

## Expansion Update- July 2010

Dear Fellow Members,

Years of hard work by the Expansion Committee and outside professionals are about to bear visible fruit: the demolition of 958 Queen Anne Road, a/k/a "the house next door to the shul," is scheduled for the week of August 1. The demolition will mark the beginning of the construction process that is scheduled to be substantially completed by Shavuot 5771. When the project is completed, we will have a physical facility that will, G-d willing, help our kehilla continue to flourish and grow. We have contracted with Visbeen Construction to construct the addition and renovate the existing building, and we have secured a construction loan from Columbia Bank to help finance the project costs. Visbeen Construction has over seven decades of experience building houses of worship in northern New Jersey. It has a well-earned reputation for on-time, within-budget, quality construction. Columbia Bank has worked with us to put together a mortgage that suits our needs and cost constraints.

We want to again thank you for the confidence you have demonstrated in the project in the face of today's economic uncertainties. You approved the project, in part, on the assumption that in today's economic climate we would be able to complete the project at lower construction and financing costs than would have otherwise been the case. It is clear that your collective wisdom was correct, and as a result of the uncertain economic environment, we project that the construction and financing costs will be comfortably within the parameters allotted by you.

We also wanted to let you know how the project will impact the use of the shul while the project is ongoing. The construction plans are designed to ensure that we will continue to have access to the main sanctuary (or other suitably-sized space) on weekends and *yamim tovim* throughout the construction period. Our contractor and architect have discussed this element of the plans with the township and they are confident that, barring unforeseen issues, this access can be maintained. There will, however, be times when large sections of the shul building will not be usable, even on weekends. There also may be short periods of time when the building will not open at all during the week. We are working closely with our project manager, contractor, architect, and the township to ensure that: (a) these disruptions are held to a minimum, consistent with swift and cost-effective completion of the project; and (b) we are informed of these disruptions as far as possible ahead of time so that we can plan accordingly.

Very importantly, we ask you to join the many of your fellow members whose contributions of resources, time, and talent have brought us to this point:

Ø **Commitment of resources.** We encourage all those who are in a position to do so to join us in this effort and take the opportunity to dedicate part of our *mikdash me'at* in memory or in honor of a loved one. A list of dedication opportunities is attached to this email. The list can also be viewed – and dedications can be made – at <http://www.bethaaron.org/expansion/>. If you have any questions, or if there is something that you wish to dedicate that is not on the attached list, please don't hesitate to contact your fellow members whose names appear at the bottom of the dedication opportunities page.

Ø **Commitment of time, talent, muscle, and space.** As you can see from the list below, more and more of our members have stepped forward to volunteer their time to the effort. In addition to your time, talent, and muscle, we are in need of storage space (to store shul items during the course of the construction) and space to hold groups and classes. If you can help out, please contact any one of us – we would be delighted to have you join the effort!

Ø **Building fund; financial arrangements.** Finally, we ask that you either: (a) send in your building fund obligations in a timely fashion (including the installment that was due on June 30, 2010); or (b) if you are not in a position to do so, contact the Financial Arrangements Committee ([FAC@bethaaron.org](mailto:FAC@bethaaron.org)). As always, complete respect, confidentiality and discretion are assured.

We look forward to updating you as the project progresses and to your feedback and questions.

Sincerely,

Larry Shafier, President

The Expansion/Renovation Committee -

Marc Benjamin, Bonnie Eizikovitz, Larry Feder, Rivka Fink, Allen Friedman, Steven Gellerstein, Arthur Herzfeld, Larry Kahn, Mark Karasick, Louis Karp, Abe Leidner, Rachelle Mandelbaum, Tamar Metzger, Ronnie Schwartz, Kalman Seidenfeld, Larry Shafier, Joy Sperber, Rinaldo Toporovsky