

## Analysis of Data from Survey and Focus Groups

145 people completed the Survey.

Survey results will be provided on SHS website.

Notes below to Focus Groups will also be made available on SHS website for review.

In reviewing the responses and comments to the survey, along with the feedback received from the focus groups, a few themes become clear. First, we are more than our building, and our membership has made it clear that their attachment to SHS is grounded in the community, the clergy and our religious traditions far more than our physical space. That said, our physical plant contains both points of pride (the Sanctuary) and areas which have been identified as sorely in need of improvement (the Social Hall, accessibility, etc). Acknowledging that dual reality, any analysis of options going forward should recognize our current membership is not leaving due to physical space issues, but those issues are limiting our ability to grow our membership and increase revenue streams from collateral such as the playschool.

As presented at the Annual Meeting in May 2015, the community's desires for improvement align closely with the goals addressed in the building plans put forth eight years ago when this process began. We still want to improve the Social Hall; we still want better learning spaces for both children and adults; we still want more welcoming adult areas and; we still need to improve our accessibility if we are going to live up to our ideals of inclusion.

Suggestions of how to address that ranged from moving the Hebrew School and playschool to 430 Spruce, to creating a divisible space in the Sanctuary which would allow for more programming there during the week. We have a diverse congregation which put forward some really creative options which deserve further research to see what may be feasible.

While all of the comments are worth reading, we find we can distill ideas which appear repeatedly:

1. **Education Hub**. There is a desire to create separate spaces for education so the Hebrew School, playschool, and adult education programs are not always sharing the same overburdened space.
2. **Welcoming and Accessibility**. The congregation craves a more inviting lobby and welcoming space. A dedicated coatroom, seating, improved signage and lighting to display the art work were all mentioned on multiple occasions. In the focus groups, there were strong desires expressed to open the upstairs Sanctuary doors more frequently. The desire for a more welcoming space outside the Sanctuary also triggered discussions of accessibility. Many in the community feel a moral obligation to present a more inclusive space by addressing the noisy lift, the steep front stairs and the bathroom accessibility.
3. **Social Hub**. There is broadly held sense that the Social Hall is overused, leading to a space which looks tired and uninviting at times. Comments included suggestions for interim

improvements, such as laminate flooring in place of the carpet, to the desire to completely transfer the Hebrew School and playschool out of the space and into 430 Spruce. There is a strong desire to have the Social Hall available for community events and less focused on childhood programming. However, there was somewhat more mixed feedback about the potential to increase revenue by renting the space for events. While some members would like to see the Social Hall better equipped to serve in this role, others pointed out the plethora of options in and around Society Hill for hosting events. Another issue raised on multiple occasions dealt with the limited capabilities of the current kitchen configuration and how that might be addressed to expand programmatic offerings. A better kitchen would allow for more in house food preparation during community events as well as allowing for additional charitable outreach.

4. **Outdoor Space**. While the outdoor space was not prominently featured in the comments to the survey, it was discussed passionately at several focus groups. The ability to combine the rear yards of 418 and 430, with the resulting enclosed area becoming accessible for use by the playschool, the Hebrew School and the community at large generated many positive comments. In particular, several parents at the playschool focus group raised the perception of safety as a reason they or their friends did not continue to enroll their children in the playschool. This perception arose from both the open ended outdoor space in Lawrence Court as well as the multiple areas of egress from the Social Hall while the children are there.
5. **Sanctuary**. While the Sanctuary is generally seen favorably by the majority of the congregation, there were suggestions made for improvement. Options ranged from movable walls to increase programming options and create more intimacy, to improvements to the cushions and seating layout. One option heard multiple times involved moving the bimah to a more central location while leaving the ark in its current location.

A note about the methodology:

The feedback from the focus groups closely mirrored and expounded upon the comments received in the written survey. While any community analysis of this type is subject to claims that the questions themselves affected the outcome, this tight correlation between the focus group minutes and the survey comments (which were not received until after the completion of the focus groups) gives the committee confidence in the results.

## Administration & Maintenance

Administration & Maintenance	Jeremey	Rafi	Tues. May 5, Convened
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In addition to making various particular suggestions (such as the need to reconfigure lavatories), the staff focused our attention on the benefits of consolidation of functions into self-contained areas.

### **“Education Hub”**

In particular, with respect to the Social Hall, the staff pointed to the significant wear and tear inflicted by our children on that multi-use space. Consolidation of educational functions into purpose-designed classrooms in 430 Spruce (where, for instance, the back yard could be used to replace the Social Hall as “Tricycle Alley”) was widely viewed as a more efficient solution than using the Social Hall for classrooms plus other functions. One alternative suggested (if 430 Spruce were not used for education) would be to divide the Social Hall with moveable walls to create multiple classrooms and replace the carpeting, which suffers the most wear and tear, with laminate flooring and moveable area rugs. Consolidation of educational space into 430 was also viewed as a “safer” alternative – limiting the number of ways that strangers could enter school space.

