

BETHESDA EPISCOPAL CHURCH'S NEW PARISH HOUSE AND COMMUNITY CENTER

Status Report
April 22, 2018



Agenda:

1. History and Background
2. Conception of the New Parish House and Community Center
3. Shelters of Saratoga & Code Blue Option
4. Other Possible Options
5. Bethesda's Mission
6. Questions and Discussion

HISTORY & BACKGROUND

2012:

- Vestry examined the church's finances through audit.
- Bethesda had been losing approximately \$80,000 per year for likely over a decade.
- Numerous steps were taken to improve the church's finances, enact budgets, and implement fiscal protocols.
- Paradigm shift necessary.
- Ambitious path needed to lead Bethesda toward its third century and for years beyond.

HISTORY & BACKGROUND

2013:

- Congregation met through a series of discernment meetings.
- Parish survey on future goals and need for a mission for Bethesda.
- The Vestry decided to sell 3 existing properties and made plans to erect a building on the lot adjacent to the church.

HISTORY & BACKGROUND

2014-15:

- The old parish house and rectory – both required expensive maintenance and costly renovations – were sold.
- Property near Saratoga Lake, from the generous bequest of Roy Ensley, was sold.
- Proceeds reserved to fund:
 1. Renovations to the church building,
 2. Purchase of a new Rectory, and
 3. Construction of a New Parish House & Community Center.
- John G. Waite & Associates retained as architects.

HISTORY & BACKGROUND

2016-17:

- Bethesda undertook its first capital campaign in over 50 years.
- Episcopal Church Foundation assisted.
- Goal of the first phase of the campaign: raise \$430,000.
- Pledges and donations have far exceeded that goal.
- Bonacio Construction retained.
- Tenants sought, such as Head Start and a restorative justice program.
- Major donations needed to raise \$1.5 - \$2 million.

CONCEPTION OF BETHESDA'S NEW PARISH HOUSE AND COMMUNITY CENTER:

Building planned for 4 stories and 20,000 square feet, including:

1. Full catering kitchen,
2. Dining hall ("Great Hall"),
3. Parish offices,
4. Choir-rehearsal space,
5. Church-school classrooms and
6. Rentable space for organizations compatible with Bethesda's mission.

CONCEPTION OF BETHESDA'S NEW PARISH HOUSE AND COMMUNITY CENTER:

The size of the building was determined by 2 factors:

1. City's zoning code requires at least 3 stories at our location.
2. Additional space would provide rentable areas, generating revenue to offset operating and debt service costs.

CONCEPTION OF BETHESDA'S NEW PARISH HOUSE AND COMMUNITY CENTER:

- A smaller building would not have rentable space, yet would still require a mortgage, but without the income to support it.
- The additional floors are also less expensive to build because the major costs associated with excavation, foundation, roofing, etc., must be met whether the building is one story or four.

CONCEPTION OF BETHESDA'S NEW PARISH HOUSE AND COMMUNITY CENTER:

- Rental income was identified as necessary to make the project financially viable and to eventually secure another source of income for Bethesda.
- In keeping with Bethesda's Christian mission, mission-related tenants rent space at less than market rate, thereby benefiting the renting organization and helping the community.
- Bethesda's new building can serve people 7 days a week, not just on Sundays or during other parish functions.

CONCEPTION OF BETHESDA'S NEW PARISH HOUSE AND COMMUNITY CENTER:

The purpose of the building is twofold:

1. Meet the needs of the parish, and
2. Serve the community.

Through outreach to the community and an active mission to serve the needs of others, the plan was to grow Bethesda's congregation.

CONCEPTION OF BETHESDA'S NEW PARISH HOUSE AND COMMUNITY CENTER:

- To meet our needs and any tenants' needs, the design of the new building will account for the safety of all occupants and security features to protect persons and property.
- Examples of possible safety and security features:
 1. Separate entrances.
 2. Separate elevators.
 3. Separate and secure spaces.
 4. Key pad or card swipe locking systems.
 5. Perimeter lighting.
 6. Video surveillance equipment.

CONCEPTION OF BETHESDA'S NEW PARISH HOUSE AND COMMUNITY CENTER:

- Safety and security also assured through well-trained and experienced on-site supervision.
- Bethesda will partner with another organization that will provide the expertise and workforce.
- Bethesda members may, if they wish, volunteer their time and talents.

SHELTERS OF SARATOGA CODE BLUE PROGRAM

- Code Blue was started in December 2013.
- Code Blue was founded in response to the tragic death of Nancy Pitts.
- Collaboration among the City of Saratoga Springs, faith-based groups, individuals and non-profit partners.
- Code Blue provides shelter to the homeless on nights when temperatures are life-threateningly cold.
- Past locations: St. Peter's Church, Salvation Army, and Soul Saving Station.

SHELTERS OF SARATOGA CODE BLUE PROGRAM

- Planning Board approved Walworth St. proposal on April 19, 2018.
- Civil litigation is pending and will slow or stop Code Blue from proceeding on Walworth St.

