



University of Colorado

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## University of Colorado Design Review Board Meeting Notes

Date: Thursday, January 12, 2017  
Time: 9:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.  
Location: First Floor Conference Room, 1800 Grant Street, Denver, Colorado

**DRB members present:** Don Brandes, Sarah Brown, Rick Epstein, Victor Olgyay, Michael Winters, Teresa Osborne (ex officio), Bill Haverly, campus DRB member for the University of Colorado Boulder campus (“CU Boulder”), and André Vite, AIA, campus DRB member for the University of Colorado Denver campus (“CU Denver”).

**Others in attendance not otherwise noted:**

Linda Money, CU Real Estate Services, CU System employee / DRB note taker.

Mr. Brandes, Chair, determined a quorum and called the meeting of the Design Review Board to order at 9:30 a.m. at which time the Board held a private study session.

### **9:30 - 10:30 Study Session – CU Denver and CU Boulder**

The Board met in a private session to discuss a potential item coming up on the University of Colorado Colorado Springs campus and the items on the agenda prior to convening the public portion of the meeting.

Mr. Brandes, Chair, called the public portion of the Design Review Board meeting to order at 10:30 a.m., after which the Board and the individuals present for the meeting introduced themselves.

### **10:30 - 12:00 Williams Village East Residence Hall – CU Boulder**

Architects: Whiting-Turner Contracting Company, Denver, Colorado  
alm2s, Fort Collins, Colorado, design principals/local architects  
KWK Architects, St. Louis, Missouri, lead design architects  
Bruce Hendee, BHA Design Incorporated, Fort Collins,  
Colorado, landscape architects

Presenters: Bruce Hendee, Landscape Architect, BHA  
Brad Massey, Principal, alm2s, architects, Fort Collins  
Paul Wuennenberg, Principal, KWK Architects

CU Boulder Campus Presenters:

Tom Goodhew, Assistant Director and Planning Manager,  
Facilities Planning

Bill Haverly, Campus Architect and Director of Planning,  
Design and Construction  
Richelle Reilly, Landscape Architect, Facilities Planning

Others Present:

Javier Esteban, Principal, KWK Architects  
Mark Faul, Vice President, Whiting-Turner Contracting  
Heather Heiland, Whiting-Turner Contracting  
Chad Koscinski, Project Architect, alm2s  
Roger Sherman, BHA Design Incorporated  
Mark Thornbrough, Martin/Martin Civil Engineering

Other CU Boulder Campus Representatives Present:

Paula Bland, Director, Residential Life  
Chris Ewing, Vice Chancellor for Planning, Design &  
Construction  
Curt Huetson, Director, Facilities Planning and Operations,  
Housing Administration  
Ida Mae Isaac, Capital Planning Strategist, Facilities  
Planning  
Grace Lahrs, Student Assistant to Heidi Roge  
Heidi Roge, Project Manager, Housing and Dining

Description: Concept Design Review and Approval

**Presentation to the Board/Discussion:**

Mr. Goodhew began the presentation to the Board by reviewing the existing micro master plan for the Williams Village campus student residential housing neighborhood ("Will Vill"). He also reviewed the current floodway and floodplain map for the area and concepts for potential changes to the micro master plan.

Ms. Reilly continued this review by describing existing and possible future bus routes, transit stations, and potential bridges that could connect both sides of Will Vill from the west side to the east side crossing over Boulder Creek.

Mr. Haverly noted that the micro master planning options included within the conceptual submittal package are not official approved master plan documents, but rather, they may become the basis for future updates to the micro master plan for Will Vill.

Mr. Massey presented an updated project schedule and project budget for the proposed Williams Village East building ("Will Vill East"), noting that the proposed number of residential beds had been increased from approximately 570 beds to approximately 700 beds, encompassing six floors. Accordingly, the total budget also increased from approximately \$70.2 million to \$90.7 million, including approximately \$62.3 million for the building, \$7.7 million for the site, \$9.2 million for design and construction management fees, and \$11.5 million for equipment and furnishings, project contingency (5%), and miscellaneous items. Of the \$7.7 million budgeted for the site, approximately \$2.2 million has been budgeted for utilities and \$5.5 million has been budgeted for landscape and hardscape purposes.

Mr. Massey also noted that when this item was last heard by the Board, the Board had requested that the design team consider five key elements as they moved forward, including the Bear Canyon Creek Corridor, Village Green Open Space, the Promenade extension, the campus edge at Baseline Road, and architectural programming. Additionally, he reviewed enhancements planned for Will Vill East that are in addition to features of Will Vill North, the residential building to the west of Will Vill East. These enhancements included sustainability considerations for the building and the site, and floodplain considerations.

Mr. Hendee reviewed the overall campus context, and site analyses of bike and bus traffic circulation, major influences, views, the recreation fields, programming, and design precedents and design inspiration which contributed toward the current proposal for Will Vill East. He also reviewed proposed concept plans, including project limits and more detailed areas surrounding and adjacent to Will Vill East, and a conceptual grading plan.

