

St. Mel Parish Center – FAQ’s – Revised 7-15-10

Parish Center Uses

Q. How will the new Parish Center be *used*?

A. The Parish Center will be *used for the same functions and events that Doheny Hall* was used for in the past with exception of student athletic events.

Q. Will the Parish Center be used for *athletic events*?

A. No.

Q. Is the Parish Center to be used for *school functions*?

A. The Parish Center *can be used for school functions and gatherings*, but no athletic events.

Parking and Traffic

Q. What is the net effect on *total parking spots* for the parish?

A. The Parish Center site will generate approximately 55+ parking stalls and the existing parking on campus is approximately 130+ parking stalls which totals about 185+ paved and striped parking stalls. Additionally, we have approximately 100+“overflow” unmarked parking stalls in the play ground area, if necessary for special events for a *combined total of approximately 300 parking stalls located on our campus property*.

Q. How will the parish mitigate for the *loss of parking spaces*?

A. We will lose parking stalls due to the construction of the new Parish Center of approximately **23 parking stalls**, however it needs to be understood that this existing parking lot is not to county code requirements for landscaping, parking dimensions and setback restrictions that were not in place when the original parking lot was constructed many years ago. In order for the Parish Center to be constructed we will need to design the new parking lot to current code and dimensional requirements, which will render approximately 55 stalls including handicap accessible stalls.

Q. Is there a new plan for *school children drop-offs and pick-ups*?

A. Yes, we are in review of several new student drop-off and pick-up plans that the church is considering at this time.

The Parish Center Building

Q. What is the *size of the new Parish Center*?

A. The new Parish Center is *approximately 9,900 square feet*, which is composed of a 4,500 square foot events hall, parish administration offices, a commercial kitchen, pre-function area, group storage rooms and public restrooms.

Q. Will the new Parish Center be *energy efficient*? Built with *“Green”* characteristics?

A. Yes, the Parish Center, where cost effective, *will utilize standard energy efficient building systems*, such as automatic lighting controls, energy efficient HVAC, energy compliant window systems and possibly renewable materials.

Q. Will the Parish Center be able to **accommodate the dinner events** that are currently held in Doheny Hall?

A. Yes, the Parish Center **can hold various church events** to include church auctions, spaghetti dinners, crab feeds, pancake breakfasts, fundraisers, receptions and many other church related events. The main reason for the construction of the new Parish Center is to be able to conduct events and functions that were previously held through-out the years in Doheny Hall. In fact, the new Parish Center will incorporate a complete commercial kitchen with food prep and staging areas.

Q. Will the Parish Center have a **stage**?

A. No.

Q. What will the parish do to ensure the **back patio** does not become a congregation point for unruly youth or homeless persons?

A. The Parish Center shall incorporate a patio along the east side of the building facing the parking area. The patio shall be **enclosed with a wrought iron fence and will incorporate security lighting**. Not to mention that the newly configured parking lot will detour the skid marks that have been a problem in the past.

Budget and Finance

Q. How can I help?

A. The biggest universal support that all parishioners can provide is to contribute, regardless of the amount, to our **“Building the Vision”** fund drive. These dollars are very important to the success of our new Parish Center. These funds allow the Church to construct a higher quality commercial building than a marginal construction budget would provide. We hope that our Parish Center will have a sense of place, architectural character and become a beautiful addition to our campus for all of us to share, create memories and enjoy through-out the years to come. **Please pray for the successful and safe completion of our Parish Center.**

Q. How much will the building **cost to build and furnish**?

A. At this time the building committee has a good understanding of the overall building costs and we have hired a general contractor to assist us in developing and fine tuning our final projected construction budget. **Once this number has been established, bids have been collected and contracts rewarded, we will inform** our parishioners.

Q. Does the parish need to **take out a loan** to build the new Parish Center? If not, where will the money come from?

A. No, we do not want to take out a loan. St Mel’s Church has received substantial funds from the diocese for our parish’s contribution into the “Preserving Our Past, Building our Future” program several years ago. This contribution plus monies in our general fund and our “Building the Vision” fundraiser should provide enough necessary funds to build and complete our new Parish Center.

Q. Does the parish **need to raise all \$750,000 before construction** can begin?

A. It is our **hope that we will be able to raise the necessary funds prior to construction** and most certainly before building completion. Our fundraising goal of \$750,000 is a benchmark amount that we hope to obtain and exceed with the help of all our parishioners.

