



Heska Amuna at the Crossroads

Preparing for a vital discussion about our future as a spiritual community

Why are we discussing our future right now?



- Today the Jewish world and our community are changing rapidly
- We seek new possibilities for
 - Worship
 - Study
 - Meaningful Jewish way of life
- What kind of spiritual community do we want and need?
- Pressing issues with our building have accelerated the need for this important conversation.

Heska Amuna at a Crossroads: Our Agenda

Tonight's Objective: Information session to give essential background on issues we will discuss at small group Zoom meetings in April and May.

- **During two weeks in April and May, groups of 8 to 12 will identify:**
 - What type of spiritual community do we want for worship, study, support, social justice involvement, celebration...?
 - What kind of synagogue space will fit those wants and needs?
 - What actions do we need to take at this crossroads moment?
- **Tonight's information session**
 - Information on critical repair needs and costs
 - Potential choices for our future
 - Discussion questions for the Small Group Meetings

“The Wilderness”

A time without a fixed address may allow us to clarify what we need and seek.

We face **two separate but related decisions.**

1. Immediate: Fix or sell our current building – consider other alternatives.

2. Longer-term: Clarify what identity and role we want for Heska Amuna in the Knoxville Jewish community going forward?

Other alternatives: To Build or Not to Build

Entering “The Wilderness”

A time without a fixed address may allow us to clarify what we need and seek.

Menachem Mendel of Kotzk, Gen. 37:15

“Always, when you are lost in life’s ways, at a moment when your soul is confused, you must say to yourself – clarify what you seek, what is your aspiration, and explain your desire – first of all to yourself.”

- Quote provided by Rabbi Ferency

Form follows function: What do we need?

In April and May we will discuss what needs to happen inside our HA spiritual space:

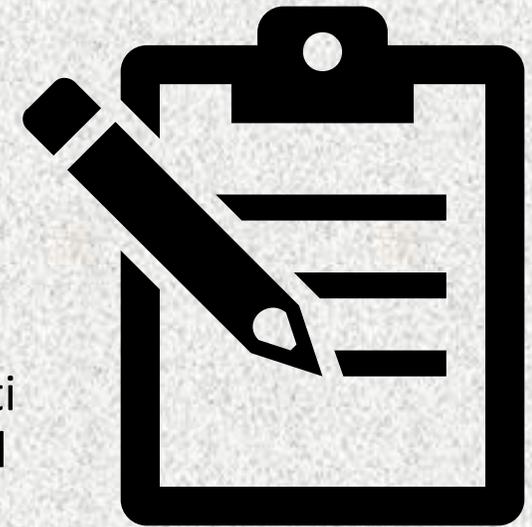
- What is the best version of us?
- What kind of community are we trying to build?
- What needs are not being met right now?
- What barriers or borders do we need to tear down?
- What do we want our community to look & feel like?



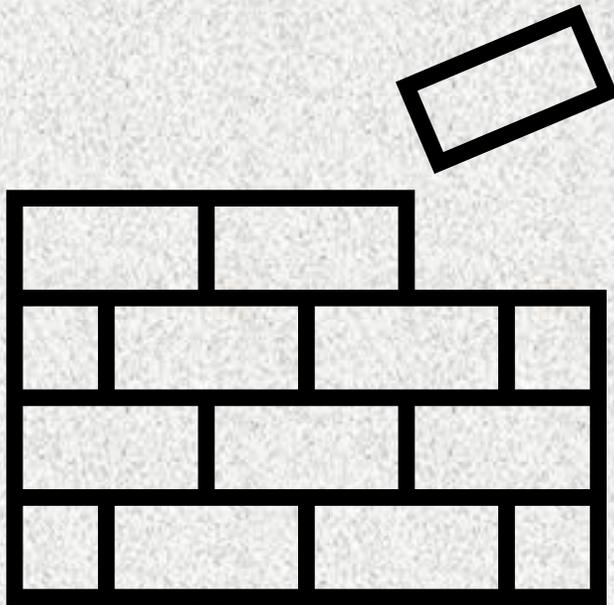
Starting from where we are now....

Building Task Force Actions: July 20-Feb. 21

- Identified and evaluated current status of major building systems: structural, roof, plumbing, electrical, HVAC, safety and fire
- Conducted numerous meetings/discussions and obtained reports from multiple contractors, engineers (structural, plumbing, geo, electrical) commercial realtors, architects, community leaders, appraisers
- Visited several communities going through a transition similar to ours. Interviewed Rabbi Terlinchamp of Temple Shalom in Cincinnati which underwent a successful transforming physical and directional change
- Met with Rabbi Ferency concerning potential alternative paths



An enormous thank you to our Heska Amuna Building Task Force Members: Frank Floyd and Lisa Jacobson (Co-Chairs), Jeff Becker, Judy Brietstein, Ernie Gross, Manny Herz, Marty Iroff, Harvey Liberman, Shuli Mesa, Pace Robinson, and Serina Scott.

