

Shaari-ing Sessions Summary

(Version June 17, 2026)

Dreaming of our Building

1. Overall Building:

- Better lighting in sanctuary, upstairs lobby, social hall
- **Freshen/modernize the color palette (carpeting / paint / fixtures); making it more comfortable and welcoming for people to come and participate**
- Power-wash the building/façade needs refresh
- Roof repairs
- Earthquake-proof or reinforce the building to minimize damage
- Create more intimate smaller spaces for meetings and conversation
- Navigating building is tricky for mobility-challenged individuals (not just lack of bathroom accessibility on main floor)
- Bringing the “outside, in” – windows, plantings

2. HVAC

- Approach HVAC repairs/improvements into building regions; consider cost of each and adding work/regions dependent upon how much money is raised, i.e. if we raise “\$X” we can do this with the HVAC; if we raise this much more \$X, we can do that plus this additional space; etc.

3. Sanctuary

- **Better lighting**
- **Sound system, including to accommodate all including hearing impaired**
- **Accommodate Bluetooth hearing aides**
- **Book holders that actually hold the books**
- **Many seats are broken/seat cushion springs broken so seat stays down**
- Add accessibility / aisles to access seats in long rows; take out certain seats to create more aisles and access
- Upper bimah is so large and unused; make davening space more intimate; enlarge lower bimah since that is used most. A way to close off certain areas for Shabbat and then open up more space as needed (HHs).
- ADA compliant up to the small bima
- Acoustic tiles on ceiling – to help with sound
- Have a second smaller, more intimate davening space
- Would we be able to lower the soaring ceiling to create a more intimate space
- We have to stand on hard linoleum, but the aisles are carpeted – standing on hard surface is difficult
- More natural light coming into the sanctuary; perhaps on either side of the Commandments

4. Bathrooms

- **Accessible bathrooms on main social hall level**
- **Upgrade existing bathrooms** so they don't feel like pre-school bathrooms
- Add sanitary napkin disposal containers
- Move tallis rack outside of ladies' rest room

5. Kitchen Facilities / Social Hall

- Update social hall so it would be more attractive to book more events (CST, private, or otherwise)
- Kasher the kitchen
- Make it usable for caterers to come in
- New cabinetry
- Stainless steel counters
- Replace dishwasher / freezer

6. Children / Youth Community

- Youth lounge
- Toddler play space
- Flex space for youth
- ("if the kids are unhappy, the parents will leave")

7. Other ideas/dreams:

- Re-hang/re-position/more thoughtful placement of our art pieces
- Art gallery with rotating exhibits
- Improve landscaping and usability of the upper courtyard for both youth, families, adults
- Re-landscape greenery seen from social hall windows
- Refresh entry landscaping
- Utilize space behind sanctuary/up a couple of steps with small kitchen in a better way – ideas were for a smaller davening space, toddler/child room for during services, teen-youth lounge, open up to the outside courtyard/playground (or "prayerground") for easy access for young families
- Security – vestibule to enter CST so that one doesn't directly enter the building but instead a security vestibule, where security staff would be (think JCC)
- Use "extra" space more effectively: We have the Pipster contract for now but that is not guaranteed...what can we do with the classroom wing to use that space better or transform to generate revenue
- Youth/teen programming – movie nights, lounge nights, game nights
- Combine congregations/share our space with another congregation that davens independently from CST – since we have so much space; come together for Kiddish lunch
- Publish a kashrut policy for CST/how to bring in food and how placed, served, etc.

Dreaming of our Staffing

1. **Replace Aleksy upon his retirement**
2. **Kitchen and Kiddush lunch assistance; replace Irina**
3. **Spiritual song leader / chazzan**
4. **Programming director / event planner / membership outreach staff**
5. Someone to manage emails received to ensure none go unanswered / implement auto-response and/or email tracking system
6. More daytime programming
7. More senior programming i.e. senior rec center
8. Make Mensch programs more robust and meaningful, like teaching Hebrew; one classroom not enough, add more space, serve kids' Judaic needs better
9. A traditional Hebrew school – religious/Sunday school
10. Start a Junior Congregation to engage young adults/teenagers
11. Start a youth group chapter
12. More robust B'nai Mitzvah program
13. Tap into expertise of congregants for teaching / leading / organizing programs or teaching
14. Offer programming that is not just religion-based but will foster community. For example, there is interest in a gaming group and was suggested that it meets after Kiddush since many people are there already and it could attract other “younger” prospects
15. **Programming suggestions:**
 - a. Monthly cooking classes
 - b. Gaming events (draw younger/middle-aged gaming enthusiasts)
 - c. Social action engagement
 - d. More interfaith / community involvement
 - e. Flags on Veteran's graves for certain holidays
 - f. Beautification projects for the cemetery involving congregants / youth
 - g. Family picnics
 - h. Trivia nights

Dreaming for our Cemetery

- **Sustain and Preserve our sacred burial grounds**
- Beautification projects
- Sidewalk repairs