



January 31, 2012

MEMORANDUM

To: Campus Planning Committee

From: Christine Taylor Thompson, Planning Associate  
Campus Planning and Real Estate

Subject: **Record** of the January 18, 2012 Campus Planning Committee Meeting

Attending: Dean Livelybrooks (Chair), G.Z. Brown, Uri Farkas, George Hecht, Gregg Lobisser, Sophie Luthin, Roberta Mann, Jamie Moffitt, Dennis Munroe, Chris Ramey, Greg Rikhoff, Terrie Scharfer, Eric Selker, Theodore Sweeney, Rob Thallon, Laura Willey

Staff: Christine Taylor Thompson (Campus Planning and Real Estate)

Guests: Jane Brubaker (Campus Ops), Bob Beals (Athletics), Gwen Bolden (DPS), Emily Eng (CPRE), Tim King (Campus Ops), Matt Koehler (CMGS), Ali McQueen (CPRE), Gene Mowery (CPRE), Bryan Haunert (PE and Rec), Otto Poticha (Architecture), Jeff Schaub (RDG), Carl Sherwood (Robertson Sherwood)

**Agenda:**

Jamie Moffitt, new Vice President for Finance and Administration, introduced herself to the committee. She explained that she would assume the role held by her predecessor, Frances Dyke--she would be responsible for reviewing and approving the committee's recommendations on behalf of the president. While she would gladly attend meetings upon request, Jamie said that she would rather not attend in order to give the committee the ability to act independently.

**1. Student Recreation Center Expansion and Renovation Project – Check-in**

Background: Staff reviewed the status of the project and purpose of the check-in meeting. Gene Mowery, CPRE Project Planner, introduced the project and explained that the focus of today's review would be on the site context, pathways, building massing, and building character.

Carl Sherwood, Robertson Sherwood, reviewed the key circulation routes to and through the facility. The proposal maintains the existing primary building entrance and creates a key interior north/south "free zone" circulation route that provides clear access to all activities, including the athletic fields via a primary east/west pathway. The project, as currently designed, allows for a future phase at a later date; the current project would build upon the site of the covered tennis courts and a future project would fill in the space between the new addition and Esslinger Hall. The proposed layout allows for good daylighting and creates an east façade that takes advantage of

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eastern views and establishes an active zone adjacent to the fields and main exterior pathway.

Matt Koehler, CMGS, introduced the proposed site design, which focuses on reinforcing and activating the existing north/south path by making a series of improvements including converting the surface to concrete, emphasizing the east building entry (e.g., create an entry plaza), and creating covered, tiered seating. Bike parking options are being considered; at this time the covered space outside the bonus room is being reserved for about 26 spaces. If more parking is needed, it could possibly go along 15th Avenue. Some trees on the project site would be impacted; the potential to move some is being researched.

The project's open-space enhancement requirement equals about 16,000 square feet. One idea being considered by the design team is the possibility of using some of the open-space enhancement funds to improve the north/south pathway. While not a designated open space, it is an important publically used pathway that merits improvement.

Jeff Schaub, RDG, introduced the building design. The project's goal is to dovetail into the existing character of the Student Recreation Center, in particular respecting the east gable end roof shape and the successful 15th Avenue edge treatment. The proposal accounts for the potential future replacement of Esslinger Hall. It links together many pieces by creating a key north/south interior corridor that provides access to and views of activities and adjacent areas. The proposal also enhances the east entrance. The key exterior design element is the east façade. Three east façade options have been presented to the user group (option 2 was not preferred by the user group because it was more contemporary and less connected to the existing SRC design).

Discussion: Members made the following comments about the initial design:

- Ensure that the project's exterior design does not result in a series of fragmented buildings, in particular in the context of the existing SRC facility, Esslinger Hall, and the EMU.
- Strongly consider integrating solar-heated water to take advantage of the roof space and south-facing orientation. Also, provide an educational element for students in the building (similar to the existing display).
- Better define the east entry; the proposed deep recess is not adequate.
- Ensure that the east façade fits into the fabric of the campus's design and function. As designed, the proposed shape is not found on campus. Use the existing 15th Avenue façade as an example of how the design should connect to the broader campus and Esslinger Hall through the use of materials, a main entry, façade definition, and roof shape.
- Reassess the design and function of the east façade's angled cantilever over the pathway. As designed, it does not seem to relate to the fabric of campus, and it only partially covers the proposed seating area. Recognize the range of important functions the covered space serves and determine how best to address the key functions (consider moving bike parking out of this area).
- Carefully define how best to provide bike access on the north/south pathway (consider bicyclists traveling on the path and bike parking).
- Maintain the focus on improving the north/south pathway.
- Thoughtfully consider how to use open-space enhancement funds (refer to further discussion below).

Jeff said the proposed design is based upon an established budget. It is understood that it may be necessary to respond to future changes in available funding.

Jeff also said the project has the potential to front a new campus green extending from University Street if the Esslinger Hall site is redesigned. A member noted that historic preservation elements would be addressed when future plans for either Esslinger Hall or Mac Court move forward.

The committee discussed the design team's suggestion to use a portion of the project's open-space enhancement requirement to improve the north/south pedestrian pathway, which is not a Campus Plan designated open space. The design team said the pathway is very dynamic and active. It functions like an open space; therefore, it seems appropriate to use open-space enhancement funds to improve the area. This is an opportunity to improve the pathway from 15th Avenue to 18th Avenue.

Staff explained the physical difference between a designated open space and a pathway as described in the *Campus Plan*. A designated open space, such as an axis, may contain pathways, but, more importantly, it has specific dimensions with clear definable boundaries and is part of a larger framework of interconnected open spaces. A pathway's dimensions are flexible as long as it provides a good pedestrian connection between two identified points. Staff added that use patterns in this region are shifting towards academics indicating that it may be time to consider refinements to the larger open-space framework. A member added that tremendous improvement is expected in the upcoming years as decisions are made about the reuse or redevelopment of University Street from 15th Avenue to 18th Avenue. Another member noted that improvements to the southern portion of the pathway near 18th Avenue should be coordinated with future projected development; therefore, money should not be spent on improvements in this area as part of the SRC project.

A member said the merit of spending funds to improve a designated open space is that the space is guaranteed to last. Therefore, it seems that the first step would be to determine if the pathway merits establishment as a designated open space. The intent of the enhancement requirement is to provide funds for projects in "shared" public spaces that do not otherwise have a link to a department or funds. Another member said that the *Campus Plan* seems to give the Campus Planning Committee the flexibility to determine how best to use open-space enhancement funds. It may be better to determine if the pathway merits use of funds and then to address separately the question of whether the pathway should become a designated open space in the context of current and future studies about how the block will redevelop.

Members agreed it would be necessary to bring back a more specific proposal if the project would like to pursue the idea of using funds to improve the pathway versus a designated open space.

Action: No formal action was requested. The committee's comments will be taken into consideration as the proposal is refined and moves forward for further review.

Please contact this office if you have questions.

cc. Vince Babkirk, Campus Operations  
Jane Brubaker, Campus Operations  
Bob Beals, Athletics  
Gwen Bolden, DPS

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