

St. Jerome Building and Grounds Committee Minutes for November 16, 2010

In attendance: Father David Blanchfield, John Davis (chairperson), John Kuczo, Dan Loch (Finance Committee representative), and John Ostrowski

Fr. David began the meeting at 7:35 pm with a prayer for the parish and for the work of the committee.

John Kuczo, who chaired the parish's past Building & Grounds Committee for 16 years, has joined the current committee.

The October 26 minutes were seconded and approved.

Erik Anderson of Connecticut Electrical Services

John O invited Erik to speak with us about setting up a solar photo-electric system for the parish. Erick has been involved in some 50 solar power projects. He recommended installing a photo-electric system on the roof of the parish school building for our own electrical usage. He urged us to act soon because of rebates of up to 60% currently offered by the Connecticut Clean Energy Fund. Erik's company uses name-brand solar panel manufactured by GE or Siemens and has installed six solar systems thus far. Erik would be glad to put together some cost numbers for the parish, but a ballpark estimate would be around \$120,000.

Such an expense, of course, would require diocesan approval. At present the parish has a diocesan contract with ConEd as its electric supplier/generator and CL&P as the electric distributor.

Ensuing discussion by the committee determined that the cost was prohibitively expensive. Erick then suggested a third-party power brokerage deal in which the parish would lease the rooftop space to a third party who would sell the parish the power generated by the solar panels. Erik said he would not be the one to secure a third-party broker and a complicating factor is that Connecticut energy laws are changing.

Erik was thanked for his time and information. The committee felt no further action was needed at this time.

Action Plan

- John D suggested that the committee create a list of all the parish systems that need servicing, then decide what to do and in what order.
- The committee recommended we place a notice in the weekly printed bulletin whenever we need bids for a project and, possibly, pulpit announcements to draw attention to the need for bids.

- In addition, the committee suggested that all specs for work for which bids are needed be placed on the parish web site with John D listed as the contact person.

Parish Areas Considered

JOHNSON CONTROLS

- John D researched pneumatic heating/cooling systems on the Internet and talked with a number of people who have retrofitted such systems to a low-voltage electrical system, the outcome most desired by the parish. John found that fewer and fewer companies service pneumatic systems and have the parts to repair pneumatic systems. John also pointed out that the parish pneumatic system has no programmable timer, only a clock.
- Ray Cassidy, who was not able to attend the meeting, e-mailed information that confirmed that because of the age of the parish pneumatic system replacement parts are difficult to obtain and that there may not be a less expensive alternative to Johnson Controls. Ray suggested negotiating with Johnson Controls for a less expensive contract. At present the parish has a \$1,900 service contract with Johnson Controls and also pays significant sums for replacement parts for the parish's aged pneumatic controls.
- John D felt we needed to have some professionals speak with the committee, examine our parish systems, and give us advice. John O will arrange for Mazar HVAC (Heating, Ventilation, and Air-conditioning) to speak with us and to look at the parish pneumatic system and the rectory mold problem at no charge.
- The committee was inclined to think that it made little sense, given the great cost and very considerable labor involved, to replace the current pneumatic system with an electrical one if the current pneumatic system still works.

SEPTIC SYSTEM

- At present the parish pays about \$1,000 each quarter to Dexter Sutherland to pump out the septic tank. There have been two overflows in the school and twice blockages (possibly from tree roots) needed to be cleared. The leaching/greenfields are behind the daycare playground and that area now is full of fairly mature trees.
- Fr. David suggested we ask Dexter Sutherland to evaluate our septic system. John D proposed that instead we ask a supplier other than our usual supplier.
- John K proposed that we get costs for hooking up with the city sewer system. Others felt it would be more expensive to hook up than to repair the current septic system because the septic lines feed behind the rectory, not its front, and would have to be extensive and highly expensive to make it to the city sewers.

LEAKING CHURCH ROOF

- The major leaks have been over the left front of the roof, over the newly-installed audio-visual system controls. The leaks stem from deficient shingles from the manufacturer installed when the church was re-roofed. The manufacturer is no longer in business. Tavella Roofing already does church roof repairs at low cost.
- John D suggested the roof be repaired in section as we can afford. John O felt the valley side be done first and recommended there be an ice-shield on the whole church roof, if affordable.
- John O will recommend several roofers, will develop roof repair specs after Thanksgiving, and will get three bids.

RECTORY MOLD

- Mazur HVAC will inspect this when they come to examine the pneumatic controls system.

CHURCH HALL DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY FUSE BOX

- John D estimates it will cost \$5,000 to install an actual on-off switching system for the church hall lights as a replacement for the current fuse-box on-off system. He felt we should still get three bids for the work.

CHURCH HALL KITCHEN GREASE TRAP

- Since we cook for about 250 people a year, we need a plumber to install a kitchen grease trap. At present the grease is going into the septic system and adding to its problems.

IN-GROUND HEATING-OIL TANKS

- The parish has two of these, one smaller tank that is close to the surface and in front of the rectory and a second larger tank under the blacktop beside the front pines near the church hall.
- John K remembered that Divine Brothers had inspected the larger tank a few years ago and pronounced that it was in fine condition.
- The committee decided to wait and take no action on the in-ground oil tanks, possibly until the next city and/or state in-ground oil tank amnesty program.

GROUNDS IMPROVEMENT

- The strip of land alongside East Rocks Road has largely been done. The brush has been removed and only raking, planting of grass, and placing down of mulch remains.

Future Plans

EXTENSION OF CHURCH HALLWAY

- Intentions remain for building a future multi-purpose room (to serve for a “crying room” and for various other activities) to be built onto the front of the current church hallway (the hall between the church and the school

building). Architect's drawings of past proposals for such a room were reviewed. No further action was taken for now.

CHURCH FRONT CEMENT STEPS

- John K pointed out the need to re-do the severely-cracked cement front steps to the church. In fact, the brick work on the church building and on the parish chimneys may need to be repointed.
- The committee briefly discussed raising money for masonry work on the church front steps through fundraising pavers with a family's or an individual's name on the paver.

Steps to Come

IMMEDIATE

Specs need to be developed for immediate bids for work on the:

1. church roof
2. church hall kitchen grease trap
3. church hall hallway electrical panel.

NEXT

Specs next need to be developed for bids for work on the:

4. septic system
5. pneumatic controls
6. masonry.

The meeting ended at 9:17 PM.

The next meeting is Wednesday, December 15, at 7:30 pm in Room 5 of the school building. *[After the meeting, this was changed to Thursday, December 16, due to absences on December 15 by John D and by Dan.]*

Submitted by:

Dan Loch, Building & Grounds Committee Secretary
December 15, 2010