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PROJECT MEETING NOTES

Project Name: **Church of St. Joseph Master Plan Study**
Project Number: 1037
Date: November 9, 2010
Time: 6:00 pm
Location: Lab School Meeting Room
Purpose: Worship Focus Group Meeting
Participants: Hagemeister & Mack Architects (HMA): Courtney Cooper
Church of St. Joseph Gary Kraft, Pam Nydeen, Judy Meemken, Judy Hansen, Roger Clausen, Marty Meyer, Patty Waletzko, Nel Pfannenstein, Nettie Pfannenstein, John Blattner, Tim Ebel

The following information and discussions constitute the understanding by the Architect of this meeting. Any additions or corrections should be brought to the attention of the Architect.

1. Overview of master planning process:
 - a. The Programming and Facility Evaluation Team (PFET) worked over the last couple years to evaluate the current and future needs of the parish, in regard to programs and the facilities needed to support them.
 - b. The Planning and Design Committee is continuing the planning process. The committee requested proposals from architects to help in the planning process, and interviewed them this summer. Hagemeister & Mack Architects was selected, and has met once with the committee to discuss the project.
 - c. The committee organized six focus groups to meet with HMA to discuss the parish's needs. These groups are: Ministries/Outreach, Buildings & Maintenance, Parish Staff, Education, Special Events, and Worship.
 - d. Meetings with the focus groups are for the purpose of ascertaining the facilities that are required or desired to support the parish's activities, and to listen to the parishioner's ideas. HMA is not doing any design work until all the focus groups have been met with, and the input received has been analyzed.
 - e. After reviewing input from the focus groups, HMA will meet with the committee to discuss the outcome. HMA will then proceed to work on schematic ideas, probably exploring several significantly different options based on different or competing ideas that surfaced during the focus group meetings. Designs may also incorporate phasing to help prioritize needs and address budget limitations. Meetings will be held with the committee to get their feedback as design work progresses.
 - f. When the committee feels that a concept or concepts have been developed that address the parish's needs, the work will be presented at a combined meeting with all the focus

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groups to get their feedback. It is expected that this group's feedback will be a good indication of how the parish will receive the work done so far.

- g. The project will then be presented to the entire parish for their feedback. If the response is favorable, the parish will then submit the project to the Diocesan Building Commission for their review, probably in January or February. If approved by the Commission, the parish will then to proceed with undertaking a fundraising campaign for the project.

2. Background Information:

- a. Average attendance numbers for regular Masses:
 - i. Saturday 5 pm: 275.
 - ii. Sunday 8 am: 280.
 - iii. Sunday 10 am: 345. This makes the church feel pretty full, although there is actually capacity for 620, including 100 in the balcony.
 - iv. Weekdays (Tus - Fri 8 am): 45.
- b. At Christmas and Easter Masses, people sit in the balcony, in the side aisles, in the back of the church behind the pews, and in the east entrance. People come from other parishes to the 4 pm Christmas Eve Mass, because other parishes don't have a Mass that early.
- c. There is usually not a problem with parking capacity in the lot across College Ave. Since most of the events with high attendance take place when the college's parking lot to the south is not heavily used, parking for the church's events can spill over into it.
- d. One person commented that although the area's population has grown in the recent past, the parish hasn't experience similar growth, because there hasn't been much evangelization done.

3. Improving the parish's facilities would seem to put it in a better position for dealing with the possibility of future clustering with other parishes.

4. One of the prospective campaign consultants suggested inviting parishioners to go on a bus trip to look at other area churches that have had recent successful building projects.

5. It was noted that previous groups have expressed concern about building an addition if the Lab School were to be closed. The school planning group is expected to make their recommendations to the Bishop public in the next few weeks (see notes from the Buildings & Maintenance Focus group meeting for more details). This issue will be taken into consideration in HMA's planning work.

6. As described below, the main master plan elements identified in the PFET report were discussed, as well as the relative priorities of each, to get additional input from this group. Also, ideas given at previous focus group meetings were repeated to hear this group's reactions.

7. Possible locations for an addition were discussed, including on the west, north and east sides of the existing church, and how these relate to the existing parish office building. Further details about this subject are included in the notes for the other focus group meetings.

- a. One person commented that a large number of parishioners would be opposed to an addition on the north side of the church and parish house.
- b. Several people thought the east side of the church would be the best place to build an addition, with a connection through the existing "winter chapel" area to the main church entrance.
- c. Some of those present thought that a west addition is a good idea, connecting the church to the school.
 - i. Offices could also be located there, which would make them closer to the school.
 - ii. The playground would have to be moved, which isn't a bad idea for safety reasons. The kids often go into the parking lot, rather than staying in the playground.

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- d. Most of those present felt that the parish house should remain in some form, even if just the exterior. A few people were open to demolishing the parish house if doing so provided advantages for an addition that no other option had.
 - e. The parish house could be converted to a chapel.
8. Church and related spaces:
- a. Some wakes are done in the church rather than at the local funeral home. Some present indicated that the church space doesn't serve wakes very well, since the pews make it difficult for the number of people present to move around, and that it would be good to have the option of having wakes in a new social hall. Others disagreed that the church pews create any difficulties for wakes.
 - b. If a new gathering space were built, more pews could be added to the back area of the church, or chairs left in place on a more permanent basis.
 - c. This group agreed that having the baptismal font at its current location in the sanctuary is awkward. It could be moved to the back, or possibly switched with the piano and organ console.
 - d. A cry room is not desired. They can be taken outside. If a gathering space is built, disruptive children can be taken there.
 - e. Although the group did not feel that a new chapel is a priority, several benefits to having one were noted:
 - i. More intimate space for daily Masses.
 - ii. Would allow people to come pray in front of the Blessed Sacrament, whether exposed or in the tabernacle, without conflicts or distractions from other things going on in the main church.
 - iii. At communal penance services, it would provide a more private place for some of the individual confessions to be done at.
 - f. Some people attend Mass elsewhere on the summer Sundays having really hot weather. The members of this group feel that this does not significantly affect Sunday Mass attendance. However, it has become very uncomfortable in the church at large funerals and weddings in the summer. Some present felt that putting air conditioning in the church to create better indoor conditions at these special services should be a priority, or that maybe a separate collection could be made for this purpose.
 - g. Although the heating system in the church could be better, it is not significantly deficient.
 - h. The sacristy next to the sanctuary is used for storing unconsecrated communion hosts and wine, and purifying the vessels after Mass.
9. Gathering space, social hall and related functions:
- a. Those present agreed that this should be the highest priority of the master plan.
 - b. Should have lots of natural light, high ceilings, and warm materials.
 - c. Social hall should have a capacity around 300.
 - d. Alcoves with seating could be provided around the gathering space.
 - e. Main entrance doors should have power operators.
 - f. Would be nice to have a family restroom and area for nursing mothers.
10. At other focus group meetings, comments were made that the people doing faith formation sometimes feel uncomfortable using the Lab School classrooms, since they are worried about messing things up for the daytime school classes. One person present is involved in faith formation, and does not share this concern.

END OF MEETING NOTES