Mr. Wuennenberg presented section drawings of the site, existing references at Will Vill, volumetric concept drawings, drawings for various viewpoints and elevations which included two proposed schemes, and shadow studies. Additionally, he reviewed proposed floor plans and the proposed program plan for approximately 700 beds.

At the end of the presentation, the Board asked questions or commented on a number of topics to which either members of the design team or members of CU Boulder staff responded. Below are informal comments made by the Board during the discussion portion of the agenda item:

- Assumptions reflected in micro master plan for Will Vill East will be very important going forward for the development on the east side of the creek and for any future modifications of the Will Vill master plan.
- Regarding the placement of fixed bicycle storage areas, cost vs. benefit considerations should be reviewed and it should be determined if any of these areas can be centralized so that the building will not be surrounded with bicycle storage;
- Using Will Vill East as a gateway portal from the main campus to the Will Vill campus is a good suggestion and may benefit from revisiting the development of the east side of the building and/or east side garden area;
- As acknowledged during the meeting, a determination needs to be made regarding whether or not there should be a major entry on the west side;
- If possible, revisit the entry ways, consider flipping the lobby desk to the west entry and reworking the placement of the lounges and laundry areas so that they anchor a major entry on the west side or both the east and west sides and so that the views to the southwest can be used to their best advantage;
- Consider that wind exposure may reduce or eliminate using the south side as a major access point;
- Also, consider what can be done to improve the connections, including the terminus at the end of the promenade, and how the layout and orientation of the soccer fields may influence these connections;
- Details regarding the site budget and what it includes concerning site infrastructure and landscape would be helpful for future Board review, especially since the construction limit lines have been extended;
- Consider reviewing the site plan, configuration, and placement of the building footprint which could be beneficial regarding access and control and could maximize the sunniest

sides of the building and possibly remove any overlap of the building on the floodplain;  
and

- Need to reduce massing and maximize pedestrian view points.

The Board briefly met in executive session with the CU Boulder campus presenters as noted above in order to discuss the conceptual design submission after which the Board thanked the design team for the progress made on the Will Vill East project. Mr. Brandes explained the process going forward through the end of the agenda item, after which, the Board provided the following formal comments and/or direction:

#### Site and Landscape Architectural Issues

From a site development and civil engineering standpoint, it will be critical that if any ground floor architectural or programming changes are made that the modified site grading and landscape improvements relate to and complement these proposed changes.

Regarding the forthcoming schematic design submittal package ("SD submittal"):

- Please consult with the University Campus Architect to better understand the SD submittal requirements and level of detail expected regarding site layout and design, grading, drainage, planting palette and plans, outdoor spaces, project cross-sections, views, fixtures, furnishings, lighting, signage, shade and shelter details, and the proposed site improvement and paving materials, etc.;
- Please review and evaluate the north courtyard in terms of the layout, grading, exposure to snow and ice, visibility, programming, shade and shadow, and accessibility from the parking lot;
- If the north courtyard could be reduced in size and simplified, perhaps the other courtyards could be expanded and enhanced;
- On the eastern portion of the site, evaluate a stronger, more natural, less formal relationship with the pond and creek in order to improve the sense of place;
- Investigate relocating the main pedestrian walkway/fire access road on the eastern courtyard area in order to help reinforce placemaking, perhaps by reconfiguring the walkway/road toward the pond; and
- Consider making the east portion of the site more of a destination and gathering node.
- With a 1:1 bike ratio (700 bikes) the potential solution to this program element will have significant impact on site planning and building entry/exit points.
- Review future circulation paths regarding pedestrian, bicycle and future transit stops at the NW corner of the site and how these circulation patterns define first floor planning.

#### Architectural Issues

Consider all of the discussions which have taken place with the Board during this meeting regarding the ground floor plan, including the relationship of the ground floor to the:

- Programming and how the ground floor influences the programming;
- Site development and the courtyards;
- Overall massing of the building; and
- Expression of the verticality of the building.

Regarding the massing of the building:

- Efforts to address elevations and cross sections in terms of the roofing plans of this building are not perceptible or meaningful from a student's perspective or other ground-level view points;
- The massing as proposed is significant and the bulk of the building needs to be reduced;
  - The massing diagrams and the related modeling need a substantial amount of work; please show process options.
  - With 700 beds, does the building have to maintain 6 levels? This limits massing options.
  - Can there be a clearer sense of main entry and potentially limit the number of entry points?
  - The largest footprint (and massing) of the building is located to the east, essentially blocking connectivity and views to Bear Canyon Creek. Have other options been explored?
  - Have options been explored which did not place the building in the 100-year FEMA floodplain?
  - The design team and staff should work together in order to explore any possible modifications or other opportunities, including changes in ground floor programming that might help reduce the massing and/or influence the verticality of the building;
  - The gables on the roof were often used to link the elements together which increased the bulk of the building, so eliminating the gables linking different sections and pursuing instead a flat roof for these areas may help strengthen the individual elements of the building and may help to pull them apart visually;
  - Consider using glass and other elements to improve the vertical massing, separate/pull the towers apart; and
  - If possible, provide additional options for the Board to review beyond the gabled or flat roof options already provided.

