

**ANNUAL MEETING MAY 6, 2018**  
**2018/2019 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN**  
*Building on Our Strong Foundation*

**Background**

For more than a decade, multiple groups within our congregation have developed aspirational improvements to our facilities to make them more functional, inviting and accessible. Many of these past proposals were developed through extensive member engagement and priority setting and were accompanied with specific deadlines for completion. Despite these earnest efforts, none of the key recommendations were implemented. The proposals presented in this report are designed to finally accomplish what have long been identified as important changes to make our physical surroundings as accommodating as our spiritual mission.

Two years ago, we again initiated a process via the World Café, whereby the congregation identified improvements to our facilities that would rejuvenate outdated architectural limitations and make our worship space more inviting, both in function and appearance. Also, ideas were proposed on how to increase income in order to fund both improvements and long-term maintenance. The World Café process generated the list of priorities shown below and the Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) developed recommendations to implement the goals and objectives. SPC worked with consultants, met with craftspeople and suppliers, visited other recently renovated UU churches, and hired an architect experienced in church renovations, Leila Hamroun of Past Forward Architecture. After researching and analyzing many alternatives, the facility improvements recommended below comprise the 2018/2019 Capital Improvement Plan to be voted on at our annual meeting. These improvements are designed to fit within the church's overall priorities for the near future that include, among other things, maintaining a sustainable budget, hiring a new minister in 2019, conducting major repairs, and managing Capital Campaign funds and other sources of income.

**World Café-Generated Goal and Objectives**

The goal is a more affordable, accessible, flexible and attractive facility. Specific objectives are:

- Increase income from underutilized space within the building and the exterior grounds
- Improve ingress/egress and accessibility between buildings
- Improve space utilization/flexibility in Parish Hall, Sanctuary, and kitchen
- Add ADA compliant unisex restrooms adjacent to Parish Hall
- Modernize AV systems in the Sanctuary
- Improve overall appearance and attractiveness of Sanctuary and Parish Hall

**Annual Meeting Vote**

The motion put to the congregation for a vote has two parts:

- 1) Reserve \$500,000 of the Capital Campaign fund and apply the interest to the chronically underfunded Maintenance Reserve.

Reserving \$500,000 helps ensure we will have the means to keep the buildings and grounds in good repair. When pledges increase enough and/or we find more sources of income, the \$500,000 could be spent on future improvements. The Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) will continue to explore income sources such as renting space within the building; leasing the library lot for appropriate development, such as a bank branch, or other income sources such as solar electric.

- 2) Implement the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

The CIP comprises four (4) groups of improvements corresponding to and in the order of priority of the World Café objectives. The Board of Trustees recommends approving all twelve (12) of the improvements described in the CIP

## The Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

**Accessibility & Restrooms** Objective: Improve ingress/egress & accessibility between buildings

1. Mechanize front entry doors  
*Future vote to decide glass or Parks' doors if feasible (talking to multiple contractors)*
2. New mechanized glass doors between vestibule and Sanctuary
3. Elevator (if meets code) or outside lift from office to Sanctuary level
4. Wheelchair lift on steps to RE wings

Objective: Add ADA compliant restroom adjacent to Parish Hall

5. Convert kitchen pantry to one ADA restroom (if meets code) and reconfigure kitchen

**Flexibility** Objective: Improve space utilization/flexibility in Sanctuary & Parish Hall

6. Options to include: replace pews with chairs and install new floors in Sanctuary & Parish Hall  
*Future vote to decide among options developed by the Flexibility Team*

**Audio/Visual** Objective: Modernize AV systems in Sanctuary & Parish Hall

7. Upgrade sanctuary audio
8. Install video display system
9. Install recording & streaming capability

**Attractiveness** Objective: Improve overall appearance and attractiveness of Sanctuary & Parish Hall

10. Replace accordion doors with foldable panels
11. New corridor ceiling & lighting between Sanctuary & Parish Hall
12. New ceiling in Parish Hall

## Project Management

A Project Management Team, accountable to the Board, will be formed comprising the Strategic Planning Committee and four Team Leaders tasked with: getting remaining bids, working out what we can afford based on World Café priorities, selecting contractors, specifying materials and finishes. The Teams will determine how to implement as many of the 12 improvements as possible without sacrificing quality or functionality. If there is not enough money for all improvements, some or all of the Attractiveness improvements will postponed. The Team will manage the CIP to completion and report at least quarterly to the Board which then will report to the congregation at least semi-annually (October & March).

