

**RECOMMENDED PLAN FOR
RETENTION OF THE COLBERT
HOUSE**



St. James Church
Chatham, New York

St James Church
Recommended Plan for Retention of the Colbert House
June 2022

Recommended Use of the Colbert House

After a concerted effort to explore and review various proposed uses of the Colbert House, the Colbert House Committee recommends that it be used as a spiritual and interfaith center for the northern Columbia County area and also be made available to various community-based groups that may need space for initiatives that address mental health, poverty, racism and other social issues. The building provides a more private, intimate and confidential setting for various meetings and services. Attachment A includes a listing of potential uses for Colbert House that would be available to our tri-parish community. In addition, the building would be utilized by various committees in instances where it is more cost effective than using the larger Church buildings. Recognizing the mission-based focus on the building's eventual use, the Committee proposes that the official name for the building be **The Spiritual and Interfaith Center at the Colbert House**.

Oversight and Administration

It is proposed that there be **two committees established for oversight and administration** of the Colbert House. The first committee would be a **steering committee** and the second committee would be the **operational and implementation committee**. However, it is understood and agreed that the committees individually and collectively will be acting as advisors to the pastor or Diocesan designee who will have the ultimate final decision-making authority.

The **Steering Committee** will consist of the pastor or Diocesan designee, St. James trustees, and the chairs of the St. James Pastoral Council and Finance Committee. **This committee will provide general oversight and guidance to the operational and implementation committee.**

The **Operational and Implementation Committee** would consist of two chairs and no more than ten additional committee members that includes representation of the Catholic Community of Northern Columbia County (tri-parish community). **This committee would be responsible for developing the list of approved uses of the Colbert House, performing the administrative functions for the use of the Colbert House, and overseeing the fundraising that would finance the operational expenses.** Each chair would oversee a sub-committee; one for the implementation and administration of the use of the Colbert House and monitoring for abuse or misuse of the building and the other for the financing and fund raising. In addition to the Chair, each subcommittee would have no more than five members. It is also recommended that the St. James Building and Grounds committee be consulted and involved for repairs and maintenance issues. Finally, it is recommended that Fr. Gary Gelfenbein be considered as an advisor to the Operational and Implementation Committee due to his extensive historical

knowledge of issues related to the Colbert House. He would be a valuable resource. Attachment C details an organization chart for The Spiritual and Interfaith Center at the Colbert House.

Parishioners of the tri-parish community have already volunteered to assist with the oversight and administration of the Colbert House. It is recommended that Barbara Haywood and Janis Wallace be named as the two co-chairs of the committee. Ms. Haywood has an extensive background in administration with the NYS Bridge Authority and would chair the implementation and administration sub-committee and Ms. Wallace who has an extensive background as an office manager with an agricultural financing firm and a medical office would chair the financing and fundraising sub-committee. It is important to note that there are additional parishioners that have offered to assist in various capacities in their support of retaining the Colbert House but do not wish to serve as an official committee member.

Financing and Fundraising

Fr. Steve Matthews has directed that if the Colbert House is retained, all related operational expenses must be financed independent of Church funds. A separate savings account would be opened by St. James and be listed as a restricted asset on the St. James balance sheet. All funds raised to support the operational expenses for the Colbert House would be deposited in this restricted account. All expenses will be paid from the St. James operating account and be properly recorded on St. James books and records. Funds from the restricted savings account will be withdrawn on a routine basis (quarterly recommended) to reimburse the St. James operating account for Colbert House expenses. If adequate funding is not maintained on a long-term basis, St. James may be required to sell the Colbert House.

Based on a historical review of operating expenses for the Colbert House, an annual budget for the period July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023 has been developed and is detailed on Attachment E. In addition to normal operating expenses, the proposed budget also includes a line item for structural repairs that will be required during this period. It is known that the chimney flashing will need to be replaced and the chimney repointed. The total budgeted operating expenses for the period are \$18,509.

