

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS RE: FPC PROPOSED FACILITIES MODIFICATIONS

CHURCH BUILDING:

Can we move the church building across the street to sit next to Pilgrim House?

Moving the church building was considered when the roads around the church were being reconfigured. We looked at whether streets could be closed to provide a place to move the church. But the decision was made by the Town and Maine DOT to keep the streets open, so the church cannot be relocated next to Pilgrim House. Additional roadblocks to moving the church include the fact that we do not own enough land onto which to fit the church building, there are restrictions on the amount of impermeable space we are allowed on the land that we do own, and the Maine State Historic Trust has indicated it would oppose moving the church building away from its present location.

Shouldn't we move the nursery to the church building?

The Council sought input from the Children and Family Ministries Team about this idea and learned that they are fine with the nursery remaining in Pilgrim House. Technology has improved such that parents can receive texts during the service rather than rely on the old pager system, it is helpful to have other teachers just down the hall, and it is more convenient for parents to have their kids all in the same building.

Why not build more on the church building side of the street to address our fellowship needs?

The Town of Brunswick, not First Parish, owns the land next to the vestry. We asked the Town to transfer the vacant land to First Parish and the Town Council responded that they were not willing to transfer the land if the Church is not proposing to use the land, but that they might be willing to do so if a building proposal were presented. However, there is no assurance that the town would choose to transfer the land in that event.

Expansion of the vestry would not resolve space and repair issues at Pilgrim House and would not provide enough space for large gatherings.

Has our sanctuary changed since it was built? If so, how?

Our current sanctuary was built in 1846. When it was built there were no stained glass windows, no lights (just candles), no reredos, no sounding board, no vestry and no Morrell Room. The platform at the front of the church was built later for Bowdoin commencement exercises. The choir loft could fit only an organist and four people.

FRONT OF SANCTUARY:

Why doesn't the present proposal include a lift or ramp to the chancel/pulpit?

We've been struggling with the options available to make the chancel accessible and we just don't see a good solution. We're not precluding future changes to accommodate a ramp.

Where will the stored items behind the reredos go if we move it back to the Morrell Room stairs?

If the proposed changes to the stairs in the front of the sanctuary are made, there will be less need for what we presently store behind the reredos. As for the pieces we keep, we could store some in

the Morrell Room and some downstairs in the church building in space that opened up when we took out the oil tanks (when we converted to natural gas).

Are we still proposing to decrease the size of the pulpit?

The pulpit will likely be smaller in order to make it moveable. We will also have to relocate the panel box for the lights and the knobs to control the blowers. We assume the microphone will be wireless.

CHOIR LOFT RAILING:

What do choir members want?

In October 2014 the choir was surveyed about sight lines from the choir loft. Twenty members responded. Of the 20, 17 agreed (with varying degrees of priority) that a change to the railing to allow better sightlines to the front of the church would be a welcome change. The remaining 3 felt there either wasn't a good solution, the loft is peaceful as is, or money should be used elsewhere.

Shouldn't we make the choir loft accessible, too?

Ideally, yes. The changes presently under consideration don't preclude making the choir loft accessible at a later date.

PILGRIM HOUSE:

What would it cost to do the needed repairs on Pilgrim House?

As of May 2015, we know we need to replace windows, rewire the building, replace the roof, insulate, fix leaks around the masonry, and build a new ramp. We would also like to install new steel doors and make the first floor bathroom ADA compliant.

How long would it take for a new Pilgrim House to be operational and where would our administrative offices and Learning Land go in the interim?

We just don't know.

Would a new Pilgrim House include a basement?

Most likely it would not.