

## NOTES FOR DESIGN ADVISORY BOARD

### University of California Santa Cruz

Monday, February 26, 2017

Physical Planning & Construction Conference Room 151 (Barn G)

CHAIR: Richard Fernau

Board: Richard Fernau, Louise Mozingo, Tito Patri (Absent)

9:30am ***Family Student Housing - Introduction through 100% Schematic Design***

**UCSC Traci Ferdolage, AVC, PPDO**

**Developer Capstone Development Partners (Kattera, Building Technology;  
Walker Macy, Landscape)**

Capstone introduced the Family Student Housing (FSH) development proposed at the site where Hagar and Coolidge Drives intersect, explaining that the project is on an exceedingly fast schedule, with Design /CEQA approval targeted for July 2018, and construction starting immediately following the public appeal period. This project phase is currently at 100% Schematic Design.

Some of the site planning decisions are currently informed by conditions related to the CEQA review, including the storm water drainage design strategy, the proximity of the development to an existing sinkhole feature and an attempt to maintain the delicate balance of forging a new living community yet complementing the existing natural environment. Walker Macy explained that some intrusive cuts may be necessary to achieve a universally accessible site, but that has yet to be determined. There is an overall 80-foot drop from the top to the bottom of the Hagar site.

The primary access to FSH will be off Hagar Drive, with a second entry planned off of Coolidge Drive. An Early Education Center (EEC) will be also be developed at FSH but has yet to be designed. Capstone is partnering with Kattera, a technology company that efficiently fabricates workforce housing, as the cost-effective solution to design and deliver the FSH units. These will be structural components that are manufactured and assembled offsite to expedite construction. On their visits to the campus, Kattera is keenly aware of the sense of importance in the sequence of approach from the campus's historical district to the proposed site.

Kattera explained the unit plans and how the schemes have evolved. One design strategy was to create two-foot 'slips' in plan and section to give some articulation and depth to the building profiles. For exterior finishes, cementitious panels are being considered in reference to the natural limestone formations commonly found on campus. Kattera acknowledged that the units with the side walls exposed to Coolidge Drive currently look starkly opaque with limited openings, which would be a problem when it's in full view. They are looking at some options to articulate that elevation.

The Board raised a collective concern on the noticeable lack of interior and exterior storage amenities for the residents. In particular, as the project is sited prominently at the gateway to the

campus, unkempt personal property left out in the open would be visible from the main road. Capstone acknowledged that while this being a concern, they also have to balance cost against program needs as FSH is currently the most subsidized component of the entire Student Housing West development. At 140 units currently, the program is very compacted. The Board commented that the designers should look at screening opportunities, either using low-screens, planting, or offsetting the public-private transition areas by a couple of feet.

The Board noted that the grading shown around the perimeter looks very infrastructure-like and imposing; it is currently proposed at a 4:1 slope which is similar to a typical CALTRANS embankment standard. They recommend that the slope be eased considerably, both to better align with the existing natural grades of the meadow and to render the approach to the Hagar / Coolidge intersection as more welcoming and inviting. The corner of Hagar and Coolidge presents an iconic view of the entire development, and acts as a gateway to the larger campus itself.

The Board also queried if it was feasible to create two ADA zones, instead of a single one across the site, to complement more of the existing site gradient. Walker Macy explained that the goal was to achieve accessibility across the entire development.

The Board also recommended considering another location for the maintenance building to minimize the amount of cut and fill needed to conceal the structure. They thought that it could be given a unique architecture treatment to complement the history of the campus.

The Board pointed out that one of the ways to look less like a developed compound is to “expand the landscape beyond the boundary, let the trees drift off-site, which will help the site considerably.” The use of a clever tree pattern could also help to mitigate the elevation changes and more landscaping on the inside of the walkway paths is highly encouraged. Some figurative attention should also be given to the EEC. Another observation was that the scale of the Commons open spaces “feel too big.” It would allow more give in the site plan to scale down the open spaces.

On the selection of materials, the Board indicated that dark and absorptive colors would be preferable to a bright palette and durability would be a strong consideration. The use of weathered steel panels could also be considered.

The Board also noted that the child care center siting would be extremely important, and asked how it would relate to the housing project aesthetically.

