



Shady Grove United Methodist Church

Knowing and Growing Through Christ

Building Committee Update

September 2017

We are very excited to be part of Shady Grove's mission to welcome, teach and help all people know and grow in Christ. Our building project, with its theme Grounded in Faith – Growing to Serve, is a fundamental component of this mission. The 3-yr capital campaign to support the building project was launched in July 2016, and the congregation voted to proceed with the design and build phase of the project on March 5, 2017.

The Building Committee has been working behind the scenes all summer long to move our expansion project forward. Some of the completed tasks include:

- Meeting with church staff and committee leads,
- Defining programming and ministry area requirements,
- Working with the architect and engineering firm to create design drawings that maximize the value and usability of the new space,
- Scheduling site planning and testing, and
- Negotiating the best options for construction and long-term financing for our expansion project.

The design drawings are substantially complete and ready to bid as soon as we receive approval from the Henrico Planning Commission. We have been meeting with the Henrico Director of Public Works and Planning to understand county requirements and to reach a consensus on the details of our proposed site plan. We have a recommendation of approval from Traffic Engineering but have yet to receive a similar recommendation from Public Works Engineering and Planning. This is an active work-in-progress and a step that must be completed before the September 27th meeting with the Planning Commission. The decision of the Planning Commission relies heavily on the recommendations received from the Public Works, Planning and Traffic departments.

The outstanding issue is this - in Henrico County, there is a mandatory requirement for all new construction to include road and infrastructure improvements. The road improvements consist of widening Pouncey Tract or extending the turn lane in front of our property plus the installation of curb & gutter and sidewalks. The road improvements can be expensive and could increase the overall cost of our expansion project.

Based upon the advice of our engineering firm, we have asked the county to waive the required road improvements for our construction project. Waivers are not uncommon in construction projects and we are not building a free-standing structure. The scope of our project is simply to connect and improve the usability of existing buildings. Our request was received and reviewed by the Director of Public Works but was denied. The basis for this decision hinged on the Public Works Design Manual, Section 2-4, Major Road Policy, and on the fact that the Director of Public Works has granted waivers on the road improvements on two prior occasions:

1. Shady Grove submitted a Plan of Development (POD) in 1998 to add a 700-seat sanctuary which was approved by the county with a waiver.
2. In 2003, Shady Grove submitted a POD for the construction of our Education Building and Fellowship Hall which was approved with a waiver.

As a result of the county's decision, we have retained the professional services and consultation of an attorney with Spotts Fain, PC to help us better understand our options and ways to move forward. This is a gracious, pro bono engagement with a well-respected law firm, which we truly appreciate. Conversations are continuing with the county and our hope is to arrive at a mutually agreeable compromise. We fully expect that a compromise will come with a cost, but we hope to keep that cost as small as possible. We plan to present our revised POD at the September 27th Planning Commission Meeting.

Assuming that we reach a compromise with the county and our POD is approved, then we still plan to start construction later this year. A preliminary schedule looks something like this:

- September 27th – receive approval from the county
- October 4th – finalize and send out bid package
- October 27th – all bids received
- November 13th – complete bid review and award contracts
- December begin construction

You may have heard that Bob and Janet Payne are planning their next chapter, which will take them to Florida in the near future. We cannot thank Bob and Janet enough for their faithful service to Shady Grove. We will certainly miss them, but we wish them well. At Bob's request and with an endorsement from the Building Committee, Rex Hockemeyer has agreed to follow Bob as Committee Chair. Rex has been closely aligned with the building project from the beginning through his role as a Trustee and member of the Finance Committee. Rex has been actively participating behind the scenes on financing options and decisions, design alternatives, negotiations with the county and overall project strategy. Bob and Rex will continue to work together during this interim period to ensure a smooth transition.

We are at a crossroads, and our next steps will require prayerful reflection and discernment. Our commitment to you is to keep you informed on the progress of this project and the growing community around us. We also ask for your commitment to pray for this chapter in the life of the church and for the courage to serve our community with an attitude of worship and a spirit of grace.

Respectfully submitted,



Bob Payne
Building Committee Chair



Rex Hockemeyer
Building Committee Co-chair