapt to meet Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) provisions, a law which FCNL constituents had worked hard to pass.<sup>52</sup>

#### THE DECISION PROCESS

Prior to deciding to rebuild on site, FCNL explored options for alternative space. The high demand for properties on Capitol Hill meant that a different building near Congress was prohibitively expensive.<sup>53</sup> Affordable space would be too far from the Capitol to serve as a central meeting place or to provide adequate support to constituents and to like-minded organizations, such as the Indian nations, that rely on FCNL for temporary Capitol Hill work and meeting space. In addition, analysis showed that long-run costs to lease a facility would be greater than rebuilding at the current location.<sup>54</sup> An architectural feasibility study showed that adding significant green features would be experimental, not technologically feasible, and outside the financial capacity of the organization. As a result, the FCNL Executive Committee felt that it would not be feasible to incorporate many green features despite a desire to do so.<sup>55</sup>

FCNL's governing body, the General Committee, made the actual decision to proceed with construction in 1999. Two-thirds of its 250 members are appointed by their Yearly Meeting or Quaker organizations. The others are at-large members appointed directly by the General Committee.<sup>56</sup> This body meets annually in Washington to approve the budget, nominations, and policies of the organization using Friends' business process. Quaker Meeting for worship for business is superficially similar to consensus decision-making. In fact, it is a worshipful process in which participants seek to discern the sense of the Meeting under guidance of the Holy Spirit.<sup>57</sup>

The movement toward a commitment to a green building evolved in steps. The General Committee deliberated at length before agreeing that it was right to move ahead despite serious concerns about the ability to raise the needed funds. They also felt that creating a green building was an important witness to FCNL's goal 'We seek an earth restored'. The decision was the subject of intense discussion and scrutiny and the process took three years from initial studies to the decision to proceed, but it meant that a wide representation of Friends nationwide were convinced of the need for the new building, believed it was being renovated in accord with Quaker principles, and were committed to aid in fundraising.<sup>58</sup>

The Executive Committee and staff responded to the General Committee's direction by creating a Building Renovation Advisory Group (BRAG) consisting of architects and engineers as well as other Friends with relevant professional skills engaged in the process.<sup>59</sup> BRAG realized that green technology was rapidly evolving and that key to the process was selection of an architectural firm with experience in this field. BRAG members were helpful in seeking out such firms to be asked to submit a proposal as well as being involved in the selection process. FCNL also told each firm being considered that they hoped a young architect committed to green architecture, and preferably a woman, would be part of the team. Burt Hill Kosar Rittelmann Associates met all the criteria and Gina Baker became part of the team along with Harry Gordon. Throughout the design process, BRAG members brought ideas and experience from other parts of the country to bear in addition to the knowledge Burt Hill brought as they sought continually to add green features yet remain within the budget constraints.

The age of the structure and its location in the Capitol Hill Historic District meant that portions of the building, in particular the exterior walls, would have to be retained. The architectural feasibility study by Harry Gordon of Burt Hill showed that demolishing much of the building and creating a substantially new structure could expand usable floor space from 3890 to 4891 square feet, create much more coherent work and meeting spaces, make the building accessible, that is, ADA compliant, and still meet all the requirements of the various review agencies.

Because of its location, FCNL had to work with an unusual variety of entities in order to gain permission to renovate the building. Involvement of the Historic Preservation Review Board of the District of Columbia, the Board of Zoning Authority, the Architect of the Capitol, the Capitol Hill Restoration Society, and the Stanton Park Neighborhood Association made for a lengthy approval process. By the time construction began in 2003, security measures on Capitol Hill were on high alert following the attacks on the Pentagon and the World Trade Center in September 2001, making construction more complicated. The construction of barriers across the street in front of the Hart Office Building impeded access. Concrete trucks had to be x-rayed before being allowed into the Capitol Hill security zone. Previously approved plans for sewer and water connections were vetoed by the Architect of the Capitol because they would have interlinked with Senate Office Building utilities, forcing an expensive retrofit.

Architect Harry Gordon, who worked with project architect Gina Baker, is a recognized leader in 'green architecture' and has been one of five architects selected to add green features to the White House and Old Executive Building.<sup>60</sup> The November 2001 'Questions and Answers' sheet for the FCNL capital campaign stated:

We will seek the best advice available to make this renovation project, so prominent on Capitol Hill, an example of Earth-friendly practices. Renovation (as opposed to new construction) has fewer opportunities for incorporating environmentally sensitive design components and materials selection. The design is seriously constrained by historic district requirements. Showing what can be done, even within these constraints, will be an important witness to our values.

