Temple Beth-El 'One Community, One Campus' User Centered Needs (Focus Group) Analysis Report

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METHODS

Human Centered Design

Design projects follow a general phase of inspiration, ideation, implementation, and evaluation. Human centered design offers one potential approach to support facility planning and design decisions which incorporates the needs of diverse sets of user groups. Iterative input from congregation and community members representing each user group enables designers to instill a strong sense of identity with the facilities while ensuring the facility not only meets user needs, but also attracts users to engage in activities within the facilities.

Many methods of human centered design are available that vary in how many users, what types of users, and how users are involved in the design process. The major steps of a human centered design process include: (1) define characteristics of your user groups; (2) determine how users currently use or value space; (3) get feedback from user groups during the planning phase to check for alignment.

Step 1: Define User Groups

Identify all the different types of people that are part of the congregation or connected to Beth-El's mission and objectives. Think about existing congregation members, prospective congregation members, community members engaged with the congregation, and other stakeholders who interact with the congregation (e.g., investors, neighboring communities). Some factors to be considered in looking at users and grouping them:

1. Demographics of the congregation
2. Ages of members
3. Group needs
4. Needs of high versus low utilizers
5. Role of Beth-El in the community
6. Review of existing membership records or other data which give insight into variability in types of members
7. Characteristics that define specific user groups. Characteristics might include high vs. low attendance at shul, age of member, age of children, and distance from facility. It is important that traditional and non-traditional users are considered in planning decisions.

Beth-El User Groups

- o Length of affiliation (>10 years, 5-10 years, 2-5 years, 1 year, potential member)
- o Stage of life
- o Children's ages
- o Frequency of use

- o Disability, physical access
- o Past leadership
- o Staff
- o Religious school children
- o Young leadership group
- o JCC preschool parents
- o Adult learners
- o Affinity groups
- o School staff
- o Brand and marketing
- o Greeters and ushers

This step was completed in October 2016.

Step 2: Design Methods for Data Collection on Current Facility Use and Desired Facility Components

The next step is to collect data to understand *how individuals interact with Beth-El*, what *needs are specific to each group*, and what aspects of a facility are most *valued by each user group*. The tasks done to complete this step were as follows:

1. Asked congregants to identify their interest in participating in the focus groups. This was done via various forms of correspondence and congregants were given the ability to note their interest online or by calling the office. This step was completed in October 2016.

2. Used the list of user groups from Step 1 to classify those interested into possible focus groups. Ultimately, participant availability more so than demographics dictated group formation. Set up group times and sent invitations to interested people. This step was completed in November 2016. Available focus group dates were November 2016 through December 2016 at different times of the day.

3. Developed a set of questions to be asked in focus groups to help with interpreting differences in data across user groups. This step was completed in November 2016.

4. Conducted focus groups. Focus groups conducted in a safe environment where participants felt comfortable to express positive and negative comments. Comments can be de-identified and reported back to the committee in an anonymous fashion to strengthen confidence in data. Each focus group lasted approximately 65 minutes and included approximately 10 participants. Focus groups were completed as shown in the table below:

Focus Group	Demographics	Date
1	10 participants	*November 14, 2016*
2	11 participants	*December 12, 2016*
3	12 participants	*December 18, 2016_afternoon*
4	11 participants	*December 18, 2016_evening*
5	11 participants	*December 21, 2016*
6	Office Staff	*January 19, 2017*
7	3 participants (Teens)	*February 5, 2017*
8	Education Staff	*February 12, 2017*

5. Analyzed focus group data. The ultimate goal is to analyze themes and to summarize the many comments from the focus group into smaller and more meaningful themes or categories. This report is the culmination of this process.

6. Developed a survey for all users to complete. Survey items are developed using focus group data to identify the most common and important needs, activities, and themes for each group. The survey should allow for open ended comments to include suggestions. Responses should be anonymous. Survey should explain that not all suggestions will be approved but all data will be factored into the future design process. This task was completed in February 2017.

7. Distributed the survey and collected response data. Those without the ability to respond electronically were given direction on how to get a paper survey to complete and return to the office to be input by Visioning Steering Committee members. This task was completed in March 2017.

8. Analyzed focus group and survey data together to identify variability in needs, utilization, and values to help inform planning and design decisions for the single campus facility. A report on the survey results was completed in May 2017.

Step 3: Collect Additional Feedback from Users During the Design and Planning Process

Human centered design methods will differ on how actively users are involved in the design process and can range from involvement in all meetings during the project to asking for specific feedback at various points in the process. More involvement is important when designers do not represent the user or when changes in user needs or feedback are anticipated during the development phase. At this stage, the task will be to identify any additional questions to request feedback on during the process.

RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Several themes were consistent across all focus groups. Most focus group participants expressed a preference for increased multi-generational interaction on a campus site. Comments described shared learning spaces (e.g., Jewish education, art) and creating common building pathways and entryways that promote more exposure to those participating in various activities. For example, designing a central area that everyone must pass through to get to other areas so that the probability that a senior on campus for prayer would see children on their way to the library would be more likely to occur. Interestingly, both adult senior aged participants and the teenager focus group expressed value in the opportunity to see other generations engaged in prayer or other life events.

There is diversity in opinions as a function of age, family size, and ways in which individuals want to engage in spiritual activities such as prayer and participate in social activities with Beth-El community members. Increased contact and interaction in general was important, but individuals differed in their preferences.

CONTENT AREA 1: Factors Associated With a Spiritual Community

Theme 1: Shared Beliefs and Values. The presence of a shared tradition with common goals with other community members. Having a sense of shared belonging through togetherness and faith. Gathering spaces and prayer spaces that allow congregants to express faith help build shared beliefs and values. Integrate new methods slowly to ensure individuals are familiar. Familiarity is critical so that people can follow what is going on and feel included and able to participate.

Theme 2: Support. A sense of comfort, connectedness, and receiving assistance from community members during good and bad times. Comments referred to the type of support you might get from your family, "They are sometimes tough with you, but always there for you." One comment stated, "You know people and they care about what you are going through." Another example is helping others assimilate into a new community.

Theme 3: Inclusiveness and Relationship Building. An inclusive environment instills acceptance and makes people feel welcome. This was important in making people feel safe and identifying with others and being themselves. Inclusiveness means feeling cared for by others in the community. Inclusiveness was described as any of the following: including other congregants, including new members or being inclusive to those with physical or other challenges. One comment stated "Inclusiveness, if I put out a hand, someone else will put their hand out to me," while another said "People just want to feel cared for and accepted."

Building relationships among parents, friendships with other congregants, and building bonds across age groups, are important to members. The synagogue should be a hub that facilitates learning, recreation, fun, social interaction, and personal and communal worship. People should feel embraced and welcome, whether they are new or their family has been there for generations.

Theme 4: Other Spiritual Places. Focus group participants were asked to describe other places in their lives which instill a sense of spiritual community. Comments described places in nature (e.g., mountain top, beach, brook, running water, and ocean) and participation in spiritual events (e.g., lighting candles on Shabbat, cemetery, and visiting other synagogue sanctuaries).

Theme 5: Multigenerational. The need for a multigenerational campus was apparent among responses. Each generation identified different motives. Current parents of younger children wanted their kids to see how parents participate in prayer and community activity. More elderly individuals enjoyed seeing children to be reminded of the generational connections. Teens mentioned they would have liked to see and interact more with the older kids, for example watching them study for bar/bat mitzvah.

CONTENT AREA 2: Functions of a Campus Site

Theme 1: A Gathering Space for Our Community. Focus group comments highlighted the importance for a campus to serve as a gathering space to facilitate formal and informal group activities. Formal activities include using the campus for group meetings and organized youth group meetings. Informal activities included a place to get coffee, have bagels or breakfast on Sunday morning, and space for watching TV or movies together, playing cards, or other games. Spaces should be designed to be user friendly, with comfortable seating for younger (e.g. bean bag) and older (ergonomic seating) generations including access to modern technology such as charging stations and Wi-Fi capabilities. All ages are interested in better technology.

Provide the opportunity for more socialization during school drop off, pick up, or even during school. Suggestions included:

- Give parents a place to congregate and socialize. We already do this to some extent but it's done more passively and it's not a comfortable, inviting, separate space.
- Design the drop off space to draw people into more social spaces. Make the design specific to the function and user demographics. For example, the flow of the space could take parents towards an open, lighted space away from entrance and exit or maybe the exit is not visible so that parents are not reminded of leaving.
- Comfortable and clean seating with music, food, and coffee available.
- Space may only be used to this degree on Sunday unless same space can be flexible for other smaller events (e.g. weekly minyan).
- Consider demographics of group. Most parents dropping off for Sunday school will be less than 50 years old. This lends itself to modern design for the space.

It was suggested that Beth-El look at availability of activities at other venues or combined with other groups to make larger groups and promote togetherness with minimal expense. Sharing other events at other venues could bring people together. This might help minimize expense while strengthening familiarity.

Need to consider overlap and market/competition with the JCC and other Jewish community resources. Maybe planning events or participating in events planned by other temples or the JCC

would benefit each organization and bring the community together, especially if there are low participation numbers at events planned individually.

