

Minutes of the Master Plan Advisory Committee
June 15th, 2004
Bishop Center, Room 7

Call to Order: The Master Plan Advisory Committee meeting of Tuesday, June 15th convened at 3:05 p.m. at the Bishop Center, Room 7. The presiding officer was Karla Fox, Chairman. Attendees present included Linda Flaherty-Goldsmith, Vice President and Chief Operations Officer, Dale Dreyfuss, Vice President of Operations, Tom Callahan, Special Assistant to the President, Larry Schilling, Executive Director of Architect & Engineering Services, Dean Rich Schwab, Cynthia Van Zelm, Meg Malmborg, Neal Eskin, John DeWolf, Carol Polifroni, Jack Clausen, Debbie Kendall, Michael Neumann, Phil Barry, Donna Korbel, Janet Freniere, Erin Lirot, Paul White, Peter Tanaka, Janine Caira, Deborah Shelby, Ralph Edwards for Bill Simpson, Leonard Blanks, Ron Dubois, Krista Rodin, Jane Bachand, Ronald Langner, Gregory Padick, Ian Hart for Dean Kerr, David Cournoyer for Kay Davidson, Craig Calvert, Ted Yungclas, Rob Henning, Alvin Wilson, Eddie Danials, Rich Miller.

Introduction-

Dean Rich Schwab announced that “there’s been some communication issues with faculty saying that they haven’t heard about certain things we discuss in master planning and just want to reiterate to everyone that Master Planning is a committee of thousands, and it’s a committee of thousands because we really want to get as much information as we can about what’s going on on-campus to as broad an audience as we can, so I just want to reiterate that part of our job of being on this committee is to also go

back and spread the word to our colleagues and keep them aware of at least what we're trying to accomplish here and what the agenda is, the updates we're getting from Larry so that we do as good a job as we can at getting information out". He then turned the floor over to Karla Fox.

She pointed out the agenda was a "lighter agenda" and she wanted to follow up on what Rich was just saying... "We probably don't have much that in one sense is new to report. Dale is going to tell you a little about where we are in the Master Planning process, but we thought it was important to have a meeting because there is so much going on. This is the point where UConn 2000 is coming to an end, we're starting the planning for 21st Century UConn, so there's still a lot of building going on, a lot of plans for the future. We thought it was important that we hold this meeting as "an information update", which some people are calling "The Dale and Larry Show" and the purpose is to just to let you all know what is going on and to engage in a dialogue if people have some insights or questions to ask. That will be very important to us. If you have any issues, you can certainly always e-mail Rich or I with those and we'll be talking a little bit about what the plans for the future are.

Karla also brought up last meeting's minutes and said that because last meeting's minutes were so "voluminous", an abbreviated form of the minutes were posted at: www.masterplan.uconn.edu and the minutes with more content will be sent out to all members before the fall. This is why "Acceptance of the Minutes" is not on the agenda for this meeting and all minutes will be accepted with any changes in the fall.

Update on Master Plan Project-

Karla then turned the floor over to Dale Dreyfuss to update the members on how the master plan project is working out. Dale started out by mentioning how Fairfield Mall is finally closed—“to the delight of some and the consternation of many”. “This will create some dislocations as we figure out how, in a real-world situation, to make deliveries to a couple of buildings in the center. One of them is Pharmacy and that will only probably persist for a year and then they’ll move. I think that everyone is really going to like that once you get used to the idea that you really can’t go down the road. It’s a much more friendly place for pedestrians without the delivery and the service vehicles. Now that the South Campus way leads up to the library quadrangle from South Campus is completed and in use, it really makes a nicer statement about how the campus hangs together. We’ve got another group of things that are under construction that are just finishing up:

- Gentry-going to be finished next month.
- Co-Gen Plant- next to the old powerhouse on Glenbrook Rd.; will come “on-line” next summer; permits are still winding their way through the DEP
- Pharmacy/Biology Building- next summer, August was proposed but Larry Schilling pointed out that they’re ahead of schedule with that project, once new building is up and open, the old Pharm. Bldg. will be coming down.