In conclusion, the Board wanted to be recorded that they are unanimously opposed to the selection of this site for the FSH development. They questioned what alternative sites had been evaluated and expressed concerns that the low-density program, located at such an iconic gateway intersection, undermines the careful approach and purposefulness of campus planning, and were alarmed by the potentially inhospitable interruption to the visual character of the open meadow in that specific location.

An absent Board member, Tito Patri, submitted his written comments on February 24th in advance of the DAB presentation and requested it to be added to the meeting notes:

1. This is the University of California and this campus was established with the uniqueness of this overall site very much in mind - this special example of the ecosystems and geomorphology of the California Coast, as an integral part of its mission. The idea of the colleges at the edge of the forest, keeping these very meadows (ancient sea terraces) free of development and forever “readable” for educational purposes, is at the core of that mission. This FSH project will signal that it’s OK to start filling in the rest of the meadow with more development. With up to 20-foot cuts and 15-foot fills it will permanently disrupt the visual understanding of the terrace formation. This will be especially prominent because when approaching the upper campus along Hagar the meadow terraces are seen as the skyline because of the drop-off to the east. I’m not even touching on the stylistic disruption of the prefab architecture. Planting native grasses on these steep slopes will not mask this error. Nor will trees popping up in the middle of the meadow designed to hide these buildings.
2. A preferable site would be downslope of Ranch View Terraces, west of the campus entrance, an area that is no longer “virgin” and in the low karst hazard category as opposed to the Hagar site which is in the moderate karst hazard category. Development there if sited properly and with “suburban” tree patterns would reflect the privately developed properties across Empire Grade. Another alternative would be to straddle Hagar and place some units close to the residential (faculty) houses to the south. These would then be in area zoned as Employee Housing - why not FSH?
3. The project’s extensive road circulation looks as though it is driven by fire department requirements and the by(sic) extensive cost saving e(sic) overall site grading and flat building sites. Instead of creating an island of development smack in the middle of the view, buildings could follow Hagar (perhaps there is even room on the south side of Hagar) and more importantly should follow the existing slope. Exclusive fire department access could be provided off of Hagar cutting down on the amount of interior roads. This would tie the project more closely with the faculty residential area to the south. In fact the project could be integrated with the edges of that development so it appears as an extension of it. The open space east of our parking area also comes to mind (also zoned as EH).

11.30am

**LRDP 2040 Update (Working Lunch)**

**Interim Campus Planner  
Consultant**

**Jolie Kerns  
Page Consultants**

Page Consultants (Page) presented an overview of the program assumptions, current impacts, and academic mission. She discussed the environmental and ecological constraints on the campus, and highlighted some of the underdeveloped area on the campus, including Quarry Plaza / Bay Street Bookstore area.

The presentation walked through the opportunities and constraints of each of the key campus zones – north, academic core, upper and great meadows, and gateway area. Lots of infill opportunities were noted throughout the academic core and gateway area. There has been a lot of interest in developing the gateway as a welcoming area for the community. The Board liked idea of creating town-university interface at entrance, noting the success that the new Berkeley Art Museum has had on the campus entrance, now that it has been relocated downtown across from the south entrance.

The Board asked about the process so far, and Page described the robust outreach to campus and community, and the LRDP planning committee. The Board also asked the level of detail in the final LRDP map, and Page explained the need for flexibility over the next 20 years, but simultaneously the need for clarity and specificity in intent, and clarifying the campus' values.

The Board inquired how the initial thoughts on campus planning are responsive to the academic mission and plan. For example, is there an emphasis on graduate or undergraduate growth, scientific research or liberal arts educations, using the "landscape as a laboratory"? The Board noted that any of these emphases might indicate a different planning direction to support it; they expressed concern about how difficult it is to plan for the long range development of the campus without an academic plan in place.

The Board asked how the faculty, the Chancellor and those in charge of academic planning see the future academic mission of UCSC. It was noted that, in a perfect campus the physical setting (the social and circulatory spaces between buildings and landmarks, etc) would reflect the emphasis of the future academic mission. If infill sites are pursued and the academic core becomes more compact, strict site and architectural design guidelines should be applied to ensure structures (in terms of grading, bulk, texture, transparency) relate well to adjacent structures and open and forested spaces; the sense of the forest is not lost with potential increased density; sunlit spaces are preserved where possible; and a clear hierarchy of pedestrian circulation is preserved.

