

**VISION 2020 CAPITAL CAMPAIGN
ST. MARK'S CHURCH, CAPITOL HILL**

**UPDATE ON ALTERNATIVE DESIGNS
March 2, 2012**

OVERVIEW

On Sunday, February 26, 2012, the Vision 2020 Steering Committee made a presentation to the Vestry that provided a detailed update on the current state of the project to renovate and expand the Parish Hall. We shared three alternative designs, all of which fit within the project's budget, and discussed our proposed financing method. Vestry members and members of the community who attended the meeting asked numerous questions. The Vestry and the Steering Committee agreed that the entire St. Mark's community needed to be provided with the detailed information about the state of the project and the current design options before the Vestry made a decision on how to proceed. The community is invited to review these materials and then make comments or ask questions by sending an e-mail to stmarkscapitalcampaign@gmail.com.

There are six documents in the package of materials being shared with the community:

- 1) This overview, which describes how we got to this point.
- 2) A description and drawings of Option 1, Renovating Baxter House.
- 3) A description and drawings of Option 2, which entails building only a new Undercroft.
- 4) A description and drawings of Option 3, which calls for building only a new second floor above the Parish Hall.
- 5) A document explaining how we will pay for this project.
- 6) A document of "other information," which addresses a number of issues and questions raised by the Vestry and by parishioners about various aspects of the project.

These materials are available on the St. Mark's web site and can be e-mailed to any parishioner who requests a copy by e-mailing stmarkscapitalcampaign@gmail.com. Enlarged drawings will be on display in the Parish Hall. A presentation about these materials will be made at the Annual Meeting on March 11, 2012. It is the Vestry's intention to consider the options and vote on how to proceed on March 25, 2012.

THE VISION

More than two years ago, St. Mark's began exploring the idea of renovating and expanding the Parish Hall to make our space more inviting, useful, and efficient. We undertook exhaustive studies of the current state of our buildings; captured more than 1,000 dreams from parishioners of how the space could be used; explored the needs of the broader community and how we might address those; analyzed the feasibility of raising the money to support the project; and began considering design options. The path from the beginning of this process to where we are today has been anything but a straight line. We have had highs and lows, setbacks and triumphs. But we believe we are on the cusp of constructing new space that will benefit the St. Mark's community, and the community around us, far into the future.

In 2010 and the early part of 2011, we completed a process of examining what we wanted out of this project. That process led us to identify the following goals for any renovation and/or expansion plan:

- 1) To preserve our historic property, while renewing our existing space, enhancing our mission, and providing for the future of our community.
- 2) To implement sustainable systems throughout our facilities, demonstrating our respect for the world in which we live, and upholding our commitment to sustainability as a core value.
- 3) To make our spaces more welcoming, accessible and available to our members, guests and the needs of our community.
- 4) To create additional space for our programs, with the flexibility to meet currently known and unforeseen future needs, enabling us to better realize our dreams.
- 5) To strengthen our engagement with and commitment to the community and the world around us.
- 6) To provide our staff with functional, pleasant space to work that are in one location, easily accessible to our community and the public, safe and secure, and that integrate the staff more fully into the daily workings of the church.

Those principles have driven our design work. Over the past six months, the reality of the financial cost to realize these goals has meant that we have had to make hard choices about what is feasible for us actually to accomplish. The Steering Committee believes that we have found an affordable plan that will take us a significant way to achieving these goals.

THE CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

In September 2011, the Vestry authorized the launching of a capital campaign to raise funds for the project. The campaign kicked off with a spectacular gala in the Nave, an hilarious and entertaining night that featured the return of the St. Mark's Follies. At the end of the evening's festivities, we were thrilled to announce that more than \$1 million had already been raised. By the time the campaign was complete in early 2012, more than \$1.71 million had been pledged by more than 220 members of the community. It is a tremendous demonstration of the support and enthusiasm for the project.

EVOLUTION OF THE BUILDING DESIGN

The building design options now being considered evolved from August 2009 until today after ongoing consultation with leaders of the parish and its programs. Below is a brief review of the major components of that evolution.

January to June 2010

- Preparatory work included the Dreamcatching process, the community engagement process and a series of building-specific studies by our zoning attorney, historic preservation consultant and design consultants, including architectural and engineering experts.
- Two major constraints on potential designs were identified: (1) all of St. Mark's property falls under the jurisdiction of the federal Commission on Fine Arts and the D.C. Historic Preservation Review Board, thus there must be review and approval of our plans and there are very real limits on alterations that can be made to the exterior of the buildings; and, (2) we already occupy virtually all of the space we are allowed on our property at 3rd and A; thus, any new addition of above ground area outside our current footprint would not be possible.

- Bonstra|Haresign was contracted to serve as our “first phase” architect. Based on consultations with the initial, ad hoc “building task force,” they developed initial concepts for how we might achieve our goals.
- Monarc Construction was recruited to provide pro bono consultation and cost estimating services for the “first phase.” Monarc did the renovation work at St. John’s-Lafayette Square, Capitol Hill Baptist Church and the Folger Library. Based on the initial Bonstra design concepts, they did a very rough estimate of cost parameters for the various alternative designs.
- In June, a major focus of the annual parish retreat at Shrine Mont was discussion of the need for a capital campaign and a review of the preliminary concept, based on the Bonstra drawings. Participants were asked to share their priorities about what needed to be done to improve our physical environment. On Shrine Mont Sunday, Paul led a parallel “Shrine Mont at St. Mark’s” discussion for those who did not go to the retreat.

