



University of Colorado

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## University Of Colorado Design Review Board Meeting Notes

Date: Thursday, May 12, 2016  
Time: 9:00 – 10:00 a.m.  
Location: By Conference Call

**DRB members present:** Don Brandes, Victor Olgyay, Michael Winters, Teresa Osborne (ex officio), and Carolyn Fox, Campus Representative

**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 to order at 9:02 a.m.

**9:00 - 10:00**

**Main Hall Society Garden – UCCS – Consent Agenda Item**

Architects: Davis Partnership, Denver, Colorado

UCCS Campus

Presenters: Carolyn Fox, Executive Director, Construction & Planning,  
University Architect, UCCS Campus Planning &  
Facilities Management

Others

Present: Lynn Moore, FASLA, Principal, Davis Partnership  
Architects, Denver, Colorado

Description: Modification of landscaping in front of Main Hall to  
acknowledge major UCCS donors.

**Presentation/Discussion:**

Mr. Brandes began this agenda item by noting that he met with Ms. Fox and Ms. Moore approximately a month prior to the DRB meeting for a preliminary discussion regarding the original concept designs and ideas which had been formed by a UCCS leadership team and a donor group charged with creating this garden project (collectively, the “Stakeholder Group”).

Ms. Fox explained that the UCCS campus desired to create a space where major (\$1,000,000 or greater) donors to the campus could be recognized. Currently, there are approximately 40 donors who fall within this threshold. The campus is hoping to increase this number to 100 donors.

Main Hall is one of the two original buildings on campus and houses the chancellor’s and vice chancellors’ offices along with the admissions and records offices, resulting in a large number of visitors to the building. Additionally, the area selected for this donor recognition garden (the “Garden” or “Recognition Garden”) is immediately adjacent to the main pedestrian pathway

through campus, known as the Pedestrian Spine. This area is highly visible to anyone walking by or visiting Main Hall. Since Main Hall was renovated a few years ago, the landscaping in this particular area has been nondescript and is currently underutilized. As such, this area was selected for the proposed Recognition Garden in order to take advantage of the inherent visibility to many pedestrians on campus, to improve and create a more desirable space, and to take advantage of an unobstructed view of Pikes Peak from the center of the proposed Recognition Garden.

Ms. Fox noted that the proposed Recognition Garden would displace an existing garden known as the Karen Possehl Women's Endowment Garden (the "Women's Endowment Garden") which is currently in need of improvement and has also been underutilized. Ms. Fox indicated that the Recognition Garden is separate from the Women's Endowment Garden and that the Women's Endowment Garden may be moved to an area around a number of existing concrete benches adjacent to and across the Pedestrian Spine to the south from the Recognition Garden or it may be moved to a separate location away from the Recognition Garden. The ultimate location of the Women's Endowment Garden is under discussion and yet to be determined.

During the design process, the Stakeholder Group discussed various options concerning how the donors should be recognized and agreed that all donors, regardless of the amount of their cumulative donations to UCCS, should be recognized in the same way. Ms. Moore described the preferred concept design, use and placement for the donor recognition elements. The proposed recognition element would be an arching metal stalk approximately 42 to 44 inches high which would include an engraved or etched metal leaf perched on top of the stalk.

Ms. Moore also stated that the Recognition Garden would not only accommodate everyday use but would also provide space for special group daytime and nighttime events such as a donor recognition gathering, potential classroom use, etc.

Ms. Moore then explained the proposed oval-shaped paved or concrete pathway area making up the center of the Recognition Garden which will be surrounded by a number of cut stone blocks for seating, pre-manufactured benches and a combination of landscaping zones. The proposed paved area would contain a center medallion, likely made from engraved or etched granite, which would be used to identify the Garden. Ms. Moore also briefly reviewed the proposed plantings for the landscaping zones and indicated that the landscaping plantings would be selected from the proposed list. Not all proposed plantings listed would be used for each landscaping zone. She noted that the areas closest to the building would be planted with appropriate materials and would not be paved. She also noted that these existing concrete benches would not be consistent with any of the proposed seating in the Recognition Garden.

The Board acknowledged that the ongoing planning for the Recognition Garden will need to be shared with the Stakeholder Group so they continue to be part of the design process.

After the Board discussed the proposal with Ms. Moore and Ms. Fox, the Board shared the following thoughts regarding the Recognition Garden:

- Due to the location of the concrete benches adjacent to the Pedestrian Spine, there is a visual connection or relationship between the two areas and that if the Women's Endowment Garden is located around or near the concrete benches, this relationship should be recognized in terms of determining and installing the plantings, the color and materials used in paving and seating and other landscape treatments for both gardens

- Trellising or otherwise imparting a formality to the vines growing on the side of the Main Hall surrounding the Garden area would help connect the vines and the sides of the building to the Garden and visa-versa
- View of the garden from inside the building as well as views to the building from the garden
- The overall conceptual design and layout of the Garden includes three primary elements, the hardscape (pavement) including the central medallion (described above), the landscaping and corresponding landscaping hierarchy, and the lighting. Recognizing that there may be time and budgetary constraints, to the extent possible, the following should be considered:

#### Hardscaping

- Because center focus of the hardscape will be the medallion, the materiality of the remaining hardscape, regardless of the actual product used for each of design features, will need to correspond with and be complementary to the richness and the color of the medallion and also to the color of the building walls surrounding the Garden

#### Landscaping

- When working with the Stakeholder Group, it will be important to coordinate with the campus facilities staff in order to determine the maintenance and irrigation needs of the plantings selected for the various landscaping zones
- When selecting the plantings for each landscaping zone, it will also be important to recognize the hierarchy of the plants, paying attention to the vertical growth, the seasonality, hardiness and year-round maintenance requirements of each species selected, especially when considering options for the donor landscaping zone containing the recognition elements
- Because the donor elements will be made of metal, the type and finish of which is yet to be determined, the color, patina and other characteristics of the donor elements related to seasonality, weathering and lighting, should include plant materials for the donor landscaping zone in terms of the leaf structure, coloring and hardiness throughout all seasons
  - For example, spirea and cotoneaster would both be options that would provide a nice connection with the leaf pattern in the elements
- It will also be important to recognize that the intent for the garden is to be a reflective area and a gathering spot and the plantings selected should be in accord with these purposes
- When selecting plantings for the foreground landscaping zone, consider that this zone could be used to frame the Garden without blocking the views to Pikes Peak and the surrounding mountains and still enclose the Garden providing a purposeful edge along the Pedestrian Spine and creating an entrance or gateway to the Garden
- The plantings for the garden landscape zone, when mature, should provide a height that will frame the back of the Garden to the scale of the building and should be complementary to the materiality of the building while adding emphasis to the center medallion
- The sun exposure in the Garden and in the area around the concrete benches should also be considered when selecting the plantings for both areas because the plants will grow and behave differently in each area due to different levels of sunlight

### Lighting

- The goal of lighting in the Garden is to illuminate what you want visitors to see and because lighting the Garden will be essential to the purposes and uses of the Garden, especially for the areas containing the donor elements, a photometrics study of the lighting could be helpful
- While performing such a study, keep in mind the desired goals of the Garden design so the lighting fixtures can be selected accordingly, i.e., the proposed pathway lighting might not really provide the desired effect while a different fixture could help reduce shadows and produce a more even light resulting in a more gently illuminated Garden, etc.
- As much as possible, the donor elements should be lit in such a way that each of the elements can be read clearly regardless of the time of day which could be a very difficult task
- The material and finish of the donor elements may affect the illumination provided by the light and, as such, should be selected accordingly
- The lighting should provide a sufficient level of safety and protection
- The lighting should also be soft and inviting to complement the garden setting and none of the lighting, regardless of the purpose, should be harsh or uncomfortable or compete with other segments of the lighting features, although it may be difficult to keep the lighting fixtures from competing with each other
- When selecting the lighting components, the reflectiveness of the building in the background and the hardscape coloring and materials should be considered, i.e., the need for lighting in the lighter areas of the Garden might not be as great as the need for lighting in the darker areas of the Garden

Additionally, the Board noted that regarding the donor elements, the messages on every leaf will be very important and while the image and patina may change between seasons, may be dependent upon the weather, and may age and become nice features of the donor elements, the long-term readability is still primary, and in order to accomplish this purpose, flexibility in the spacing and placement of the donor elements and in the lighting may be required. It will be important to have a good understanding of how the weathering and patina of the donor elements will impact the visibility of the etching. The maintenance of the plantings in the garden also will be critical to the ongoing visibility of the donor elements.

Ms. Moore, in response to the Board, acknowledged that the lighting fixtures and placement may evolve from what had been included within the proposal submitted to the Board, and she indicated that Davis Partnership had an in-house lighting designer so she will work with this designer in order to refine the lighting recommendations.

Although concern regarding the Endowment Garden may not be warranted if it is indeed placed at a different location on campus, Ms. Moore agreed that if the Endowment Garden is built across from the Recognition Garden, the two gardens need not be identical but the relationship between the gardens should be recognized so they will not appear to be in opposition to each other.

Ms. Moore noted that the Recognition Garden provides seating for approximately 20 people, but the space could possibly accommodate between 50 and 100 people for large events. Also, she indicated that trash receptacles were not included within this Garden because receptacles are already located in other areas near the Garden.

The next steps will include:

- Holding additional meetings with the Stakeholder Group
- Completion of a photometrics study, after which the lighting plan can be finalized
- Finalizing the design and determining the selection of materials and finishes for the donor elements
- Finalizing the design and materiality for the hardscaping and the landscaping plans
- Completing construction documents and, as appropriate, sending the project out to bid
- Completing actual construction and landscaping by fall 2016
- Dedicating the Garden in September 2016

The Board thanked Ms. Fox and Ms. Moore for their work on the Recognition Garden and expressed excitement for the proposal. The Board felt that the proposed Garden will be a distinctive, one-of-a-kind area which will become a suitable and gratifying means of recognizing such important donors to the UCCS campus.

There being no further business, the public meeting was adjourned at 10:00 a.m.

\*Comments from Mike Winters (May 19):

1. The intersection of the new oval paving with the existing pedestrian spine paving is unresolved.
2. If the 2 gardens are tied together the paving across the pedestrian spine could help to announce the entry into the garden.