



ST. MARY'S CAMPUS CONNECTION

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What are we announcing?

- This weekend May 30 & 31st, 2015
- St. Mary's Church in Simsbury is sharing its vision for our parish & school community's campus
- Which we have named "St. Mary's Campus Connection"
- We envision a unified campus that
 - Supports current and future needs of a robust and vibrant community
 - Enhances our community purpose, inclusiveness and pride
 - Includes a vibrant school facility that enhances its mission of Catholic education for both its full time students and weekend religious education
 - Delivers a positive, energetic Catholic Identity through architecture, landscaping, statuary and signage that enhance our faith and practice
 - Occupies contiguous space on Hopmeadow Street
 - Is inviting and contributes to evangelization
 - Serves as a visible northern gateway for Simsbury, consistent with Simsbury's planning and Charette process.
- The vision is the product of the Facilities Working Group (FWG) that Father Matera formed from the strategic planning process in 2013.

2. What does St. Mary's Campus Connection contain?

- A new building that connects St. Mary's Church and School and contains:
 - A divisible Parish Life Center
 - Offices for all staff
 - A new music/art room (also usable for church choir rehearsals)
 - Handicap accessibility to the building and the Church
 - Handicap accessible bathrooms for the Church
 - Covered walking from the north lots to the church sanctuary to enable safe passage from weather and traffic
 - Elevator access to the lower Church
 - A basement with storage facilities
- Construction and upgrades to existing facilities that include:
 - A new school library
 - Retrofitting the Parish Center to include a regulation middle school basketball court, small platform stage, & limited seating for teams & spectators
 - Handicap accessibility to the Church entrance.
 - Upgrading the lower Church
 - Enhancing the traffic flow around the school
 - Expanding parking by 8 spaces
 - Enhanced landscaping
 - Future options for walking accessibility to/from Ironhorse Blvd.
- Removing the existing modular units, and
- Selling the current Parish Offices at 3 Massaco

3. How much will it cost?

- We estimate the entire plan will cost \$4.3 million after funds contributed from Parish assets including the McGowen bequest, sale of 3 Massaco and some capital reserves.
- The estimate includes a budget for contingencies and inflation.

4. Can we build a standalone gym instead of retrofitting the Parish Center?

- Perhaps. The FWG has begun to explore a standalone gym as an option instead of retrofitting the Parish Center.
- A new gym could be located on the site of current modular units.
- We estimate a standalone gym will require an additional \$1.6 million above \$4.3 million for a total of \$5.9 million after funds contributed from parish assets.
- The FWG will evaluate expanding its recommendation to include a standalone gym if it is feasible to raise the entire \$5.9 million.
- A gym will also need the approval of the Town of Simsbury and the Archbishop.
- Significant reconstruction to the existing Parish Center is not feasible from an engineering point of view.
- The FWG has not yet worked through all the details of a standalone gym including site evaluations and impacts on traffic flow and parking.



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5. Is there an option with smaller scope?

- The Town of Simsbury requires us to replace the modular units by 2017.
- To achieve only this goal, the FWG also considered a smaller permanent construction for
 - A music/art room,
 - Library,
 - New school office, and
 - Handicap accessibility and bathrooms for church.
- This option would not include the St Mary's Campus Connection but would also include
 - Retrofitting the Parish Center to include a regulation middle school basketball court, small platform stage, & limited seating for teams & spectators, and
 - Renovation of the lower Church.
- This "must do" option could cost ~\$2.4mm after funds contributed by Parish.

6. I thought school enrollments in Simsbury were declining. Why is the St. Mary's Community investing in the school?

- Public school enrollments in Simsbury and surrounding towns have and are projected to decline by 20%.
- St. Mary School's enrollments have been relatively stable between 210-225 students.
- St. Mary School's attracts students from throughout the Farmington Valley, Bloomfield, New Hartford, Burlington and even Massachusetts.
- The school has a strong board, strategic vision, and financial health.
- St. Mary School's students, parents and alumni are an active and important part of this community, discussion and feasibility study.

7. What is currently within the St. Mary's campus?

- St. Mary's Community currently occupies 6 buildings: the Church, the School, the Parish Center, the Parish Offices, the Rectory, and The Carriage House.
- Five of the buildings are located on the northern end of downtown Simsbury between Hopmeadow Street and Iron Horse Boulevard.
- The Parish Office is located at 3 Massaco.

8. How did the FWG make this recommendation?

- Father Matera formed Facilities Working Group (FWG) from the Parish strategic planning process in 2013.
- The FWG includes the Pastor, two trustees, our business manager and five additional parishioners. One member is an architect. Four members have been on the St. Mary's School Board. Three members have children at St. Mary's school.
- The FWG
 - Inventoried needs of seven broad stakeholder groups and all parish assets
 - Implemented some near term improvements
 - Assessed wide variety of alternatives including land purchases & sales
 - Hired a construction manager & architect to assist in preliminary planning, and
 - Reviewed preliminary plans with town officials
- Father & FWG
 - Gained approval of this stage from Archbishop
 - Shared the recommended option with leadership committees - Parish Council, School Board, Finance Council, and
 - Are presenting results today May 30/31.

9. What are the next steps?

- After this meeting, we are asking each household to complete an on-line or paper survey on their level of support and interest in the project. This will help us assess the project's feasibility. We will also ask interest in a standalone gym.
- Assuming interest and feasibility, Father will form a Steering Committee - composed of Trustees, representatives of parish council, school board, finance committee, and lead fund-raisers.
- The steering committee will hire a professional fund-raiser.

10. Where can I learn more?

- In addition to this weekend's sessions, if you have additional questions - please submit them to fwg@stmarysimsbury.org.
- The FWG will collect, respond, and publish answers to the St. Mary's website on a periodic basis.