

NEW HEIGHTS

Taking Community, Learning
and Spirituality to the Next Level

FAQ

Why now?

BHS is literally bursting at the seams. The purchase of a second building on Remsen Street brought us additional square footage, but its configuration has not solved the issue of usage. The current space—indoor and outdoor—is not conducive to holding social events, keeping congregants together at Onegs, connecting parents at school pick-ups or holding multiple meetings, programs and study. Simply put, BHS needs to address this in order for our community to grow and flourish.

What happened in the Phase One *Growing Together* Campaign?

Phase One, launched in 2013, under the title *Growing Together* raised more than \$2.5 million from over 150 families, allowing us to purchase the building adjacent to BHS.

Why the need for Phase Two?

Phase Two, the *New Heights Campaign* will raise \$9.5 million to address the needs of our community and the needs of the 131 and 127 Remsen Street buildings. This work is vital because the buildings need critical repairs, are overtaxed, and wholly insufficient for our community. Many of the proposed changes are aimed at not simply merging the two spaces, but also transforming the 127 Remsen portion of our synagogue into a beautiful and modern facility.

How were the buildings' needs assessed?

A Board-appointed Building Project Committee, led by congregants Scott Sager and Rachel Loeb, worked closely with the architectural firm of Sage and Coombe to develop a Master Plan. Through a community-driven process in early 2015, including a charrette attended by more than three dozen congregants and a voting board in the BHS lobby, community input was gathered, needs were assessed, and legal and architectural considerations were reviewed.

This work yielded an ambitious, yet realistic, plan to integrate 127 Remsen and 131 Remsen into a unified, highly functional, and accessible home.

How will the expansion improve my experience at BHS?

It depends on what you seek in your BHS experience. If you are looking for more space for lifecycle events and to build community through well-attended Onegs—the new social hall will hold upwards of 200 people. Tots and teens will be provided an enhanced space to meet and build connections with others and to BHS. We will be creating learning spaces for all ages; new meeting rooms and program spaces, an outdoor garden, a café and gathering space, and accessibility improvements that will make it easier on those with mobility issues. There will be an expansion of our parenting center programs which are currently severely limited due to lack of space and these families are a pipeline for BHS membership. Our clergy will be able to program more classes and conversations about issues important to our members. Really, the new space configuration will have something for everyone.

How will our synagogue grow?

When the work is completed we will have 9,500 square feet of new and improved space on 5 floors, with connections on each floor, and beautiful garden level outdoor space.

What is our next step?

We now have an inspiring Master Plan, a Certificate of Occupancy for the garden level, and a real estate tax exemption for the whole 127 Remsen building. Everything is in place to integrate the two buildings. The next step is this new campaign to enable construction.

How will we address the current mortgage?

The fundraising goal includes paying off the mortgage.

What financial systems will be in place to manage the campaign?

BHS has created Gift Acceptance Policy that has been vetted by congregant attorneys, and approved by the Board of Trustees. After you make your commitment to the campaign, a pledge agreement letter will be sent to you for your signature outlining the amount of your pledge and the timing of payment. A Gift Acceptance Committee will manage the process, and answer any questions or concerns. All gifts made to the campaign will go into a designated account and will be used solely for campaign expenses.

How will the construction process be managed?

The construction process will be guided by professionals in the construction management business who have experience with schools and managing space during construction; the plans are to do most of the “destructive work” during the summer hours; staged during the time we are less busy. We are not planning renovation in the sanctuary. For a short time, we may not be able to celebrate life cycles in their entirety in our building.

How long will the construction take?

Starting construction in summer 2019 and projected building out is minimally 2-3 summers. We will provide Congregants with a formal timeline for construction and ongoing updates.

The artist renderings are helpful to envision what will change. Can you be more specific about what we will get for this investment?

There are many changes and upgrades planned for BHS. Our campaign booklet will provide a side by side analysis of the improvements made possible through this campaign. An online PDF will soon be available as well.

Who at BHS is involved?

The Campaign is Co-Chaired by BHS leaders Susan Chadick and Dave Smetana. Marcia Bellows, Karen Gordon, Dave Jaroslaw, Anne Landman, along with the Co-Chairs, serve as a Core Campaign Committee. Rachel Loeb is heading a Campaign Building Committee made up of BHS community members with expertise in real estate, construction, architecture and more. Jonathan Kopp is Chairing the Communications Sub-Committee. A task force of past BHS presidents has been charged with developing donor recognition and gift acceptance policy. The BHS board and staff are fully committed. Subcommittees are now being formed and there is room for everyone at BHS to participate.

Great. How can we participate?

With the belief that in order to be successful, we must be “all in,” your participation is crucial to the success of the campaign. We invite congregants to financially support the campaign at the level they feel most comfortable and to participate on the many committees—and activities—which are being planned to support the campaign. Please speak to Sue Gold, BHS Executive Director for more information on how to join in.