

# Estes Park Memorial Observatory

Oct. 20, 2006

Hi everyone,

Here are the minutes from our October 16, 2006, meeting.

First order of business was meeting the new architect / engineer. He is Wyatt Knutson from Secure Foundations and Precision Drafting in Fort Collins. Michele & Roy use him for their condos and town homes. He is very enthusiastic about the project and has offered his services to us at a greatly reduced rate. Wyatt and I met Meinte Veldhuis, president of the Little Thompson Observatory (LTO), at the LTO last week. Meinte gave us a two hour "Observatory 101" tour of their facility. It really helped Wyatt get in tune with what's important to us. Also new to the group was David Hemphill. David approves of our cause and has volunteered to help us. He is a CPA/accountant and also on the board of the Estes Park Non-Profit Resource Center. He is familiar with the IRS filing requirements of 501-C3 organizations. Thank you and welcome aboard Wyatt and David.

## **Building Update**

- Roy Johnson, our builder, Wyatt Knutson, our architect / engineer, and Mike Connolly took a walking tour of the observatory site and evaluated various building options and locations. Wyatt will locate the observatory on the new site survey plan just completed by Cornerstone Engineering.
  - It was decided that a 40' by 40' concrete slab on grade warm room with a 40' by 20' crawl space under the facility rooms would be most appropriate for construction. A crawl space under the complete observatory would probably be cost prohibitive because of the extensive blasting required.
  - A hydronic radiant floor heating system can be incorporated using water coils in the concrete slab and sub floor. A small electric boiler can be incorporated as a heat source for the system. The crawl space will be heavily insulated from the outside.
  - A stick built structure using standing seam metal siding for the roof and exterior is proposed for the construction. The siding comes in various colors and finishes and can be made to look like beige or tan concrete walls with a sand pebble finish. The building will have a slant roof 12' high on the South side and 8' high on the North side. It also can be beige or tan just not a very dark color. Darker roofs take longer to cool down and give off more heat than lighter colored roofs.
  - The dome will be 16' diameter and 8' high. We plan to build it ourselves in conjunction with the LTO group who also want to build an identical dome. The dome exterior needs to be a light colored (white) composite material able to withstand hail. The dome will be very similar to the existing LTO dome.
  - The entrance to the EP MO will have a mountain theme with some heavy timbers for the columns and cross beams forming the portico and some stone work for the front of the building.

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- The entire facility will follow ADA accessibility guidelines. We are still brainstorming how best to interface a lift up to the observatory telescope deck.
- Wyatt provided us with the latest preliminary design drawings for the building. Check them out on the website: [www.angelsabove.org](http://www.angelsabove.org) > Preliminary Plans.

## 501 c3 Status

- The 120 day response time the IRS said they needed to contact us for our application expired on October 11.
- The IRS is currently reviewing cases that were filed in February 2006. Our application was filled June 2006. We are 5 months into the process and rumor has it that it takes from six months to a year to get the 501 c3 designation.
- The good news is that all donations to the Angels Above Foundation (AAF) are retroactive deductible to the incorporation date (1/6/2006) of the AAF. We then have 24 months from that date to get the 501c3 designation. In other words, all donations to the foundation will be tax deductible as long as we get the 501c3 by January 2008.
- We have been in contact with Frank Shavlik of the EP Non-Profit Resource Center. The center is a 501c3 that can act as a fiscal agent at no charge to us for donations that can only be made to a 501c3. We can use their umbrella if the need presents itself.

## Fundraising

- A round table discussion of who could help with fundraising efforts was conducted. A number of names were mentioned:
  - Ann Buckley of the medical center
  - Don Libby's son in Cherry Creek
  - Norm Love of the Newcomers
  - Jason Marcks NASA Space Education
  - Eagle Rock
- Michele has contacted Shelley Doggett who has set us up for a presentation to the members of the Sunrise Rotary tentatively scheduled for December 5<sup>th</sup>.
- We are also looking to give presentations to other local groups such as: Afternoon Rotary, Kiwanis, Chamber, Newcomers, Realtors, etc...

## Grants & Sponsors

- A round table discussion of who could help with grant writing and what organizations could be contacted for possible sponsorship. It was the consensus of the board that before we approach people to help search and write grants and ask for sponsorships, we need to have a better fix on our budget and schedule.
- Potential sponsors include:
  - Lockheed Martin – Mike's employer, -Joy Knight director of community relations

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- Sunrise Medical – Christian’s employer
  - We plan to ask Sunrise to help make the observatory ADA accessible.
- CQG, Inc. – Tom’s employer
- Town of Estes Park – Randy Rapola, Doug Frisbee
- Estes Valley Community Services
- Community Foundation – Steve Todd
- Eagle Rock – Robert Burkhardt & Dick Herb
- People who could eventually help with the grant writing include:
  - Steve Little
  - Karen Glassman – from the school district
  - Katie Spear – from EP
  - Peggy A. Halderman - Chairman, Board of Directors Jefferson Symphony Association
  - Roger Giellis - Lockheed Martin Engineer retired.

## Miscellaneous

- There was a discussion about where we could build a dome. It would be desirable to be inside. The building would have to be able to accommodate a 16’ diameter, 8’ tall hemisphere. It also must have an access door big enough to accommodate the dome on some sort of lift. One idea was to use a barn building over at the fair grounds. Another idea was to build it in the actual observatory warm room and use a temporary wall as an access door.

## Current Priorities

- Work with the architect and the builders to get a handle on expected building cost and schedule. This is paramount before we can do any grant applications or asking for sponsors.
- Schedule presentations to local groups and try and solicit volunteers and trades people to help with the building task.
  - Wyatt mentioned that his friend Cameron has volunteered to help with any welding task, i.e., the dome and support rails.
- The latest observatory drawings are on the website (: [www.angelsabove.org](http://www.angelsabove.org) > Preliminary Plans). Please view them and pass on any questions or suggestions.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 16th at 4:30pm, at the school district administration building conference center. At this meeting we will be close to finalizing the building plans drawings. This will be our main topic. I’ll keep putting the most current drawings on the website for your review.

Thanks to everyone for your continued support.

Mike Connolly