THE COMPLEXITY OF SIMPLICITY<sup>61</sup>

The structure itself is technically complex, as are most LEED buildings, in its effort to achieve goals of simplicity. The methods of green architecture draw on a number of principles: reducing the energy demand of the structure and its users; use of recycled or renewable materials; use of locally available materials. Information about the building is prominently available on FCNL's website with suggestions for ways to apply these principles elsewhere, as well as being part of the onsite tour of the building.

Reduction of energy demand is evident literally from the roof to the basement. The roof is covered with sedum plants which absorb heat. Where a conventional roof can easily reach 150 degrees on one of Washington's sultry summer days, the green roof stays at ambient temperature and reduces the load on the cooling system. The roof cost an additional \$20,000, but is expected to pay for itself within 5 years through increased energy efficiency. The plants also absorb rainwater and limit the amount of runoff from the roof and filter runoff from the building (Figure 4).



Figure 4. FCNL Building, Green Roof and Hart Senate Office Building

The building has energy-efficient, operable windows coated with a chemically designed composition to reduce glare and moderate the transmission of energy, and window blinds designed to control transmission of solar energy into the building. The Ecospace elevator does not use hydraulic fluid and thus is more energy-efficient than conventional elevators and does not use toxic fluids. The stairs in the building are welcoming and invite use by those who can easily climb steps. The renovated building is, however, fully in compliance with the ADA federal guidelines even though FCNL is exempt from the Act by being in an historic structure.

The building is also located to encourage use of environmentally friendly transportation. It is within walking distance of the Union Station and South Capitol METRO stops, and FCNL provides free METRO passes to all staff. It also has space in the basement designated for bicycles and a shower and changing room for use of cyclists or walkers. The commitment to alternative transportation extends to the current Executive Secretary who is among those who bike to work.

'Buy local' applies to the basic heating system. Ten 300-foot-deep bore holes accommodate a 'closed system loop' in the geothermal system which cycles a fluid mix that is 80 percent water and 20 percent glycol through the building, then back under the earth to make use of the constant 55 degree temperature of the earth's crust for the geothermal heating and cooling system. A network of pipes, with multiple zones, spreads the constant-temperature fluid throughout the building. Thus, FCNL does not rely on oil or gas and only uses enough electricity to run the geothermal pumps. FCNL pays a premium for all wind-generated electric power. The building design also makes extensive use of natural light with windows and light scoops. It is expected that heating costs will be reduced by 40 percent as well as offering the benefits of reducing the use of fossil fuels (Figure 5).



Figure 5. FCNL Building, manifolds for geothermal heating and cooling system

Choices for materials used throughout the building emphasize local, recycled, and renewable resources. Floors are made of fast-growing bamboo. Stone for the stairwell was quarried regionally. The furniture is Greenguard Certified: durable and made without toxic chemicals, as well as using recycled or rapidly renewable materials.<sup>62</sup>

To return to the hallmark of contemporary Quaker design, the predominant impression inside the building is *light*. But even this required careful thought and creative use of materials, such as the glass blocks used in the flooring underneath the light scoop so natural light can filter through all three stories at the core of the building (Figure 6). Light-toned and light-reflecting materials (e.g. bamboo floors) enhance the effect and there are outdoor views from 90 percent of regularly occupied spaces.



Figure 6. FCNL Building, interior with light scoop



For its 2005 Christmas holiday card to supporters, FCNL chose a watercolor of the building entitled 'Scooping Light' that highlights the window wall of the new section of the building.<sup>63</sup> The text of the card draws on the multiple meanings of 'light' as physical and spiritual. It quotes Matthew 5.16: 'Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to God in heaven'. It also states that 'light shines through our new building and through FCNL's Quaker witness on Capitol Hill'.

#### IMPACTS

The FCNL Building models environmental best practices across the street from the Hart Senate Office Building and in 2007 became the first LEED-certified building on Capitol Hill. It has received a Presidential Citation for sustainable building design from the DC Chapter of the American Institute of Architects as 'a building with a conscience'. The proximity of the Hart Office Building has served to raise consciousness of green building among US Senators. The green roof of the FCNL building, in particular, is quite visible from the upper floors of the Hart Building. Congressional staff and visitors have regularly taken pictures of FCNL's vegetated roof from the Hart Building roof and comment on this new addition to the local landscape.<sup>64</sup>

Members of Congress, energy and environmental committee staff, staff from the Architect of the Capitol, and leaders of faith organizations have visited the FCNL offices in order to tour the building and learn more about green architecture. Materials for a self-guided tour of the building describing its reconstruction and environmental features have been developed to make this information readily available without draining staff time from their legislative education and advocacy.

