

March 5, 2007

**Tsomides
Associates
Architects
Planners**

**Saint Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church
Weston, MA**

Proposed New Master Plan:

Page 1 of 2

The proposed new Saint Demetrios Master Plan design concept symbolizes contemporary (New England) America embracing the traditions of the Greek Orthodox Church, proclaiming a commitment to its unique heritage while not losing touch with its immediate surroundings.

PHASE-I

Constructing the new Church in the same location as the existing respects the traditional and canonical orientation of the alter facing east and allows for a logical phased expansion of the community support programs in the future.

The Proposed New Church will be separated from the existing and future expanded community spaces by a glazed Atrium Lobby, serving as a link between the distinctly pure Byzantine Church structure and the social, educational and administrative facilities.

The new Church structure will seat 450 in the Naos (Nave) plus an additional 120 seats on the Second Floor north and south side Balconies. A 50 seat Choir loft will be located on the Second Floor, west. A new domed Chapel, located at the southwest corner of the Church facing Brown Street and the entrance Plaza, will accommodate another 70 seats and will be accessed directly from the Plaza and the Church Narthex. An alternate location for the Chapel positions it adjoining the Naos, providing supplemental seating during high holidays.

The proposed Church is designed to comfortably seat 600 for high holidays, but intimate enough for 450 worshipers during weekly services. The introduction of the Balcony as a meaningful element in Church design will provide seating close enough to the center of the service to offer good sight lines and a sense of involvement.

A cross-in-square central plan, developed from the circle and square, emphasizes the centrality and gathering of the congregation for worship. Arches and curved surfaces reinforce the spatial three dimensionality inherent in Byzantine Architecture.

PHASE II

A new East Wing will comprise a landscaped Courtyard and expanded Administrative Offices on the First Floor and a new glazed Promenade from the rear main parking lot on the Second.

On the west side a new large Social Hall with table seating for 400 will adjoin the existing hall. The existing Social Hall will be subdivided to provide space for an expanded Kitchen, a new Philoptohos Meeting Room, Fireside Room, and a newly renovated smaller, more intimate Social Hall seating 150. The planning concept envisions all of these spaces opening out into each other, accommodating over 650 parishioners seated at tables for social functions. Two new Class Rooms will be constructed on the Second Floor directly area above the expanded Kitchen and new Philoptohos Room.

PHASE II MASTER PLAN - Continued

The Master Plan creates an internal circulation system with continuous hallways on both floors circulating around a newly created landscaped Courtyard while maintaining the Main Entrance from the Brown Street Plaza.

The new design concept responds to the uniqueness of the site, taking advantage of the sloping grades on the east side, guiding parishioners from the upper rear parking lot along a glass enclosed Promenade to the Church structure beyond. Seen in full view through the arched glass roof as they approach, parishioners will literally be able to physically embrace the exterior masonry walls of the Church on the Second Floor before descending to the First or directly accessing the Balcony overlooking the Naos and Sanctuary below. Landscaped gardens, wooded views and a new landscaped Courtyard will flank either side of the Promenade. The natural wooded setting provides an opportunity for an additional small Chapel or Meditation Room, outside Gardens and Children's play area directly accessible from the Second Floor Promenade.

Constantine L. Tsomides, NCARB, AIA
MDesS, Harvard GSD; MArch, Columbia GSAPP