There are several approaches that can be utilized to finance the annual operating expenses and to build an appropriate reserve for major repairs. First, a campaign could be initiated on either an annual or multi-year basis to raise funds to meet annual operational expenses plus establish a reserve to address extraordinary future expenses (i.e., major repairs). The targeted benefactors do not have to be limited to the St. James parish community. To ensure adequate funding will be in place, a multi-year approach is recommended. Benefactors would be requested to contribute funds thru an immediate contribution or a pledge over a multi-year period. This type of initiative would be supplemented by various fundraising event. Efforts could also be made to target various other initiatives such as gifts or grants from foundations or community support. Unless an alternative major fundraising initiative generated adequate

funding, the fundraising campaign will need to be repeated on a routine basis. Attachment B contains a comprehensive listing of potential revenue sources.

For example, the budgeted annual expenses for the new fiscal year are approximately \$18,509. With a proper reserve, a targeted annual fundraising amount of \$25,000 per year would be established. A multi-year fundraising campaign of three years would establish a target of at least \$75,000 to be attained either thru direct contributions or pledges. A minimum target of actual cash collections in the first twelve months would also need to be established. If the targeted amount is not attained, a decision could be made to sell the Colbert House. There would need to be a level of flexibility built into the process to allow various additional fundraising initiatives to take place in order to attain a targeted minimum level. However, it needs to be made clear to the community that over the longer term, if inadequate funding is not available to meet the expenses and establish a reserve, the Colbert House may be sold.

Submitted by:

The Colbert House Committee

[please see Attachment D in this report for listing of committee members]

Date Submitted:

June 5, 2022

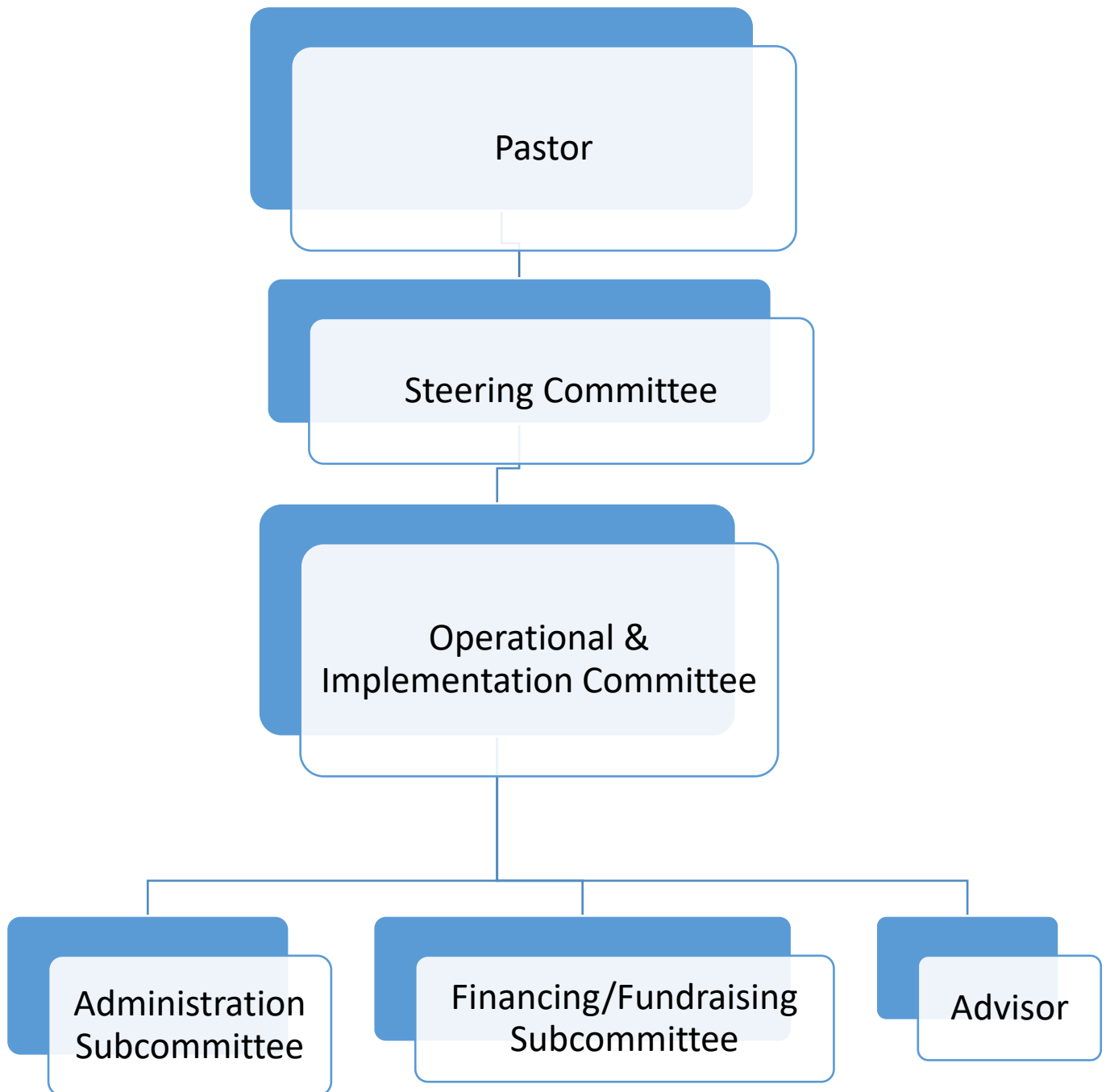
The Spiritual and Interfaith Center at The Colbert House
Attachment A
Proposed Uses for the Colbert House