### **“Administrative Hub”**

The Staff felt strongly that the Rabbi and Cantor’s office should stay where they are today, and that the administrative offices could be moved into the current ground-floor classroom, to create a centralized and more efficient administrative area.

### **“Kitchen Hub”**

If a goal is to enable the Social Hall to be used for social functions, the Kitchen should be reconfigured to permit more efficient catering. In the staff’s view, the current educational director’s office (assuming it would be moved to 430 Spruce) would be best used as storage and staging areas, freeing up significant kitchen space that is now used to store chairs and tables. In addition, additional storage could be built into the kitchen to house materials used in building administration that currently clutter surfaces and administrative offices.

### **“Beit Midrash”**

We discussed the concept of converting the Beit Midrash from its current playschool use to a mini-chapel/lounge/adult meeting space. We also discussed the creation of lounge spaces in the entryways (an idea suggested in a previous focus group).

Social Hall gets most damage from Sunday and Hebrew School kids, not Play School kids.

## Clergy Staff & Religion Committee

Clergy Staff & Religion Committee	Jeremey	Deb	May 19, 6:15 pm (JTN)
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Facilitator and Recorder: Jeremey Newberg

In attendance: Rabbi Winokur, Cantor Freedman, Nathan Kamesar, Terry Novick, Neil Cohen

### **A. Need a sanctuary that promotes “Intimacy and Community building.”**

Straight ahead seating can be formal and uninviting for services where less than 50 people attend.

Bimah is not compliant with American with Disabilities Act.

1. Remove a 3 to 5 of front pew rows. Purchase high quality individual chairs with armrests that can be arranged in a semi-circle. Lower the Bimah to bring worshipers closer to the service.
2. “Bring the Torah to the People” by purchasing a new Lectern / Bimah that could be set at the lower level of the Pews and large enough for Torah reading.
3. Install a semi-circle curtain that defines a more intimate space for services attended with groups of 50 or less in the new seating arrangement.
4. Install decorative rope at the pews that directs people to sit in the front area bear the Bimah.
5. Need to upgrade sound system so people can hear inside and outside of the Sanctuary.  
Service should be piped throughout 418 Spruce to help people focus on the services.

### **B. Need a Library.**

“Walk into a Sanctuary full of Books; it feels Jewish.” (Rabbi Avi) Install built in bookshelves.

### **C. Need to make services more “Family Friendly.”**

1. Purchase more quiet toys for young kids.
2. Improve a designated play space and sitting area for parents near the Sanctuary.
3. Need sofa for the nursing mothers and older folks to sit just outside of the Sanctuary?

### **D. Welcoming Strategy**

“It sends a great message to open the front doors for Shul.” Need a security plan for coverage of front doors as well as street level doors.

How about some better directions for where to go?

Need to improve railings on steps to sanctuary.

Lighting in lobby is poor. How about dedicated space for showing art work?

### **E. Need Alternative, Smaller, More Intimate Spaces for Worship and Study**

“Sacred Space is difficult with the clutter of toys and kid decorations.”

Consider installing dividers or sliding panels in multi-purpose room.

Supportive of the Lounge / Salon concept in the Beit Midrash.

### **F. Priorities of Focus Group:**

1. Develop Education HUB at 430 Spruce so that there is more space for adult education classes while kids are at Hebrew School concurrently.
2. Improve space in Social Hall for gatherings and events.
3. Re-configure Sanctuary so it is more welcoming, intimate and “everyone can see each other and the leaders of the services.”

## Playschool Focus Group Meeting

Playschool	Adam	Staci	<b>May 11, 12:45 pm Convened</b>
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Monday, May 11, 2015, 12:45 PM

Facilitator: Adam Shapiro

Recorder: Staci Schwartz

Participants: Susan Eizen, Sindy Agudelo-Nelson, Simone Schapiro, Isela Lares-Guzman, Jess Downes, Laurel Landau, Gloria Parris, Ali Kaplan, Valeria Pipano

Adam began the meeting with introductions and gave a brief explanation of the history of the previous Capital Campaign resulting in the purchase of the building located at 430 Spruce. He explained the purpose of the Focus Group- and the importance of developing a prioritized list of space improvement needs for SHS. He showed the group some of the architectural diagrams designed for 430 Spruce and discussed how the Board will be re-focusing on the best use of space in our current building and adjacent property. He encouraged open and honest feedback from all participants.

### Questions:

#### **I. SPACE USE FOR YOUR GROUP**

**IA.** The main spaces used by the people in this group are the Social Hall, Beit Midrash, Rear Playschool Classroom, and the outdoor space in Lawrence Court. One or two times during the year, they use the outdoor space at the back of building for Purim and Sukkot celebrations.

**IB.** The main challenges with the current spaces are the small size of the Rear Playschool Classroom-it limits the number of children that can comfortably fit in there for school. Currently, they cap this classroom, used for 2-year-olds, at 10-11 children with 3-4 adults. Parents and staff love the set-up of this room with a bathroom in the room, inability to see in from the outside (safety) and one door access on first floor. **They feel limited by size of room, and they said it also limits the enrollment of 2-year-olds not only by numbers in the classroom-** but also by number of days a week they can attend.

