Campus Center Expansion – Recreation Building
Design Review
Campus Center Design Advisory Panel 6/24/09, 3:00 – 5:45pm

Attending:
Design Advisory Panel Members:
Peter Vincent       AIA, Peter Vincent Architects, 808-524-8255
Kiersten Falkner   Historic Hawai'i Foundation, 523-2900, x24
Juli Walters       Landscape architect, Walters, Kimura, Motoda, 941-2520
Steve Meder        UHM, 371-7032
Sanford Murata     Sanford Murata, Inc., 226-7373
(Clark Llewellyn  Dean, UH SoA – (excused due to travel)
Eric Crispin       UH Assistant Vice Chancellor, 956-8018

Jonathan Bolch    Yost Grube Hall Architecture, 503-221-0150
Steve Mortensen    Yost Grube Hall Architecture, 503-221-0150
Gary Nakatsuka     Ushijima Architects, Inc., 946-9544
Nels Hall          Yost Grube Hall Architecture, 503-221-0150
Shaun Ushijima     Ushijima Architects, Inc, 946-9544
Katrina Shum Miller Green Building Services, 503-467-4726
Sarah Yap          UHMSLD – Campus Center, 956-4832
Shawn Kyono        UHMSLD – Campus Center, 956-4814
Carl Furutani      UHMSLD – Coordinator of student life, 956-4815
Bruce Teramoto     UH Office of Capital Improvements, 956-4800
Eileen Ellis       UH Sea Grant, 956-2861
Janet Gillmar      UH Planning, 956-8786

Eric Crispin: Introductions, Process as called for in LRDP, Approval by Campus Facilities Planning Board, next meeting in about 3 weeks

Sarah Yap: Director of student union and campus life center
• Students work on this project starting in 2000
• Wish to create a gathering place
• In 2006, received $ from state legislature
• Student-driven; 4,000-signature petition for project
• This is the 2nd of 3 phases, goal is to increase visibility and student quality of life
• Phase 2 is the recreation center; Phase 3 will be additional renovations to original building
• Program and schedule are key.

Presentation

Shaun Ushijima: local architecture firm
• His Mom worked at the campus center for decades, so he grew up around the campus center
• Following Long Range Development Plan by Group 70
• Original idea was to extend the existing building, but changed the project to separate building to the NE side of original building due to seismic and other code considerations.
• Now working on landscape component, salvage, saving trees.

**Nels Hall:** Yost Grube Hall Architecture from Portland, Oregon
• Firm has expertise in recreation centers and campus plans, overseas work, he has worked with 35 campuses in 25 years, Jonathan is project designer.
• Nels is Project Principal responsible for site plan issues, many staff LEED accredited
• Create space for interaction, 18-hrs of activity instead of it becoming dead at 4:30 pm; cost-effective model of sustainability, very constrained site, incorporate historic buildings.
• Old part of building is 1960’s mall style, inward looking, doesn’t recognize neighbors; this is opportunity to transform it, create inside-outside connections.
• Long term plans include adding a childcare facility, more space for student government, and change circulation of existing part.
• Historic buildings - integrate 2 of 4 existing buildings into the design (#31 and Ka Leo); these face the open space in N-S corridor on E side which is/will be landscaped.
• Keep project as separate building; if attached there are costly ramifications since it would be classified as a larger building and need to meet seismic standards and a different fire code, etc.; so group decided it will be a separate building in the same complex.
• Trees affected: 24 canopy trees; 5 will be demolished and 19 relocated. {see notes on page 6}
• Causeway changes, bike areas in NW area; move walkway closer to building; causeway will be more like a plaza with view to E through picture window of gym’s 2-story workout area.
• Ramped walk to replace steps to W side of causeway won’t disturb 2 large trees (earpods).
• They looked at many orientation options; looked at circulation; handicapped-accessible route along the N and E.
• Re-grade land at N and get rid of rail
• Relocated ’Mother of Earth’ statue to relate better to walkway to Quad.
• N side transformer room (?); cantilevered rooms on second floor breaks up sides of building to prevent monolithic appearance.
• Formal entry to central courtyard plaza from E between 2 historic buildings
• Banyan tree between historic buildings, not recommended saving it; instead using planters.
• Plan to move parking on E side, but as temporary step, plant 1 main canopy tree to start growing before parking is turned into landscape.
• Plaza area – extending stair (theatre seating)
• Rebuild entry to bookstore
• reas.
• Gym can open doors to plaza; large covered zone on S side of gym
• No work in W zone of campus center
• W side steep stairs – suggest breaking up and also put in large canopy tree.
• Need better path from bus stop to W side.
• Suggest childcare are in S end of campus center and outdoor play area; good access from legacy path.

