Building Committee Report
June 10, 2016

The purpose of this report is to provide to the June 26 Church Conference an update of the activities of the Building Committee during the 2015/2016 church program year. As of the Jun 10 date of this report, plans for the implementation of the building program approved at the May 1, 2016 Church Conference are nearing completion, and construction is expected to begin in late June or early July.

At the end of the previous program year, the June 28, 2015 Church Conference approved a facility improvement program recommended to it by the Facility Study Committee. The $5.2 million program consisted of the addition of a new chapel on the south side of the existing narthex, the renovation of our parking lot and several other infrastructure upgrades. Following the approval of the proposed building program, the Facility Study Committee was transformed into the Building Committee.

During the summer and autumn months of 2015, the Building Committee supported the Pave the Way Capital Campaign that was organized and carried out by the Capital Campaign Committee. The Campaign resulted in Pave the Way pledges totaling about $2.44 million at the end of 2015. To align the building program with the funds available, the Committee formulated a revised program that included the parking lot renovation and other infrastructure upgrades but excluded the proposed new chapel. This revised program was presented to and authorized by a Church Conference on November 30, 2015.

In early January, the Building Committee began the process of hiring the professional services necessary for the parking lot renovation. The Committee initiated discussions with Doug Sacra of Maple Hill Architects, who had previously worked with the Facility Study Committee. However, before an agreement was reached, Gregg Yanchenko, a principal of Helene Karl Architects, Inc. (HKA) and a member of the SUMC congregation, generously offered to provide as a gift to SUMC the architectural and engineering services for the design and oversight of the construction of the parking lot. At its February 9 meeting, the Committee voted appreciatively to accept Gregg Yanchenko’s offer. Gregg engaged Hancock Associates (HA) to provide the necessary civil engineering services.

The design of the new parking lot began with a geotechnical analysis of soil composition using data obtained from ten test pits dug in the parking lot. The data revealed the existence of a layer of glacial till, a dense material that would inhibit the infiltration of storm water and cause it to flow instead into the septic system leaching fields. To avoid this unacceptable outcome, the engineers specified a traditional catch basin and drain pipe drainage system that would not allow raising the grade of the parking lot up to the level of the Sanctuary entrance, as proposed in last year’s facility study. Consequently, we will meet our goal of providing a front entrance to the Sanctuary for all persons, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, through a combination of an increase in the grade of the parking lot and well-designed ramps on each side of four steps that will maintain the aesthetics of the existing building.

A related goal of the parking lot renovation is to improve the drainage of the courtyard between the Sanctuary and Hawes Hall, along with enhancing the entrances to Hawes Hall and the educational wing. During the design of these improvements, Gregg Yanchenko extended his offer of free architectural services to encompass all the interior projects as well as the parking lot and building entrance renovations. The Building Committee was again pleased to accept Gregg’s generous offer, including the objective of completing all the construction during the summer and autumn of 2016 instead of spreading the work over three or four years as previously planned, to achieve the following benefits:

- Reduction of the time-dependent overhead costs of the construction program.
- Elimination of the risk of construction cost increases in future years.
• Avoidance of construction fatigue and burn-out of the Building Committee and the congregation.
• Allowing church leaders and Building Committee members to refocus sooner on the mission of the church instead of on the infrastructure that supports the mission.
• Avoidance of repeated periods of disruption of the daily activities of the church, the Sunny Hill Preschool and other building users.
• Substantial reduction of the architectural and engineering design and oversight costs.

The design of enhanced entrances to Hawes Hall and the educational wing led to another major change in the previously proposed building program—the creation of a common entrance to Hawes Hall, Davison Chapel and the educational wing, including Sunny Hill. The proposed new ADA-compliant entrance will provide a foyer and direct access to Davison Chapel, eliminating the existing Hawes Hall front entry steps and out-of-code ramp. To provide the space for the entrance foyer, the existing kitchen will be renovated and moved to the space currently occupied by the stage in Hawes Hall. The new common entrance will provide a more functional and more accessible chapel and a multi-use foyer that can accommodate Davison Chapel and Hawes Hall overflows. Both of these latter spaces will also receive renovations.

The completion of the building program in 2016 will require bridge loan financing to enable timely payment of the contractors, since the Pave the Way donations are pledged over a five-year period.

