



November 7, 2024

MEMORANDUM

To: Campus Planning Committee

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

Subject: **Record** of the October 18, 2024, Campus Planning Committee Meeting

Attending: Bob Choquette (Chair), Eric Alexander, Jamie Dillon, Ihab Elzeyadi, Emily Eng, Bella Esbeck, Michael Griffel, Norma Kehdi, Diana Libuda, Taliek Lopez-DuBoff, Erin Luedemann, Taylor McHolm, Janet Rose, Daniel Rosenberg, Amy Salmore, Philip Speranza, Rachel Withers

CPC Staff: Liz Thorstenson (Campus Planning)

Guests: Luke Helm (CPFM), Chelsea McCann (Walker Macy)

CPC Agenda

1. 13th Avenue Redesign – Schematic Design Review

Background: The purpose of this agenda item was to review the schematic design for the 13th Avenue Redesign project.

CPC staff reviewed relevant *Campus Plan* principles and patterns.

Luke Helm (CPFM) and Chelsea McCann (Walker Macy) reviewed the project goals, purpose, funding, phasing, extents, campus engagement, key campus planning considerations, and schematic design, including site elements, features, and materials, site circulation (pedestrians, bicycles, and vehicles), layout, views, stormwater treatment, and lighting.

Discussion:

The following is a summary of questions and comments from committee members with clarification comments from Helm, McCann, and CPC staff:

Regarding site design elements:

- Member: Will proposed bike parking be like the existing campus bike parking?
 - Helm: Proposed bike parking will be the campus standard U-shape racks.
- Member: Will proposed furniture be fixed or movable?
 - Helm: The proposed furniture will be heavy duty and movable.
- Member: Will there be a covering/structure over the EMU tabling area near the Campus Heart?
 - Helm: This could be considered as the design progresses for this area; however, the goal is to keep this area simple to reduce costs.
 - McCann: At the time design started, the EMU was considering a covered area inside the EMU outdoor amphitheater.
 - Member: Has this corner and reservable EMU space area been considered in terms of the overall design?
 - Helm: This area has been considered in the overall design.
- Member: Consider avoiding the use of oak trees due to acorn debris in areas for bicycles and wheels.
- Member: Is the paving, shown throughout the design, concrete?
 - Helm/McCann: The concept is concrete, potentially with specialty finish or color to highlight specific zones. The project explored different materials options, however, chose concrete due to maintainability and as a nice compliment to the brick buildings located along 13th Avenue, as to not clash with existing texture and color.
 - Member: Concrete is complimentary to the existing paving in the surrounding areas and facilitates blending into the context.
- Member: Support for a cover for the EMU tabling area reservable space.
- Member: Would a center tree in the campus heart conflict with the tabling area?
 - Member: This area will be more active after this project is complete, and the change of placing a tree at the center will help enhance it.
- Member: Support for the stormwater collection and overall 13th Avenue improvements.
- Member: Concern that the transitions in pavement seem arbitrary, especially in front of Johnson Hall that is designated as Johnson Plaza on the plans. The area does not seem to be much of a plaza, it seems like a place where the pavement changes color. There are some places where the visual transitions are motivated and visually important, particularly as signals to wheel transportation, and there are other places where it seems less motivated. Consider clarifying the design in these areas.
- Member: Consider the importance of a tree canopy and tree species.
- Member: The entrance on Agate and 13th Avenue is underwhelming and too simplified. Previous meeting discussion considered this potentially as being more significant.
- Member: What is the proposed tree species palate?

- McCann: The project has considered a broad range palate of tree species that are native and adaptive, depending on the conditions that are appropriate for each species. At this stage, there is a preliminary tree/plant list, and specific tree species will be developed further in the design development phase.

Regarding overall schematic design:

- Member: Does this design significantly impact the entrance to Columbia Hall?
 - McCann: Assuming Columbia Hall remains the same, there will be a small renovation of some of the steps that lead into Columbia from the south side, a strengthening of the walkway, as well as maintaining accessible entries to the building. There will be changes to some of the planters, while maintaining existing trees in the area.
- Member: Where is the boundary for this design? E.g., what are the project extents? Consider that the edge of the project can become abrupt.
 - McCann: The south and east edges are tied to where there is an outlet from the pedestrian movement of the EMU. On the north side, the edge was drawn at the façade of Columbia Hall, and there was conversation to not continue all the way to Lawrence. Further study could be done, but for the sake of the project scope, the team needed to pick a boundary.
 - Helm: The extents of the plazas were studied in terms of current movement and existing circulation patterns, defining those for future pedestrian movement and better delineation and safety. The paver circle at the intersection of University Street and Johnson Lane, south of 13th Avenue, was not initially part of the project scope, however, was added after it was determined that this area was deteriorated enough that it needed to be included in the project.
 - CPC Staff: Previous committee discussion regarding this project included that the project is not currently funded past schematic design. The project scope is looking at opportunities for 13th Avenue, not redesigning all of campus, and includes budgetary constraints.
 - Member: Once the schematic design is approved, and enters the next phase of design development, it references the schematic design as a basis of moving forward.
- Member: This project has gone through a year-long conceptual design process and received campus-wide student input and support. Throughout schematic design the project was brought to the committee and stakeholders, and feedback was incorporated into the design. The design is balancing cost, desires, needs, and functionality.
- Member: What is the difference between schematic design and next steps, E.g., what moves forward into the next design phase?

