Master Planning Committee Meeting  
July 11, 2002

Notes

Members Present:
Rick Caulfield (chair), Deb Brownfield, Chris Bennett, Ian Olsen, John Craven, Bob Wheeler, Lydia Andersen, Pamela Davis, Kathleen Schedler (FS), Steve Titus (FS)

Current projects:
Steve Titus from Facilities Services (FS), Division of Design and Construction, provided an overview of current projects underway on campus. Among these are renovations to the Fine Arts Building, Library, Brooks Building, and Hess Village. Groundbreaking has taken place at the Museum, and drilling is being done to assess the proposed site for the West Ridge Research Building (WRRB) next to the GI. Results will be available shortly. He noted that some $21.5 million is included in general obligation bonds going before the voters that will be used for utilidor upgrades.
Proposal for Cold Climate Housing Research Facility (CCHRF):
The MPC discussed the proposal for the CCHRF, which proponents seek to build adjacent to campus. MPC members are generally supportive of this concept if viable. They also want to ensure that a proposed location and design is in keeping with the UAF Master Plan (MP) while also meeting the proponents' needs. The MPC understands that the originators of the proposal need to have approval from UAF about a possible site by October 2002.

The MPC considered many issues about possible location of the CCHRF on the south side of the ARR tracks, with access off of Fairbanks Street. General issues centered on the need to consider this proposal in light of potential interest for other "R&D" facilities in the same area. This proposal is the first that gives us an opportunity to think about the needs of a "research and development park" in the broadest sense.

Specific topics discussed included the size of the required footprint (up to 5 acres), challenges and opportunities provided by frozen and wet soils, vehicle access (preferably from the Fairbanks Street intersection used by WVHS), pedestrian and other access (especially with ARR upgrades over time), adjacencies to other potential "R&D" users in the same area, and utilities.

After considerable discussion, the MPC asked FS (Steve Titus) to explore with the proposal's originators another possible location—one near Farmers Loop Road and adjacent to the Taku Parking lot. The MP also identifies this as a potential site for an R&D park, and it has advantages of having better ground for building, access to roads and utilities, and an adjacent parking lot. Whether it is suitable for the CCHRF's research needs is not clear. Steve agreed to speak with the principals involved to determine if that might be a more appropriate location. He will report back to the MPC at our next meeting on July 25. With that information, the MPC can formulate more comprehensive recommendations about the proposal and the broader concept of a R&D park.

Proposed use of Gruening Building for KUAC satellite dish
The existing KUAC satellite dish is located adjacent to the Ballaine Parking lot. KUAC proposes to replace that dish with a new one and requests that it be placed on the top of Gruening Building. Installing a new dish at the old site is said to involve additional and unbudgeted costs for fiber optic cable upgrades.
While recognizing the need for such dishes, several committee members raised questions about the desirability of using Gruening or other highly-visible buildings for dishes and antennas if other options exist. There are concerns about safety and liability in expanding facilities on the tops of buildings. There are also aesthetic issues about a proliferation of antennas on tops of buildings.

After some discussion, the MPC asked Facilities Services (Steve Titus) to explore with KUAC the possibility of using the existing site, even if cable upgrades are necessary. The sense is that we have an existing ‘antenna farm' on that site and that it seems a good use of land that is otherwise not buildable. That said, future construction near the current antenna farm (e.g. a potential parking garage envisioned in the Master Plan) may require relocation of these dishes and antennas at a future date.

FS will report back to the MPC on July 25 about its discussions with KUAC.

Proposed research tower on North Campus
The MPC reviewed a proposal for a 30' research tower for measuring methane levels, to be constructed on North Campus lands. It also had the benefit of comments about the proposal from the North Campus Subcommittee, submitted by Pat Holloway.

The MPC discussed a number of issues raised about the proposal by the North Campus Subcommittee, including the proposed location, access to power, vehicular or other access to the site, eventual removal of equipment and restoration of the site, and potential impacts on other adjacent uses. Among other questions, the MPC questioned whether any alternative locations—outside of the North Campus area with its multiple uses—had been considered. Given growing research, educational, and recreational demands on North Campus lands, it seems reasonable to explore all such alternatives unless having a boreal forest research site is essential.

The MPC agreed that it would ask the North Campus Subcommittee to invite the proposal authors to present the concept at the next scheduled meeting (July 23). This will provide the Subcommittee the opportunity to explore whether a North Campus location is indeed required, or if other suitable locations might be found.
Now that the North Campus Subcommittee is in place, we need to inform the campus community and other users of the area about the importance of providing sufficient information in a timely way so that NCSC recommendations can be developed and forwarded to the MPC.

The MPC believes that broader issues raised by this proposal are most appropriately addressed by the North Campus Subcommittee and its ongoing planning process (anticipated to take about one year). The MPC looks forward to having such a plan in place in order to anticipate the needs and concerns of all users.

**Other Business:**
The Executive Committee intends to draft bylaws for the MPC for approval in September. It will also continue working with the Chancellor, the Cabinet, and others in identifying new MPC members as terms expire so that a full Committee can begin work in September 2002.

**Next Scheduled MPC meeting:**
Thursday, July 25, 9-11am, Chancellor's Conference Room