- Phase II of the Student Union- will be done and occupied next summer and the last of the student groups will be in there and the food court, as well, which will have three branded concepts: a Wendy's, a Panda and a Blimpie's, as well as some of the other food chains that have been in there all along.
- Poultry Facility- going up right on the edge of Horsebarn Hill Road, next to the other poultry facilities and will be completed in October
- Thrust Theater- will be completed late this summer; kick off production will be a production of Caesar in October.
- Burton Family Football Complex- construction begins in October; Larry Schilling showed the attendees what the complex is going to look like; Location: current site of tennis courts and parking lot where Stadium Rd. circles around South Garage.

The tennis courts will be relocated up by I-Lot.

Building: main materials: brick and stone elements, pitched roofs

A question was raised about what was going to be done with the concrete stadium stands at Memorial Stadium and Larry announced that those are going to be demolished and he is not sure what the site is going to be used for. The field will continue to be used for various activities, but the stadium will be gone. He has signed the commission letter and they'll be developing the specifics for the demolition. They are looking to see if they can relocate some of the bleachers to the soccer field for a larger seating capacity. He also said that while the indoor practice facility is not in use by Athletics, it would be available for other recreational programs. They will need 180,000 sq. ft. more of

additional program space. He also spoke about how in the near future, probably July, he will be meeting with Jeff Hathaway and other people in athletics to develop an “Athletics Master Plan”, which will be blended with the recreational component so that we can “comprehensively look at how the whole university, including athletics, will be developed in the future”. It was brought up that the Master Plan consultants mentioned, at the last meeting, more possibilities for that recreational center and that they were being looked at. It was discussed whether or not the Master Plan committee members would have input into that and Larry told members that they would indeed have input into it and that in September, a representative of JJR would be coming back and by then they’d have some good ideas which will come back to this committee. A main concern was putting the fields next to the facility, but Larry said that “we are somewhat limited in the central campus for open space”. A member raised the question, “Are the same number of tennis courts going to be at the same location?” “Yes, and down the road, Athletics is looking at the possibility of enclosing three courts”, Larry answered. “Given the increasing number of the student body, wouldn’t a larger number of courts seem in order?” Larry replied that the courts are not heavily used throughout the year, except maybe for summer camps or athletic venues, but students don’t seem to have a heavy interest in tennis.

- Torrey Life Sciences building-the Hillard Group has been selected as the architect and they are verifying the program right now; various concepts are being looked at with the biologists as to what the building could and should be like and there should be some preliminary ideas in the fall re: a quad, one large public art component (Pharm. & Torrey LS).

- Lakeside Apartments- renovations; for University Communications use; Allan Dehar is the architect; preparing plans right now, he was the architect on the Bio/Physics building, among others.
- New Classroom Building- replacing Arjona and Monteith in a few years; just getting underway on the architectural selection. Rob Henning asked, “What is the order for those (Arjona and Monteith) coming down? Are they coming down at the same time?” The answer given was, “we don’t have anything like the amount of swing space you would need to take them both down at the same time. We haven’t exactly decided. It’s likely we’ll build a building that’s half that size, maybe a little larger, then take down one of them and move those people, then build the replacement for the other half and then take that down.” Rob then followed up by asking, “So build you say the half-size, does that mean where the co-op was then?” “We have an internal debate...this is a great thing to bring up to the Master Plan Committee. Larry and his friends the Master Planners think we ought to put a classroom building where the old co-op used to be. I think it’s a much better park than it is a building. It’s an obvious location for part of the Arjona/Monteith replacement, though it’s not the only possible location. So, when we get to that point, we have to make a decision.” “Is *we* Master Planning? Or this committee or Building and Grounds?” “Building and Grounds will ultimately make the decision, but I think this is a real master plan issue.” Karla then interjected, reiterating the issue that Rich Schwab brought up in the beginning of the meeting about

going back and sharing what was done in the meeting with colleagues.

John DeWolf then asked, “When does that input come?” and the response was, “we haven’t even hired the architects yet”. Larry said, “After we develop the program for the building. In 21st century, we’ve got a certain size building. I took the current size of the building, and I inflated it higher. We got to work with CLAS to develop who goes into the building and with the classroom committee, what kind of classrooms. We’ve got to figure out what the size of that building is and then we’ll do some site analysis and bring it to the committee.” Rich Schwab pointed out that they are still in the “First Programming Phase” where they are finding out the needs—one building? Two buildings? A big building? A small building? The building gets designed around the needs. Later in the fall is probably when the discussion for the siting will begin.

