

Architectural Feasibility Group Pros and Cons

Features Common to All Three Options

- All three options will be “green” buildings that will be designed and built to come as close as possible to zero net energy usage and sustainability. Each will offer lower energy costs, feature multiple heating zones, etc.
- All three options have the potential to save and incorporate the stained glass murals (though it is possible that different locations may affect our eligibility for certain grants)
- All three options are likely to cost the congregation about the same amount of money after all factors are taken into consideration. (For example, a new building on a new site would yield money from the sale of the current site, but a new site would involve substantial site development costs.)

Option 1: Renovate Existing Building & Add On

Pros

- Liberal religious presence downtown
- Retain emotional connection to building and site
- Intown location – on bus line, near businesses, accessible to foot traffic, and drop ins, visible to visitors and students (e.g., wayside pulpit)
- Accessible to walkers from the neighborhood, Umass and Amherst College
- Perhaps more reuse and recycling of building material—less material in landfill
- Does not add another building to landscape & contribute to sprawl
- Would be a “deep energy retrofit” and so possible eligible for related funding
- May be eligible for “historical building” grants
- Possible shared energy with neighbors
- Some income from parking lot

Cons

- Limited expansion possibility
- Very limited in design options—need to have sanctuary in rear with a less-than-desirable square shape; front entrance goes into social space
- Requires building more “useless” space—stairways, hallways, elevator shaft, etc.
- Possible added expense and aggravation of dealing with town and neighbors
- Parking an issue, particularly during the week
- Likely need to relocate during construction
- No playground or garden (unless we used a “green roof”)
- Elevator adds new operating cost (several thousand per year)
- Significant amount of space below grade

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Option 2 – Build New Building on New Location

Pros

- May have more room to grow & greater flexibility for building design (e.g., having one story with no elevator or stairs; arranging space for maximum efficiency)
- Possibility of playground for children, garden & more green space
- Onsite parking for all
- Sale of existing site may provide some working capital
- Existing building can be used while we build
- No lease or title issues
- Single-story design would mean less need to build useless space—elevator shaft, stairways

Cons

- No downtown religious presence (if, as is likely, new building is not downtown)
- Uncertainty of original building future
- No buses, visibility, access to shops and restaurants, etc. (if, as is likely, new building is not downtown)
- Accessibility to current walkers unknown
- Urban sprawl -Green movement is toward town centers, not away from it
- One-story design has more skin than two-story design, which is inherently less efficient
- May become less attractive to current renters (Family Center)
- Unknown neighbors, possible NIMBY issues

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Option 3: Build New Building on Current Location

Pros

- Liberal religious presence downtown
- Retain emotional connection to site and has potential to maintain appearance of old building (same façade, etc.)
- Intown location – on bus line, near businesses, accessible to foot traffic and drop ins, visible to visitors and students (e.g., wayside pulpit)
- Accessible to walkers from the neighborhood, Umass and Amherst College
- Does not add a new building to landscape & contribute to sprawl
- Better design than Option 1—more flexibility in meeting our space needs on current site (e.g., possibility of having our sanctuary in the front of the building)
- Possible shared energy with neighbors
- Some income from parking lot

Cons

- Limited expansion possibilities
- Perhaps reuse/recycle fewer materials than Option 1
- Possible added expense and aggravation of dealing with town and neighbors
- Requires building more “useless” space—stairways, hallways, elevator shaft, etc.
- Parking an issue, particularly during the week.
- Likely need to relocate during construction
- No playground or garden (unless we used a “green roof”)
- Elevator adds new operating cost (several thousand per year)
- Significant amount of space below grade