## Sources of Funds and Cost Estimates

Potential sources and initial cost estimates of improvements are shown below. Cost estimates will be revised as the Teams work out the most cost effective alternatives. Much of the Capital Campaign Fund was recently reinvested to avoid exposure to falling stock prices but some of the value is subject market fluctuations.

POSSIBLE SOURCES OF FUNDS		COST ESTIMATES	
Capital Campaign Fund	\$ 1,250,000		electric Sanctuary window shades \$ 45,000
to Maintenance Reserve	\$ (500,000)		required electric upgrades \$ 8,000
Capital Improvements Now	\$ 750,000	1, 2	glass ADA front & vestibule doors \$ 30,000
		3, 4	ADA ramp OR elevator & stair lift \$ 350,000
Remainder of \$179,000	\$ 22,900	3, 4	modify basement bathrooms \$ 50,000
Old RE wing floor	\$ (2,500)	5	ADA restroom(s) & kitchen \$ 150,000
Stained glass fund	\$ 70,000	6	chairs & new Sanctuary floor \$ 100,000
architect Fee	\$ (9,700)	6	new Parish Hall floor \$ 20,000
paid to architect so far	\$ 3,300	7	upgrade Sanctuary audio \$ 25,000
Available Now	\$ 834,000	8	stream & record video \$ 30,000
		9	video display system \$ 28,000
PNC construction bond	\$ 36,000	10	replace accordion doors \$ 180,000
sale of pews	\$ 2,000	11	new corridor ceiling & lights \$ 60,000
Chalice Lighter AV Grant	\$ 20,000	12	new Parish Hall ceiling \$ 65,000
chair contributions	\$ 10,000		
POSSIBLE in FUTURE	\$ 68,000		sub total \$ 1,141,000
		15%	design & project mgt (not on all items) \$ 101,000
POTENTIAL TOTAL	\$ 902,000		grand total \$ 1,242,000

The Capital Campaign Fund contains \$1,250,000 (as of Feb. 28, 2018). Setting aside \$500,000 to help fund the Maintenance Reserve leaves \$750,000. Just over \$20,000 remains from the \$179,000 of accrued interest on the Capital Campaign Fund the congregation approved in 2015 for critical repairs, including new blinds for the rebuilt windows. The chair supplier believes we will easily sell the old pews. The congregation will be encouraged to contribute to the purchase of a new chair. A plaque will be placed in the vestibule with names of all those who contributed to the Capital Campaign fund and to the 2017/18 Capital Improvement Plan, in addition to a plaque commemorating the Barnes Family who agreed to repurpose the stained glass fund to help pay for replacing the accordion doors. A grant application for AV upgrades will be submitted to the Central East Region Chalice Lighter Program.

## **Supporting Notes**

### **Increase Income**

SPC is continuing to seek optimal ways of increasing income from underutilized facilities including the vacant library lot. SPC received several offers to buy the vacant lot adjacent to the church but believes leasing the land would provide more income than investing sale proceeds while retaining ownership and control of the land. SPC concluded a branch bank would be a good use of the site since most branches are closed on Sunday and the church could use the parking. So far, none of the banks approached expressed interest. Owners of the adjacent property are willing to join our properties to increase the pool of possible lessees but, despite help from a local developer, no suitable lessee has been identified yet. Suitability is a key criterion for any lessee. SPC continues to search for a suitable tenant and evaluate other ways of increasing income, including solar electric.

### **Improvement Details**

In addition, to the numbered improvements below, motorized window shades, a high priority improvement, would be funded partly with Capital Campaign Funds and partly from the previously authorized expenditure of Capital Campaign Fund interest.