- Student Union Quad- a landscape architect has been chosen, Carol Johnson Associates; she is very inventive & engaging with wonderful ideas; area includes down to the Benton Museum, all the way to the Hillside Road side of the Student Union and then from Glenbrook (even around Castleman) over to Fairfield Road. She is meeting with the various bldg. committees to get everyone’s input for the process and then she will be coming back to the MPAC group for a presentation in the fall.

Programming this coordination activity begins in a few weeks. Larry Schilling mentioned the idea of an outside commencement, possibly *one* commencement ceremony in this area, because it is so large. Rob Henning

raised a question concerning a clock tower being raised in this area and a response was given: “We have a site. The site being where the vent is. It really awaits a donor. We’re looking at it as a very large philanthropic opportunity...a very large statement for somebody.”

Discussions-

Jack Clausen reopened the subject of closing the Fairfield Mall and said that he saw three delivery vehicles going down the sidewalks because they couldn’t go down the mall anymore. He pointed out that he sees tire track maintenance being needed on almost all sidewalks on campus because of this traffic. He asked if there was a Master Planning effort to consider sidewalks, not from pedestrian point of view but because they are going to be used now by a lot of vehicles. He mentioned that they are too narrow for a lot of vehicles that are using them so he thinks there is constant maintenance. The response to his concern was “whenever we have to replace or repair a sidewalk, we always put in a minimum eight foot replacement...not so much because we want trucks to drive down the sidewalks, but because they are going to get plowed by pickup trucks, so they need to be that wide for when they plow the snow. The real problem is we don’t want trucks on the sidewalks unless they’re plowing snow.” “So they shouldn’t be on the sidewalks?” Jack clarified. “Any vehicle shouldn’t be on the sidewalk,” Larry answered, “because we have many disabled students on campus and to be disabled and have to meet a vehicle when you don’t expect them...out in the public, you wouldn’t get away with that, you would get a very hefty ticket.” He also pointed out that with any new construction that is done, loading docks and delivery access to the buildings are created. It’s just that some of the older buildings are not laid out to create a delivery point.

Meg Malmborg asked if there would be a way to put ‘pavers’ in the areas where students are walking where there are just small grassy areas, especially near the school of business (near the grad school). Larry Schilling replied, “We can look at that. The biggest issue comes when you get close to a tree, the tree roots will continue to push up the pavers.”

Donna Korbelt voiced her concern regarding the handicap accessible vans making it up and onto Fairfield Way now that it’s closed. Larry Schilling replied that they could come up near Babbage and on the east side of the old school of business.

Peter Tanaka asked if the loading dock for the Information Tech building was connected to the library loading dock and Larry Schilling confirmed that they would use the library loading dock for both buildings.

Rob Henning said that he was curious to know how some “of these other design considerations that have been discussed by the consultants” are factored in? He gave one example as the replacement building for Monteith that was described at the last meeting and how one design consideration was to build a ‘neighborhood effect’, for example. He wanted to know which priorities were more important than the others. His question was, “How do those priorities, which are still unclear to me, factor in to the program design planning that you’re doing now?” Larry Schilling answered by saying, that “we start working with a building committee for the project which is made up of groups that are going to occupy the building—they drive the program. Then you look at the siting issues. What is the program inside the building? What is the program outside of the building? That group comes up with ideas, which are then brought to the group Buildings and Grounds and then to this group for input. Rob then asked when the architects come into

that process. Larry answered that they are the ones that do the programming with the Building Committee (the tenants in the building). Karla wanted to mention that Larry has been working on and Building and Grounds is reviewing a “flowchart” that explains how the whole process works and it will be forthcoming once it is finalized. This document will go up on the Architectural and Engineering website to explain to the reader the various stages of the design process and who is working on it at that time.

Carol Ploifroni raised a question about those people who are not tenants of the buildings that are being redone, but are required to use the space because their own buildings do not have enough space. “When does our opinions get factored into the programming needs of the building?” Larry Schilling responded that if she “was talking about classrooms, there is a central Classroom Committee that’s made up of various people from the University and their part of the review process...give input into what’s the size of the classroom, what’s the level of technology that’s put in, what type of seating goes into the classroom...we’re looking campus-wide what type of classrooms do we need for the future. So, it is in the project.”

