

## Sanctuary Redesign Update & a July 27 Schmooze

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From: Peggy Hackett (office@beki.org)

To: bekinews@beki.org

Date: Monday, July 18, 2022 at 09:35 AM EDT

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Dear BEKI friends,

A major goal in redesigning BEKI's sanctuary is to make the space more accessible and inclusive for everyone. Toward that end, the Sanctuary Redesign Committee will hold a [BEKI Schmooze](#), "A Sanctuary For All," on Wednesday, July 27, at 7:30pm (next week).

The committee has already received great suggestions about designing for physical disability. In this Schmooze, we want your help in thinking about how to accommodate the needs of neurodiverse children and adults, such as those with Autism Spectrum Disorder and intellectual disability. BEKI's own Carol Weitzman, an autism expert, will moderate.

We would especially like to hear from people with lived experience, and from parents of neurodiverse children. What aspects of the existing sanctuary design work for people with sensory sensitivities and other hallmarks of neurodiversity? What could be improved?

The sanctuary redesign project continues to move forward. Primary work areas include:

- **Art:** A new Art Subcommittee has formed, made up of BEKI artists along with members of the Sanctuary Redesign Committee. The subcommittee is developing a short list of potential artists for new and repurposed decorative elements. The Sanctuary Redesign Committee is responsible for engaging with the artists and making the final selections.
- **Seating:** The redesign committee is scouring the earth — well, the U.S., Israel, and the U.K. — to find the right chairs for our new sanctuary. In the coming months, we will have sample chairs available for BEKI members to evaluate.
- **Cost estimates:** We are obtaining cost estimates from construction firms. These estimates will help align the conceptual design, presented to the congregation in April, with our target budget of \$1 million to \$1.25 million.

The project's overarching goals are warmth, inclusiveness, spiritual intimacy, and true egalitarianism. The conceptual design sketches are on display at BEKI and [on the website](#) (password required).

We hope you can join us for the Schmooze on July 27! As always, we welcome your feedback: [sanctuaryredesign@beki.org](mailto:sanctuaryredesign@beki.org).

Carole Bass, co-chair  
John Weiser, co-chair  
Eric Dunsker, House Committee chair and board liaison  
Lynn Brotman  
Howard Gralla  
Marga Hirsch  
Rick Saltz

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