In 2006, Senator James Jeffords of Vermont introduced the High-Performance Green Buildings Act (S. 3591) to make federal buildings more energy efficient. This legislation also provides environmental grants for schools and promotes new building technologies with less negative impact on the natural environment and the building of 'green' structures. Prior to introducing that bill, the Senator brought his staff to tour the FCNL building and to talk with FCNL staff about their experience with the green design, construction, and operation of the building.

Among Friends, the prominence of the FCNL building on Capital Hill and the numbers of individual Quakers who make use of this building in their role as volunteer workers with FCNL or as visitors to the area, has helped stimulate use of green construction techniques in local meeting houses. The impulse towards green construction is fairly widespread among Friends, so the FCNL building is more a general inspiration and example of what can be done than the cause of such construction.

To cite just one example, when Friends in Portland, Oregon, decided to add a classroom wing on their meeting house, they set energy conservation and use of low-impact materials as a high priority. The FCNL building was cited during discussion about the project and in various applications as an example of Friends' commitment to and leadership in the use of green architecture. In turn, their undertaking has been a key example in the 'Oregon Interfaith Power & Light', an activity of Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon to help churches reduce their ecological footprint.

## IV. CONCLUSIONS

Can an office building be a spiritual structure? Can it support spiritual values and spiritual journeys in ways that parallel the spiritual work of cathedrals and temples? The leadership of FCNL certainly believes that the building is 'a manifestation of the practice of faith', both by its location and functionality and its expression of belief in the unity of Creation. The first—political—idea draws on the Quaker tradition of 'speaking truth to power' and working to right social injustice. The second—ecological—idea is becoming more and more central to the way that modern Friends understand their faith. Both of these approaches overlap with broader political and environmental movements but Friends distinguish themselves when they insist that action be spiritually grounded and that the process of seeking divine guidance is integral to all action.

Once the building was open, it received a strong positive response from members of the General Committee, neighbors, and others who walked through the space. The use of light, clean lines, and minimal decor linked the structure to Friends' meeting houses. The energy-saving features demonstrated the growing belief among Friends of the importance of limiting our impact on the environment. The way the building functions—its conduciveness to cooperative decision-making, its very location on Capitol Hill, and the availability of space designed to welcome people into the legislative process—is integral to the mission of FCNL. Joe Volk, Executive Secretary of FCNL, described the importance of the building: 'We believe that humankind must respect the ecological integrity and sacredness of the natural world. A headquarters that has a low environmental impact and creates a healthy environment for our staff is a tangible expression of what we believe'.<sup>65</sup>

At the same time, it is important to note that the particular choices made in building design and construction are firmly embedded in the society and culture of the twenty-first century United States. Over the centuries, Quakers have focused on different material practices as ways to express simplicity and plainness. In the first generations, when the richness and style of dress was one of the primary markers of social hierarchy, Quakers emphasized plain clothing. In the contemporary United States, real estate plays a much more prominent role as social and cultural marker while decades of concern about energy shortages and global warming have highlighted the importance of personal and organizational choices with low environmental impacts. Plainness in this context can be understood not as an absolute standard, but as a set of choices that are consciously in contrast to those of the dominant society, as Peter Collins has suggested more generally for Friends' practice of simplicity.<sup>66</sup> The FCNL building, in other words, expresses both general values and specific historically conditioned understandings of these values.

The fundraising campaign for the FCNL building used the slogan 'A Place Just Right', taken from the popular Shaker hymn 'Simple Gifts'. The phrase had a triple meaning: The project would be as simple as possible given the needs of the organization; the location on Capitol Hill is a great place for a lobbying organization; and the building itself was to be done 'right' in terms of design choices that combined

aesthetic appeal and greenness. Ten or fifteen years from now, most FCNL staff and supporters would hope that green buildings will be the norm on Capitol Hill and in other places where basic social and political choices are debated, and that the FCNL building will not stand out like a green thumb. What will not change, however, is the way in which the building embodies not only a specific social and economic choice but also a theology of stewardship and simplicity.