Dale Dreyfuss then went back to the subject of other projects that are going on.

- Completion of North Hillside Road - plowing through the permits, toughest of which is the Army Core of Engineers Permit
- Fine Arts Complex – in the programming phase; models of the spaces have not only been drawn out but have been constructed; “programming is continuing side by side with fundraising”

- Story Landfill on Hillside Road – in permitting; when closed, will be paved over and will give another 550 spaces of parking; “It will be served by the shuttle bus system”

A question was raised asking if the “huge air conditioner that’s sitting sideways” on the “skyline of the Thrust Theater” will be camouflaged at all because it looks as if it was just “placed there”. Larry Schilling asked if it was green because it may be a transformer. He said that, “there should be no air conditioner there. It’s an air-handling unit for ventilation. I’ll find out (what it is)...usually we screen it...we may not have done the screening yet.”

The next question raised was, “Will you remove parking from *both* sides of North Eagleville Road this fall...both sides?” “Yes”, Rich Schwab replied. “What’s the reason for removing the parking?” Dale responded, “The reason for removing the parking is ‘pedestrian-vehicular interaction’. We have a significant ongoing safety problem because of the pedestrian volume crossing that road at all hours”. Larry Schilling added that, “We have about 5,000 students that live north of that road...” “So parking on one side of the road wouldn’t be reasonable then because of safety?” the person who initially asked the question added in. Dale answered that what they are going to do is allow parking there on Saturdays and Sundays (during the days) because of the religious services (during daylight hours). “Other than that, we will take the parking lot. We’re going to see what we can do to do some traffic calming...we can not expect to have police standing there giving out tickets all that time, that’s just not reasonable. So, we will resort to devices. We may use rumble strips in the road to keep speeds down. I’ve investigated into whether we can during the daytime we can restrict the outside lane—the lane closest to the curb—

for bus traffic, which would improve service of the transit system and give us a lot easier way to make schedules on the buses and also keeping the cars to the center to keep those speeds down.” The devices they would be using have not been decided on yet.

Janine Cairra mentioned that she recalls hearing that having cars on North Eagleville would serve to slow traffic down because the idea would be that if they left some cars parked on one side that it would focus where the pedestrians are crossing...she asked if this is a bad idea? Dale replied that after many years of trying out different possibilities, they have found that this is a bad idea. They keep coming back to the idea of getting the cars off the road and trying to deal with the safety problem and getting the road to the point where they can control the traffic. Janine then asked if it would be possible to streamline the pedestrian traffic, maybe by using “brickwork”. Dale responded, “If you put in brick walls, it gives a kind of ‘prison camp’ look and if you just put in chains, which look really nice, the kids just step over them. We’ll take a look at what might work.” Larry Schilling suggested maybe they could do what they did with Gilbert Road, raising the crosswalks so that people know they have to slow down.

Karla Fox asked if there were any other issues and one person said that they are having a problem with “way-finding” a.k.a. giving directions. He said he has given directions “in the last week about ten times and there is nothing really to give directions by.” He said he uses the gold dome and the silver dome as directions. He suggested that something needs to be done to help solve this problem. Larry Schilling said that one of the components of the Master Plan is a way-finding component—how to get people to their arrival point and then to where they need to get to from there. He said that they are looking, along with JJR and Chance, to come up with way-finding solutions. There

should be something more definitive in the September timeframe. Another person said that the new connector that goes from South Campus over to the library and the Dodd Center and when the road alongside Gentry is complete would make for a more “sane” environment, making it easier to give straightforward directions. Larry Schilling also added that part of this improvement would be the instillation of some “Informational Kiosks”. He also added that there are building signs, but they get “plastered with all kinds of material and we want to create kiosks where material can be posted and then things are not posted on light poles, stop signs, and building signs or directories”.

Another person said that his class once worked on a project where they tried to design a kiosk system, but that “they decided an electronic one would be a good idea...some kind of an electronic thing. It was unclear who would manage such a thing, but one of the student groups might be interested in doing that.” Larry Schilling answered, “That is indeed one of the components we need to come up with”.