The Board added that it is fundamental to the campus' identity for the meadow, the all-important foreground to the "college at the edge of the forest," remains largely intact.

The Board also inquired, broadly, about the landscape carrying capacity of the campus, any implications that might have on the limits as to people, cars, buildings, and the potential for the campus to lose its intrinsic value as a unique environmentally oriented teaching lab. Page has been working the UC Natural Reserve throughout the process, defining criteria for open spaces, to understand the environmental balance between development and the natural ecology.

2.00pm

### **Kresge College Redevelopment**

<b>Project Manager</b>	<b>Jolie Kerns</b>
<b>Consultants</b>	<b>Studio Gang Architects (SGA) TEF Architects (TEF), Office of Cheryl Barton (OCB)</b>

The Board visited the Kresge College site preceding the design team's presentation.

Studio Gang Architects, joined by TEF Architects and the Office of Cheryl Barton, presented their thoughts on the project thus far. SGA included the notion of Kresge as an urban place, the democratic sense of design, and how they've thought about the intentionality of Charles Moore. SGA/TEF noted the challenges on the current site, including the two-dimensional façades, no privacy for students and the need for clear programmatic areas to support academic, residential and student support functions.

OCB noted that this is a site of succession, and the landscape design will need to understand how much to evolve from the past and how much to retain.

The Board was impressed with the amount of care and thought put into the planning and programming process, and the detailed site analysis. They were supportive of any proposal to thin the forest for more

sunlight, and noted that thinning should consider tree health so the healthiest trees can be saved. The resulting pattern of sunlit spaces could help guide the architecture.

The Board remarked on the grading challenges, and strongly suggested attacking these issues earlier rather than later. They noted the odd mix of exterior and interior planting, and suggested that perhaps all of Dan Kiley's original design wasn't executed. They asked that paving and large planters be considered as to how they will mesh with existing conditions in the new plan. They agreed that large outdoor gathering spaces will strengthen the sense of community and contribute to student wellness.

SGA presented the current site plan, detailing which buildings would need to be removed. The Board noted that any trade-offs in the proposed site plan must exceed the value of the original, in terms of achieving the function and humanity of the college, and that we should be cognizant of tearing down potentially historically significant buildings.

With regard to the new academic building and plaza, the Board suggested avoiding a square or rectangular massing, as it will appear too generic for the site, and would not be consistent with Charles Moore's original design where residential buildings were rectangular and non-residential buildings were imbued with more latitude as to shape. The Board encouraged the team to think of the academic building as a marker, where a smaller footprint and higher building would be appropriate and there could be lots of potential in seeing it as beacon at night, lit, from Heller. The Board noted that a lecture hall can be a really dead space when not in use, and the team should be conscious of locating other active spaces on the ground floor of the academic building if possible.

For the Library building that will now be the Kresge College assembly space, the Board encouraged the team to utilize the spatial qualities of the existing interior to the greatest extent possible, as this building is a good example of the original architect's defining design thinking.

The Board thought the proportion and scale of the existing "civic plaza," between buildings R-11 and R-3 and flanked by the "Mayor's Stand," was quite odd, and agreed with the proposal to enlarge the exterior space and provide accessibility via a stramp through this area.

The Board also saw the potential in removing R8, which opens the site to the Moore Creek ravine, allows for visual access from Heller Drive, and will enlarge the academic plaza area and bring in more light.

For the new residential buildings, the Board expressed concern with how the final forms are designed. In looking through the early photos compared to the existing photos, they were surprised to find so much whimsy and delight embedded in Charles Moore's original buildings. They noted that the challenge for the design team is to design for the functional program without overwhelming what's left of that whimsy, and suggested a sensitive approach to the Moore vocabulary. Without mimicry, the new buildings should not only relate to the original design but enhance it.

3:15 p.m.

**Adjourn**

Cc: Advisory Committee on Campus Planning and Stewardship  
Denise Blais  
DAB Members