

## **Proposal that Friends Meeting at Cambridge Become the Host Meeting for a Quaker Voluntary Service House in the Boston Area, 10/5/2014**

**What is Quaker Voluntary Service (QVS)?** In three cities (the proposal is to add Boston to the list in 2015), the program consists of an intentional community of about seven volunteers, ages 21 to 30, Quaker and Quaker-curious, who

- live together in a rented house, practicing voluntary simplicity
- share meals and worship
- make decisions on the running of the house on the basis of Quaker business practices
- participate actively in the life of the Host Meeting
- work full-time in pre-existing social service and social change organizations
- receive from QVS a small stipend, housing, transportation, and health insurance
- are provided on a regular basis with training in Quakerism, social justice issues, and leadership skills

### **What is required of the Host Meeting and other local meetings?**

- setting up a Local Support Committee (LSC), which will need several people from FMC to assist a paid half-time QVS staff person with initial house set-up, fundraising, and finding placements. The number of people on the LSC will decrease once the house has been established. The hope is that neighboring meetings will provide some members of the LSC.
- initial help in furnishing a house with surplus furniture, kitchen equipment, etc.
- one person for each volunteer for spiritual nurturing, several of whom would presumably come from FMC
- provide welcoming activities and be attentive to getting to know the volunteers as they participate in FMC activities
- an annual monetary contribution from FMC funds to be determined by the Meeting (contributions from current Host Meetings have been in the range \$150-\$2000 per year). Note that the national QVS organization pays the rent on the house and handles the money generally; it also selects the volunteers and makes final choices of placements.

### **How is the program financed?**

- each work placement site pays \$15000 to QVS for a volunteer serving for 11 months
- financial support from local Host Meetings, as previously mentioned
- grants and contributions, raised by the QVS staff working in collaboration with local Friends
- QVS volunteers asked to raise \$2000 each to contribute to QVS during their year of service

### **What potential benefits will come to FMC?**

- long-term connections with young people who will be doing significant work in the world, and potentially in Quaker circles

- high visibility of young adult Friends following a leading, providing a powerful model for our young people and fresh insights about how we need to change as a community
- more knowledge of, and connections with, local service and advocacy organizations
- more visibility at FMC of all our individual work in social change and service
- having a specific innovative project that a number of members of the FMC community can work on together
- more connections with other local Meetings
- excitement and joy
- whatever else Spirit brings us

### **What has happened so far?**

- interest expressed in Core Working Group
- announcement in MWB in May 2014
- approval by MWB in June 2014 of sending letter of interest to QVS
- contacts made with interested people at Beacon Hill, Fresh Pond, Wellesley, and Framingham Meetings; AFSC also was contacted and expressed interest in helping
- approval of FMC/Boston by QVS in September 2014
- information sessions and discussion on September 27 and 28 at FMC, attended also by people from Framingham, Wellesley, and Beacon Hill Meetings
- MWB on October 5, 2014

### **What is being proposed?**

#### **Proposed Minute**

Friends Meeting at Cambridge (FMC) supports creation of a Quaker Voluntary Service (QVS) house and program in the Boston area, to begin operation in August 2015.

FMC accepts the ongoing responsibilities of a QVS Host Meeting, by

1. approving the creation of a QVS Local Support Committee, expected initially to include Lynn Lazar, Barbara LeSage, David Myers, Sharon Frame, Jan Nisenbaum, David Anick, Patti Muldoon and Alex Kern, as well as others from FMC or from other Meetings in the Boston area who want to get involved;
2. supporting the start-up phase (in FMC fiscal year 2015) with a monetary contribution, **and** supporting the first year of operation in the Boston area (in FMC fiscal year 2016) with another contribution (amounts and sources to be determined by Business Meeting in Worship);
3. remaining mindful of the program's impact and its need for material and spiritual support and hospitality.

We expect to continue supporting the program, but will review our commitment at least once every two years.