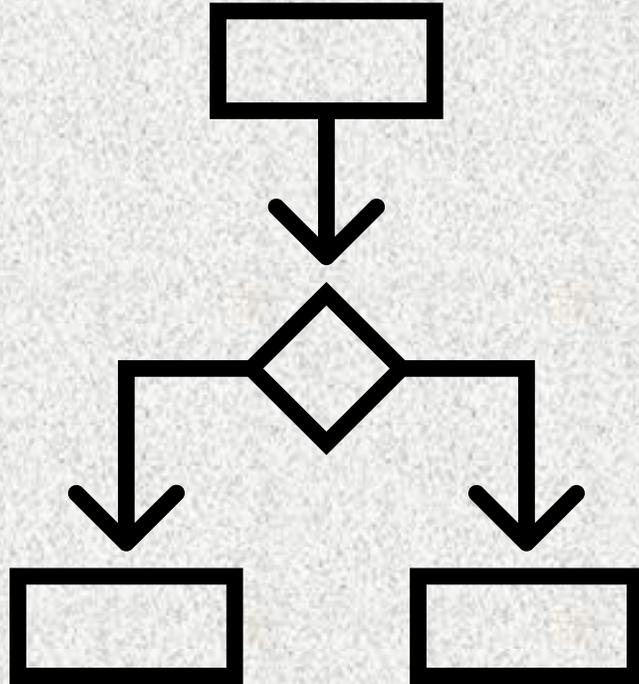


Projected space needs/costs to build

- Present building: ~23,000 sq.ft.
- Estimated building needs (based on present needs and reasonable growth projections): ~7200 sq. ft.
- Estimated cost to build: \$2.6 million

Room-by-room estimates and cost calculations have been estimated by building task force

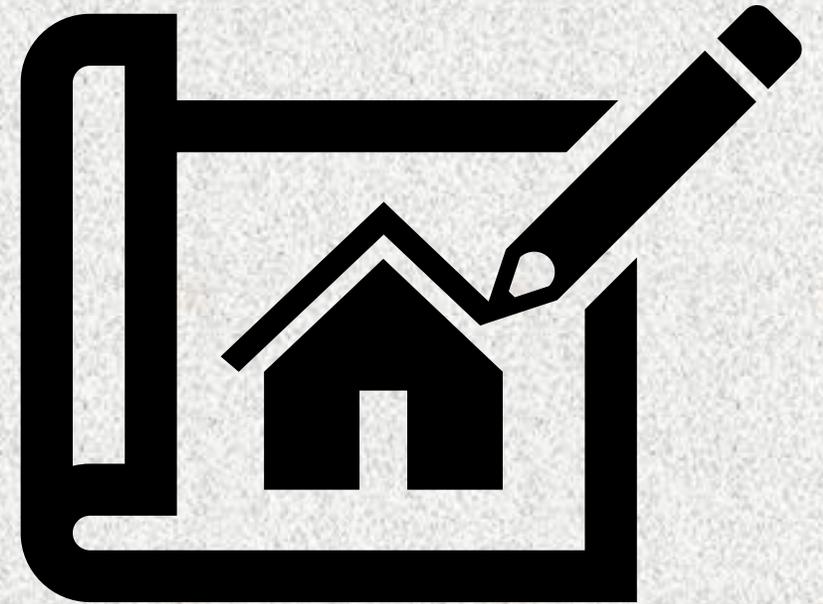
Physical space options identified so far



1. Stay in place, repair the building
2. Stay in place, don't repair while we decide what to do
3. Sell and build on AJCC property
4. Sell and build or purchase pre-existing building
5. Sell and rent a space
6. Stay in place, demolish sanctuary and reconfiguring into a smaller building (Deemed not feasible by Building Task Force)

Advantages and Disadvantages of these Choices have been identified

- Repair and renovate (\$1.5M)
- Sell (\$800K?) and build on AJCC property
- Sell and build or buy pre-existing building on another site
- Sell and rent



Decisions, Decisions

- The Building Task Force clearly recommended selling our building and building on the site of the AJCC.
- This recommendation was discussed by the Board of Trustees and presented to all the Past Presidents and Board Chairs.
- The strong recommendation from these groups was to enter a period of introspection and decision making involving the whole Heska Amuna Community.
- This is the process we are undertaking at this time.

REVIEW: The next task is picturing our future

During two weeks in April and May, groups of 8 to 12 will identify:

- What functions do we want our spiritual home to serve for worship, study, support, community involvement, celebration...?
- What kind of synagogue space will fit those wants and needs?
- What actions do we need to take at this crossroads moment?



Next Steps

- ZOOM Small Group meetings
 - April 25, 26, and 27, May 2, 3, and 4 at 5pm or 7 pm
 - Groups of 8-12 persons/families
 - All discussing same questions/issues led by moderators
 - Envisioning the future of Heska Amuna
 - Ideas for appropriate space
- Results from small group meetings will be collated by Meetings Steering Committee
 - Discussed by Board
 - These discussions will help determine the decision on our building and our future physical space
 - A full report will be discussed at annual meeting in June



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS UNDER CONSIDERATION FOR SMALL GROUP MEETINGS

- How can we make Heska Amuna more welcoming to nonmembers?
- What makes you want to come to Heska Amuna? What keeps you from coming/being more involved in Heska Amuna?
- What does a “Community of Meaning” signify to you? Is Heska Amuna a Community of Meaning? If not, how can Heska Amuna build a Community of Meaning?
- Should we continue to embrace new technological tools to facilitate communication, connection, and logistical tasks?
- Is the Conservative Movement now serving the needs of Heska Amuna?
- Is a building necessary for Heska Amuna to thrive? If so, what kind of building would address the needs of the community?

Heska Amuna at 130: Our Commitment to a Spiritual Community



In 1891, our founders built a bridge. In 2021, we are called to continue their work.