**Jonathan Bolch:** architect, project designer

• Make campus center the center of campus; full of energy, connections between people, indoor and outdoor, night and day.
• Gym faces S onto plaza; maximum daylight, maximum ventilation
• N lighting, S side PV either now or later.
• Plaza – good area for concert, gatherings, seating.
• Reduce stormwater runoff – maximize pervious pavement.
• Investigate green roof – historical buildings are only 1 floor so can be seen from many buildings on campus; need to determine if this is structurally feasible. Portland promotes green roofs. They had considered using roof of Bldg 31 to act as terrace but too complicated.
• PV and solar hot water not in scope of project.
• Impression of village of buildings around monkey pod plaza; sizes of buildings step down.
• Continuity with earth tones, keying roof levels with neighbors; fitness roof level about same as Miller Hall cornice, gym roof edge about same as Campus Center. [Eric: 1987 color guide to be updated.]

**Comments about presentation**

• Too much hard surface; not enough green
• Project as shown doesn’t “feel like Hawaii”
• Putting building on a plinth, not necessary. Need more nature, looser, not so hard and controlling; very urban landscape.
• Bleachers? Answer: No. Benches around perimeter, hardscape in plaza for concerts.
• Thoughtful design, agree there’s too much hardscape, need more feel of Hawaii.
• Project reflects sustainable design but it could be located in “Anywhere USA” –
• Design should reflect Waikiki/Manoa Ahupua’a (ancient Hawaiian land management concept of sharing resources and stewardship from Mountain to the Sea)
• Likes ‘village of buildings’ with different roof levels.
• Concern with sun control on E side – potential heat gain. [Answer: Agree.]
• Elevations need to be further studied; example: green roof will require thicker section – either decreasing the fenestration or increasing size of parapet; question of access and maintenance of green roofs. [Answer: Ladders through hatches in roof.]
• Open doors of gym great idea – what kind of doors? Are they really open bi-folds as shown on plan and if so, how do they really work in elevation and in creating the stage space?
• Need more eye-level perspectives.
• Operable wall to exterior? Response: Yes. (?)
• Some wonderful considerations, a progressive statement for campus.
• Inward looking; could use more porosity. Response: program calls for access control; need some AC – humidity issue with equipment rusting.
• Need more open envelope.
• What is the (large) box on the roof? Response: mechanical room; pre-treating air 2/3 of the year and open ventilation 1/3 of the year (Nov to Feb).
• This is like a lunar module dropped in.
• 24 trees affected; loss of canopy; losing the heart of the campus.
• Urge designers to be open and flexible. Listen to what’s being said.
• This is an established institution – the mature landscaping is a key element in signaling that.
• Hardscape is harsh, not integrated; look at other options.
• Not a lot of connection between inside and outside; transparent but not porous. Response: control issue.
• Worked on this in the past 6 months on historic preservation issues and calls it the “engineering quad”, not “campus center” – this shows perspective of where each one is coming from.
• Compromise position in early discussions led to keeping 50% of the existing historic structures - ie keeping 2 of the 4 historic buildings. Remember – we still need a separate charette on historic buildings-- how they relate to adding green roofs, plinths, new entries.
• Want to know more about how interior wall and historic building meet; interior view.
• Remember commitment to an integrated educational display for historic buildings.
• Oldest building (#6) is being demolished to save significant landscape.
• Can’t believe this plan got to this stage without more fuss being made over losing significant trees like the comosa ficus. It’s unforgiveable. The continuity of banyan canopy (from Hemenway to Miller) is important. The landscape of campus is one of its biggest assets. Can we go back (and re-visit this issue)?
• Response: funds would lapse if project delayed.
• Asked Kiersten: Do you consider trees historic as well as buildings? Response: Yes, want to include the setting, context.
• Hope the landscape plan not set in stone.
• The building is head and shoulders above the others.
• UHM previously did not have a position in charge of overseeing planning and sustainability at a high level. His is a newly created position to deal exactly with such issues before they become critical. From here on out, such issues will be addressed early in the process.
• Previous lack of communication between groups on campus; previous lack of checks and balances.
• Problem precedes the people involved in the project now.
• Procedures are being implemented that will correct such issues for the future.
• Let’s document this so it does not happen again.
What is the “Overarching Theme”?

