

# St. John Neumann Parish Center

## FAQ's

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Q – What is the overall goal of this Building Project at SJN?

A – The purpose of the SJN Long Range Planning Committee (LRPC) is to assist the Pastor and Parish Council in planning for the maintenance and growth of the Parish. To that end, the LRPC developed a 10-Year Master Plan to identify our facility needs. As a growing Parish, through our Spring 2009 Parishioner Survey we identified the need to provide additional meeting space for our expanding activities. Therefore, our 10-Year Master Plan includes recommendations to:

- bring our Parish Administrative Offices back to the campus,
- provide on-site facilities for our Parish Religious Education (PSR) program, middle school EDGE program, high school Life Teen program, and our multiple Adult Religious Education programs,
- provide meeting and social space for our ministries and group gatherings,
- expand the parking lot to accommodate our growing parish.

Q – Why a new SJN Parish Center and not an expansion of the Church?

A – The results of the SJN Parishioner Survey conducted in the Spring of 2009 clearly indicated a desire to have a new Parish Center built first. Of the 276 families and individuals who responded to the survey, 60% felt that the current Social Hall *does not* meet the needs of the Parish. Conversely, 63% of those responding felt the current worship space (church) *does* meet the needs of the Parish. In time, additional masses can be scheduled to accommodate all parishioners. Our need for additional meeting rooms and social space requires building new facilities on our grounds.

Q – Can we pay off our current debt before we begin another campaign?

A – Yes! This is our goal. If everyone who has made a pledge to our Debt Elimination Campaign is able to complete their payments, our debt should be paid off by December 2010. We also continue to receive new gifts from new parishioners in response to the Debt Elimination Campaign. Also we will ask anyone who made a debt elimination pledge beyond January 2011 for permission to apply those payments to the Capital Campaign for our new Parish Center. Finally, we will amortize any remaining debt obligations to our loan through parish savings.

Q – Is the plan set in stone, or can it still be changed?

A – The current building proposal represents a recommended path forward based upon the results of the Spring 2009 SJN Parishioner Survey, the 10-Year Master Plan, a Feasibility Study with parishioner interviews and “in-pew” surveys conducted by the Cunneen Company in February 2010 and the work of a dedicated group of parishioners on the Long Range Planning Committee. The plans may be altered by the Committee based upon the feasibility of the new suggestions and our ability to raise the funds needed to support any recommended building additions and changes.

Q – Why are you conducting a Capital Campaign now?

A – We understand that many parishioners have been negatively impacted by the recent downturn in the economy, and may not be able to make a financial commitment if they are underemployed or unemployed at this time. However, our parish is growing and we continue to expand our programs to help meet the spiritual needs of our parishioners as they live in a world of uncertainty and multiple challenges. We feel it is our responsibility to create and follow our 10-year plan that assesses the needs of current parishioners and anticipates the needs for our future generation of Catholics.

Ultimately, there will never be a perfect time to build. But, if not now, when? If not us, who? As some of our parishioners commented during the Feasibility Study: “Our parents made things happen when time were much tougher, we need to do the same”; “It is never a good time; when you have needs you just need to do it!” “Inaction or procrastination are not strategies; we need to act on these plans and get this done”.

Q – Will the new SJN Parish Center include a basement?

A- Yes. As currently envisioned by the Long Range Planning Committee and our design partner Meacham & Apel Architects, the SJN Parish Center will include a lower level (basement) with some windows to the outside for PSR classes and small group meetings.

Q – What rooms will the new SJN Parish Center include?

A – Based upon the currently proposed design, the building provides 17,100 square feet of new space which is an optimal size for the events of our parish. The SJN Parish Center will include restrooms on the ground and lower levels, an elevator (for disabilities access), and stairways near the entrances at the northern and southern ends of the building. The ground level floor will consist of a large multi-purpose space that can provide comfortable seating for 300 guests for receptions, meetings, parties and church sponsored events for parishioners and the public, and can be divided into three equally sized rooms with wall dividers. The ground floor also includes a full commercial grade kitchen with pantry, and a separate room for storage of tables

and chairs. The lower level will be divided for up to 10 classrooms primarily for use by our PSR program and as meeting space for a variety of SJN ministry groups and programs.