1. Mechanized doors at the Whitby entrance will improve ease of entry/exit - either architecturally appropriate glass doors or Parks' doors if mechanizing is feasible. Attractive glass doors would let in more light and allow seeing who is coming and going. Parks' doors would be moved inside. A suitable location and the cost of properly displaying them will be estimated. In order to mechanize Parks' doors, some repairs are needed and the wood refinished. When feasibility and costs are known for both alternatives, a congregational vote will be held on either installing new glass doors and moving Parks' inside or mechanizing them.
2. New mechanized glass doors between the vestibule and Sanctuary will coordinate with foldable panels replacing the accordion doors to create a lighter, more welcoming and attractive entry to the Sanctuary.
3. A lift from the office level up to the Warner Room is the preferred alternative among several alternatives evaluated including a new fully enclosed ramp from the RE wings into a new vestibule at the Halstead Road door and a lift opening into the back of the sanctuary. While feasible, it would be very expensive. Just covering the ramp rather than enclosing it is less expensive but would be open to the weather and less secure. The existing office hallway could be rebuilt as a ramp, new doorway cut into the offices, existing doors closed off and an all-weather platform lift installed outside the building opening into the back of the sanctuary. Or the lift could open onto the existing landing but it would be cramped. Installing a stair mounted lift from the office level to the sanctuary was considered but the stairs are not wide enough.
4. Installing a wheelchair lift at the steps leading to the classrooms provides ADA compliant access. This is the most cost-effective of several alternatives considered.
5. Converting the kitchen pantry and exterior doorway area into ADA restrooms while still allowing use of the Warner Room is the only alternative considered that did not require new construction. Depending on the effect of an elevator on basement bathrooms, one or two restrooms would be built. One restroom is preferred because it would leave a passageway directly between the back door and kitchen. Several redesigns of the kitchen and storage areas next to the parish hall were considered including swapping the chair and general storage area with a totally new kitchen but the cost is prohibitive.

6. Replacing wooden pews with specially designed chairs will allow for a variety of worship configurations, as well as make the Sanctuary available for other uses and events. Chairs that connect together leaving no gap in between would look and act much like pews but provide flexibility. Other congregations told us they were glad they replaced fixed pews with moveable chairs which greatly expanded their seating flexibility and configuration options for different events. Refurbishing the pews and replacing the cushions would cost about the same as new chairs but would have to be staged over a long period of time with large segments removed for renovation. A wide range of seating options are available. Examples selected on the basis of appearance, functionality, and durability will be presented to the congregation. The chairs can be stacked in order to make an open area in the sanctuary, but creating a space to store all of the chairs would require a building addition that would not be cost effective. The chair vendor assures us that our old pews can be easily sold so few, if any, would be scrapped. Removing the pews and anchors embedded in the existing floor will necessitate replacing the floor. Covering the Sanctuary and Parish Hall floors with the same flooring will unify and accentuate the design elements of the building architecture.
7. Upgrading audio in the sanctuary will improve sound quality for everyone including those with hearing impairment. Bids from different contractors will be evaluated by the AV Team in order to provide the most cost effective solutions.
8. Installing a video display system allows greater opportunities to modernize, enhance, and enliven worship experiences and other events. Either a screen and projector or commercial TV screens will be evaluated by the AV Team.
9. Installing recording and streaming capabilities will allow home-bound congregants and those at retirement homes to share services and other church events when they are unable to get to the church. The ZOOM videoconference service, already used by many congregants, can live stream and record services just as it does now for meetings. Multiple options will be evaluated.
10. Replacing soiled and obsolete accordion doors with foldable panels would brighten and modernize appearance of the dark and uninviting Sanctuary corridor. The dirty doors between the Warner Room and Parish Hall would be replaced with opaque panels.
11. Installing new corridor ceiling lights with LED's that complement foldable panels will further brighten the connecting space.
12. Replacing the old-fashioned acoustic tile ceiling in the Parish Hall with more decorative panels will refresh appearance and improve acoustics.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – FAQ's

***Q. Estimated costs exceed available funds. How will priorities be managed?***

A. Lower cost alternatives are being evaluated and we are seeking additional sources of income which could free up some or all of the \$500,000 set aside. If these measures don't close the gap, then we can choose between foregoing or postponing some improvements or raising more funds. In any event, the World Café process identified ingress/egress, accessibility, flexibility and AV improvements among the higher priorities.

***Q. Why not just sell the adjacent former library lot?***

A. The lot could be sold for ~\$1 million. It is assumed that proceeds from the sale would be placed in a stable and safe investment. However, interest income on the proceeds provides less income than a lease and, importantly, leasing means we continue to own and have control of the lot.