Regarding the materiality and fenestration of the building, more articulation and thought about how to make Will Vill East a really unique building are needed.

### Energy and Sustainability Issues

To date, there has not been clear articulation of the project energy and sustainability goals, and technical analysis of the project's energy and sustainability potential has been minimal. The expectation of the Board is that for the SD submittal, several issues related to the integration of energy and sustainability should be addressed in detail, including, but not limited to:

- Identify goals and objectives for the building and for the site;
- In addition to and beyond LEED certification, if applicable, what systems will be employed for the site and the building;
- Specifically, we would expect a schematic energy model to be in use at this level of design to determine which strategies would be most effective to be included in the design. The purpose of early use of the analytical tools is to inform the design, not to document its performance; and
- A description of the process used in order to review or otherwise examine these systems and include the results of these investigations.

Additionally, the timeline for establishing these parameters is of concern as the decisions regarding energy and sustainability should affect both the programming and planning for the site and the building.

We believe this building should improve upon the design of the existing Williams Village residence halls, and cost effectively achieve a high standard of energy performance.

Mr. Olgay moved to accept the conceptual design submittal with the inclusion of the formal comments that have been made by the Board as noted above. Mr. Epstein seconded the motion which unanimously passed.

**12:30 - 1:30**

**Speer Crossing – CU Denver**

Architects: H3 Hardy Collaboration Architecture LLC, New York, New York

CU Denver Campus Presenters:

Cary Weatherford, Associate Director, Institutional Planning, CU Denver

André Vite, AIA, Campus Architect, Office of Institutional Planning, CU Denver

Others Present:

Michael Delgiudice, Chief Planning Officer, CU Denver (by phone)

Description: AHEC, in partnership with the Downtown Denver Partnership, Inc., engaged H3 to investigate opportunities to better connect the Auraria Campus with the greater downtown area. H3's conceptual proposal will be presented to the Board for comments and input.

**Presentation to the Board/Discussion:**

Mr. Weatherford began the presentation by noting that the concept to bridge Speer Boulevard ("Speer") was developed by H3 Hardy Collaboration Architecture LLC from New York with direction from a steering committee made up of individuals in various leadership roles from the Auraria Higher Education Center ("AHEC"), the three Auraria Campus educational institutions (including the University of Colorado Denver ("CU Denver"), the Downtown Denver Partnership, and the City of Denver (the "City").

The purpose of this study is to look specifically at the goal of connecting Downtown Denver to the Auraria Campus.

A committee of Auraria, Downtown Denver Partnership, and City and County of Denver leadership has endorsed this plan for potential City bond funding. He also noted that the financial commitment will belong to the City, but there are steps in the process for which the CU Denver campus will be responsible and which may have an economic impact for CU Denver.

Mr. Weatherford indicated that a letter had been sent from AHEC and the three Auraria Campus educational institutions to the City requesting that \$17.5 million be included on the general obligation bond fund to be voted upon in 2017. He also briefly reviewed existing conditions of the areas being discussed and the proposed phases in more detail.

Mr. Vite reviewed the phases of the proposed project and indicated that the completion of Phase I would include, at a minimum, CU Denver approving the installation of pads for the terminus points of the proposed bridge on CU property. In later phases, it is anticipated that CU Denver could be responsible for acquiring the land needed and the construction of the Nexus building, to provide access and a connection to a building to be constructed in front of the North Classroom building, and to provide an easement at the terminus points where the bridge would touch down adjacent to CU Denver's Architecture & Planning annex building at 14<sup>th</sup> and Larimer Streets.

The need for renovations and for long-term plans regarding the Architecture & Planning building and annex was briefly discussed. The proposed ownership and development of the "Nexus" site at the intersection of Larimer Street ("Larimer") and Speer was also briefly discussed.

Mr. Weatherford and Mr. Vite expressed their appreciation to brief the Board on this important initiative and its potential impact to the University. Mr. Weatherford suggested that perhaps a second study group could be formed which would include landowners in the area, including, but not limited to, the City and the major stakeholders who own the parcels which would be affected by the proposed pedestrian bridge.

The Board inquired about the process going forward.

In summary, Mr. Vite suggested that the DRB:

- Prepare written comments that could be shared with Chancellor Horrell and President Benson. At this time, it would be most helpful if the DRB comments and suggestions could be at a conceptual level.

As suggested, the Board agreed that it will be important for the Board to share its thoughts with Chancellor Horrell and President Benson and that a meeting with these individuals may also be appropriate. Ms. Osborne will follow up on this suggestion.

The Board thanked Mr. Weatherford and Mr. Vite for their time and for keeping the Board informed of matters which may affect the University.

There being no further business, the public meeting of the Design Review Board was adjourned at 1:43 p.m., after which the Board met for a few minutes in private in order to discuss a few administrative and scheduling items.