Q – Are we using current spaces fully?

A – With approximately seventy (70) small groups, committees and activities offered at St. John Neumann our buildings are almost always in use. In addition, we currently lack enough space for administrative offices and PSR classrooms. To maximize facility utilization, we now ask all of our groups and ministries to provide annual calendars to the Parish Office each May in order to schedule space and resolve any potential “double booking” conflicts. The parish works very diligently and efficiently to maximize the use of our current limited administration and meeting space.

Q – What will be done if you cannot raise the \$3.2 million proposed in the Feasibility Study?

A – We are working with our architect and builder to look for ways to cut the cost of the building project to align them with the financial figures the Cunneen Company estimates as our fundraising ability, while still fulfilling our needs for additional space. The Diocese of Columbus requires all parishes to cover 100% of the building project costs through parishioner pledges and have 50% on deposit BEFORE we will be approved to break ground. Our commitment to you is that *we will only build what we can afford.*

Q – Have you considered tearing down the Social Hall and connecting the new space to the Church?

A – The current Social Hall is a sturdy and versatile building that the Diocese and Long Range Planning Committee agree should be maintained. Considering the growth of St. John Neumann Parish, the nearly 7,300 square feet of space in the Social Hall is needed and would be far more costly to replace than to re-purpose as our Parish Offices on the upper level, and open meeting space on the lower level.

Q - Where will the Parish Offices be located? Why can't we just keep them located down the street from the Church?

A – The Parish Offices for administrative and ministry staff will be re-located to the Upper Social Hall, which will be renovated to accommodate them. Relocation of the Parish Offices from down the street is necessary due to our lease arrangement. Additionally Bishop Campbell allowed us to move the offices temporarily with the understanding that we move back with the next building campaign, where parish offices should be properly located. Funds we currently use to pay our rent will be used to operate the new parish Center.

There is enough current square footage in the Upper Social Hall to provide space for the staff to properly and professionally conduct their work for the benefit of the parishioners. The floor between the Upper and Lower Social Hall is porous for sound, with more sound being heard in the lower level than the upper level. Thus, it was determined that the Upper Level would be a better place for the staff to conduct their business. Plus, their movement and work would be less likely to disrupt groups in the Lower Level. The Lower Social Hall will be gutted and renovated into one large meeting space to be used by groups and ministries for a variety of purposes.

Q – How will locating the new SJN Parish Center in the current parking lot impact the availability of parking spaces?

A – Currently, there are 183 spaces in our parking lots. Our Phase I plans include expansion of the north lot for a total of 249 parking spaces; a net gain of 66 spaces. The additional parking spaces will be added to the north lot before construction of the Parish Center begins.

Q – Can a “connector” between the Church, Parish Center and Social Hall be added so we don’t have to walk outside?

A – The Long Range Planning Committee received several similar comments during the Parish Survey held in the Spring of 2009. In fact, having the Church connected to the new Parish Center was a preferred item on our original design wish list. However, when several architects who responded to our request for drawings proposed connectors it became apparent that the \$1 million cost for an enclosed, heated and air-conditioned hallway to connect the three buildings would be prohibitive. The Committee did not feel this expense would be good use of our parishioner’s donations. In addition, connecting the buildings could present security issues and interfere with future building expansion plans.

Q – How will this project affect the Shelter House/Pavilion?

A – This project will have no impact on the current Shelter House/Pavilion. The Shelter House/Pavilion will remain where it is currently located, and will be untouched.

Q – Our family would like to see a school at our parish. Is this a possibility?