Theme 2: Jewish Identity. A campus site functions to promote a sense of spiritual identity by providing a safe space to explore and practice spirituality. People want to feel closer to G-d by participating in services, seeing other community members and generations participating in spiritual activities, and independent reflection. Being able to see many generations and having options to express Jewish identity through participation with others or in isolation was important to provide a sense of spiritual safety and generational continuity.

Theme 3: Support for Important Lifecycle Events & Social Activities. A space to celebrate important events throughout the lifecycle. Individuals commented they build respect for tradition and other generations when life events are associated with a campus. Facility requirements included spaces to celebrate weddings and bar/bat mitzvahs. It was important for participants to have a safe place to discuss spiritual questions.

All groups commented on the ability to socialize and share a meal whether this be an informal gathering space to use while waiting for children at Hebrew school or other activities or formal space to accommodate receptions for lifecycle events or Shabbat or holiday meals or social activity.

Theme 4: Learning. Support of education and learning was another core function of a campus site. This learning could be both formal and informal and the space should accommodate both youth and adult learning. There was debate on the need for a physical library versus access to online resources.

Think of learning resources and access to information rather than a dedicated library space. Some like traditional books, library now is not functional for today's learner. Consider what types of learners we have, what they bring with them (iPads, phones). It can be hard for multiple aged children to learn together. Maybe we should organize groups: (1) adults learning with one class age group, or (2) seniors with one class age group. Can we learn from each other? Need to consider where and when are we more comfortable around each other and when folks would like privacy.

Consider innovative educational approaches for practicing bar/bat mitzvah (e.g., recording and playback software/hardware, or gaming approaches with peers.)

There were several comments about a community Hebrew school which could alleviate the issue of smaller classes, but most felt it would never happen again.

CONTENT AREA 3: Features of a Prayer Space

Focus group responses showed diversity in the types of features people prefer in a prayer space. Many members feel that there should be a sense of holiness to the Torah and it should emit a sense of respect and power.

Theme 1: Prayer Space Experience. The way people want to feel in a prayer space. Overwhelmingly, comments described feeling joy, peace, comfort, awe, connected, engaged, and inspired. Comments focused on the importance for all generations to feel comfortable including the opportunity to observe calmly and having areas for children to feel comfortable sitting during prayers and even running around when appropriate. Participants described the need to feel welcome and at home. For some this means engaging in new experiences during prayer while others feel most comfortable when they are familiar with what to expect. Familiarity with the environment, the prayers tunes, and with the community was important. Participants discussed the importance to feel moved, connected to G-d, and the power from others praying with them and from the community. There were diverse opinions on preferences for how services are conducted.

Spaces that are nimble, adaptable, and have multiple uses. Beauty, dignity, reverence- all spaces look nice and are up-to-date. People want to feel safe experiencing things at Beth-El and associated different emotions (happy, sad, depressed, alone, social, observer, safe) with a facility. Spaces should be identifiable for their specific character so users can identify and choose the space which best fits their current emotional needs.

Theme 2: Design of the Bimah and Sanctuary. Participants differed in the types and sizes of the sanctuary they preferred. Most agreed they enjoy the presence of a dedicated sanctuary space with a bimah that portrays holiness, sacredness, and spirituality. At the same time, individuals recognized that oversized sanctuaries can also feel lonely and detract from a sense of spirituality or community. Suggestions included to have multiple dedicated sanctuary spaces with different designs to accommodate user groups.

Overwhelmingly, individuals felt that a space with an ornately designed bimah dedicated for prayer that can adapt into a larger seating area or social room for larger events and has adaptable seating configurations is desirable although having the bimah visible if the room was being used as a social hall was not desired by some. Individuals had different opinions regarding the design of the bimah. Some preferred a more raised bimah to project sacredness and power while others preferred a lower bimah to feel more involved and connected. People seem to want a smaller traditional sanctuary for weekly prayer with a more traditional bimah that can expand when needed.

Use an adaptive seating configuration to provide the best sense of comfort for the group where people can feel they are a part of the group, but not cramped. Block off areas. Allows the choice to be participative or isolated depending on member's preference. Open without pressure to participate in one way.

Theme 3: Comfort and Access. These comments related to ease of sitting, standing, and ease of access to different areas of the sanctuary (e.g., seats, bimah, entryways, walkways). Access is especially important for the elderly, children, and individuals with physical limitations or disabilities. For example, many comments noted that a sanctuary should be ADA compliant and that the bimah should not be so raised where steps might be difficult. Limiting the number of steps was a general theme across focus groups. Access for those who cannot come to the Temple was also discussed and things like streaming services was suggested.

