

SAINT ROSE MASTER PLANNING PROCESS

Saint Rose of Lima is a vibrant and growing Catholic parish in Murfreesboro, Tennessee. In 2020, William Heyer Architect in conjunction with Schooley Caldwell was asked to put together a master plan. Although Saint Rose had done a master plan in 2006, the acquisition of new property, together with significant growth in the county and the parish, led to the desire for a new plan to address present needs and accommodate future growth.

The master planning process was divided into three phases:

1. orientation and data assembly
2. analysis and development of recommendations
3. master plan development

ORIENTATION AND DATA ASSEMBLY

In the first phase of the master planning process, the master planning team sought to gather information on the parish campus as well as the surrounding neighborhood and the newly acquired property. The information gathered at the onset of this phase included the demographics of the neighborhood, an assessment of the wetlands on the new property, and a survey of the ministries at Saint Rose identifying their space uses and needs. According to the survey results, the ministries collectively needed more storage, a new gym, reconfigured athletic fields, and a community center. The community center would include large gathering spaces, meeting rooms, and a kitchen.

The master planning team gathered more detailed information on the existing facilities at Saint Rose, including student pickup and dropoff circulation, the athletic fields, and the extent to which the parish might expand to the north on their wooded property. The team particularly sought to understand what spaces were being used by whom and when, whether the existing facilities were meeting current needs, and whether they would be adequate for expected growth. To this end, the master planning team conducted interviews with representatives from the school and the parish ministries.

Almost all interviewees expressed that there was a significant need for more event spaces and meeting rooms. Several groups indicated that the existing kitchen is inadequate for the events and fundraisers it needs to serve. There were also needs specific to particular groups, such as a gym large enough to accommodate a standard basketball court, a consolidated office suite for the school administration, and more storage space for the food pantry and backpack ministry. Fr. Baker also indicated that the parish has outgrown its existing church, and that a new, larger church should be included in the master plan. The master planning team also had to consider the conditions of the existing facilities.

The team also considered that several parish ministries operate out of houses in the neighborhood adjacent to the parish campus, and whether it would be best for them to move or to remain where they are located.

ANALYSIS AND DEVELOPMENT OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Having gathered the necessary information, the master planning team put together a plan to address the needs and concerns of the parish. The team identified five major components to the master plan:

1. A new gym large enough to fit a standard basketball court. The gym addition would include a lobby, locker rooms, restrooms, and concessions accessible on the inside and from the outside.
2. A new event space large enough to host events currently held in the Jo Call Room and the existing gym. This event space would be located next to a new kitchen, which would be larger and better equipped than the existing kitchen.
3. A new church seating at least 1,000 people. The new church addition would include a narthex, sacristies, parish offices, restrooms, meeting rooms, and possibly a columbarium room.
4. Maintenance work where needed. This would include renovation of the Marian Center and of parts of other buildings in need of repair.
5. Reconfiguration of the athletic fields and parking. This would involve moving the fields north to account for expanded parking, clearing the trees to the north of the fields as necessary, and rearranging the fields so that the baseball and soccer fields no longer overlap.

Early on it was apparent that the issues with the existing gym, the Jo Call Room, and the existing parish offices could not be resolved by renovation, and that they would be better off being replaced or removed. With that established, the team could determine the placement of new additions.

The New Church

Because the location of a new church would have a significant effect on the rest of the campus and neighborhood, the master planning team determined its placement first. The church placement is critical to the identity of the campus and the vision of the parish as expressed to the public. The team realized that placing the new church in a central location facing the street (in what is currently the parking lot and existing gym) could make the campus beautifully recognized as a beacon of Catholic Faith and Education in Murfreesboro.

In addition, it would create a new large courtyard flanked by the existing church and an extension for the parish offices. Once the new church is built, the existing church could be converted into a social hall, one of the event spaces Saint Rose needs.

The New Gym and School Administration Offices

The master planning team then sought to address the need for a new gym, a secure lobby for the school, and improved pickup and drop-off circulation. Because of the size of the new gym addition, which included not only the gym but also locker rooms, restrooms, a lobby, and an indoor concession stand, the team placed the new gym immediately north of the middle school.