- Member: Major concepts and dimensions, and configuration, in general the look and feel, and overall thoughts about materials move forward. Whether one bench is wood or not, or what type of trees are specified, can be worked out in the design development phase. These comments will be gathered and incorporated as design moves forward.

Regarding site circulation and gathering:

- Member: As this project moves 13th Avenue to a more pedestrian zone, does this mean that guests or community members visiting campus to express their personal views can be anywhere with signage within the street? Currently the university can direct people to where they can gather because the existing sidewalks are public access. Support for a cover in the area.
 - McCann: There is a difference in tone and scoring in the wheel zone, as wheels will have to travel through these plaza spaces. There are proposed visual cues for where wheel zones will go versus pedestrian zones.
 - McCann: Throughout the schematic design phase, there was previous design discussion regarding a canopy for the EMU amphitheater with design exploration. The project did not show another canopy outside of the amphitheater as to not have conflicting structures adjacent to each other. If the canopy project does not move forward in the EMU amphitheater, it could be noted that this edge with a canopy is explored in the future.
 - Member: The committee approved schematic design for a canopy in the EMU amphitheater, which may be in the fundraising stages, however, if that project does not move forward, other options can be explored.
- Member: Concern regarding the relationship between wheel transport and the pedestrian design. For example, the bicycle route between Volcanology and Willamette Halls has frequent complicated interactions between bicycles and pedestrians. Pedestrians frequently sprint across 13th Avenue from Willamette Hall to the EMU area. Support for considering these areas and incorporating into the design.
 - Helm: If the project extents could expand further to Onyx Street, perhaps there would be opportunity to widen the area for separate lanes, however, the project widens the area as it approaches 13th Avenue for better visibility of bicycles, recognizing that there is frequent traffic in the area.
 - Member: A positive change is there will no longer be private vehicular traffic going through the area, which at least removes the added element of vehicles.
- Member: Consider the importance of making this space especially welcoming for pedestrians and bicycles, not only vehicles.
- Member: How will the staging of trucks and vehicles near Carson Hall work?
 - Member: This can be considered as the project moves forward.

Regarding maintenance, materials, and sustainability:

- Member: Have future maintenance costs been considered? E.g., the proposed stormwater location.
 - Helm: CPFM Facilities Management has been a part of the project team regarding maintenance, helping to guide design decisions through the lens of future maintenance needs.
- Member: Consider the lifecycle of materials, embodied energy in the materials from a sustainability perspective, and avoiding the urban heat island effect.
- Member: By expanding concrete areas, is the site losing existing permeability to water trees?
 - McCann: The project is either maintaining existing tree planter zones or expanding them and including a “Silva Cell” tree product that supports expanding tree root zone areas growing below paving. This will create more area for existing tree roots, maintaining soil volume and additional root mass zone, creating an improved environment than the trees have currently.

Regarding accessibility:

- Member: When planning for wheels, also consider wheelchairs, knee scooters, and other mobility devices. In addition, signage language related to wheels should be inclusive of these mobility devices.

Action: A member made a motion to delay action due to feeling the presentation materials were insufficient, E.g., the graphics were too small. With 8 in favor, 1 abstention, and 6 opposed, the committee agreed to delay action on the **13th Avenue Redesign – Schematic Design Review** until a future meeting and noted the following considerations:

1. Provide further clarification in the presentation materials, including boundaries and definitions of schematic design for the overall project, and what carries forward from schematic design into the next design phase, and
2. Provide further inclusion of design materials in the presentation, E.g., paving, plantings/species, layout, and content.

2. Campus Planning Committee – Year in Review

CPC Staff provided an overview of the 2023-2024 committee’s activities, highlighted anticipated activities for the 2024-2025 academic year, and reviewed typical CPC meeting procedures.

Action: No formal action was requested.