Theme 4: Aesthetics. Several general comments describing aesthetics were provided. Participants spoke about the importance of good acoustics for improving level of immersion, group prayer and singing. It was also suggested that listening devices for those who are hearing impaired be available. Most people indicated a preference for a prayer space that is bright with natural light even though there was disagreement over the preference for a modern compared to a more traditional design. The ability to look at important symbols of G-d, Judaism, and allow different generations to feel more connected during prayer or during personal reflections was noted. Visualizing symbols was important for providing a strong connection to G-d, self, and the community.

CONTENT AREA 4: Features of a Building

Theme 1: Kitchen. A kitchen should be up-to-date and designed to accommodate kashrut. Again, an adaptable kitchen that can accommodate smaller meals after services and then upscale for larger events. Commercial kitchen equipment would be appropriate. A kitchen space to accommodate cooking classes with tables for children and adults.

Theme 2: Learning Spaces. Spaces for different types of learning activities and for different age groups were described in the focus groups. Participants showed interest in formal educational spaces that might be used by multiple age groups and for multiple purposes. Learning spaces that can adapt to different activities and age groups would benefit more inter-generational learning and contact. More formal learning spaces were also important for more serious and individual self-study, but may not be used by a lot of people at any given time.

Technology was an important factor for the motivation to utilize a learning space on campus. Adequate access to reliable internet, up to date computers, charging ports, and interactive learning tools were emphasized. Smart boards and greater virtual access through the use of skype or other teleconferencing applications. Interestingly, the teen group and other participants suggested spaces that had some similar features as the sanctuary would help improve learning and spiritual connection when engaged in Torah study or bat/bar mitzvah. Sustainability of the building was also a noted feature. Green building design helps efficiency, better connection with the community, and to model respect for nature.

Theme 3: Outdoor Spaces. Comments focused on having outdoor spaces for children to play (e.g., playground) and to run around. Many individuals mentioned spaces that would facilitate outside eating, reading quietly, observing nature or self-reflection, and green spaces for picnicking. Being able to bring features of nature inside was also discussed. Several groups brought up the campus that exists in Charlotte where two synagogues, the day school and the JCC all share the same campus. Some mentioned that having larger recreational facilities (e.g., tennis, basketball courts) were an important feature, but others noted that many of these services might already be available at other Richmond Jewish organizations such as the JCC.

Theme 4: Accessibility. Accessibility was defined in terms of ease of access to travel to the site, accessibility to any physical limitation of the elderly, children, pregnant women, and ease of access to specific campus facilities such as restrooms. Physical distance from a campus site was not as important to participants as having efficient parking, accessible restrooms on the same

floor as the sanctuary, and walking paths in good condition. For example, many mentioned the danger of having poorly maintained or uneven sidewalk paths especially for the elderly and young children.

Many accessibility needs relate to safety. Safety includes having a well-lit parking lot and other outside areas, having a well-kept site where you are clearly visible to others, and taking security measures to ensure safety from threats of harm from outside the community. Some mentioned that establishing a security presence such as a security guard for the school and a video-based security system helped them feel safe.

Theme 5: Children. Focus group participants generally agreed that it is important to have spaces for children to play and run around without judgement from others. This might be a separate area in the sanctuary designed for families allowing more room for children to move around or have interactive activities for children associated with the campus site (e.g., treasure hunt). One comment mentioned that children should feel like they are going to "grandma's house, don't want to be there but comfortable." Having a sound-proof space where parents with children could still hear and see the service while tending to their child's needs was also mentioned.

Most Important Features. Responses were provided in all thematic categories including security, flexible spaces, connections to history, comfortable children's areas, and outdoor spaces. Some unique comments mentioned the need to have a building that meets Beth-El membership projections in the future whether they be greater or smaller in number. Food and shared meals were other important features that surfaced.