Question the alterations of old buildings

In HI, it is more natural to have landscaping right up to building

This hardscape is not in balance with culture of Hawaii, reminds him of Sproul Plaza at Berkeley.

Response: Need to have place used, assembly issues
Is there a way to achieve better balance?
Easier transition, more solutions need to be considered.
Raised planters on this campus don’t work – never maintained-end up full of weeds
There are examples where some are maintained, such as at Bachman Hall.
That is only because it’s outside the building where the president works!
There is a need to integrate human needs and interaction with built environment and nature.

Ficus Comosa – Steve made impassioned plea to save; since it can’t be saved, let’s provide adequate, commensurate mitigation. People will react badly when trees are cut down. Integrate with existing landscape and mitigate loss of major trees on campus.

How do we respond with new plan that mitigates that loss.

Suggestion: create a small “Legacy park” at terminus of Legacy Path ending at Miller Hall

Need a well developed plan to show future splendor on N-S axis on E side of Campus Center courtyard – equal in size and stature to the area being lost.

This will take generations of people to prune and re-create canopy – existing tree should be documented, photographed, exhibited in new building.

Look at image of (monkeypod) tree in hardscape – that won’t work

You say one thing, but all we can do is react to the images provided;

Look at our parks and beaches – grass, trees, beach – very simple, people love it for the outdoor, natural environment not the built environment

Formal placement of trees not Hawaiian in feeling;

Formal placement only along UH streets; off street it’s informal, a rich tapestry of trees.

We don’t have the landscape architect’s input yet.

We don’t have an arborist on team yet; no decisions about trees until we have the arborist.

(pointing to formal entry from Legacy Path into courtyard) Image of entry feels rigid, urban, almost military.

Preserve existing 2 Ficus trees by 2 historic buildings; push stairs back.

Kiersten warned we are putting entrances that weren’t there in original buildings.

What if we move formal entry back to far end of historic buildings; gentler transition, keep original entries to historic buildings;

remove transformer;

leave 2 large trees for canopy, have softer slope leaving base of buildings original.

Hardscape inside plaza is hot. Needs shade.

Turn some of major courtyard steps into seats, make it more like informal amphitheatre, add planters.
• People love grass.

Group Discussion: Would grass grow under that tree? Could use grass-ring mat type of reinforcement – works well when installed properly, such as at East-West Center. (material there manufactured by Invisible Structures)
Shaun: Remember students 'go everywhere'.

• I’d like to stress the importance of design of green area on E side as future phase – important selling point if are to mitigate loss of so much tree canopy.
• We could find private donations to fund the landscaping.
• This project needs to address it enough to sell the concept.
• Extension of Legacy Path/Park
• Need banyan trees, not just breadfruit. Want eventual canopy of banyan.
• How to document propagating a part of that tree.
• We have a responsibility to future generations.
• People along the way, over the years worked on pruning this tree to create this canopy.
• Need photographic documentation, history of that tree.
• Could plant its replacement in large open space of extension of 'Legacy Park' where won’t matter too much there's not much canopy for a long time. Also plant some Comosa trees on a backup location at edge of campus. This was done for the Moore Hall bo tree. Eric: Does design team have questions for the panel?
• Funding/timing constraints, responsibility to legislature.
• We believe the recommendations heard here have minimal impact to schedule and cost; urge the Design Team to incorporate them.

Consistent themes in comments:
• Indoor-outdoor relationship, how project relates to landscape.
• Building itself is very handsome.
• Lots of negative reaction to the perspective between the 2 historic buildings. A powerful entry but military rigidity. Redo grading, might move entry back toward courtyard, leave canopy trees.
• Very important to finish design for green park area on E side.

Conclusion:
• DAP to meet separately to formalize its recommendations
• Meeting could be via email if time is a constraint.
• Eric will send recommendations to Bruce for circulation to Campus Center, Design Team.
• Design team to address recommendations, present to Campus Facilities Planning Board as soon as possible.
Notes about impact on trees:

1. Of 24 canopy trees affected:
   - 16 have historically documented campus landscape heritage value (Campus Heritage Report, December 2008)--all but 5 demolished.
   - 15 are rare trees in state (ficus benj. Comosa, schleffera spp, 1 unknown species), the only ones on campus (koka), or part of a special collection (breadfruit)--
2. 31 palms are also affected.