A – The Diocese of Columbus has established strict policies for the establishment of new primary schools. Among them, the Parish must raise all of the capital needed for building a preschool or elementary school for grades K-8 and the school’s total operating costs must be solely funded through tuition. For planning purposes, enrollment of approximately 400 students would be needed to sustain a school covering grades K-8. On average, only 18% of students in a Catholic Elementary School are members of the host Parish. Therefore, a Parish

would need to have between 1800 and 2000 PSR age children participating in religious education programs in order to establish and sustain a school. As of April 2010, there are 388 total students participating in PSR and EDGE at St. John Neumann. According to a 2009 Columbus Dispatch article the annual tuition per student enrolled in grades K-8 in the Columbus Diocese ranges from \$2,550 to \$4,450 with the parish paying an additional 35% of its offertory funds, on average, to run the school.

Q- Will Masses or use of the Social Hall be disrupted during the construction of the SJN Parish Center?

A – No. Another advantage of building the Parish Center away from the church is that neither Masses nor use of the Social Hall for meetings will be affected during construction. In addition, we won't begin to renovate our current Social Hall into Parish Office space until the Parish Center is complete so as not to disrupt our group gatherings and meetings.

Q – Will we be able to play basketball in the multi-purpose area?

A – The multi-purpose room in the new Parish Center is primarily designed for meetings, receptions, luncheons, dinners, parties and other large gatherings of parishioners and the public. Through our Spring 2009 Parishioner Survey we learned that those who responded were seeking larger space for Receptions, Lenten Fish Frys, the Christmas Bazaar, Bible Studies, Youth Group Programs, Knights of Columbus and Men's and Women's Club functions and a variety of other opportunities that often cannot be accommodated in the current Social Hall. From that same survey, a desire for gymnasium facilities ranked very low. Therefore, in keeping with the wishes of the parishioners who responded to the survey, and the limits of available floor space, a gymnasium cannot be incorporated into the new SJN Parish Center floor plan. We do however, intend to remodel and open up the current Lower Social Hall for multiple users including the Youth Groups for more athletic activities.

Q – Can I join the planning/building committee?

A – As we move forward through the Feasibility Study, Fund Raising, Project Assessment and Construction phases of this project there will be opportunities for SJN parishioners to help the Long Range Planning Committee reach the goals outlined in the Spring 2009 SJN Parishioner Survey and detailed in the SJN Master Plan. Those opportunities will be presented from the ambo and through the Parish Bulletin as the needs arise. This is your parish; we seek your involvement and support.

Q – Do the Building Plans in the 10-Year Master Plan allow for future expansion?

A- The current design plans were specifically chosen with an expectation for future expansion of the Church, Parish Center and/or Parish Offices as and parking lot.

Q – When will the LRPC consider expanding the church?

A – Expansion of the church to add space for approximately 500 more worshipers is considered the next major phase of the SJN Master Plan as completed by the LRPC. Expansion of the church will depend upon many factors including: growth of the parish, the feasibility of adding masses in our current Church to accommodate the growing parishioner base, and the willingness of the parish to begin another Capital Campaign to raise funds for additional construction. A tentative timeline for planning and expanding our worship space is anticipated sometime between 2016 and 2020.

Q – When the Parish Center is built, and modifications to the Social Hall are completed, have you planned for the increase in operating costs?

A- Yes. The Master Plan includes a 10-Year Pro-Forma (a statement of anticipated assets, liabilities, income and expenses that may be recognized in the future) which is based upon past years' trends in actual expenses and income, coupled with realistic projections of current expenditures due to the new building. We anticipate being able to cover the additional operating costs with offertory, rental fees and cost savings from not having to lease office or PSR space.

Q – What is the timeline for the Capital Campaign and building the New Parish Center?

A – Our Capital Campaign will begin with a “quiet phase” to solicit substantial donations from large donors in November 2010. Starting in January 2011 and running through June 2011 the Capital Campaign for the remainder of the parish will occur. If through our Campaign, 100% or more of the needed funds are pledged, and 50% or more of the funds are paid to the Campaign within the first 18 - 24 months, groundbreaking for the new Parish Center could occur as early as Spring 2013, with project completion the following Spring or Summer.