Design Requirements and Recommendations

Theme	Design Recommendation	Motive/Goal
CONTENT AREA 1: FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH A SPRITUAL COMMUNITY		
Theme 1: Strengthen shared beliefs and values	Flexible space that can change size based on use to bring people "together."	Allow for a feeling of togetherness through faith.
Theme 2: Increase a sense of support	No suggestion	Feel the support of others in the congregation in good and bad times.
Theme 3: Inclusiveness and relationship building	Create a "hub" for social interaction which could include learning, prayer or recreation.	Feel included whether it be with the TBE community, acceptance of new people into the community or creating accessibility for those with additional needs.
Theme 4: Integrate characteristics of other places which invoke a sense of spiritual community	Display art depicting nature, the ocean, Israel and the mountains. Design running water in outdoor spaces. Display pictures from Beth-El events. Spiritual events (Tashlich), life events (weddings), community events (CARITAS).	Strengthen association between Beth-El and other spiritual places to enhance the connection with the physical campus.
Theme 5: Multigenerational	Shared activity spaces and/or strategic building design that increases probability for generations to see each other participating in activities.	Maximize opportunities for contact between multiple generations. This phenomenon is consistent with identity formation and provides an opportunity to strengthen community identity.
CONTENT AREA 2: FUNCTIONS OF A CAMPUS SITE		
Theme 1: Gathering space for community	A "lounge" area with food or coffee available and comfortable seating, good lighting, Wi-Fi. Possible recreational space for study, TV or movie viewing, or playing games.	Create a comfortable, inviting space that provides togetherness.
Theme 2: Jewish identity	Prayer space allowing for group prayer and individual reflection.	A safe space to explore and practice spirituality.
Theme 3: Support for important life events & social activities	Updated event space for celebrating weddings, bar/bat mitzvahs, Shabbat or holiday meals. Need better aesthetics.	Be able to come together for the less formal celebration of events by having adequate, welcoming, and attractive space(s).
Theme 4: Learning	Combination of library space with books that is well organized and a space to learn in groups or individually with access to technological resources. A comfortable space for all ages.	Support education and learning (formal and informal).
CONTENT AREA 3: FEATURES OF A PRAYER SPACE		
Theme 1: Prayer space experience	Design should provide a sense of joy, peace, comfort, awe and inspiration. A connection to G-d and the community.	Provide space for people to feel moved, connected to G-d, and each other.
Theme 2: Design of the bimah and sanctuary	Flexible space or possibly multiple size spaces available for prayer. Responses on look and feel (modern versus traditional) were not unanimous.	Provide designated sanctuary space that feels holy and sacred.

Theme 3: Comfort and access	Accessibility for those with disabilities or physical limitations and children. Flexible, comfortable seating. Access from outside the buildings, closer parking, bathrooms on sanctuary level. Technology to allow access to those who cannot physically participate (live streaming). Accessible bimah.	Provide ability for all ages and abilities to utilize and participate in physical space.
Theme 4: Aesthetics	Better sound and light (natural, too), listening devices for those with hearing challenges, and Jewish symbols part of design. Comfortable seating.	Provide physical comfort and a good environment for participation in services.
CONTENT AREA 4: FEATURES OF A BUILDING		
Theme 1: Kitchen	Milk and meat kitchens. Updated commercial kitchen space with the ability to accommodate cooking for larger and smaller events and possibly cooking classes for children or adults.	
Theme 2: Learning Spaces	Flexible learning spaces for different size groups, different ages and formal or informal learning. Technology is important – Wi-Fi, charging capabilities, interactive learning tools. Possibly smart boards and computers in classrooms.	
Theme 3: Outdoor Spaces	Space for play or outside social activity or gatherings (eating, enjoying nature, individual or group space). Bring nature inside.	
Theme 4: Accessibility	Ease of physical access, parking, access to restrooms. Well maintained sidewalks, etc. Safety- good lighting, video monitoring.	
Theme 5: Children	Indoor space to play or let off steam. Separate space (soundproof) for families to enjoy services, when needed.	

Notes from Several Focus Group Recordings

1. **What does Spiritual Community Mean to You?**
    a. A community that worships together
    b. A group with the same focus who care about each other
    c. Can be subgroups – geographic, age, degree of commitment, spirituality
    d. Place of recognition – we are proud, we feel safe
    e. Involvement
    f. Community I pray with and who supports me in time of need, also celebrates with me
    g. Synagogue
    h. Safe place for family to feel comfortable being Jewish – like-minded, comfort level
    i. Physical location
    j. Central place to start but it expands beyond those walls – learn with, go out to Shabbas dinner
    k. No clique groups – don't want different factions – common goal
    l. Diverse sense of belonging regardless of core values
    m. Large family
    n. Oneness – multiple age groups, backgrounds, coming together to do various activities (not just prayer)
    o. Supporting each other in a relationship with a higher power
    p. Mutual support in happy/sad times
    q. Sense of common purpose – help & support each other when needed
    r. A community that meets religious needs of that community
    s. Includes members and all Jews in the community
    t. Generational mentorship
    u. Non-Jewish spouses feel excluded – more Hebrew, etc.
    v. Helping each other grow and develop spiritually (we're at different places individually)
    w. Inclusive – you can connect however you desire to
    x. Sanctuary – dedicated holy space for Torah/holding services (don't like a multi-function space that includes Torah Ark); doesn't have to be big; don't want to have lunch in front of the Torah
    y. Any place people can gather to share in worship (can be informal or formal)
    z. People coming together with a shared value which has a connection with G-d
    aa. A place you can feel at home and connect with a larger group of people with shared values (being together in good, bad or indifferent times)
    bb. Children should be happy, involved and comfortable
    cc. Not building – liturgy is important & being familiar; service, continuity, leadership are important; people
    dd. Welcoming
    ee. Warm, caring, family atmosphere