#### NOTES

1. The source of all dollar figures in this article is the FCNL staff. The total cost of the project was \$6.5 million, which included \$3.7 million for the actual construction and \$0.5 million for a fund to maintain the building once it was complete. The remaining expense was for the feasibility study, design, engineering, legal fees, permits, historical consultant, fundraising, and related soft costs.

2. 'The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System™ is the nationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction, and operation of high performance green buildings. LEED gives building owners and operators the tools they need to have an immediate and measurable impact on their buildings' performance. LEED promotes a whole-building approach to sustainability by recognizing performance in five key areas of human and environmental health: sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials selection, and indoor environmental quality'. US Green Building Council Website, online: <http://www.usgbc.org/DisplayPage.aspx?CategoryId=19>, 2007. Silver level certification is the third of five levels of sustainability features.

3. The National Register of Historic Places is a federally mandated and maintained listing of sites, buildings, and districts with architectural or historical significance. The Capitol Hill Historic District, listed in 1976, is one of the largest in the United States.

4. 'FCNL On Capitol Hill: A Legacy for the Future', FCNL Education Fund Capital Campaign handout, 2000.

5. Punshon, J., *Portrait in Grey: A Short History of the Quakers*, London: Quaker Home Service, 1984, pp. 71-72.

6. Abbott, M.P., Chijioke, M.E., Dandelion, P., and Oliver, J. (eds), *Historical Dictionary of the Friends (Quakers)*, Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2003, p. 321.

7. For the development of the Religious Society of Friends in the United States, see Hamm, T., *The Quakers in America*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2003, and Barbour, H., and Frost, J.W., *The Quakers*, Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1988.

8. For a discussion of the testimonies of integrity, equality, simplicity, and peace, see Barclay, R., 'Proposition 15: Vain and Empty Customs', in Freiday, D. (ed.), *Barclay's Apology in Modern English*, Manasquan, NJ, 1967, pp. 389-437; Copper, W.A., *A Living Faith: An Historical Study of Quaker Beliefs*, Richmond, IN: Friends United Press, 1990, pp. 99-112; and Barbour and Frost, *The Quakers*, pp. 41-46.

9. Lapsansky, E.J., 'Past Plainness to Present Simplicity: A Search for Quaker Identity', in Lapsansky, E.J., and Verplanck, A.A. (eds), *Quaker Aesthetics: Reflections on a Quaker Ethic in American Design and Consumption*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003, pp. 1-15 (4).

10. Frost, J.W., 'From Plainness to Simplicity: Changing Quaker Ideals for Material Culture', in Lapsansky and Verplanck (eds), *Quaker Aesthetics*, pp. 16-40 (39).

11. Penn, W., *No Cross, No Crown*, ed. Selleck, R., Richmond, IN: Friends United Press, 1981, pp. 82-87.

12. Penn, *No Cross, No Crown*, p. 85.

13. Tolles, F., and Alderfer, E.G. (eds), *The Witness of William Penn*, New York: Macmillan, 1957, p. 175.

14. John Woolman, 'A Plea for the Poor', in Moulton, P.P. (ed.), *The Journal and Major Essays of John Woolman*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1971, p. 255.

15. Daniel Wheeler, Thomas Shillitoe, Martha Routh and William Evans are other examples of eighteenth-century Friends who made a similar choice. See Brinton, H., *Friends for 300 Years*, Wallingford, PA: Pendle Hill Publications, 1952, p. 138.

16. Woolman, J., *The Journal of John Woolman and A Plea for the Poor*, ed. Tolles, F.B., New York: Corinth Books, 1961, pp. 130-33.

17. Frost, 'From Plainness to Simplicity', p. 305 n. 3.

18. Gregg, R.B., *The Value of Voluntary Simplicity*, Wallingford, PA: Pendle Hill Publications, 1936, p. 4.

19. Northwest Yearly Meeting of Friends Church, *Faith and Practice: A Book of Christian Discipline*, Newberg, OR: The Barclay Press, 1987, p. 17.

20. Frost, 'From Plainness to Simplicity', p. 39.

21. Nayler, J., *Love to the Lost*, 1656. *A collection of sundry books, epistles and papers*. London, J. Sowle, 1715. Concerning the fall of man and concerning light and life, see pp. 260, 261.

