

DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Minutes of the Meeting of October 17, 2013

Boulder Campus Items

The University Design Review Board met on Thursday, October 17, 2013, in Room 501 N114-A in the Kittredge Central Building on the Boulder Campus.

DRB members present were: Don Brandes, Rick Epstein, Victor Olgyay, and Candy Roberts. Also present was Teresa Osborne, Office of Budget and Finance. CU-Boulder staff members present were: Tom Goodhew, Wayne Northcutt, Richelle Reilly, Phil Simpson, Robin Suits, Steve Thweatt, Bill Ward, and William Arndt of Facilities Management.

Thweatt introduced Bill Ward, interim Director of Planning, Design, and Construction, following the departure of Paul Leef.

NORTH OF BOULDER CREEK PLAN CONSULTANT INTRODUCTION

Also present for the discussion were: Steve Hecht and Curt Huetson, Housing and Dining Services; Chris Geddes, studioINSITE; and David Schafer, OZ Architecture.

Goodhew noted that planning for this area began in 2010 with in-house work. A team of consultants has been hired to continue this process. The area in question is roughly from 17th Street to Folsom and Arapahoe to Boulder Creek. Most of the property along Arapahoe is privately owned as is the two blocks from 17th to 19th north of Marine.

The stakeholders in the area include Housing and Dining Services, Intercollegiate Athletics, Recreation Services, and Parking Services. Several groups provided input during previous planning efforts, including the City, Naropa University, and the Millennium Hotel. Although the area is in the center of Boulder, much of it is underdeveloped and even somewhat rustic. The proposal is to continue the urban grid and provide east-west alternatives to Arapahoe. It is hoped that development in this area will provide a connection between the university and the City.

In general, housing would be closer to 17th Street and athletics facilities would be nearer Folsom. Open space would provide a graceful connection to the Naropa campus. The use of the bloc at the northeast is still under consideration. It could become housing, part of athletics, or it could become an academic/community use area. At this time, no structured parking is proposed. The number of parking spaces would remain about the same as they are now, but better organized.

Even before the recent floods, flood issues were a priority in the studies. The September flood in this area was not as intense as in some of the other tributaries in Boulder. It could be considered a 25-year flood. Water mostly went where it was expected to go. There was not major damage. The pedestrian bridge at 19th Street

was knocked out. Goodhew showed the current flood map, indicating conveyance zone (high hazard) and flood plain. State laws required that the existing Day Care Center be moved out of the area. A preliminary study of existing trees and plant types is underway.

About 1350 residential units are projected, replacing approximately 650 units existing now in the floodplain or which are obsolete, as well as increasing housing capacity. It is proposed that added capacity of housing would market rate rentals or be "for sale" with deed restrictions. The 650 replacement units would be held at 80% of the Boulder market rate. The market rate units could be offered to faculty, staff, retirees, or alumni. Other universities have provided housing like this with success. The goals for housing would be to bring about diversity and flexibility, create community, generate revenue (with financial stability), improve connectivity and access, support athletics and recreation, and be environmentally sustainable. Housing would like to market this area to foreign students, many of whom do not return home during school breaks, but do provide marketing value when they return to their home countries.

Epstein asked if it could be a CU project or a public/private partnership. Goodhew said the planners lean towards self-development, but that other formats will be considered. Public/public partnerships could also occur.

Goodhew said that there is some concern by Housing about the increased traffic, especially in the family areas. Also, while Boulder Creek is an amenity, it could also be a hazard for small children.

Schafer talked about other areas of study. Density needs to be considered as well transportation and connections. They need to interface with Athletics master planning. There are also possibilities such as harvesting geo-thermal heat from under the open, flat athletics and recreation fields.

Olgyay asked about the area south of the creek. Simpson said that it's mostly out of the scope of this project, except for flood mitigation. A plan to replace the treacherous footpath at 19th Street has been approved and is essential to the success of this plan.

Olgyay said that attention must be paid to the edges of the site. The use of the northeast parcel should be the best analysis for the best result; it shouldn't be only a financial issue.

Epstein reiterated the dangers of the creek, but also said that it must be considered as a community amenity, not just something that goes through the CU property. He noted that most of the lines on the current plan are straight, but that flood lines are not.

Roberts agreed, and said planning should look at the "big picture," especially the creek's future contribution to the project and the City of Boulder. Currently, the creek, as it runs through this area, is underdeveloped and difficult to see and use. The opportunities are huge. Also, urged the planners to look hard at urban design strategies to better integrate this site with the surrounding city fabric. Take a look at the character of the entrances and look for opportunities to create special gateways at the edges. She also asked if there had been an inventory of the trees and vegetation for protection.