2. **Spiritual Community in 1 or 2 words (1 facilitator posed this question):**
    a. Belief system
    b. Knowledge
    c. Involvement
    d. Ethics
    e. Observance

3. **What are the overall functions of a Synagogue Space?**
    a. Multipurpose
    b. Home or hub
    c. House of prayer, learning, assembly
    d. Adaptability
    e. Integrated site that meets the needs of those who wish to participate

f. Place that works for us – have to make it work now and making do now
g. Accessibility
h. Special at entry – beautiful; generations have been there before and future, too
i. Inviting, warm atmosphere
j. Bring people together – be there for others & they can be there for you
k. Somewhere you'd like to pray
l. Somewhere family can come and participate in different activities (celebrate); a place that can be bigger or smaller based on attendance
m. Administrative offices, Hebrew school, place for education, space for kids to run around
n. Place for parents to build community
o. Place people can come and stay (parents don't drop off and leave)
p. Space where children feel comfortable and understand spirituality
q. Younger kids not in temple except for bar/bat mitzvahs – parents don't come so kids don't see a family connection to synagogue (lost connection by having separate spaces)
r. Smaller class size – kids came more often, sat together instead of with parents when classes were bigger; also now that classes are smaller, don't have as many bar/bat mitzvahs to come to
s. Older members used to invite newer members in – sit together, give candy, invite out (created a sense of family)
t. Families were more involved – parents need to want to be there, feel involvement is important
u. Allow for building of relationships – get together, pray together, learn together
v. Once kids were bar/bat mitzvah in older times, the kids had been to temple, it was natural for them to keep attending services
w. Lifecycle events and everything in between
x. Would like a youth lounge – USY, hang out for homework, after services, foosball?
y. Prayer
z. Social
aa. School
bb. Administrative
cc. Bring people in community to one space (all ages, etc.)
dd. No longer have USY, girl scouts – person said high was 15 people and lots of stuff was done in homes
ee. A place where you feel there is something bigger than yourself
ff. Spiritual, community – hold various size events; place to gather; flexibility in space
gg. Feel connected – kids and adults (kids aren't as connected to Grove)
hh. Education – place for adults and kids
ii. Kosher kitchen, outdoor space
jj. Support to others – life stages and phases, different levels of support
kk. Ability to be quiet by yourself
ll. Jewish lifecycle events
mm. Preserve, practice and grow sacred traditions of our faith
nn. Not just the space – the people/connection
oo. Conversion space/mikveh (serves larger purpose than just Beth-El members)
pp. Accessible – for physical and other types of challenges; restrooms on same floor; bad parking (needs to be more efficient; challenging), bimah not accessible for some
qq. Takes advantage of natural light
rr. Green building techniques, energy efficient
ss. Transportation for those who cannot drive
tt. Have members who cannot attend services due to disability – could we broadcast/stream services for those members
uu. Can't be buried together if non-Jewish spouse
vv. Could we perform interfaith marriages (issue with movement) – relevant to the idea of inclusivity; these kinds of issues may be more important than physical space and location

4. **What are the benefits of a spiritual community? (only 1 facilitator posed this question)**
   a. Not alone – even if you go alone
   b. Comfort
   c. New friends
   d. Anchor
   e. Safe harbor/ understanding – safe to be yourself
   f. Continuity through generations
   g. Feeling of belonging
   h. Familiarity
   i. Calming, brings peace and perspective

5. **What characteristics are most important in a synagogue or congregational facility?**
   a. One group was asked for 5 words or less
      i. Space
      ii. Shape
      iii. Form
      iv. Color
      v. Accessibility
      vi. Comfort
      vii. Safety
      viii. Ritual objects
      ix. Climate control
      x. Dignified for worship
      xi. Location – parking, accessibility
      xii. Transportation
      xiii. Tradition
      xiv. Ambiance
      xv. Symbols
   b. Welcoming
   c. Flexible/multifunctional
   d. A single campus is ideal
   e. Not sterile
   f. Traditional but comfortable
   g. Warm environment, not sterile or ultra-modern
   h. Embrace history to move forward
   i. Comfortable even if you don't want to be there
   j. Encourage relationships
   k. Intimacy
   l. Place that can grow
   m. Convenient location
   n. Parking
   o. Expandable sanctuary – flexible space (from minyan to high holidays)
   p. Light and airy
   q. Some like tradition
   r. Physical comfort
   s. Keep stained glass windows
   t. Some people may not want to be in close proximity to others when praying (this is being inclusive, too – meeting the needs of these people)
   u. Want to have a place where people want to be
   v. Quality sound system
   w. System for hearing impaired