- Faith Formation for older students
- RCIA instruction
- Adult continuing religious education
- Retreats
- Guest Ministry
- Baptism, Funeral and Marriage preparation
- Caring card ministry
- Housing for visiting priests, missionaries, seminarians
- Jesuit Retreat House
- Same day retreat
- Book clubs
- Knights of Columbus meetings (possible Tri-Parish HQ)
- Interfaith meetings
- Small Tri-Parish functions
- Various counselling groups
- Use by community organizations for business meetings or satellite site for their activities

The Spiritual and Interfaith Center at The Colbert House
Attachment B
Potential Fund-Raising Initiatives for the Colbert House

- Annual Fund Drive - Pledge
 - One-time Donation, Monthly, Yearly
 - Three Year Commitment
- Concerts
- Cabaret Event highlighting talented parishioners
- Cocktail Social Events in conjunction with Annual Fund Drive
- Dinner with Father Gary
- Threads of Hope fundraiser
- Various raffles (50/50, prize baskets, etc.)
- Parish or Tri-Parish Cookbook containing recipes from parishioners
- Food Truck events
- Donations
- Grants
 - Cabrini Foundation
 - Stewarts/Price Chopper Foundations
- Requests for support from local community

**THE SPIRITUAL AND INTERFAITH CENTER AT THE COLBERT HOUSE
ATTACHMENT C
ORGANIZATIONAL CHART**



Attachment D
Operational and Administration Committee Members

Donna Piche – St. James
Malia Mossman – St. James
Maria Lull – St. James
James Forster – St. James
Regina Boyce – St. John the Baptist
Joan Dolan – St. John the Baptist
Dianne Ives – St. Joseph
Martha Pizza – St. Joseph

The Spiritual and Interfaith Center at The Colbert House
Attachment E
Proposed Budget
July 2022 – June 2023

Supplies – Maintenance	\$ 75
Contracted Services – Maintenance	\$ 2,674
Contracted Services – Other	\$ 5,580
Utilities (not incl Electric)	\$ 3,200
Water & Sewerage	\$ 280
Utilities – Electric	\$ 750
Property Insurance	\$ 3,800
Repairs – Structure	\$ 2,500
Total	\$ 18,509

Notes:

1. Contracted Services – Maintenance includes Mowing, Pest Control, & Furnace Maintenance.
2. Contracted Services – Other includes Cleaning Services, Snow Removal & Internet Services.