Q. Is it *a good time to build now*, with the economy in such poor shape?

A. Yes! *It is a great time* for our Parish Center to be built within the next year. Material and labor costs are low and with the help of our selected contractor we should be able to capitalize on these construction costs opportunities.

Q. Can I have my pledge amount paid off periodically by *electronic fund transfers (EFT)* or through the automatic clearing house (ACH) method?

A. St Mel's Parish uses The Bank of America (BoA) for our accounts. BofA does not use the ACH method except for large accounts. BoA suggests that the donors use the 'On Line Bill Payment' method if they wish to make automatic periodic payments from their bank/credit union to the St Mel's Building Fund. The donor must arrange this with their bank/credit union to start their pledge periodic payments. Give your bank/credit union the following address and they will cut a check and send it to St Mel's in the amount and frequency that you direct them: St Mel's Building Fund, 4745 Pennsylvania Avenue, Fair Oaks, CA 95628.

The Building Process

Q. How *long will it take to complete* the project?

A. The completion of the Parish Center depends on the acquisition of the conditional use permit and the building permit. These are the two items that the County will require prior to our construction start. The project received a unanimous approval of the use permit and design review in June of 2010 and the July 2010 estimate of the timeline to obtain the permits is one month, or August 2010. Once we have the permits in hand, the building should take six to nine months to build, putting the *completion date between February and June of 2011*.

Q: Is the *project approved* by the County yet? What is the *approval process*?

A: The project has been approved the Sacramento County Planning department, and is currently working through the approval of the Sacramento County Building Department.

The planning department approval is discretionary, while the building department approval is more administrative in nature. The planning department approval begins with the submittal of site plans, conceptual building plans and material boards to the County. These items are reviewed by the various departments within the County such as Land Development and Site Improvement (LDSIR), the Department of Environmental Review and Assessment (DERA), and Planning and Community Development, among others. Public input is solicited from all neighbors within 500 feet of the project boundaries, e.g., for us, the entire parish property line. Various changes are requested along the way and revisions are made. The Fair Oaks Community Planning Commission is the ultimate arbiter for the project's planning approval. This body meets the first Wednesday of each month at 6:30 pm at the County Center on Hazel and Madison. The planning department approval we obtained is called a Conditional Use Permit.

Prior to the approval of the Conditional Use permit, the Parish Building Committee commissioned the completion of the building plans from the project architect, Borges Architectural Group. These were completed in May of 2010 and submitted to the County Building Department, who have begun their review. This process will include a review by various departments within the County for code

compliance and other technical characteristics. Once the Building Department provides its approval, the County will issue a Building Permit and then we can start our construction of the Parish Center.

Q: When will the *parking lot be lost* to the construction process? How long will it be *out of commission*?

A: A portion of the parking lot, probably in the southeast corner close to the building pad for the Parish Center, will be used as a “staging area” during the construction process. This situation will begin soon after the project starts. While the majority of the project is being built, the balance of the parking lot will remain functional. Toward the end of the process, since the County requires it, the entire parking lot will be resurfaced and landscaped. The goal is to dovetail the completion of the new parking lot with the completion of the building, while minimizing the disruption to parking during the building process.

Q: What is the *plan for parking* when the lot is out of commission?

A: The Building Committee has directed the project civil engineer, Morton and Pitalo Civil Engineers, to *create a temporary parking plan*. Some ideas we have submitted for their consideration and possible inclusion include re-striping the main parking lot in a more efficient manner to fit more cars, utilizing the paved portion of the school playground for parking, and attempting to gain County approval to park along Sunset Boulevard. As the plan progresses, the results will be communicated to all parishioners, but at this time we are researching this issue.

Q: Why did the Church decide to place the Parish Center where the *old house* is?

A: Back in early 2008, during the needs assessment period and beyond into the feasibility study period, just about every possible configuration and location for the Parish Center was considered, including the far west parking lot and several locations on the eastern parking lot. The professionals involved, including the project Civil Engineer, determined that based on the pros and cons for all the sites, *the current configuration was the optimal location due to its visibility as one enters the parish campus, its relative ease of construction, and its logistical layout within the Parish Campus*. While the old house is an interesting structure, it has been vacant for many years, is not historically significant and was determined to be expendable as the parish searches for the highest and best use of all its real estate property.