x. More nature (see outside)
y. Social hall to celebrate, provide meeting places
z. Classrooms
aa. Multi-purpose space
bb. Functioning office for staff
cc. Energy efficiency
dd. Accessible to foot traffic, bus
ee. Accessible bathrooms
ff. Less imperial pulpit – pulpit configured so people can also sit on the sides for a different perspective and also makes the bimah more a part of the congregation
gg. Hang out space for adults
hh. Inspired by a sense of history and grandeur (contemporary space is uninspiring)
ii. Newer people may not have same sense of history
jj. Place for children to participate or not
kk. Milk/meat kitchens
ll. Need to acknowledge those who want cultural Judaism
mm.   Office space should be more welcoming and updated
nn. Functional foyer – not enough space, need better flow
oo. Flexibility for smaller space – don't like Kiddush room
pp. Charlotte-style campus – probably can't get that here (synagogues, JCC, Hebrew school on same site)
qq. Community Hebrew school at JCC (gathering space due to other activities available) – has been attempted in Richmond (and has been done before); but lots of territorial issues now
rr. Families with young children should have space to hear service while children play (quiet room)
ss. Meeting/learning space – flexible, comfortable
tt. Social – warmer, more comfortable, place for bar/bat mitzvah parties (needs to look and feel better)
uu. Seats – too small for some, not comfortable
vv. Library – needs more space and organization
ww.   Technology capacity – wiring, configuration of space, equipment; educational space; congregation who can't come (simulcasting services)
xx. Can't dwell on the past – can't recreate the way things were
yy. Main sanctuary
zz. Restrooms on same level
aaa.   Handicapped accessible
bbb.   Nice reception space for events – updated, flexible, multipurpose
ccc. Flexible space for other groups – can't have designated space for each function, too many spaces
ddd.   Limit size of space to consolidate people into smaller space
eee.   Kid's area like balcony foyer
fff. Educational facility/area – library, inviting
ggg.   Green space
hhh.   Medium sized worship space (have large and small now) – could be handled by having flexible space
iii. Kitchen facilities – commercial, modern, updated, accessible to where people are

6. **What are the most important physical attributes of the space? (1 facilitator posed this question)**
    a. Air condition
    b. Heat
    c. Good lighting
    d. Good sound system
    e. Acoustics
    f. Amplification
    g. Proper maintenance (repairs on a regular basis, safe)

h. Don't need body mikes (some do/ some don't)
i. Comfortable seating
j. Ease of movement within space

7. **What kind of things would make a synagogue campus more of an indispensable part of your life?**
   a. Living facility
   b. Campus
   c. Recreation facility for all ages
   d. Community
   e. Multi-purpose
   f. Mixed-use community for all ages
   g. Charlotte – café, campus style – JCC, parking deck, camp space, outdoor space, reform temple, conservative temple; this is a good model (meets all needs in one place and doesn't require driving from place to place; Would be a bigger target at a campus (security)
   h. Someone commented that there are synagogue cliques and JCC cliques
   i. Want Beth-El to be "go to" place
   j. Would be compelling for both conservative temples to join together to make these space goals a reality (provide resources to make it happen)
   k. No synagogue (except Beth Ahabah) has the numbers in terms of kids – need to provide a connection to the Jewish community for kids
   l. Outdoor space – families; a break from services; weddings; group activities; Kiddush

8. **What are other places that invoke a sense of spiritual community?**
   a. Cemetery, Bliley's chapel (gathering of community/connectedness)
   b. Park
   c. JCC
   d. Garden
   e. RTA
   f. Yeshiva
   g. Nature
   h. People singing together – music is important (need space for choir, musicians)
   i. Mountain top
   j. Beach
   k. Running water
   l. Chabad sanctuary (since renovation) – simple aesthetically, Zen, light-filled, ark is gorgeous, feel very accepted, mikveh is gorgeous