OFFER TO EXPLORE CODE BLUE PROGRAM

- Vestry only made an offer to explore the possibility of how Bethesda could help serve the homeless in the community, in keeping with our Christian mission.
- No decisions or commitment made by Bethesda.
- Identify and solve concerns of the congregation and public.
- As stated in March 2018, if it's God's will, Bethesda's New Parish House and Community Center may host Code Blue.

OTHER POTENTIAL OPTIONS

- Saratoga County Department of Social Services Satellite Office.
- Jobs-Training Program.
- Alcoholics Anonymous (AA).
- Temporary Housing for Backstretch Workers.
- Shelters of Saratoga – Need for Housing for the Poor – Housing First Model.

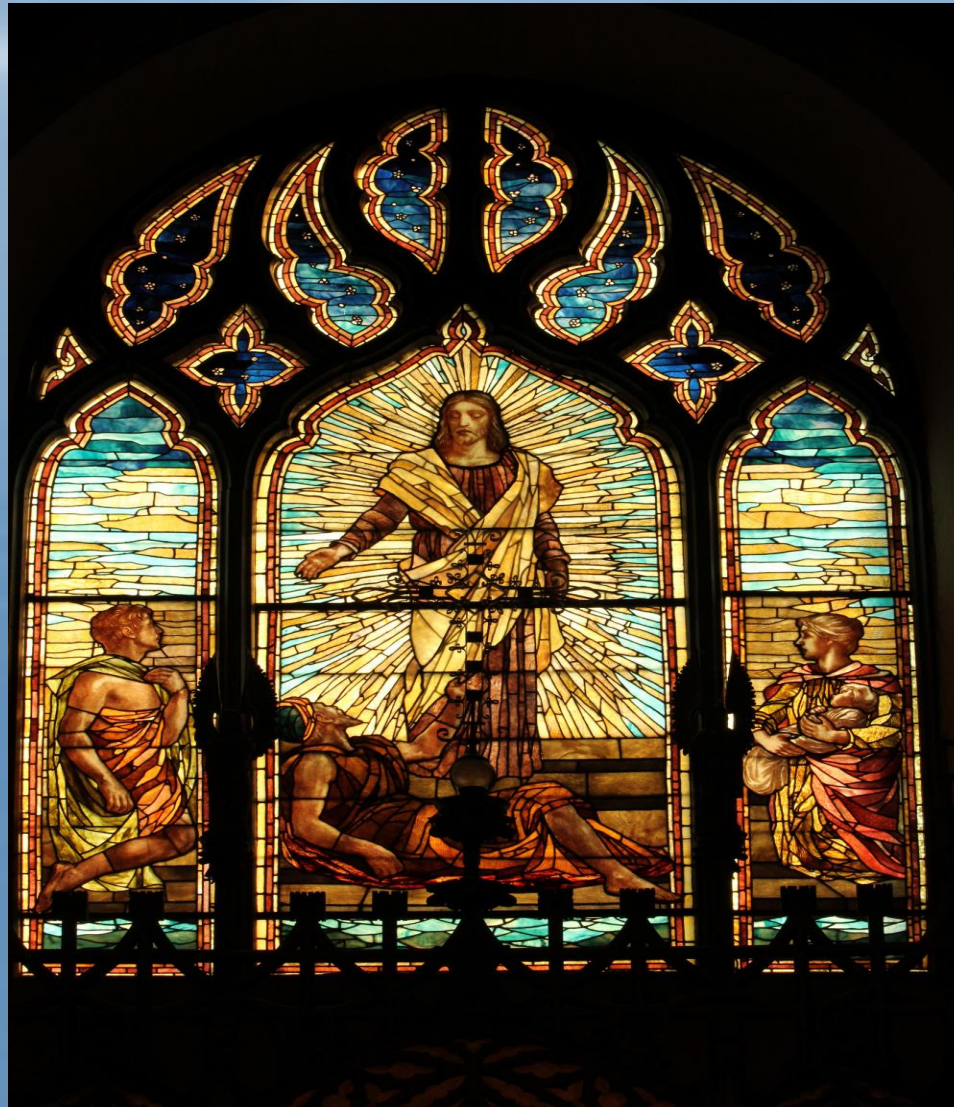
OTHER POTENTIAL OPTIONS

- Amend Special Use Permit to allow for over-night accommodations to expand Bethesda's options.
-
- Others possible partners and options may be identified now that Bethesda's New Parish House and Community Center concept is known to the broader community and civic leaders.

Serving Jesus Christ By Helping Those In Need In The Saratoga Community



Bethesda Is Aramaic And Means “House Of Mercy”



ACTIVE VS. PASSIVE MISSION



**ACCORDING TO THE BIBLE, WE ARE RESPONSIBLE TO
HELP THE POOR, THE HOMELESS, AND THE NEEDY.**



Are we at Bethesda like the good Samaritan?
([Luke 10:25-37](#)).

Are we at Bethesda following what Jesus said: “For I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat . . . in that you did it for one of the least of these brothers [and sisters] of mine, you did it to me”? ([Matthew 25:34-35](#)).

Are we at Bethesda called to serve those in need in our community?

If not us, then who should serve those in need in Saratoga?

Then I heard the voice of the LORD saying, “Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?”

And I said, “Here am I. Send me!” [Isaiah 6:8](#)



Questions & Discussion