Another, smaller addition parallel to the new gym would accommodate a secure lobby and offices for the school administration. The two new additions could be connected with a covered walkway or portico which would provide a new location for student pickup and drop-off and demarcate two new private outdoor courtyards. After deciding the placement of the new additions, the master planning team considered how various uses could be rearranged within the existing buildings.

The Marian Center and New Kitchen

Locating the food pantry and backpack ministry in a renovated Marian Center would allow these ministries to keep the advantages of their current location while also giving them a space separate from the parish and school buildings. Similarly, issues with the existing parish meeting rooms and the need for a better kitchen allowed for the conversion of the parish meeting rooms into the new kitchen. Better meeting rooms would be provided in a new addition. The Marian Center and the new kitchen space could be served by a new service drive immediately to the south.

New Event Spaces: Cafeteria and Social Hall

The need for more meeting spaces, and the need for better-located school administration offices and arts rooms, opened up the idea for the current school administration offices and arts rooms to be converted into a cafeteria, doubling as a large meeting space. Placing the cafeteria near the kitchen and the existing church (the future social hall) would allow the kitchen to serve both event spaces.

The school administration would move to a new extension central to the school, and the arts would move to a new addition behind the new church. The new church addition would also have the school library on a first floor, which is currently in a non-ADA-compliant space above the existing gym.

The Stonewall House and the Maymont House

Regarding the ministries operating out of nearby houses, it was determined that while the Stonewall House was serving the Knights of Columbus and other groups well, it would be best for the Maymont House to be sold and its ministries moved back to the parish campus to be better connected to the parish community.

Outdoor Spaces: Athletic Fields, Columbaria, Memorial Grove, Grotto, and Stations of the Cross

In addition to reconfiguring the soccer and baseball fields, the master planning team was asked to accommodate an outdoor area for columbaria, memorial grove, and a grotto with Stations of the Cross. The team moved the athletic fields northward and arranged them so that they no longer overlap. The outdoor area for the columbaria and memorial grove is placed immediately north of the new church. The grotto is within the trees north of the athletic fields, at the end of a path lined with Stations of the Cross.

MASTER PLAN DEVELOPMENT

With all of the components of the master plan in place, the team considered how to divide each part into phases. The team had to ensure that no essential spaces would be removed before their replacements were available. The existing gym, for example, could not be demolished until the new one was built. With this and other similar considerations in mind, the team determined that smaller projects such as the renovation of the Marian Center and the reconfiguration of the athletic fields could be done at any time.

Of the three new additions, only the gym addition required no demolition, which suggested that it should be built first. The existing school administration offices and arts rooms could be converted into the new kitchen and cafeteria only after the school administration office addition was built. The Jo Call Room, the kitchen, and the existing gym would be demolished only in the final phase to make way for the new church, parish offices, arts rooms, library, and new meeting rooms. Upon completion of the new church, the existing church would then be converted into a social hall capable of hosting large events.

The breakdown of phases and associated costs is as follows:

- *Phase 1* The reconfiguration of the athletic fields, the addition of new parking lots, and the renovation of both floors of the Marian Center for use as meeting spaces and offices. Construction cost is estimated at \$167,000 and the site cost at \$300,000. The total project cost is estimated at \$607,000.
- *Phase 2* The new gym with a regulation-size basketball court, associated restrooms, concessions, and locker rooms, and the reconfiguration of the drive aisles and the parking lot entry from North Tennessee Boulevard. These costs are estimated at \$2,445,000 for construction and \$60,000 for site work. The total project cost is estimated at \$3,257,000.
- *Phase 3* The demolition of the interior in the existing meeting and office spaces, the construction of the new school offices addition and the covered arcade connecting to the new gym, and the renovation of the existing meeting and office spaces into the new kitchen and cafeteria. These costs are estimated as follows: demolition at \$32,000, construction at \$1,071,000, kitchen equipment at \$500,000, site work at \$100,000, and total project cost at \$2,214,000.
- *Phase 4* The demolition of the existing gymnasium, kitchen, Jo Call Room, and existing parish offices; the construction of the new addition including the church with its narthex and columbarium, arts rooms, library, meeting rooms, and parish offices; the renovation of the old church into a new social hall; and a new memorial grove and entry plaza. The cost of demolition is estimated at \$63,000, the construction cost at \$15,985,000, site cost at \$120,000, and the total project cost at \$21,018,000.