9. **What should a prayer space communicate to you as a worshiper?**
   a. Calm
   b. Peaceful
   c. Awe-inspiring
   d. Inclusion – familiarity with prayers (changes to tunes or not transliteration precludes people from participating)
   e. Sense of sacredness
   f. Hate drums
   g. See friends, hear tunes that you know
   h. Tradition of repetitiveness
   i. Don't like music
   j. Not fond of body mike
   k. Good lighting, acoustics
   l. Warmth of feeling
   m. Comfortable seats

n. Feel like you're in a sacred space
o. Updated classroom space
p. It's mine, not just for clergy
q. Peaceful, calm, personal
r. Create a setting that connects kids to learning
s. Sense of belonging
t. Ritual objects
u. Space to be used throughout year
v. Space away from the world (retreat)
w. Sanctuary from world

10. How do you want to feel in a prayer space?
a. Included
b. Comfortable
c. Peaceful
d. Calming
e. Inclusive
f. Coming home when coming to shul
g. Clique free
h. Friendly
i. Adequate lighting
j. Supported
k. Welcomed
l. Surrounded by people who are doing what you're doing (participation)
m. Knowledgeable – at least parts of service are familiar
n. Rejuvenated, uplifted
o. Physically moved
p. Not be bored – learn something new (Torah); not repeat over and over; teach new melodies
q. Feel like G-d knows where I'm at
r. Comfortable
s. Want person giving sermon to inspire, not give a lecture
t. Feel comfortable not participating, but just being there
u. Why are melodies being changed?

11. What should a prayer space help you express?
a. Respect for others
b. Feeling of awe/reverence
c. Be with the community but also be able to have your personal moment
d. Familiarity
e. Place to express sadness (feel safe)
f. Feel rooted
g. Personal feelings
h. Pride
i. Comfort
j. Peace
k. Joy
l. Should feel happier than when you came
m. Space is irrelevant – I can pray anywhere
n. Comfortable chair – one you can fit in and more space in-between chairs
o. Can be introspective or communal – whatever you're feeling
p. Inclusive
q. Connectedness

12. **What type of educational spaces should there be?**
    a. Preschool through high school classrooms
    b. Recreational space
    c. Place to meet, study, watch movies, guest speakers
    d. Be nice for teachers to be at services
    e. Educational opportunities for adults – interesting and scheduled at times they can come
    f. Richmond Community Hebrew School – would take care of the issue of small classes
    g. Classrooms of various sizes (use based on size of class)
    h. Conference room/meeting room for adult education
    i. Do we need a large library? – maybe just resources; a learning resource center; need books that are relevant; at the school, library is the hub and needs comfortable furniture
    j. Classroom, library
    k. Safe
    l. Updated equipment/technology
    m. Hands-on learning
    n. Functional, flexible
    o. Conducive to learning (not a blank room)
    p. Educationally appropriate for all ages
    q. Outdoor space
    r. Playground
    s. Use sanctuary space for learning – space should be familiar
    t. Accessible to other spaces

13. **What kind of connections should a prayer space help to facilitate for you? (1 facilitator posed this question)**
    a. Learning
    b. Past generations and future
    c. Community
    d. Comfortable/accepting of family and children

14. **What do you like to do with other temple members? (2 facilitators posed)**
    a. Socialize
    b. Work on projects/committees at temple
    c. Tashlich at folk festival
    d. Holiday meals with others who maybe don't have a place they fit
    e. Havurah
    f. Be invited by others
    g. Junior Congregation with meals afterwards
    h. Events to connect people – off site (museum, trips, theatre)
    i. Shabbat – social hall open for socialization and game playing
    j. Reaching out to young families
    k. Onegs – have lost social interactions without this
    l. Bring back college graduates
    m. Hard to feel connected if you don't get together outside of services
    n. Facilitate bonds between congregants
    o. Eat – current option is to pay $20 for not such great food (too expensive); would be nice to sign up and be together to cook at TBE; have classes to learn how to use kitchen
    p. Travel/Trips – Israel; Red Sox game
    q. Live life, enjoy, get together to celebrate life events
    r. Bars, breweries
    s. People are split into separate groups – need broader groups

15. Anything else?
   a. Analysis of demographics and zip code analysis
   b. Inclusiveness – interfaith couples/families; diversity; new members
   c. Manage participation in services – we used to have Fern Kaufmann who was tenacious in keeping people involved and reading Torah
   d. Need more volunteers for the office or people to make phone calls or volunteer in general
   e. Need people to show up for planned programs
   f. Collaboration – synagogues, JCC, Federation, Hadassah (instead of competing with each other); engage U of R/VCU students
   g. Security
   h. Parking (safety at night)
   i. Cleanliness
   j. Need to be better at welcoming non-Jewish spouses
   k. Convenient, easily accessible location
   l. Go back to past studies done (same things keep coming up)
   m. Bricks and mortar are not going to solve diverse issues
   n. Need solid programming; need people to choose TBE over other activities