During the month of April, members of the Building Committee presented concept drawings and explained the revisions to the proposed building program at commission meetings and after worship during coffee hour. On April 17, architect Gregg Yanchenko and the Committee described the program at a congregational meeting.

In late April, the Parsonage, Buildings and Locations Committee of the Central Massachusetts District affirmed the building program content, schedule and financing proposed by the SUMC Building Committee as required in the UMC Book of Discipline, clearing the way for approval of the plans by a Church Conference, which was convened on May 1. The Church Conference authorized the Building Committee to proceed during the summer and autumn of 2016 with the detailed design and construction of the following facility improvements, limiting their total cost, including interest on any short-term bridge financing, to the total pledged Pave the Way donations:

• Parking lot renovation and basement drainage upgrades
• Handicap access improvements including Sanctuary front entrance ramps and a new entrance to Hawes Hall, Davison Chapel and the educational wing
• New entrance foyer to Davison Chapel and Hawes Hall
• Davison Chapel upgrades
• Kitchen relocation and renovation and Hawes Hall upgrades
• New modern heating system
• Sprinkler installation (fire protection) throughout the facility
• Sunday School, Youth and Grapple room upgrades under the Sanctuary and Hawes Hall
• Chancel renovations to add flexibility and accessibility
• New energy-efficient windows in HH and the educational wing (budget permitting)
• Handicapped person restroom in Sanctuary Narthex (budget permitting)

Following the May 1 Church Conference, architect Gregg Yanchenko has worked with New England Builders and Contractors (NEBC), Hancock Associates and other licensed professionals, including
electrical and mechanical engineers and an acoustical consultant, to specify design details and construction costs for the components of the approved building program. The Building Committee has reviewed the designs to ensure that they meet the needs and expectations of the Committee as well as the needs of building users. A kitchen advisory group composed of SUMC kitchen users has provided input to the design and equipping of the new kitchen. The Committee has also worked with Gregg and his team to minimize the disruption of the activities of building users during construction. Current floor plan and front elevation drawings are attached to this report.

Inspections by the electrical engineers revealed that the electrical distribution system in the building is dangerously deteriorated and fractionated and will require extensive rewiring to ensure that it is safe and meets current building code requirements, adding to the costs of the improvement projects.

Gregg Yanchenko and NEBC are designing the various projects to be completed within a total construction budget of $2.3 million. Adding the expected loan costs of $140,000 brings the total forecast expenses to the $2.44 million limit established by the Committee based on the pledges received through the end of 2015. Once construction has begun, the Committee will encourage Pave the Way donors to accelerate the payment of their pledges if possible, thereby reducing the interest costs incurred.

As of May 31, an additional $28,000 had been pledged or donated and set aside as a reserve against unfulfilled pledges. These totals do not include $98,000 recently designated to Pave the Way by the Trustees ($48,000 from the Larson Fund) and the Sunny Hill Committee ($50,000 from the Sunny Hill Facilities Fund). The Building Committee will determine what portion of the $98,000 will be added to the current $2.3 million construction budget and how much will be held in reserve to cover unexpected contingencies and furnishings for the new facilities.

To provide the required bridge financing, the Committee has arranged for a 4.25%, 20-year loan from the Middlesex Savings Bank. A Commitment Letter has been executed, and the Loan Agreement will close on July 26. The Committee fully expects to pay off the loan in five years or less, depending on the receipt of Pave the Way pledge payments (there is no prepayment penalty). The 20-year term will allow lower scheduled loan payments and protect the church from default in case of fluctuations in the pledge payment cash flow.

Depending on the receipt of the required permits from the Town of Sudbury and the execution of the construction contracts, Gregg and NEBC are planning to begin construction on the interior projects in late June or early July. Work on the parking lot will likely begin in late July.

The Building Committee has met 20 times to date and will continue to meet as necessary to review design proposals prior to and during construction and to monitor work performed and cost incurred during construction.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Morris,
Building Committee Co-Chair

Committee Members: Karen Bowler, Trey Burns, Bill Cooper, Jenny Eaddy, Todj Gozdeck, Chris Heberlig, Patrick Helsingius (Co-Chair), Earnie Stonebraker
  Nancy Hammerton (Lay Leader), Joel Guillemette (Pastor)
  George Gorman (Stewardship & Finance Chair)