Historically (though this year, enrollment is down), they have had 10 kids who attend on M, W, F and 10 who come on T, Th. Unless they had more space or a second classroom, they cannot accept 2-year-olds who also would want to attend M-F.

The Social Hall provides a great space for a larger number of kids. On days with inclement weather, this space is big enough for kids to ride tricycles inside. This is the classroom for 3-4-year-olds.

Enrollment in previous years has been 25-35 kids. This year there are 17 students. Some parents expressed that this room is too big and would benefit from moveable room dividers so smaller groups of kids could be engaged in different activities at the same time. The large space encourages some running and wild play, which they try to discourage.

Its location in the building also results in people (office staff, maintenance staff, parents, clergy, occasional repair/delivery people, members) walking through the classroom space distracting the children.

The fact that the SH is a multi-purpose room also has its problems. The teachers said that the maintenance staff has to constantly set up and break down the room for Playschool, Hebrew School, services, education courses, and meetings.

There is not enough storage space for toys and supplies so- even though the maintenance staff is amazing and as careful as they can be- things are piled and stuffed into spaces, increasing the wear-and tear on equipment, toys, and furniture.

Also the arrangement affects what can be purchased (storage cabinets have to be on wheels).

Some parents also said the reverse is also a problem, i.e., they know that the appearance of the Social Hall, and the fact that it looks like a Playschool classroom, has deterred some people from joining or from electing to have receptions in the room.

There were parents in attendance who indicated their families had left SHS for other congregations in part based upon the appearance of the Social Hall, while staying at the playschool.

Teachers also mentioned that PS supplies have been used, furniture has been moved, and toys have been broken by Hebrew School students (presumably) on Tuesdays and Sundays, and by young children when the Rear Playschool Room is used for childcare during holiday services.

One other point raised was that the Social Hall has too many doors of access- some parents mentioned that they had friends who would not come to SHS for Playschool because they felt the **classroom was not safe**. They expressed worries about stranger access from the outside and worries about kids running out through the doors themselves.

The multi-purpose set up also prohibits extended day options that are extremely important to some families.

The Pre-K classroom is adequately sized, and Ali likes that it is separate from the other classrooms and that it is upstairs (gives the kids a sense of being older because they can manage the stairs, which are really only used by the kids). She would prefer to have only one door access. She currently has 12-13 kids in the AM class. Having the kids have to use a bathroom outside of the classroom is a challenge, especially if she is ever in the room by herself and has to supervise both spaces.

**IC.** The main ways in which programming is affected is that the staff must be flexible and move things around the classroom to accommodate certain activities like yoga, circle time, and other group activities. **The multi-purpose use of all rooms prohibits daily class for 2-year-olds and extended day programs for all students because of conflicts with Hebrew School and evening meeting usage.**

#### **MAIN TAKE-HOME POINTS: THIS GROUP WOULD LIKE TO SEE:**

1. Dedicated and divided spaces for the playschool classrooms with more storage space that would allow them to organize supplies.
2. An adequate number of bathrooms and one door access instead of the multi-purpose set up we have now. Main concerns were creating or maintaining an intimate classroom setting, limiting distractions, and safety!
3. There is universal agreement in this group that they would like to see laminate flooring and area rugs in the social hall instead of the carpeting. Area rugs would create a sense of dividing up the space. (the teachers also said the carpet is worn, has an odor, and they can't use play doh or some other art materials because they would get stuck in the carpet. They also requested that we replace the mats the kids use for circle time.)
4. They would like to have a private patio in the back of 430 spruce so kids could have more private outdoor play space (safety and great selling point for the ps).

#### **II. VISION FOR IMPROVED SPACE**

**IIA. Dedicated and expanded Play School classrooms** would lead to:

- increased potential student enrollment,
- increased productivity in the classrooms (fewer distractions and interruptions during lessons),
- potential increased SHS membership (we could attract individuals who are looking for a more attractive SH), and
- potential increased revenue (if more people joined and rented out a renovated SH for events and receptions).

**IIB.** The spaces that could be improved are the:

- A. Social Hall,
- B. Rear Playschool classroom, and
- C. Beit Midrash.

The main ideas discussed were:

- 1. add **moveable dividers to the SH**,
- 2. **remove the carpet** in the SH,
- 3. **Limit access to the PS rooms** to enhance safety, and
- 4. **Increase storage space for supplies**, toys, and furniture.

The Rear Playschool Classroom has a great set up but is too small.

The Beit Midrash would ideally have a bathroom in the classroom and one door access.

**If we move the PS to 430 Spruce Street, they would like to see dedicated PS classroom space, increased storage, attention to safety concerns, laminate floors with area rugs, and a private outdoor play space.**

The teachers were asked if PS classrooms could be in 2 separate buildings- and they all agreed it would be better to have the PS classrooms in the same building (with regard to safety, extra teacher support, and borrowing materials).