Deb Kendall raised the topic of communication once again and stated that she remembered that there was once going to be an interactive portion of the Master Plan website, “where people could log in comments and questions about issues”. She feels it would be really helpful. “People could see these options up on the website and you could tell people to “Go look, this is what happened at the meeting...go look at the website.” Karla Fox noted that she was “moved” just that morning to look at the website to see what was up there and “they don’t have the minutes from the February meeting, but JJR has the minutes ready.” There is a very full description of the really long meeting we had in November where JJR laid out the basic concepts. It’s all there along with an up-to-date map that appears to be the February map. Also, there is a button that looks like you

can communicate with JJR. “A couple of us tried after the last meeting, not recently, but that was a great idea in my mind but I just don’t know if anyone has been successful at using that and whether they have or not...Does the campus community know that’s there? I think people might be very interested in it...it provides an avenue for some input.” “I’ll check into that with JJR to see if there’s a problem with it, but they should be putting up the Torrington Master Plan which we just signed off on that and I think there’s just one open issue on West Hartford and that will be posted up—the Space Needs Assessment and the Master Plan.”

Pete Tanaka brought up the need for a place for helicopters to come and land on campus. Is there any thought on designing that new lot on the landfill for that purpose, because lately we’ve been getting a lot of helicopter traffic with our new chairman of the Board of Trustees...there’s a number of reasons why it’s needed.

John DeWolf wanted to go back to the discussion of Fairfield Way and the Academic Way, which he feels “looks beautiful”. The intersection, with “sort of an island there” has nice grass and there’s a path right across it. Is something going to be done about that? Larry responded, “We came up with a concept to do it, the problem is we’ve got a bunch of utilities and I’m looking at a way of doing it without...the first number was close to \$300,000 because of the location of some of the utilities. “So you mean to move that?” “Yes, because there are some steam lines, some water lines, irrigation lines that go through that. So I’m working with the contractor to come with a way to try to cut through that hill with a sidewalk straight across...and not spend a fortune.” Someone mentioned that putting a few plants on top so that “you can’t cut across it” would solve the problem. “If you look around the Athletic facility, they have a

chain-link fence and the lawns over there always look so nice. Is that something that could be done elsewhere?” “Yes...(laughter)...that would be a good idea to do.” “You never see vehicles on the sidewalks in that area.”

Karla Fox announced that this would be the last meeting of the committee for the summer, so she asked those in attendance to “speak now or forever hold your peace”. Peter Tanaka raised a question about demolition, “Is there any timeframe for the houses on Gilbert and the old SUBWAY and a number of these other venues?” Larry responded that there just needs to be a sewage ejector pump installed into the SUBWAY and once that’s in, the building can come down. “How about the houses on Gilbert? Any estimate?” “We’re waiting for permission. I sent probably six months ago a request to the State Historic Commission. We’ve had some discussions. We sent another piece of correspondence to them and I’m going to start pushing them. Likewise we are in the design components of tearing down the two wings of the yellow barn, once we have permission there. Karla Fox asked Dale Dreyfuss if he would like to talk about a little bit about the Yellow Barn and some of the plans for that building? “We are going to take those wings down, which are decrepit and falling down anyway. We are going to take those down and pave those areas and increase parking, which will help the churches but it will also help the Ag Biotech area where there is very little parking...that will increase the parking there by at least double.

“Are there any plans to renovate Hawley Armory?” someone asked. A comment was made that it was just done ten or twelve years ago. “If you go inside and look up...there are some water infiltration issues and we’ve got a consultant looking at what needs to be done to stabilize it. Water infiltration means it leaks...”

John DeWolf asked if that is really a suitable area for a parking lot, “right on 195, where you come in and see a campus and you start to see parking lots?” “It falls off...there will probably be retaining walls...if you look for it you’ll see it...it will be down below.”

Karla Fox asked who had the sign-in sheet and made sure everyone signed in. And she just wanted to reiterate the point that “communication is very important and that this is definitely not a secret meeting, so feel free to go forward and spread the word about what you heard...it’s especially important as you know, because the UConn Advance doesn’t publish during the summertime, so that’s a good way to get the word out.

Adjournment-

The meeting was adjourned at 4:15 p.m. and Karla Fox thanked everyone for coming.