Additional Epstein comments:

- Ensure that the center as shown is in the right location. Alternatives should be explored that reinforce a larger urban design idea of node, pathways, etc.
- Special thought needs to be given to the pathways that students take from the Goss Grove neighborhood to the north through the site to get to the campus. These pathways may influence the urban design, particularly where a node is shown, the types of gateways, and the character and use of the paths through the site. Transitions to the steep slope south of the creek also need to be considered, although out of the project area.
- The preliminary plan seems to treat Boulder Creek as a “back” as does the current site. This is what contributes to the safety and neglect issues along the creek. The project team should consider how to transform the creek and make it a “front” either through the addition of a road or shared street or major circulation elements.
- The presentation/transition of this area to the city is a concern. What is the nature of the gateways and the transitions to the city. This is especially important given the need to add almost 110du/acre adjacent to existing lower density residential areas. These transitions need to be carefully studied.

Brandes asked if a new base map was being prepared; Schafer said it was. Brandes suggested the next steps be to (1) Prepare a definite development program for housing, athletics, Boulder Creek Corridor/Open Space and the unassigned northeast parcel; (2) Based on an agreed and understood development program, evaluate and illustrate the physical and natural constraints and opportunities of the development area, including: Civil infrastructure, flood issues and constraints, site planning alternatives for housing, athletics, Boulder Creek Corridor, and alternative uses for the northeast parcel, phasing of demolition and rebuilding for all programmed uses and activities, and related sustainability and environmental impacts; and (3) based on the selection of a preferred development plan, determine appropriate vehicular, emergency, transit, pedestrian (neighborhood) and student, maintenance, on-street/off-street, access, circulation, connectivity, and parking for the project area.

Goodhew said that the postponement of the September DRB meeting due to the flood has given the design team a head start. Site plan development and building forms will be considered by December and finished in April. The plan will go to the Regents in June. The approved plan will be the basis for agreements with the City and FEMA. Although the Athletics Master Plan is independent from this work, the Planning Office will make every effort to coordinate.

CONSENT AGENDA

UMC GLENN MILLER BALLROOM RENOVATIONS

Northcutt said that this will be the first major renovation of the ballroom since it was built in 1953. In addition to infrastructure upgrades, it is proposed that new spaces be added to provide for catering needs and storage (linens, tableware, etc.). The additions would be added to the north side of the ballroom in a roof-top area that is not visible from most exterior sidewalks and open spaces. There are already two small shed structures in the area which were built several years ago.

The proposal is to add additional space just outside the large north-facing windows east and west of the bandstand. The windows would become opaque or covered about two thirds of the way up. The lunettes at the top would still allow natural light. Martin and Martin Engineers had determined that the existing structure could adequately handle the new load, provided the construction is light-weight (which excludes barrel tile roofing and sandstone veneer). Hallways would connect to the catering kitchen to the east of the ballroom.

Roberts noted that the drawings indicated a new door replacing one of the windows. This would drastically alter the appearance and change the symmetry of the room. She wondered if some sort of light boxes and/or sanded windows could help keep the current appearance of the windows. She said that the design should respect the history of the room. Epstein noted that ideally, the modifications/additions need to be moved so that they do not block the windows at all. It is suggested that other locations be sought for these services.

Brandes noted that this is an iconic space for the campus and the community. To alter the windows would be a big mistake. Other board members agreed. There was a discussion of some inconsistencies in the plans as presented as well as the possibility of finding storage space elsewhere in the building, or even off-site.

The DRB expressed regret that the project had gone this far in design without prior consultation of the Board. The DRB denied the request to give consent to the Planning Office to approve the designs. They urged the planners to find alternative solutions and bring them back for additional DRB review.

FLEMING BUILDING RENOVATIONS AT ROTHGERBER LOADING DOCK

Northcutt showed proposals for alterations on the north side of the Fleming Building, outside the Design Center of the Department of Mechanical Engineering. The space was the Rothgerber Library when the Law School was in the building. The Design Center needs an overhead door opening for access to the interior, new doors, alteration of some existing openings, and additional storage space.

Although the use of Fleming is considered temporary, this function could remain in the building for several years.

This area was altered as part of the recent Kittredge project. Trucks now reach this space from a multi-use sidewalk between Fleming and Smith Hall.

The Board felt that the proposed exterior storage shed was inappropriate. They agreed that the location of the large overhead door was acceptable, but that the height of the opening should match the existing window lintels.

The Board agreed that the changes were minimal and in a low-traffic area. They gave consent to the Planning Office to deal with all design issues, based on their comments, and authorized the project to proceed.