**IIC.** Again, the group felt that **dedicated PS classroom space would allow us to increase the number of enrollment options we offer, increase our revenue, and increase our ability to be competitive with other local schools by offering extended day programming.**

They said we would need 3 classrooms for the PS in 430- but it would be ideal to have 4 so that there would be an additional room to use for smaller groups or special activities on rainy or cold days when the kids can't go outside.

The group wanted to know how the square footage for PS classroom space would compare to the current situation if all classrooms were moved to 430 Spruce?

- ☐ We may want to do research to see what other local preschools look like, what enrollment options they offer, and whether or not they have extended day programs.

Code may require ground floor classrooms for younger kids, and even with outdoor space available indoor space would still be required for bad weather days.

## Education Focus Group

School Committee	Rafi	Carmen Hayman	May 6, 7:30 pm Convened
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Pros – love the flexibility

Hard to teach a little group when they're all together.

Ideally make the social hall more beautiful and have enclosed classrooms

Single biggest challenge is noise

4 classes is too much – it's been as much as 6 classes in one space.

Even dividing ½ with soundproofing would be an improvement

For students with identified learning differences, it's even harder – volume is a tremendous problem

South classroom – is used for 7<sup>th</sup> grade – Beit Midrash is used on Tuesdays but it's too distant– the program is successful because the kids can be brought together when it's called for.

If 430 Spruce was all classrooms would be a change but would be beneficial.

Want the social hall to still be available for group gatherings (Yom HaZikaron eg)

Goal of combining Hebrew and Sunday school together is GREAT.

If the Social Hall could be made into a real social hall would be a good benefit. The Synagogue could make more money if people could use it for festivities.

Entryway from Lawrence court – lots of information is placed out there which is ignored – a digital announcement board (or use the tv screen for scrolling announcements – videos of kids) .

Positioning screens by any new “lounge areas” would also be good.

Improved Signage – newcomers don't know where to go and aren't comfortable.

Bridal room?

Kitchen – like the idea of being able to cook together.

Putting an awning over the terrace would be great today – so we can do outdoor learning now.

Outside of the social hall

Coat Closet would be good

Opening the big double doors would be more welcoming

People love the pews, big wood doors, old windows

Moveable chairs vs. some pews might be more comfortable – and allow for more flexible use of the sanctuary

Center Bima might make sense

Childrens' area outside of the sanctuary – maybe allocate a space for children in the back of the synagogue – what flow should there be. Maybe glass doors so parents can see their children.

***Simplicity – is a positive – beautiful but simple – let the content come out.***

Maybe a sitter supervised space for kids. Maybe in 430.



## Membership

Meeting Date/Time:	May 6, 2015/6pm
Group Name:	Membership
Facilitator's Name:	Carmen Hayman
Recorder's Name:	Debra Stewart

Participants: Susan Levering, Bob Blacksberg, Mitchell Bach, Joan Roller, (Mitchell: discussed history of building next door and our purchase and rationale; rental...potential stages for improvements)

### Note Summary:

We had an open discussion and although we did not follow the questions, though discussion and facilitation, we touched on all pertinent areas:

### Needs and interests:

- Move the Hebrew/Sunday and Playschool to 430 Spruce; accommodates Sunday and Hebrew school simultaneously and allows for parent education during this time frame
- Attach the buildings to that it is clearly one entity
- Either move the offices as well as use cameras/intercoms
- Remodel and expand the social hall with dance flooring; AV equipment and improved acoustics – functional for multi-use and impressive for outreach
- Explore multiple uses for the social hall for daytime, evening, worship and other options/do not count on rental income
- We need three size options for alternative worship services; explore the needs of the larger community
- Consider whether the kitchen is conducive for caterer use
- Make the lobby welcoming; coat room; inviting gallery for art
- Improve upon bathrooms
- Install a new modern lift rather than deal with the grading issues for an elevator
- Improve the audio system for the Sanctuary and replace the pews with flexible and attractive seating
- Examine current demographics for needs
- Utilize outdoor space for students and congregants
- Create salon space and adult education spaces
- Highlight and make prominent the Historical Nature of SHS property
- Be sure the architect examines safety and code requirements
- Visit other similar size Shuls – inquire with Irv Shapiro
- Work with potential funders as their interests may differ from those who are more engaged

### Actual Notes Taken:

Joan, recalled plan to move school next door and improve current space for social gathering/rental and asked if this is still being considered. Yes, still in the mix of considerations. If we move Hebrew school over, Sunday and Hebrew school can meet at the same time and limit impact to families in terms of drop off/pick up. Discussed the potential for attachment of properties, yard space, larger social hall.

Bob - Is the social hall key to engagement and use of the facility for rental? How many events per year? Is this cost effective for us to do if only a few members annually have an event here?

Joan - Even if not money maker, it is more impressive to new members and support our engagement.

Susan, asked about Adult ed. space options. Carmen spoke of different options i.e. dividers in social hall; salon space.