22. Woolman, *Journal*, pp. 211-12.

23. Woolman, *Journal*, pp. 227-28.

24. Baltimore Yearly Meeting, in 2000, adopted a Minute on Global Climate Change: 'Protecting God's Earth and its fullness of life is of fundamental religious concern to the Society of Friends. The links among human activity, the dramatic rise in atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations, and the rise of average global temperature are now of sufficient concern to lead us to action. Climate change is apt to affect everyone and everything: food; water; air quality; biodiversity; forests; public health; social order; and world peace. It is therefore an issue of great importance for ecological sustainability, social and economic justice, and international diplomacy.'

Because the United States uses much more energy per capita than any other nation, our policies to curtail greenhouse gas emissions will be crucial. We must consider not only the kinds of fuels used directly but also the energy embodied in all material goods we use. Our nation has long set a standard for others with its high levels of consumption; we must now provide an example by taking responsibility for the consequences of past and current behavior.

Involvement by religious communities in education and advocacy will be needed if policies to address global warming are to succeed in politics or practice in the US. We unite in urging individual Friends, Monthly Meetings, and other Friends organizations to seek Divine Guidance in understanding how to:

- reduce our own use of energy and material resources;
- support strong international agreements for reducing greenhouse gas emissions;
- promote national policies for assuring energy and resource conservation;
- participate in a transition to less damaging technologies in our industries, agriculture, buildings, and transportation.

These are essential steps to protect life on Earth as God creates and sustains it'.

25. *Friends Bulletin*, December 2006, advertisement on back cover.

26. Quaker Earthcare Witness website <<http://www.quakerearthcare.org>>, accessed 15 December 2006. The header and logo of this website states 'To our testimony of conscientious objection to war, let us add conscientious protection of the planet'. See also Lofland, L. (ed.), *Becoming a Friend to the Creation: Earthcare Leaven for Friends and Friends' Meetings*, Burlington, VT, Publications Committee of Friends Committee on Unity with Nature, 1994, and Adams, A. (ed.), *The Creation was Open to Me: An Anthology of Friends' Writings on that of God in all Creation*, Wilmslow, Cheshire: Quaker Green Concern, 1996.

27. See Collins, P., 'Quaker Plaining as Critical Aesthetic', *Quaker Studies* 5 (2001), pp. 121-39 for a more detailed discussion of the concepts in this paragraph.

28. Barclay, 'Proposition 15'.

29. Garfinkel, S.L., *Genres of Worldliness: Meanings of the Meeting House for Philadelphia Friends, 1755-1830*, unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1997, pp. 79-85.

30. Lavoie, C.C., 'Quaker Beliefs and Practices and the Eighteenth-Century Development of the Friends Meeting House in the Delaware Valley', in Lapsansky and Verplanck (eds), *Quaker Aesthetics*, pp. 156-87 (173).

31. Lavoie, 'Quaker Beliefs and Practices', p. 158.

32. Lavoie, 'Quaker Beliefs and Practices', p. 342 n. 32.

33. Herman, B.L., 'Introduction: Part II, Quakers as Producers', in Lapsansky and Verplanck (eds), *Quaker Aesthetics*, pp. 149-55.

34. Lavoie 'Quaker Beliefs and Practices', p. 157.

35. Lavoie, 'Quaker Beliefs and Practices', p. 157.

36. Homan, R., 'The Aesthetics of Friends' Meeting Houses', *Quaker Studies* 11 (2006), pp. 115-28 (124). To a contemporary eye, the Manchester structure looks like a bank office and raises thoughts about the high level of business success enjoyed by many nineteenth-century Quakers.

37. Herman, 'Quakers as Producers'.

38. Garfinkel, *Genres of Worldliness*, p. 6; Dandelion, P., *The Liturgies of Quakerism*, Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005.

39. There is an entire set of 'old meeting house' books that describes the origins, construction, and modification of older meeting places and accompanies the historical details with loving illustrations (often of the buildings without people present).

40. This aesthetic stands in full contrast to the Gothic cathedral and its nineteenth- and twentieth-century imitations, with their complex forms, verticality, high spaces, colored light, and ambient darkness.

41. A lantern in the garden is believed to be the one given to Floyd Schmoie by the Japanese government in appreciation of his work there.

42. Portland is located in Multnomah County, hence the peculiar name.

43. Online: [www.friendshouston.org/building.html](http://www.friendshouston.org/building.html), accessed 15 December 2006.

44. Turrell, J., 'Live Oak Friends Meeting House', interview in 'Art:21: Art in the Twenty-first Century', online: <http://www.pbs.org/art21/artists/turrell/clips.html> and <http://www.pbs.org/art21/artists/turrell/index.html>, accessed 15 December 2006.

