

Planning Assumptions and Planning Objectives
for Long-Range Campus Planning
University of Oregon

Comments and Recommendations of Board's Staff

Although the Board's staff has not been working as closely with Mr. Alexander and his associates in the Center for Environmental Structure as University personnel, we have been aware of the substantial amount of work which has been performed to date and we have had a few conferences with the consultants following receipt of drafts of selected portions of their work. Admittedly, much of the material was in pretty rough form, but we have been impressed by the enthusiasm of the consultants in their planning for the University and feel that our comments and criticisms have been accepted in the spirit in which they have been given and have been given consideration. We have been particularly mindful in recent weeks of the concern of the consultants and the officials of the University in putting together, in summary form, a statement of the basic assumptions and objectives of the long-range development plan which could be presented to the Building Committee and the Board for review and approval, possibly with modifications following discussion.

It seemed to the Board's staff that the statement which appears in the agenda as Supplement A, entitled "University of Oregon Master Plan," written by Mr. Larry Bissett of the University's planning staff under date of September 15, 1971, and revised on September 22, 1971, was an appropriate summary of the consultants' process of planning and the major points of the study to date, with particular emphasis upon the planning assumptions and objectives. Consequently, we asked Mr. Collins to include it in the agenda for the Building Committee's consideration today, and we recommended that it be accepted as a basis for further planning for the University of Oregon. We also requested authorization to instruct the consultants to proceed with their study, describing and illustrating the plan and its components. It should be understood, however, that the recommendation for the acceptance of the planning assumptions and objectives does not imply concurrence of the University administration or the Board's office with the various "patterns" and "diagnosis policies" proposed by the consultants because they are still in draft form and are subject to further analysis and modification.

Subsequent to the preparation and distribution of the agenda for this meeting, we have had an opportunity to read the draft of the nine chapters which the Center for Environmental Structure has prepared for this study. Many sections are incomplete and the consultants have indicated clearly that other sections are subject to substantial revision. Nonetheless, it constitutes the framework of the "master plan" and is expected to get intensive review and criticism by the University's planning staff, the Campus Planning Committee, students and other persons or groups interested in it, prior to its referral to the Board's office and the Board.

There are many features of the study which we endorse. For example, we concur in the projected enrollment data and the involvement of a greater number

of the users of space in the planning process (short of design, however, because in our opinion the project architects and engineers should participate in the early planning stages along with the users of the space). Who could argue with the need to "repair" many existing spaces on the University campus? Regrettably, many of the items which the consultants have criticized were due to circumstances beyond our control -- principally the shortage of funds for constructing, equipping and landscaping major building projects. Nor can one ignore decisions made by those outside the State System of Higher Education, such as the deletion of all classroom facilities from capital outlay requests during the particular biennium in which Prince Lucien Campbell Hall was authorized. The building does provide a substantial number of offices and at least some of the faculty assigned to these spaces are not as critical of their environment as the consultants are.

At this stage in the development of the University campus, the concept of "piecemeal growth" appears worthy of general support with the understanding, however, that exceptions may need to occur in the planning and construction of large units for certain specialized facilities, such as the proposed new Administrative Services Building which was authorized by the 1971 Legislature. It should be acknowledged that several "piecemeal" projects have already been undertaken, including the recent addition and alterations to Lawrence Hall for the School of Architecture and Allied Arts, and the construction of the fine arts units north of the millrace.

We have mixed emotions about the suggestion to acquire properties west of Kincaid Street as they become available. It may be feasible to do so if satisfactory purchase arrangements can be made, but funds appropriated for land acquisition are restricted to properties within the approved campus boundaries (or within the area of development of Portland State University). The University of Oregon is now leasing a former fraternity house directly across Kincaid Street from the Library Building to accommodate the staff and services of the Center for Advanced Study of Education Administration (CASEA) whose support comes principally from federal grants. Other fraternity and sorority houses are available for University use also, but there are no resources identified to pay rent or buy them. With the curtailment of enrollment growth, the urgency to acquire additional land has diminished. On the other hand, if a portion of the University's space requirements can be fulfilled by purchasing and remodeling existing buildings at less cost than constructing new buildings, serious consideration should be given to such a proposal.

It occurs to us that there is no real basis to modify the Board's present standards for space utilization and building planning. We would expect, therefore, that the development of the long-range plan for the University would be based upon them rather than upon some other set of standards or ideals. The suggestion that a workstation be provided for each student in or near his departmental "hearth" would not likely receive support because of the difficulty in getting the necessary funding. Similarly, financial considerations would appear to preclude endorsement of the concept of additional departmental libraries. Exceptions to centralized library services may be warranted, as they are now for Science, Law, and Architecture.

Some integration of housing with academic programs would seem to be worthy of consideration, but in our opinion it would not be practical to consider the complete alternation of these functions throughout the campus. We have been disturbed by the consultants' suggestion that married student housing be constructed adjacent to existing academic buildings within the central sector of the campus, and would anticipate that such a proposal would be discarded by the administration of the institution.

As indicated previously, our recommendation for the acceptance of the planning assumptions and objectives outlined in Supplement A does not imply concurrence of the University administration or the Board's office with the various "patterns" and "diagnosis policies" proposed by the consultants because they are still in draft form and are subject to further analysis and modification.

We would welcome your comments and we shall be pleased to respond to questions which you may wish to direct to any of us -- Mr. Alexander, President Clark and his staff, or Dr. Paetz and me.

Committee Discussion

Office of Facilities Planning
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