Bob - school in other bldg. ; spaces for multiple worship services even for bringing in other groups to worship here, looking at range of needs in the community; performing spaces; meeting spaces; acoustics in social hall needs to improve for performances; Beit Midrash originally meant as a worship space (one wall faces east) but it was too small; need three size worship spaces; look at replacement of pews in sanctuary as flexible and attractive seating; define use of social hall in broad terms.

If school is moved, we could use the social hall for daytime activities for us and the larger community.

Agree that daytime activities would be good for retirees, empty nesters; Carmen- consider accessibility.

elevator would need to address the grading issue of properties. Lift is 30 years old or re-engineer lift solution with current upgraded model.

no gallery space/need.

In planning need to attend to the history of this building as a historic structure and make this information more prominent. Raise awareness of this and "Friends of Historic SHS" idea. Who is the architect when it was converted to a synagogue? Susan's grandfather carved the lions.

Need input from our school staff; Have we visited other small synagogues? Ask about other comparable synagogues. Some sites trying to use smaller spaces for intimate experiences.

Current demographics where does it fall ie. Many empty nesters and young families?

Would like to do more adult ed for parents.

Do we need more space for family programming?

We *need danceable space with flooring*.

Admin offices: would they need to be with school? Or cameras? What do we use our social hall for during the day. Is there enough space next door for all of the classrooms needed? It is thought yes.

Look at scheduling options for Hebrew and Sunday School and parent adult ed simultaneously.

Architect could look at compliance for space and safety. We have plans to review from the past.

Need daytime small spaces during the daytime to meet in small groups.

Need more welcoming lobby and clear where things are; coatroom; inviting galary / lobby area.

Any discussion of identifying potential funders? Need to engage potential major donors as their interests may be very different than those who are very engaged.

Need modernized AV equipment.

Sanctuary sound system need to amplify more sources; modernize bathrooms;

Kitchen – if caterers will use it as well as by families – it needs to support this use. Parking remains an issue especially at night. Outdoor space would be a benefit and balcony.

Two want to see a connected space, not an annex.

**Social Action & POWER**

Social Action & POWER	Phyllis Denbo, Harry Oxman	Adam	Ric	(Adam) Convened 4/24
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I had the pleasure of working with Carmen in place of Ric as recorder last night (she was already at the meeting). We had about 8 or 9 people at the meeting, and had some interesting feedback. As a group, their space needs are minimal as most of their activities are offsite. They really don't need anything more than a meeting space. That really limited the responses to the group level portion of the questions, but when we opened it up for more individual thoughts/concerns we got them talking and increased the feedback. There were mixed reactions to the social hall space as it's currently used (surprising, to me at least, that there were both positive and negative comments), a discussion of renovating the kitchen to allow for more serious food service use (this was a group level concern), and talk about accessibility issues – the lift, bathrooms, and hearing impaired improvements.

Overall, I have to report there was a general desire not to have the conversation at all. Before we even began the questions, the group was inquiring about why we own 430 and questions about selling it off to raise capital for the main building and our general financial standing. Harry Oxman, who was at the meeting, did a very deft job of explaining that while nothing was completely off the table, the Board wanted a review of all the options and congregation needs before deciding on a path forward. We also tried to steer the conversation away from the money issue and focus on wants, but even so we probably discussed the why question for 10 minutes before we even got to the set questions. During this preliminary discussion, and during the questions at the end, we noted and addressed several requests for transparency in the decision making process.

Adam

## Arts & Culture

Arts & Culture	Jeremey	Ric	April 20, 7 pm, Convened 4/20
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Facilitator and Recorder: Jeremey Newberg

Meeting Date: April 20, 2015

Attendees: Jonathan Feinman [jon46feinman@hotmail.com](mailto:jon46feinman@hotmail.com), Dan Bogen [dan@seas.upenn.edu](mailto:dan@seas.upenn.edu), Erica Ginsburg [ericagins@gmail.com](mailto:ericagins@gmail.com), Susan Leshnoff [susan.leshnoff@gmail.com](mailto:susan.leshnoff@gmail.com), Marty Rosenberg [martinellen@verizon.net](mailto:martinellen@verizon.net), [mrosenbe@camden.rutgers.edu](mailto:mrosenbe@camden.rutgers.edu), Ellen Rosenberg [martinellen15@gmail.com](mailto:martinellen15@gmail.com), Libbey Cone [cone@effectivemedicalenglish.com](mailto:cone@effectivemedicalenglish.com), Susan Stein [stein.susan0@gmail.com](mailto:stein.susan0@gmail.com), Jeanne Bell [jbgolden617@comcast.net](mailto:jbgolden617@comcast.net), Betta Kolansky [bkolansky@comcast.net](mailto:bkolansky@comcast.net), Bruce Hirsch [Bruce@hirsches.comcastbiz.net](mailto:Bruce@hirsches.comcastbiz.net), Ylanah Sloan [ylanah@verizon.net](mailto:ylanah@verizon.net), Fran Gallun [frangallun@verizon.net](mailto:frangallun@verizon.net), Bonnie H

Arts and Cultures does more events outside of SHS than inside. If there was better-dedicated and better-decorated space for adults A&C could convene many more programs, events and exhibits. This would draw more people to participate in events and attract prospective members as well. Need separate spaces for kids and separate spaces for adults.