45. FCNL Education Fund, 'FCNL On Capitol Hill: A Legacy For the Future', fundraising materials (2000), and 'Questions and Answers', fundraising materials (November 2001).

46. Wilson, E.R., *Uphill for Peace: Quaker Impact on Congress*, Richmond, IN: Friends United Press, 1975, pp. 8-17; Snyder, E.F., Cooper, W.A., Klineberg, S.L., Volk, J., and Reeves, D., *Witness in Washington: Fifty Years of Friendly Persuasion*, Richmond, IN: Friends United Press, 1994, pp. 16-19.

47. The organization has come under criticism from Friends who do not share its views. E. Raymond Wilson, the first Executive Secretary responded in this way: 'If a criticism was justified, and many of them were, we have sought to remedy the situation. If it was an honest difference of opinion, we have sought to recognize and respect it, even if contrary to the policy established at our annual meeting. Where an agreement could not be reached, it was a matter of regret to the staff and meant considerable emotional strain on them. We tried to recognize that no policy of FCNL should be above review, debate, or criticism, and that there was vast room for improvement of its work'. Wilson, *Uphill for Peace*, p. 363.

48. FCNL By-Laws and FCNL Education Fund By-Laws.

49. FCNL, 'Statement of Legislative Policy', *Friends Committee on National Legislation Newsletter* 682 (November/December 2003), p. 1.

50. Cooper, W.A. (ed.), *The FCNL Story*, Washington: Friends Committee on National Legislation, 1958, p. 7.

51. For a few examples: Disarmament Clearinghouse, Native American Working Group, US Campaign Against Land Mines, Mexican Human Rights Group, American Association of University Professors, American Association of University Women lobbying group, US Campaign for People Centered Development.

52. Snyder *et al.*, *Witness in Washington*, p. 152. The ADA, adopted by Congress in 1990, addressed the needs of individuals with physical or mental impairments that substantially limit one or more life activities. The measure prohibits employment discrimination on criteria not directly related to job requirements and requires that public buildings be accessible for people with physical impairments.

53. This description of the decision-making process draws on conversations with FCNL staff and on participant observation. The fundraising materials published by the FCNL Education Fund 'Questions and Answers' (2001) also describes the eventual conclusions reached as part of the decision-making process.

54. Hummon, M.R., 'Building Renovation Project Clerk's Interim Report #1', May 27, 1999. Weinstein Associates Architects, *Phase II Feasibility Study*, 14 September 1998.

55. Conversation with Joe Volk, FCNL Executive Secretary, December 2006.

56. FCNL By-Laws.

57. Sheeran, M., *Beyond Majority Rule: Voteless Decision Making in the Religious Society of Friends*, Philadelphia: Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, 1983.

58. Fundraising started out with a pyramid of expected donations using conventional wisdom that at least one \$1 million gift would be needed for the project, two \$500,000 gifts, and increasing numbers of smaller gifts according to the year 2000 FCNL Education Fund Capital Campaign 'Chart of Gifts Needed to Raise \$6,170,000' distributed to fundraising volunteers. A year into the fundraising effort the chart was revised to reflect the fact that there would be no major donor to carry the project according to the FCNL Education Fund Capital Campaign 'Building Progress Bulletin' January 2003. In fact, the funds for the core project were raised with no gift exceeding \$250,000, an indication of the breadth of the support for this project as well as the limited number of Friends with substantial giving capacity.

59. FCNL Education Fund Building Renovation Advisory Group (BRAG), fundraising campaign materials, 19 May 2000.

60. Conversation with Joe Volk, Executive Secretary of FCNL, December 2006.

61. For building descriptions see 'FCNL's Renovated Capitol Hill Building Features', online: [www.fcnl.org/building](http://www.fcnl.org/building) and Gina Baker, 'Web + Digital Exclusive: Witness to Sustainability', posted October 1, 2006, online: [www.edcmag.com](http://www.edcmag.com).

62. Greenguard certification is awarded by a private nonprofit organization whose mission is to improve indoor air quality by reducing chemical and particulate emissions from building materials and furnishings.

63. The artist is Barbara Treasure, a Friend from Baltimore Monthly Meeting of Friends, Stony Run Meeting, Maryland.

64. Conversation with Joe Volk, Executive Secretary, FCNL, December 2006.

65. Baker, 'Witness to Sustainability'.

66. Collin, P.J., "'Plaining": The Social and Cognitive Practice of Symbolization in the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)', *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 11 (1996), pp. 277-88.

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