Congregational Meeting: 3/18/2018

Kerns presentation

- See the slides: https://kernsgroup.sharefile.com/share/view/sca7aebe24f4987a

- To best support Hope’s mission, we need 14,340 square feet of usable space – as of right now, we have a little under 4,000 square feet.

- We have some limitations in where and how we can build – the steep hill means we cannot economically build ‘up,’ and the resource protection area (“RPA”) creates some hurdles for a parking lot expansion.

- Phase 1a: New opening for Sunday school classrooms to enable more (and better) use of that space. Flexible space in Fellowship Hall replaced with two private offices. (This frees up current office space for a multipurpose room.) We are legally required to improve handicap accessibility any time we make a building improvement – planning to add a handicap-accessible drinking fountain and grab-bars to the restrooms (both are legally required). Also adding an annex with a restroom at the edge of the parking lot adjacent to the path to the front door – which will be used for Christian Education. That annex will be accessible by a ramp.

- Phase 1b: Improve the worship level. We will build a handicap-accessible ramp adjacent to the front door that will allow someone with mobility challenges to use the same vestibule as everyone else instead of relying on the elevator. Plan is to consume the closet at the back of the worship space and create a welcoming area with glass, coat closet, and furniture for overflow seating and conversation. That, combined with some other space captured on this level (including the old church offices), will give us a 20x20 welcoming space. There will also be a new, handicap-accessible bathroom where the closet currently sits. The wall should achieve acoustic isolation, so the worship and welcome spaces are completely separate. AV will be relocated to the back right of the sanctuary.

- Phase 1a and 1b are primarily working within the church’s current footprint.

- Phase 2: New, expanded parking lot. We currently have 38 spaces; we’ll pick up 14 by moving toward the woods and 36 with another tray of parking closer to the stream. Expansion of parking within the RPA will require county approval – environmental studies, justification of hardship, etc.

- Phase 3: Welcome and hospitality. We expand the building toward the road (outside the RPA and not up the hill). We further expand the welcoming area with a new front door, an interior ramp to the sanctuary, and a new fellowship hall to the left as you come up the hill. It will have a commercial kitchen, 150 seats, and plenty of space for storage. Also adding a partial basement to that addition, which will have mechanical stuff and storage.
- **Phase 4: Expand Worship.** The plan is to expand the sanctuary to 200 seats (about 80 seats more than today). The idea is to expand the sanctuary toward the parking lot (by 10 feet) and also forward into the woods (by 40 feet). Then reconfigure the lower level (current fellowship hall) to classroom space for CE. We’ll add a third restroom into that area, plus a new choir rehearsal room and storage.

- **Phase 5: Office / Admin addition.** We build an addition between fellowship hall and parking lot for more office space and sell the modular unit. A new covered walkway will link the offices to the rest of the church and also help people get under cover in inclement weather.

- **Costs:**
  - Costs are all-inclusive, including construction costs, other project costs (fees to the county, for example, and furniture), and professional fees.
  - Costs are also estimates meant to give us a sense of the scale of magnitude – these are not precise numbers.
  - Phase 1a: $311,000
  - Phase 1b: $439,000
  - Phase 2: $515,000 if we can get county approval.
  - Phase 3: $4,341,000
  - Phase 4: $3,910,000
  - Phase 5: $1,078,000

- **Q&A:**
  - Question: Will the wheelchair ramp really be useful for folks in wheelchairs given the steep grade of the slope? Answer: We think so. Also, it’s worth noting that the ramp is also for people with a variety of mobility issues, not just wheelchairs, and so it should have some broader use.
  
  - Question: What if the elevator gives out before the phase in which we’ve allocated funds? Answer: These proposed phases are somewhat flexible, so we’ll re-allocate money earlier if needed.
  
  - Question: For the proposed bathroom on the sanctuary level (phase 1b), will the door provide adequate acoustic blocking? Answer: We think so, but we’ll do more research.
  
  - Question: Why does the parking lot cost so much? Answer: The Resource Protection Area (RPA) which bisects our property (and the parking lot is on the other side of the line) requires additional work and likely more expensive materials.
  
  - Question: Will people be able to see worship from the welcome space? Answer: Yes, glass doors should enable that.
  
  - Question: What is our ability to occupy the space while we are building? Answer: Plan is that we will occupy almost continuously (no extended time period outside the church).
o Question: Can we talk about business (rental) opportunities that might open up when we do certain phases of the expansion? Answer: Absolutely. As we get closer to those later phases, that will be an active conversation.

o Question: Are the costs in 2018 dollars? Answer: Yes. Since we don’t have a precise timeline for later phases, we can’t make any inflation predictions right now.

o Question: What are we thinking about in terms of making the building/parking lot green? Answer: There are a number of green building techniques included, including gardens, energy-efficient glass, energy-conserving walls, permeable parking materials, LED lighting, etc. Goal is to strike a balance between being good stewards of the earth and fiscally conscious.

o Question: How can we ensure children’s safety in the annex? Answer: We will likely put some planters in front of the annex. We could also create reserved parking for staff right in front of the annex, which means those parking spaces would be occupied before any children were on the property. We also have some flexibility in how we orient the annex (which affects ingress and egress). We’re open to other ideas!

o Question: Why have Phase 1b so early, since it requires restricting the worship space? About how many can fit in the sanctuary during that time? Answer: Roughly 100 people. Currently worship is the best-functioning space we have, so we wanted to focus resources improving other elements of the church first. In the worst-case scenario, we could add an additional worship service if things get crowded (something that makes adjusting this space a lot easier than shifting phase 1b around).

o Question: Would we ever consider having an organ? Answer: It was not a priority for musical stakeholders.

o Question: How can laypeople help? Answer: We don’t have specifics right now, outside of supporting the Capital Campaign! If you want to volunteer for it, please reach out to Amber (pastor@hopeucc.org), Rob (r1.simmons@verizon.net), or Michael (douglassmic@gmail.com).

o Question: Do we plan to replace the pews? Answer: New seating is being contemplated in phase 4’s costs. But we may invest in flexible seating earlier, particularly depending on what happens with phase 1b.

o Question: If the county doesn’t approve phase 2’s contemplated parking expansion, will that limit the plan? Answer: The amount of worship space seats is tied to the amount of parking. Current rule is we need to have a parking space for every four seats. We may be able to find another area on the site – we would reevaluate those opportunities if the county does not approve.
- Question: What’s the optimistic timeline for all phases? Answer: 30-50 years. Goal is to make improvements that fit into the broader plan, so we aren’t reinventing the wheel each time. The process with phase 1 will begin as soon as we begin the Capital Campaign.

- Question: How will we afford phase 3, given that we’d either need to all make a lot more money or bring in a lot more people to the church without having the space to support that right now. Answer: We may break up phase 3. We’ll cross that bridge later.