### **A. Social Hall**

“Why must the Social Hall be so Drab?” “Aesthetics matter.” “every space should be decorated and attractive.”

Competing uses overburden the Social Hall. It is unattractive. Kids chairs are uncomfortable for adults. Playschool décor is not inviting for adult programming.

Floor in Social Hall is substandard. Padding on Columns is unattractive.

If Playschool must stay in Social Hall, then there must be an upgrade to the décor of the Social Hall so it is as much a Social Hall as it is space for a playschool.

Some expressed concern that they did not want SHS to get so modernized in its décor that it looks corporate.

### **B. Salon for Adults**

SHS could benefit from a Salon or Lounge furnished and decorated with chairs comfortable and sized for adults. Salon could be venue for adult education, book club, movies, art exhibitions, talks, meetings. A room that can accommodate up to 30 people makes sense. Salon could also be space for alternative Shabbat services.

Need a piano on wheels.

### **C. Library**

Dedicated space for books on Judaism; documents that relate to history to of SHS and gift shop.

“What can we do with the décor to help tell the history of SHS?”

Display cases and Plaques that honor the membership.

**D. Welcoming Strategy:**

“The People of SHS are welcoming uh welcoming is the space?”

“The SHS entrance is a fortress. It is not inviting.” “You have to fight to get into the building.”

Is there a way to open the front doors for Shabbat and services?

“How about some signage to help our guest figure out where to go?”

Need to modernize audio-visual equipment in Sanctuary and throughout SHS.

Lighting is poor and harsh. Motion detector lighting would be appreciated and could save money.

Need strategy to make lobby more welcoming.

The lift is loud and unappealing. Needs to be replaced with an elevator that is quiet and dignified.

Need a Coat Room

Need updated technology to better manage temperature

**E. Bathrooms:**

Need separate bathrooms for adult and for kids. Bathrooms need to be modernized to meet accessibility requirements.

**F. Kitchen**

Use kitchen for Jewish Holiday cooking classes. Kitchen is under-utilized.

Re-name “Play School” to “Pre-School.” Play School is not a commonly understood term and may confuse prospects.

Need a technology modernization plan for SHS that includes better system for micorphones and speakers, remote entry, multimedia projectors, whiteboards and ambient Jewish music

## Young Professionals Group

Young Professionals Group		Nathan	June 10
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Facilitator and Recorder: Nathan Kamesar

Meeting Date:

Attendees:

Attendees: Nathan Kamesar, Jordan Segall, Natalie Lesser, Jonathan Freitag

Various thoughts on space needs:

- Alternative venue for events, etc. (“classier” version of the multipurpose room)
- Not sharing space that is used for the playschool
- Whatever gets done in 430 Spruce should be for a unique purpose
- There should be a social lounge
- A space with books available for adults to read
- A space for informal, perhaps intellectual conversation
- If possible, also a refrigerator available to adults in the community

## SPACE NEEDS FOCUS GROUP COMBINED NOTES

### **Sanctuary**

1. Open main sanctuary doors every Shabbat or much more often. Use as main entrance for services when possible. (Arts & Culture; Social Action).
2. We need three size options for alternative worship services; explore the needs of the larger community (Engagement & Membership; Open Members & GUB; Social Action; Membership Engagement; Education Comm; SS parents).
  - a. Remove fixed benches and replace with attractive, comfortable flexible seating (Membership Engagement; Open Members & GUB)
  - b. Dividers to separate spaces as needed (Membership Engagement)
3. Improve the audio system for the Sanctuary (Membership Engagement; Social Action)
  - a. Consider something for the hearing impaired (Social Action)
4. Replace the pews with flexible and attractive seating (Engagement; Membership; Social Action).
5. Sanctuary sound system need to amplify more sources (Engagement & Membership).
6. Place for Siddur and Chumash at the seats (Social Action; Membership Engagement)
7. HVAC - Temperature is too cold year round (Social Action)
8. Loft/Balcony area feels like wasted space that could be better used. (Membership Engagement)
9. Don't change pews (SS parents)
10. Change color of wainscoting in sanctuary – feels industrial (SS parent)
11. Better use of space outside sanctuary for parents with small children (Educ Comm)
  - a. Put glass in the top panels of the side doors to the sanctuary – so parents can see in and feel like part of the service if playing in that current play nook
  - b. Speaker in the outer lobby so they can hear the service even if not physically in the sanctuary.

