



October 12, 2020

MEMORANDUM

To: Campus Planning Committee

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

Subject: **Record** of the October 2, 2020 Campus Planning Committee Meeting

Attending: Ken Kato (chair), George Evans, Michael Griffel, Michael Harwood,  
Dean Livelybrooks, Cathy Soutar, Christine Thompson, Chuck Triplett

CPC Staff: Liz Thorstenson (Campus Planning)

Guests: Greg Bryant (JSMA), Brandalee Davis (General Counsel), Jeff Diez (Biology),  
Emily Eng (Campus Planning), Nick Gioello (City of Eugene Planning),  
Allen Hancock (Community Member), Harper Keeler (Landscape Architecture),  
Aaron Olsen (Campus Planning), Matt Roberts (University Advancement),  
Bitty Roy (Biology), Josh Skov (Lundquist College of Business),  
Philip Speranza (Architecture), Peter Walker (Geography)

**CPC Agenda**

Announcements:

- CPC Chair Elections will take place at the next CPC meeting.
- The new 2020-2021 CPC committee begins October 30, 2020.

**1. Campus Plan Amendment: North of Franklin Boulevard – Preliminary Proposal Review**

Background: The purpose of this agenda item is to review the preliminary proposal amending the *Campus Plan* to incorporate the university's land north of Franklin Boulevard. This incorporation serves to guide essential future campus development and connect people to the Willamette River based on *Campus Plan* principles. The amendment will be consistent with the new Conditional Use Permit (2018), which was designed to accommodate the university's long-term potential needs.

CPC staff introduced the purpose of the agenda item as described in the meeting mailing and the relevant key *Campus Plan* principles and applicable patterns to the project.

Campus Planning staff, Aaron Olsen, briefly reviewed background information previously discussed at past CPC meetings regarding this project and presented the current preliminary proposed amendments including specific items that will be in the amendment and paused periodically for questions and comments after each part of the presentation, with the understanding that this presentation and discussion will continue at the next CPC meeting,

### Campus Plan Boundary, Design Areas, Open Space Framework, and New Designated Open Space

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

- What is the public hearing process?
- The *Campus Plan* is not intended to be a detailed design.
- Is the *Campus Plan* aspirational and how should we think of the plan?
- The *Campus Plan* has a very strong process, is aspirational, and is a framework upon which we build future decisions. This helps direct future leaders making decisions about important considerations but remains flexible and adaptable.
- This proposal does not indicate that COD will be moved out. Refer to the *Campus Plan* Principle 5, Replacement of Displaced Uses – every project is required to follow this. For example, when Millrace was moved to 510 Oak, these displaced uses were transferred there. There are no intentions to displace anyone and the principles of the plan will be followed. The *Campus Plan* does not presuppose that these actions will take place under any particular time scale.
- However, the current low density land use characteristic in the area north of campus is not sustainable for future development.
- The seven-minute walking circle radius does not extend across Franklin, which limits the use of land North of Franklin.

The following is a summary of questions and comments from guests:

- The pedestrian crossing at Franklin is not clear and needs improvement.
- Where does COD go if displaced?
- What is the programming of the proposed open spaces? What are the purposes of the spaces?

- What is the expected use of this area? Is it intended for academics or focused on Knight Campus?
- Great idea to keep the urban farm where it is.
- More than 4000 students per year are documented to use the Riverfront open space and natural area for coursework, from departments including biology, geology, art, and anthropology.
- There is a recommendation to request the city follow up their construction of bike path with native plant plantings due to concern over weeds.
- Will the specific city bike pathway change be addressed?
- The new designated open areas shows the Urban Farm. Is this not in the *Campus Plan* because it's new? The outline shown around the urban farm in the *Campus Plan* has never included the north 1/3 of the Urban Farm. A diagrammatic building footprint is shown on top of that portion of the urban farm and there is concern the boundary is nebulous.

In response to questions and comments from committee members and guests, Olsen provided the following clarifications:

- The format of the public hearing is essentially the same as a Campus Planning Committee Meeting and will take place online via Zoom. While all CPC meetings are open to the public, a public hearing differs in that we will be providing 30-day notice to the director of the Eugene Planning Division and to designated representatives of each recognized neighborhood organization that abuts the campus (although neighborhood chairs have been notified throughout the process). Notice of the hearing is also given by publication in the Daily Emerald at least ten days prior to the date of the hearing. Other means of providing notice will be through an email to our extensive interested parties email list. This is in accordance with the Campus Plan, Principle 1, page 22, Meeting Notification.
- We will have time for revisions to the proposal after the public hearing; there will be no action being taken at that meeting. Action will be taken at the following meeting.
- It is recognized that the pedestrian crossings at Onyx and Agate are the formal established crossings at Franklin. The *Campus Plan* is not designed to provide specific design solutions, but it points out the importance of areas for improvement.

- Any use that would be displaced, such as COD, would be subject to *Campus Plan* Principle 5, Replacement of Displaced Uses.
- While not getting into the specifics of what the development is, the *Campus Plan* can indicate opportunities to meet a need. The future site selection process would determine if a specific area is suitable for any given proposal.
- The *Campus Plan* is not a fixed image Master Plan; instead, it establishes a process with 12 principles to follow. It sets up a series of considerations as proposals come forward (e.g., sets the stage or ground rules). It is aspirational and helps guide future projects and decision-making.
- Regarding the specific city bike pathway project, this was previously addressed and reviewed by the CPC. An overall pathway diagram is included in this proposal which provides the general goal of connections.
- The Urban Farm boundary in the diagram shows what's included in the Campus Plan as an Outdoor Classroom.

