

April 15, 2020

MEMORANDUM

To: Campus Planning Committee

From: Liz Thorstenson, Campus Planning  
Campus Planning and Facilities Management (CPFM)

Subject: **Record of the April 3, 2020 Campus Planning Committee Meeting**

Attending: Ken Kato (chair), Liska Chan, George Evans, Emily Fenster, Hilary Gerdes, Michael Harwood, Shawn Kahl, Diana Libuda, Dean Livelybrooks, Maxwell Mindock, Cathy Soutar, Christine Thompson, Chuck Triplett, Laurie Woodward

CPC Staff: Liz Thorstenson (Campus Planning)

Guests: Austin Bailey (Rowell Brokaw), Rodney Bloom (PE and Rec), Colin Brennan (CPFM), Jane Brubaker (CPFM), Emily Eng (Campus Planning), April Freeman (Neuroscience), Dustin Locke (Rowell Brokaw), Benjamin McNulty (UOPD), Aaron Olsen (Campus Planning), Eric Owens (COE), Ivy Pitts (Campus Planning), John Rowell (Rowell Brokaw), Zoltan Varga (ZIRC)

**CPC Agenda**

**1. Zebrafish International Resource Center (ZIRC) Research Restoration and Expansion – Schematic Design Review**

Background: The purpose of this agenda item was to review the proposed schematic design for the ZIRC Research Restoration and Expansion to determine whether the design is consistent with *Campus Plan* principles and patterns. The project will renovate and expand the existing 10,000 square foot ZIRC building that was constructed in 1999 and replace the 20-year old aquaculture equipment systems. The building expansion will be up to approximately 5,000 square feet. Construction is anticipated to begin around April 2021. The project is being primarily funded by a NIH grant to upgrade the ZIRC facilities. It will be a phased project to maintain operability of the facility. Rowell Brokaw Architects is leading the design.

CPC staff reviewed prior committee input and applicable *Campus Plan* principles and patterns. Aaron Olsen, Campus Planning representative on the project management team, reviewed North Campus Plan Amendment considerations related to this project.

John Rowell and Austin Bailey of Rowell Brokaw Architects provided a schematic design presentation for the ZIRC project. The presentation included existing site conditions, proposed schematic site design and layout, conceptual plan and elevations, wall assembly diagrams, structured landscape base examples, and 3D renderings of the addition. Proposed building and landscape materials were presented, describing the design and other details of the proposed ZIRC schematic design. Design considerations for the expansion to be seismically independent and an animal research facility were also presented. John indicated that the addition's color palette was still being developed. Also, he said that a loading dock was being considered but the design has not been resolved.

**Discussion:** The following is a summary of questions and comments from committee members:

- What effort has been made to mitigate the large metal box design, which doesn't have a base, middle, and top? Assess ways to do so. For example, try to integrate elements from the existing building, which has a base in a different material and roof forms with a heavier roof cap, to soften the blank wall look.
- Include taller landscape options adjacent to the building to help break up and mask the building facade.
- Carefully consider building colors.
- What effort was made to preserve the existing Chestnut tree?
- Consider ways to assess and better tie the design into the existing building, not necessarily emulating the existing design, but avoiding a jarring transition.
- The loading dock needs further assessment and refinement if a decision is made to include it in the project. For example, determine whether the adjacent tree needs to be removed.
- Consider how to connect the proposed sidewalk that is west of the addition to the existing pedestrian sidewalk to the south. This connection currently exists and, while the current sidewalk is not ADA compliant, it provides an important connection that will grow in importance as future development occurs in this area. If not provided, people will be cutting through.

- Evaluate views from primary pedestrian walks and open spaces (Gallery Walk and Onyx Street). For example, carefully consider what the SW corner and loading dock feels and looks like when viewed from Onyx Street.
- Consider how the building looks on its own without the proposed vegetation.
- Consider the future of the North Campus area, and the style of architecture in the area now, versus what we are imagining and trying to put into action for our future and a very different surrounding of the ZIRC building.
- If at all feasible, consider adding green roofing elements to help mitigate the building's industrial character.
- While not in the purview of the CPC, has consolidation of off-site ZIRC storage to on-site been considered, as requested at CPC Meeting One?
- Carefully consider exterior lighting locations, as this is a parking lot area and pedestrian area.
- Challenging construction phasing requirements are important to consider while the facility must remain operational.
- This building sets the tone for possible future research facilities in this area. Does the current facade condition dictate what we match it to today, or do we consider facade changes to the entire building?
- Consider a building facade color choice that is not necessarily matching, but blends in and is compatible with the existing building.
- Consider color, rhythm, and connection to the existing building that isn't a monochromatic approach, but the insertion of vertical elements on the east side as well as the north side of the building. Represent a horizontal element that wraps through the existing building and shows up periodically in the new facade.
- Understanding certain functions inside cannot be visible from the exterior, consider ways to bring light into interior spaces and ways to use windows as an element that adds rhythm and scale to the exterior and mitigates the appearance of a metal wall. For example, in the UO utility plant, there are translucent openings that allow daylight but not views in.

In response to questions and comments from committee members, Rowell and Bailey provided the following clarifications:

- The facade design approach is to establish a base by developing landscape in the foreground, and a buffer between the landscape and the building. Also, there will be differentiation and texture in the metal and a cap detail at the top of the wall that will be further developed. Joints or a single joint will be developed to separate the upper metal from the lower metal.

- The intent of the landscape is to create a foreground and interest. Color selection of the building will be important.
- Existing pine trees on the south side of the existing building shown in the 3D rendering will remain, and there is no intent to change the landscape east of the loading dock.
- Alternate designs were studied to preserve the Chestnut Tree, however, the space required by the internal program included in the NIH grant didn't allow the Chestnut tree to be preserved. An effort was made to push the addition further west versus north; however, the program elements needed a more direct relationship to the existing zebrafish area, resulting in the addition wrapping around the existing west building.
- Consolidating off-site ZIRC storage to on-site is still being considered.<sup>1</sup>
- There are two existing campus standard pathway lamps west of the facility. The project team will further consider how to restore pathway lighting on the new path and loading dock area.
- Interior rooms along the north side of the building are either equipment rooms or lab space that may have activities that can't be opened up to views or daylight.

Action: With 13 in favor and 1 abstention, the committee agreed that the proposed ZIRC Resource Restoration and Expansion schematic design is consistent with the *Campus Plan* and recommended to the president that it be approved subject to the following conditions:

1. Consider ways to break up the facade and better tie the design into the existing building, not necessarily emulating the existing design, but avoiding a jarring transition. For example, carefully consider the use of horizontal banding, windows, color, and landscaping. Pay particular attention to views from primary pedestrian walks and open spaces (Gallery Walk and Onyx Street).
2. Ensure that there is adequate pedestrian pathway and parking lot lighting that is consistent with campus standards.
3. Carefully consider the loading dock design and pedestrian pathway access to the south, and views of this area from nearby open spaces.

In addition, the project team will assess ways to consolidate off-site ZIRC storage to on-site.

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<sup>1</sup> Efforts to visit the Baker Center to assess storage has been impacted by UO operational changes due to the Covid-19 response.