

## **A Picture is Worth A Thousand Words...**



*Adult Day Center of Somerset County – Floor Plan  
Floor plan provided by Steven S. Cohen Architects P.C.*

If a picture is worth a thousand words, a rendering may be worth thousands of dollars to a nonprofit organization embarking on a capital campaign. What may seem common sense often becomes an afterthought in the pre-campaign readiness process, or worse, a late consideration.

Successful campaign materials include case statement brochures, agency brochures, executive summaries and building display posters for cultivation events. Preparation time, board approval and the bidding process can delay a seemingly simple aspect for months. There are many reasons why nonprofits benefit from having pictures of a new building or expansion, namely:

- Donors can visualize the project, perhaps its place in the community or lives.
- Early renderings give the impression that the project is well underway and will be successful.
- Naming opportunities – floor plans, especially, give donors personal choice, and nonprofits wishing to stretch a pledge to a particular level can adjust or promote specific opportunities accordingly.

Architect Steven Cohen of Steven S. Cohen Architects P.C., suggests getting the architect involved as early as possible. Architects help evaluate the needs of a building, and can determine if the site is suitable for the building's use. Having worked with many nonprofits, Mr. Cohen also points out the value of a personal interview when selecting an architect. Interviews tell an Executive Director and Board if the vision of the project is shared and if they are flexible enough for a nonprofit's fluctuating needs. "We find that when working with nonprofits, the 'front-end time' is considerable. For budgeting purposes, allow approximately \$3,000+/- for a rendering package that includes a floor plan and an outside building design perspective. Although working with nonprofits can be an intense process given their fundraising concerns, our firm is always inspired and impressed by their dedication."

Stephen Cohen has worked closely with nonprofits, primarily in the low cost housing arena for 35 years. His firm is located in Princeton, NJ (609) 924-6560.