#### Campus Plan Principle 12 Organization: Willamette Design Area

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

- Thanks for incorporating this concept and change into the overall plan.
- The UCSB Cheadle Center is a good example of a natural area and something to have in mind as an opportunity; there could be a UO center analogous to this. It is a good precedent for managing land and should be on the table for the entire area as a natural area. Large tracks of land given to UCSB to manage have been very successful. Therefore, we should expand the area north of the tracks as a potential natural area. Playing fields could be relocated.
- There is concern about lighting. It is difficult to manage field lighting, and this could adversely affect habitat.
- What is the cost of restoration activities on other campuses (how much per undeveloped acre is estimated)? When we adopt a plan that sets aside land as a natural area, how will UO find funding to do projects within the natural area that support restoration? We would need an estimate of the rough dollar cost per acre.
- There is a significant financial commitment made when accepting responsibility for land and it needs to be balanced with the necessary funding over time. The

Shire is a good example: <https://yeoncenter.uoregon.edu/our-locations/the-shire/>

- There are many important values: environment, habitats, student, faculty, staff, and community well-being, recreation, and expansion of university facilities to help support student well-being. Are there other metrics, guides, or other benchmarks that campuses have used for the right amount of recreational space and natural habitat, and how may we be guided in creating the appropriate levels and balance?
- We can think of the word harmony between competing interests; while there are a lot of elements being blended together, we are not drawing a line.
- Introducing the Natural Areas language is appreciated. The idea of incorporating it into the *Campus Plan* creates enthusiasm for how this language has been crafted and what it means.
- If there were to be a larger area of campus Nature Center, it would require a big commitment of money and/or large donor, which may or may not materialize. UO has a reputation as a green university. During this process, the CUP has to allow for the maximum development of the area the university envisions, but at some point we have to think about what is permitted or not permitted from a *Campus Plan* view.
- The challenge is that the role of this committee is to define the future of the university, what those needs are, and what those academic goals are. Look at space needs vs. land use needs. It's aspirational but realistic, and we must accommodate and balance the known university uses and the projected university uses.
- Because this is not a fixed image master plan, it could be that recreational fields can be removed or replaced.
- It is important that there be ample room for Recreation Fields between the Railroad Tracks and the River.
- There is hope to find funding to achieve the goal of restoring the riverbank. This began with a smaller scale example of the Millrace restoration being funded as part of the Knight Campus project. Hopefully this will lead to bigger plans.
- This proposal is creating opportunity and setting up a framework for future opportunities. It is not a binding decision, but setting up a recommendation at this point in time.
- Thinking of this as an opportunity area sets up the potential to extend the natural area. It would show the possibilities and it doesn't foreclose on the issue.

- If the goal is to provide more flexibility, then it seems that the full spectrum of possibilities should be included. This would mean that the natural area would also be open to broader range of uses.
- The proposal does not preclude future opportunities. It is necessary to plan for the future and figure out what could go where, with parameters, to communicate our intentions, which is not a commitment to build. This provides the direction and process to do so if more buildings, recreation fields, or natural areas are needed. Integrating our academic and experiential natural landscape would be amazing. It is worth valuing and protecting.
- This proposal been a long process over many years, and we have been thoughtful about providing opportunity for future growth. Outdoor space is at a high premium during the present time of COVID-19.
- There is value in covered outdoor space.

The following is a summary of questions and comments from guests:

- What does the new designated definition of Natural Area mean? There is a lot of value for teaching, research, and ecological services that the campus benefits from that are quantifiable in dollar terms. How should we think of the Campus Plan as a guide?
- Restoration costs depend very much on how they are done. There is a large group of environmental science students who do active learning projects off campus, who could work on campus.
- There is appreciation for the examples of other universities and how they integrated with ecological environments. There is great opportunity to connect the university to the City (e.g. East 8<sup>th</sup>) and waterfront, as shown in the plan.
- The designation of playing fields is premised on the assumption that the university will need more fields. With the present time of COVID-19, will this even occur? With this high level of uncertainty, is the proposal still relevant?
- Consider designating the area between the Natural Area and the railroad tracks as an opportunity area instead of for recreational field use. This will accommodate whatever is needed and remain flexible.
- With the playing fields relocation study it appears as if a decision was made that the best location for fields was along the riverfront. How was this decision made and why were other locations not chosen? Having flexibility and adaptability is key for the university being able to respond to those changing circumstances.

- The purpose of the *Campus Plan* is to set up options for flexibility. Show both options of recreational fields and Natural Area.

In response to questions and comments from committee members and guests, Olsen provided the following clarifications:

- There will be a range of costs per project. For example, we could look at the City's restoration project as a good cost check for restoration work moving forward. Opportunities of federal, state, or grant funding for a restoration project may exist.
- Balancing needs differs between universities. The UO Framework Vision Project (FVP) conducted a needs analysis led by renowned campus planners to help give input on how to accommodate our campus growth.
- The Natural Area will be a formerly established type of open space that will be defined in the *Campus Plan*.
- The *Campus Plan* is flexible; we can adapt as new opportunities develop and we're not restricted in the future.
- The identified recreational field needs are based upon the current student population. There were needs already identified that aren't accommodated. Enrollment growth would add to this current need. The fields are not driving the premise for the overall proposal; the proposal addresses a wide range of identified needs for fields, natural areas, and building development.
- The recreational field study did not conclude with a site selection. It identified more thoroughly what sites were viable and what considerations would need to be addressed (opportunities and constraints). The site selection process would take place before making an actual decision about a site.
- If an opportunity area is established, we would need to relocate the existing fields, recognizing that this is the area on campus that was able to meet the needs of aggregating multiple fields.
- The 25-acre Natural Area designated open space does not show recreational fields located there.

**Action: No formal action was requested. This presentation and discussion will continue at the October 13, 2020 CPC meeting.**