July to December 2010

The preliminary design concepts and cost estimates were presented to the entire parish in the “tentative case statement” for a capital campaign. Parishioners also were invited to several open meetings to learn more.

Based on the feasibility study, the Episcopal Church Foundation, our campaign consultant, concluded that a capital campaign was highly feasible and projected that we could raise \$1.3 million.

The Vestry, at its November 2010 retreat, authorized the Rector and Senior Warden to move forward with planning.

January through July 2011

- We conducted a “request for proposal” search for an architect, reviewing proposals from and interviewing three architects. Our final choice was Bonstra|Haresign. The Steering Committee interviewed three Project Management companies and selected E&G Group to work with the detailed management of the team of consultants and project budgeting processes. Also, after a “request for proposal” search, we reviewed proposals from and interviewed two construction firms to be our pre-construction contractor. Our choice was Monarc Construction.
- Bonstra entered into the “concept design” phase with the goal of producing a more detailed set of drawings that could be used for a formal pricing exercise by Monarc. This involved consultations with program leaders for specific areas – Christian Education, Music and Choir, Kitchen/Pub/Pub Lunch, Worship and Altar Guild, Arts/Players/Yoga/Dance Studio, Youth, Historic Preservation/Archives, Library, those with a vested interest in storage space, and staff.
- The concept design drawings were issued by Bonstra in June, in time for us to share them at Shrine Mont and in a parallel session at St. Mark’s where we brought participants up to date on our work and on the status of the designs. These drawings were for the most complete design option – a new undercroft under the Parish Hall, complete renovation of the first floor

(foyer, sacristy/vesting, Parish Hall, kitchen) and construction of a new second floor above the Parish Hall for our offices.

- We worked our way through an extensive review process by our local Advisory Neighborhood Commission, the Capitol Hill Restoration Society, the DC Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB) and the Commission on Fine Arts (CFA), all of which have either right to input on or jurisdiction over alterations to our property.

We were pleased to receive strong support from all of these bodies. CFA insisted that the north side (garden) of the Parish Hall building could not be altered, except for our proposal to redesign the gable over the entry door to the foyer. Both agreed that we could alter the south side of the Parish Hall and install solar panels. Each of these decisions impacted the overall design and resulted in incremental alterations to the concept design drawings.

In July, we received from Monarc a cost estimate of roughly \$4.2 million for the renovation which, when combined with cost estimates for capital improvements that we had collected, resulted in a total project cost of just over \$5 million.

We immediately began a re-evaluation of what we hoped to do, bringing to the Vestry a recommendation that called for a series of changes – the largest single one of which was to eliminate a fully finished new undercroft under the Parish Hall. While we regretted having to make this recommendation, which the Vestry accepted, it was the only realistic way to significantly lower the cost of construction while preserving what all agreed were essential elements of the overall design.

August through December 2011

In September, we received a new total cost estimate from Monarc of \$3.6 million, based on the decision to eliminate the fully finished undercroft and on other cost-saving design changes recommended by our Bonstra, their engineering consultants and Monarc. The design included addition of a second floor over the Parish Hall, total renovation of the first floor (including moving the stairs and elevator) and renovation of the current elevator/stair lobby in the undercroft to provide two new meeting rooms but only a “cold dark shell” undercroft beneath the Parish Hall.

Between September and November, Bonstra completed the Design Development drawings that took the design to a new level of detail. During that period, they consulted again with a variety of program leaders to ensure that the design reflected the needs that those leaders had articulated in the spring.

When those drawings were completed, Monarc did a new round of cost estimates. That resulted, in early December, in a new estimate of \$4.8 million for the project.

At the December Vestry meeting, the Steering Committee recommended and the Vestry approved, an 8-10 week effort to (1) identify the causes of the huge escalation of costs; and, (2) revisit the design and examine three potential alternative designs: renovation of Baxter House only, construction of a new undercroft under the Parish Hall only, and construction of a new second floor above the Parish Hall only.

January through February 2012

At the February Vestry meeting, the Steering Committee was able to report four reasons for the escalation in the estimates between September and December:

1. We did not achieve all of the savings we had believed we would from "value engineering" decisions made after the September cost estimates.
2. There was an increase in estimated construction costs attributable to the greater detail available in the drawings used for the December estimates and the input of potential subcontractors.
3. The Steering Committee had added potential new capital improvements in order to get cost estimates.
4. Because of the impact of #1, 2 and 3, we had less of a positive impact on contingency and contractor fees than we had anticipated.

We also presented to the Vestry a report on each of the design alternatives identified in December. The results of that work will be found in the accompanying documents.

The Steering Committee believes that the most viable design option is that which calls for construction of a new second floor above the Parish Hall, complete renovation of the first floor, and renovation of the current elevator/stair lobby in the undercroft to provide two new meeting rooms. This is the same preferred option that was priced in September with the exception that, now, we propose minimal excavation under the Parish Hall, only that required to build the columns needed to support a second floor.

The estimated price for that option is \$3.7 million, including approximately \$330,000 in "design completion contingency" to protect ourselves from the cost escalations that are bound to occur as our architect creates the final construction documents.

We invite you to review the documents for each of the design options.

We thank the community for the ongoing support over these many months.

Vision 2020 Steering Committee
Paul Abernathy, Rector
Kenn Allen, Co-Chair
Doris Burton
Ed Corr
Linda Ewald, Treasurer
Phil Guire, Junior Warden
Cecilia Monahan, Senior Warden
Justi Schunior, Assistant Rector
Michael Townsend, Co-Chair