



AGUDAS ACHIM SYNAGOGUE VISIONING SESSIONS - TOWN HALL NOTES

The following notes are a general record of the items discussed in the Town Hall Visioning Session completed for Aguas Achim Synagogue on May 2, 2021. The notes have been compiled and categorized for clarity and are not in sequential order as they were brought up in the meeting. They are in no order and only stand to create a record of the items discussed so that we can continue to build on these subjects:

- Utilizing the facility as a “third place”, i.e. a place that people could come to enjoy relationships and community that is in addition to their homes and their businesses.
- Accessibility was a topic that was brought up in several contexts:
 - Accessibility for people with mobility disabilities
 - Auditory Accessibility
 - Accessibility of spaces for all members
 - Accessibility of the kitchen
 - Accessibility of the building based on traffic, bikes, and parking.
 - Additional single use accessible toilets were also suggested.
- Connectivity was also an overriding theme with several thoughts regarding different spaces and their connections to other spaces.
 - There was a concern that the chapel felt disconnected and a “lesser space”, but there was also an opinion that these two rooms should remain separate.
 - The connection of the building to the outdoor spaces was discussed especially regarding its connection to the courtyard which was viewed as positive. However, it was also noted that nobody from the outside community can see or connect with this courtyard space.
 - Connection to the entrance was brought up. There is a front entrance that rarely gets used and the classroom entrance is far and disconnected from the sanctuary.
 - The building was not thought to be as connected to the neighborhood as it could be, but this was also considered in the context of the strategic plan.
 - An idea was brought up to open the kitchen up to allow connectivity of the kitchen to a greater percentage of the members. As it was also thought that the kitchen may be too far and disconnected from the programs that it should be servicing.
 - It was also thought, however, that the members did not want to have too much connectivity to the Sanctuary from other spaces to avoid both noise and odor pollution of the sanctuary.
 - It was suggested to potentially create a children’s room at the rear of the sanctuary that was sound isolated from the sanctuary so that people could have small children in there and also feel connected to the service going on in the sanctuary.



- It was thought that the Synagogue should have a broader community engagement to allow for more connection to the community at large. Though this did present a more complex relationship that might arise by allowing the broader community into a building that is now mainly utilized by the Jewish community.
- It was thought that there should be ways considered to utilize the sanctuary for more than just Saturday's.
 - One suggestion was to incorporate moveable chairs to allow the utilization of the sanctuary for different types of events.
- It was suggested that there should be a dedicated Hebrew school in the school/daycare area.
 - It was also thought that the classrooms were outdated.
- It was further suggested that there should be some space that could be devoted or utilized as a teen space to offer programs that appeal to this demographic, as well as adult learning, and additional meeting rooms.
- This was also suggested for young families as well to get them more involved in the Synagogue.
- It was suggested that the Founders Hall was underutilized and could possibly contain a food and drink component perhaps in the form of a coffee bar.
- As well it was suggested that the Library was also underutilized.
- It was suggested that additional offices or a reconsideration of the administrative wing should be considered. However, it was also brought up that the location of the administrative wing is critical to the visual and physical security at the front door.
- It was suggested that the Hebrew shop had inadequate visibility because there were a lot more items in the shop than the shop can display.
- It was noted that the building functions somewhat like a Jewish Community Center in that the other JCC is somewhat far away. This means that it might need to:
 - Provide more diverse programs for both in person and remote programming.
 - Provide or possibly host for profit assembly uses like parties and party rentals.
 - Expand the for-profit pre-school.
 - Providing a separate commercial kitchen and Kosher kitchen.
- It was noted that the current cemetery space is almost at capacity and that a long-term plan for this use and space would need to be considered.
- We were also reminded that the Valley Drive house was available for use as well and should be considered in any long-term planning.

End of Notes.