***Q. Why not install solar panels on the library lot? How much can we save?***

A: Solar panels are still an option but probably won't provide as much income as leasing the lot. We need to explore all viable options so we can select the best. Economics of a solar project will be presented to the congregation along with economics of other options when they are available.

***Q. Will we need the library lot for parking?***

The Brandywine School District (BSD), which owns the lots across Whitby, told SPC that deed restrictions limit use of that land to educational purposes. The District is unlikely to build on the lots in the foreseeable future and is happy to let us park there indefinitely so we won't need the library lot for parking. If the District does decide to build, the process is long and public so we would have time to make other plans. BSD reminded us that they cannot afford to plow or resurface the lot so we may have to consider paying for some maintenance in the future.

***Q. Do we need approval from the donors to use the capital campaign money for improvements?***

A: Legal counsel advised that the envisioned capital improvements are consistent with the uses described at the time of the capital campaign so we are not legally required to obtain permission. Nevertheless, we will try to ensure donors have the opportunity to review and comment on the new plans.

***Q. Do we need congregational approval of the plans and to spend the money?***

A: Yes. The scope of proposed changes and the amount of funds committed requires approval of the congregation.

***Q. Why not just build the Narthex-New Sanctuary project proposed years ago?***

A: That plan only achieves some of our objectives and is so expensive - approximately \$6-\$8 million - that we could not afford to meet the other objectives without raising much more money. One of our guiding principles with the architect has been to work within the existing walls in order to keep costs down so we can achieve as many objectives as possible with the existing funds.

***Q. How did we pick the architect we're working with?***

A: We sent the Goal and Objectives to church-experienced candidates and decided on the architect whose proposal best met our desires and whose cost was comparable to others.

***Q. Who reviewed all of the alternatives discussed with the architect?***

A: A Capital Improvement Sub-team advised the architect before the full Board of Trustees reviewed her Feasibility Study and final proposals.

***Q. How would a stair-mounted chair-lift and elevator work?***

A: Operation is fairly intuitive and training will be provided to regular users and caregivers. An access code will be needed to prevent improper use.

***Q. What AV systems are envisioned for the Sanctuary? Who designs it? Who works it?***

A: Church-experienced contractors recommended improvements for sound, video display, streaming, digital hymnals, better hearing assistance, etc. A top end system may require a part time professional operator. In any event, we will need a number of well-trained volunteers.

***Q. How will the Sanctuary blinds work?***

A: Two motorized blinds are installed on each window: one light filtering to cut down direct sunlight and one room darkening for viewing movies and presentations. Controls are mounted in the rear of the sanctuary out of the reach of children. A hand-operated system was evaluated, but was deemed to be too limited and inconvenient.

***Q. Will we be compliant with the UUA Accessible Sanctuary Program?***

A: The Capital Improvement Plan includes some steps supporting compliance but decisions on achieving full compliance will be deferred until the new minister arrives.

***Q. I usually have to move where I sit on a pew so I can see between people. How will I be able to see when we have chairs? Won't chairs reduce overall capacity and what about overflow contingencies?***

A: The chairs can be staggered so that people can see in between the chairs in front of them. Chairs will provide about as much seating capacity as the pews do now. Folding chairs can accommodate overflow as they do now. In addition, the new AV system with video display will allow more viewing options.

***Q. Can we still use the Warner Room as before?***

A: Yes! The east door will now lead to restroom(s) rather than the kitchen pantry. If an elevator down to the office level is installed, the cabinets on the west wall may need to be relocated.

***Q. How were the costs estimated?***

A: International Consultant Inc. prepared the estimates based on a set of conceptual design drawings from the architect and are developed and documented according to the Construction Specification Institute's (CSI) Code of Accounts based on first quarter, 2018 construction unit prices. No escalation has been included. Once a construction period has been established, the appropriate escalation factor, based on four percent (4%) per year must be added. A 15% design contingency is included to account for unforeseen conditions, which is a conservative estimate for capital planning purposes. The estimate does not include professional design services (architectural, engineering, project management) to prepare the required construction documents. These services may add 10 to 15% to the cost estimates.

***Q. How accurate are these cost estimates?***

A: Some estimates, such as those for window shades, are already firm bids from contractors. SPC believes the architect's estimates are conservative. Multiple bids will be obtained from both general and sub-contractors.