### **Social Hall**

1. In particular, with respect to the Social Hall, the staff pointed to the significant wear and tear inflicted by our children on that multi-use space (Administration & Maintenance).
2. Public events at 418 (Arts & Culture; Open Members & GUB; Social Action; Membership Engagement; Education Comm; SS parents).
3. Multi-Function room – “This space is a mess, competing needs, columns, unpleasant. Very utilitarian space (Arts & Culture; Open Members & GUB; Social Action; Membership Engagement; Education Comm; SS parents).
4. Need better sound system in Social Hall (Arts & Culture; Social Action; Open Membership & GUB).
5. Projector and Screen would be nice (Arts & Culture; Social Action).
6. Questioned whether people would want to use the social hall for family celebrations/events (Donors; Education Committee; Open Members & GUB).
7. Remodel and expand the social hall with dance flooring; AV equipment and improved acoustics – functional for multi-use and impressive for outreach (Open Members & GUB; Social Action; Membership Engagement; Education Comm; SS parents).
8. Explore multiple uses for the social hall for daytime, evening; worship and other options/do not count on rental income (Engagement & Membership).
9. Addition of movable dividers (Playschool).
10. Pillars in the social hall block view (Social Action)

### **Hebrew School Space**

1. One alternative suggested (if 430 Spruce were not used for education) would be to divide the Social Hall with moveable walls to create multiple classrooms and replace the carpeting, which suffers the

most wear and tear, with laminate flooring and moveable area rugs (Administration & Maintenance; Educ Comm).

2. Public events at 418 and 430-kids events and studies (Arts & Culture; Open Members & GUB; Social Action; Membership Engagement; Education Comm; SS Parents).
3. Move Hebrew School to 430 (Open Members & GUB; Social Action; Membership Engagement; Education Comm; SS Parents).
4. Look at scheduling options for Hebrew and Sunday school and parent adult ed simultaneously (Open Members & GUB; Social Action; Membership Engagement; Education Comm; SS parents)
5. If HS is moved to 430 – still need a large flexible space like the Social Hall for full school activities (Educ Comm; SS parents)
6. Use digital display for announcements so as parents are waiting for pick-up can read the info (Educ Comm)

### **Playschool Space**

1. Consolidation of educational functions into purpose-designed classrooms in 430 Spruce (where, for instance, the back yard could be used to replace the Social Hall as “Tricycle Alley”) was widely viewed as a more efficient solution than using the Social Hall for classrooms plus other functions (Administration & Maintenance).
2. Need a place for kids to play outside without interfering with neighbors (Donors).
3. Move Playschool to 430 (Engagement & Membership, Playschool; Social Action; Open Members & GUB; Educ Comm).
4. Rear Classroom - The main challenges with the current spaces are the small size of the Rear Playschool Classroom-it limits the number of children that can comfortably fit in there for school. Currently, they cap this classroom, used for 2-year-olds, at 10-11 children with 3-4 adults. Parents and staff love the set up of this room- with a bathroom in the room, inability to see in from the outside (safety) and one door access on first floor, but feel limited by size of room, and they said it also limits the enrollment of 2-year-olds not only by numbers in the classroom- but also by number of days a week they can attend. Historically (though this year, enrollment is down), they have had 10 kids who attend on M, W, F and 10 who come on T, Th. Unless they had more space or a second classroom, they cannot accept 2-year-olds who also would want to attend M-F (Playschool).
5. One other point raised was that the Social Hall has too many doors of access- some parents mentioned that they had friends who would not come to SHS for Playschool because they felt the classroom was not safe. They expressed worries about stranger access from the outside and worries about kids running out through the doors themselves. The multi-purpose set up also prohibits extended day options that are extremely important to some families (Playschool).
6. The Pre-K classroom is adequately sized, and Ali likes that it is separate from the other classrooms and that it is upstairs (gives the kids a sense of being older because they can manage the stairs, which are really only used by the kids). She would prefer to have only one door access. She currently has 12-13 kids in the AM class. Having the kids have to use a bathroom outside of the classroom is a challenge, especially if she is ever in the room by herself and has to supervise both spaces (Playschool).
7. Dedicated storage for Playschool supplies and toys (Playschool).
8. New mats for circle time (Playschool).
9. Dedicated space this will allow us to expand and compete with other places the offer similar services (Playschool).

### **Adult Education Space**

1. A room dedicated to cultural needs-gallery space (“Saloon” space) (Arts & Culture).
2. Small Space where people can meet and talk (Arts & Culture; Open Members & GUB; Social Action; Membership Engagement)
3. Adult ed is uncomfortable- people sit in kids chairs (Arts & Culture; Open Members & GUB; Social Action; Membership Engagement)



4. We discussed the concept of converting the Beit Midrash from its current playschool use to a mini-chapel/lounge/adult meeting space. We also discussed the creation of lounge spaces in the entryways (Administration & Maintenance; Open Members & GUB; Social Action; Membership Engagement).
5. Separate adult education spaces; re-launch movie group and other interest groups (Donors).
6. Need space for music room and other interests of more secular Jews (Donors; Open Members & GUB; Membership Engagement).
7. More comfortable chairs for classes (Membership Engagement)

