

ST. JAMES ARMENIAN CHURCH

SPECIAL PARISH ASSEMBLY OF APRIL 13, 1986

1. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by the chairperson of the Parish Council, Martha Gurahian, at 12:55 PM. Opening prayer by Fr. Kasparian.
2. Quorum: Attendance was 50 voting members, constituting a quorum of 110 church members with voting rights. Three additional members arrived shortly after the quorum count but before any votes were taken.
3. Minutes of pertinent prior meetings: At the direction of the chair, the Recording Secretary of the Parish Council read minutes of the Special Parish Assembly of October 14, 1985, and pertinent excerpts of the Parish Annual Assemblies of 1985 and 1986. Minutes were approved without change.
4. Building Committee Report: George Davidian, Chairman of the Church Building Committee, presented a brief report. Committee members visited three Armenian Parishes that had recently completed building churches or ancillary buildings. Meetings were held with cognizant members and experiences with their Architect-Engineer firms were studied. On the basis of the successful experience of the building of St. Vartan Cathedral in New York, and the extensive background developed by the Architects for that edifice, the Building Committee recommended that the Parish Council initiate contractual negotiations with the firm of Cain, Farrell & Bell for the design of our Church and Assembly Hall. Mr. Davidian also recommended that the entire complex be built at once, rather than by following a piece by piece approach.
5. Financial Report: Dan Mushegian, Chairman of the Building Fund Raising Committee presented his report, after expressing appreciation to the members of his committee. Noting that the collection of pledges will occur over a three year period ending in November 1987, Mr. Mushegian reported that funds presently credited to the account of the Church total \$669,781. In addition, Mr. & Mrs. Mushegian have set aside \$100,000 in a private family foundation, which sum will be released when ground breaking occurs. Although some parishioners have already paid pledges in full, unpaid balance of remaining pledges total about \$200,000, and Mr. Mushegian expressed confidence that this sum would be paid up by November 1987. Additional

funding of at least \$200,000 is needed from "outside" sources, but this will probably depend on a good showing by the St. James community itself which should try to raise another \$245,000. To complete the required funding of \$1,665,000* will require a debt (mortgage) of about \$250,000; this will require monthly payments of approximately \$2,500 to amortise the debt in fifteen years at current interest rates.

A question was raised regarding the annual pledge of \$500 that has been made by some members. It was stated that the \$500 annual pledge will prevail as a commitment unless it is exceeded by a new pledge at a higher level.

Interior furnishings are not included in the estimated costs. It is expected that cost of all interior furnishings would be met by "memorials".

Mr. Mushegian invited questions from the floor. These follow:

1. Since November 1985, what new money has come in?

A. The Committee has been collecting pledges but no new pledges have come in since the gala kick-off last November.

2. Why is extra architectural fee required in case of stone exterior?

A. Additional design effort is needed to detail the stone work.

3. How about expanding the Building Fund Committee?

A. New members would be welcome, and the Committee needs more membership.

6. Motion by Parish Council: The following motion was offered by Martha Gurahian on behalf of the Parish Council and seconded by Ed Essayan:

"The Parish Council moves that: This Parish Assembly authorize the Parish Council to 1) expend an amount not to exceed \$1.5 million for the construction of a church and an auditorium, exclusive of interior furnishings and architectural fees; and 2) to hire the architectural firm of Cain, Farrell & Bell at a capped fee of \$165,000."

Extensive discussion of the motion ensued. Objections raised are summarized as follows:

1. The motion does not call for any further review by the Parish Assembly, nor does it provide a schedule for the completion of plans, submittal to the Diocesan Council, the Town Planning Board, or for initiation and completion of construction.

Ans.: Motion was amended as reported below (Item 7).

2. Can the estimate of \$1.5 million be exceeded?

Ans.: The \$1.5 million is a first estimate. A better estimate will be available when plans are completed; it may be higher or lower than this figure.

*Note: Estimated cost of bare facilities: \$1,500,000; Architect Fee: \$165,000 which is a "capped" maximum unless stone facing is specified by the Church.

3. There does not seem to have been input into the planning by people who will be using the facilities.

Ans.: All the active groups in the Church were sent a letter asking for input into the plans for the church. Some groups responded, and their needs have been given consideration; others have not responded but will be invited to a Building Committee meeting to review needs.

4. The indicated seating capacity of 250 in the church seems too small, particularly in view of anticipated growth of the Westchester community.

Ans.: The Architects will be asked for an estimate of the cost for a church seating 300. If this figure exceeds \$1.5 million, the issue will have to be submitted to the Parish Assembly for approval.

5. Will only one design be produced?

Ans.: Yes. For practical reasons, in dealing with organizations outside the St. James community, such as the Town Planning Board, only one plan can be presented. More would create confusion. It is expected that during the preliminary design, alternate plans will be studied but not detailed. When the plans have been completed, a Parish Assembly will be called.

7. Amendment to the Parish Council Motion (Item 6, above): The Parish Council motion was amended by introduction of underlined wording on motion of Dan Mushegian, seconded by Jack Hachigian, to read as follows:

"The Parish Council moves that: This Parish Assembly authorize the Parish Council, subject to the guidelines of the 10-stage Building Program*, established for meeting our objectives, 1) to expend an amount not to exceed \$1.5 million for the construction of a church and an auditorium, exclusive of interior furnishings and architectural fees; 2) to hire the architectural firm of Cain, Farrell & Bell at a capped fee of \$165,000. It is the expression of this Parish Assembly to attempt to have a ground breaking by the spring of 1987.

The question being called, the amendment was voted and approved unanimously. The amended motion was then voted, and approved unanimously.

8. Adjournment and Closing Prayer: The meeting was adjourned at 1:10 PM, and closing prayer offered by Fr. Kasparian.

Minutes recorded by

Lionel S. Galstaun

Lionel S. Galstaun, Rec. Sec.

Note*

See page 4.

Approved: *Fr. Kasparian*
Rev. Fr. K. Kasparian, Pastor

Martha Gurahian, Chairperson,
Parish Council.

*Note: TEN STAGES OF A BUILDING PROGRAM:

1. Topographical survey of property (this has been completed),
2. Determine what is needed in the structure and where it should be located. (This includes facilities etc. for church organizations)
3. Establish a budget,
4. Hire an architect,
5. Master Plan - from architect.
6. Preliminaries (Plans, elevations etc.) from architect. Present to Parish Assembly and Planning Board. Reconsider budget?
7. Design development,
8. Preparation of working drawings, specifications, bidding documents by architect,
9. Receipt, evaluation and award of bid,
10. Construction.