

Silhouette Dance School Society

A Permanent Home Project

Who we are:

Silhouette Dance School is a nonprofit society administered by a volunteer board made up of members. The board is proud to work as a team with the instructors.

The Philosophy of Silhouette dance school is:

- To provide an excellent dance program
- To provide an enjoyable dance program
- To promote the art of dance in our community
- To promote an atmosphere of caring within the school, with their fellow dancers and about the overall dance experience.
- To promote healthy lifestyles, through body awareness and exercise.
- To promote confidence and positive self-esteem.
- To provide a safe environment for our dancers.

The Silhouette Dance School Society was created more than 20 years ago. We have gone from an enrollment of 15 students to more than 100 and this 2012/2013 year after listening to requests from parents in our community we will be offering classes for 3 year olds. With the addition of these classes, as well as the increased interest in dance, we see the future enrollment only increasing.

Where have we been and where are we now:

Throughout the years the Silhouette Dance School Society has run classes from a variety of places. The original studio was in the basement of the Tital Safety building (beside Sunshine Video). Other locations we have tried throughout the years are: the Xstream oilfields building (beside Lakeland family eye care) the St. Paul Pawn building, the St. Paul Co-op Mall, the basement of Loree's Furniture and Appliances. Our current space is located upstairs in the Century 21 building.

While all of the spaces have had their benefits, some were the price, some was the square footage and some were a combination of the two. None however have been the ideal home for the Silhouette Dance School.

With each place we have rented we have found some aspects of the space we were renting were extremely valuable. Currently in the Century 21 building we are renting some of those aspects are:

1. A large entry way to take off shoes.
2. Separate space for the costume inventory.
3. A waiting room for the parents.
4. A washroom available to everyone including parents, guardians, siblings and/or guests.
5. A parking lot for parents and guardians picking up and dropping off their dancers.
6. Studio space that was ideal for past enrollment numbers.

Why are we looking to build?

With the increased enrollment in dance classes offered at Silhouette Dance and the increased abilities of the dancers, we have run into some problems with our current studio.

Those problems are:

- There is no space for expansion; in the past we have had the opportunity to offer Hip Hop, Belly dancing, Tap dance and Exercise boot camps. With our main focus being on the Ballet and Jazz program. Unfortunately with the increased enrollment, our Large studio is booked up almost every night between September and May from 3:30pm until 9:30pm. As such we are unable to offer the specialty classes that we once were able to. We had renovated a small office space beside the waiting room as an additional studio but found it too small to be an effective studio space and was not making best use of our finances and eventually we decided to close the small studio.
- The ceilings are too low for the jumps and leaps the dancers we now have enrolled are capable of performing and practicing any type of lift or carry is not possible.
- The space is hot in the spring, summer and early fall and very cold in the winter. While there are some benefits to a warm studio, often the temperatures get so high that it is extremely uncomfortable for those who use the space. The current heating and cooling system is linked to the office beside our studio, and an ideal temperature for an office is not the same as that of a busy dance studio. With being located on the south part of the building with one and half of the walls being windows the sun beats in and warms the studio while leaving the office facing north much cooler.
- Being located upstairs above other businesses' there were also problems with offering the Tap dancing program as the noise from the tap shoes was quite loud and carried to those businesses below the studio. And at times the volume of music the instructors have used during class has been less than ideal for the offices surrounding us.

The Silhouette Dance School Society Board has asked a Member at large to look into what our community would have to offer as a new home for our Dance school. What she has found is that in the majority of the places one or more of the following things were found:

- The ceiling height is even lower than we currently have.
- What would make a perfect studio also is quite expensive and unfortunately not affordable for our nonprofit dance school.
- Once the waiting room and costume room has been built, there would be no actual increase in studio square footage but would be significantly more expensive.
- In one building the heating and cooling is vented through the floor and the raised dance floor which is built to cushion the dancers' joints while they practice their jumps and leaps. They type of ducting would block the heating and cooling for the space and eventually would ruin our expensive dance floor surface.
- The society would be required to maintain and fix the leased buildings heating and cooling system on top of a higher rent than we are currently paying.
- The facility is located out of town which would be almost impossible for our young dancers who walk to the dance school after school and there are parents with children currently enrolled who don't drive, and we would no longer be accessible to those people.
- No parking available other than very limited street parking.

- Most of the new places we would be renting will require 20 to 30 thousand dollars to build soundproofed walls and change rooms (with only one washroom there would need to be change rooms built to accommodate our dancers change of attire) and as we would be leasing the space this would be in addition to the rent we are paying.

What is our plan?

After reviewing our options the Silhouette Dance School Society Board has decided to look into the possibility of building a space that is specifically for dance:

- Two large studios.
- High ceilings.
- Gender specific washrooms.
- Gender specific change rooms.
- Large waiting room for parents and dancers.
- Spacious costume room.
- Large entry way with space to take off shoes.
- Space to store and sell new dancewear and shoes (currently there is nowhere in town to purchase dance shoes, body suits or tights.)
- A dedicated heating and cooling system that will keep the space at the ideal temperature for dancing.
- Parking.
- A kitchen area to promote healthy eating for our dancers and instructors who are there all evening. (Sink, Refrigerator, Counter space and a microwave)

What we are asking for from the Town is land to build the studio on and a financial contribution to help build our permanent home. We will also be approaching other places for funding as well as applying to receive matching grants.

With the space being built through donations and grants it is our hope to eventually be able to reduce class fees and make our Dance Program more available to everyone in the community.

WHEN:

If funding is available we could potentially be breaking ground within a year. We do realize this is extremely ambitious but with the support from our community and from our local government as well as from the art community and grants that are available this could be a very real possibility.

If the County would be willing to help support this initiative with funds, we would like to receive a letter of intent as soon as possible, as our future plans are dependent on your response.

Thank You for your Consideration

The Silhouette Dance School Society Board