### **Kitchen**

1. If a goal is to enable the Social Hall to be used for social functions, the Kitchen should be reconfigured to permit more efficient catering. In the staff's view, the current educational director's office (assuming it would be moved to 430 Spruce) would be best used as storage and staging areas, freeing up significant kitchen space that is now used to store chairs and tables. In addition, additional storage could be built into the kitchen to house materials used in building administration that currently clutter surfaces and administrative offices (Administration & Maintenance).
2. Consider whether the kitchen is conducive for caterer use (Open Members & GUB; Social Action; Membership Engagement; Education Comm).
3. Cooking demos for adults and use during SS/HS (Educ Comm)

### **Clergy Offices**

1. Library, book cases-larger offices for Clergy with shared library (Arts & Culture; Membership Engagement).
- 2.

### **Administrative Offices**

1. The Staff felt strongly that the Rabbi and Cantor's office should stay where they are today, and that the administrative offices could be moved into the current ground-floor classroom, to create a centralized and more efficient administrative area (Administration & Maintenance).

### **Base Building Services (Multi-Media, Lift/Elevator/Bathrooms, etc.)**

1. Need better sound system in Social Hall (Arts & Culture; Open Members & GUB; Social Action; Membership Engagement).
2. Projector and Screen would be nice (Arts & Culture Open Members & GUB; Social Action; Membership Engagement; Education Comm).
3. Bathrooms dedicated to children (Arts & Culture).
4. Adult bathroom, changing space-handicap stalls (Arts & Culture; Open Members & GUB; Social Action; Membership Engagement; Education Comm).
5. Dignity – Coming to shul – ramps to enable wheelchair accessibility (Arts & Culture).
6. Elevator to replace the lift, ADA bathroom (Arts & Culture)
7. Install a new modern lift rather than deal with the grading issues for an elevator (Open Members & GUB; Social Action; Membership Engagement; Education Comm; SS parents).
  - a. Reported lift is about 30 years old
8. No elevator in 430 (SS parents)
9. Make 418 better accessible in general for individuals with disabilities (Open Members & GUB; Social Action; Membership Engagement; Education Comm)

### **Lobby**

1. Outside office area is bad gallery space-bad lighting, hard to hang (Arts & Culture; Open Members & GUB; Social Action; Membership Engagement).
2. Synagogue is not that welcoming-maybe low level music (Arts & Culture).
3. Make the lobby welcoming; coat room; inviting gallery for art (Open Members & GUB; Social Action; Membership Engagement; Education Comm; SS parents)
4. Need more welcoming lobby and clear where things are; coatroom; inviting gallery / lobby area (Open Members & GUB; Social Action; Membership Engagement; Education Comm).
5. Better signage outside (where to enter – even more important if we expand to 430) and inside 418 (Open Members & GUB; Social Action; Membership Engagement; Education Comm; SS parents)
6. Lounge/Salon space (lobby, outside sanctuary and at the side entrance (Open Members & GUB; Social Action; Membership Engagement)

### **Outdoor Space (Other than Lawrence Court)**

1. Outdoor Space for Kids other than Laurence Court (Arts & Culture; Open Members & GUB; Social Action; Membership Engagement; Education Comm; SS parents).
2. Utilize outdoor space for students and congregants (Open Members & GUB; Social Action; Membership Engagement; Education Comm; SS parents).
3. Playschool would like to have a “private” patio for the kids (Playschool).
4. Awning – possibly retractable (SS Parents; Educ Comm)
5. Buildings do not be connected, however a covered area (walkway) between the buildings would be great in the breezeway or backyard area (SS parents)

### **Misc.**

1. Aesthetics matter-Everything in the Synagogue should be finished for the use of the space (Arts & Culture).
2. 418 is a fortress, not welcoming, tight space. Very uninviting space. Fight to get into the building (Arts & Culture).
  - a. “Large synagogue with little space” (Membership Engagement)
3. Need to have spaces that are pleasant to be in. Always trying to fit into the space (Arts & Culture).
4. Nice shirts for the guys that greet everyone (Arts & Culture).
5. Need to make SHS interesting and attractive to young families and professionals (Donors; Open Members & GUB; Social Action; Membership Engagement; Education Comm; SS parents).
6. Keep Donors informed (Donors).
7. 100% annual giving of members is important (Donors).
8. Advertise in Playbills and take our ads (Donors).
9. Look into estate planning/legacy gifts (Donors).
10. Is current space used most efficiently? (Donors).
11. Highlight and make prominent the Historical Nature of SHS property (Engagement & Membership; Arts & Culture; Open Members & GUB).
  - a. Raise awareness of this and “Friends of Historic SHS” idea. Who is the architect when it was converted to a synagogue? (Engagement & Membership).
12. Be sure the architect examines safety and code requirements (Engagement & Membership).
13. Visit other similar size Shuls – inquire with Irv Shapiro (Engagement & Membership).
14. Work with potential funders as their interests may differ from those who are more engaged (Engagement & Membership).
15. A connected space, not an annex (Open Members & GUB).