September 20, 2012

University Planning Council

Minutes for September 20, 2012

Present: Buffy Bagwell, Jeff Brown, Jessica Dunsmore, Shannon Earle, Jane Fernandes, Catherine Frank, Melodie Galloway, Eric Gant, Bill Haggard, Julie Heinitsh, Benjamin Judge, Gregg Kormanik, Ann Martin, Ted Meigs, Dave Peifer, Anne Ponder, Keith Ray, Leisa Rundquist, Stephanie Watkins-Cruz, Christy Williams

Absent: Archer Gravely, Blake Hobby, John Pierce, and Christine Riley

Guests: Elizabeth Becker, Rob Nelson

UPC met from 8 am to 9:30 am in HIG 104.

1. The Chancellor’s update included information on the start of the academic year, the latest news from General Administration, and a follow-up from questions from the last meeting:

   Successful start of our 2012 Fall Semester:
   - Great participation in the annual campus Wellabration event
   - University Hall was renamed Brown Hall in honor of former Chancellor Brown. The dedication event was an amazing community-building opportunity
   - Family Weekend is this weekend
   - Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for Overlook Hall is September 27
   - Chancellor’s Briefing is scheduled for October 4 (renamed from “All Campus Meeting.”)

   UNC CH Chancellor Holden Thorpe has announced his resignation:
   - Terrific colleague, served UNC CH for 5 years
   - Took a disproportional share of the UNC wide $400 million budget cut, which helped soften the blow to the rest of the schools

   UNC System Strategic Planning is under way:
   - The priorities remain the same as those in President Ross’ inauguration speech.
   - Our Strategic Plan aligns closely with those priorities.
   - We have submitted our existing Strategic Plan to UNC GA.
   - We will continue to monitor the progress, and will report back to UPC with any updates.

A follow-up from two questions asked at the August UPC meeting:
   - The temporary location of Admissions, Financial Aid and One Stop is not finalized. Brown Hall
will potentially be renovated in 2013, so a new home needs to be found. The viability of the ground level of the library has not been fully determined.

- The Observatory/Astronomy Lab building bids have come in high. The team is exploring cost cutting, options for more donations, and a redesign or postponement. The original timing of opening the facility in January 2013 is unlikely.

2. Rob Nelson reported that the original vision of the Board of Trustees was to develop a full Campus Master Plan. In 2011, the Board of Trustees created a Steering Committee and a Working Group. The Working Group, consulted with hundreds of UNC Asheville constituents about campus facility needs. Because of the budget cuts and economic climate, a modified alternative was developed to address four key areas: wayfinding and signage, sustainability, repairs and renovations, and governance.

For 2011-12, the Working Group was split into two subgroups, one for Wayfinding and Signage, the other for Sustainability.

The focus of the Sustainability Subgroup centered on a draft sustainability plan for the campus. Several members of the Sustainability subgroup also attended a recent Sustainability Energy Summit hosted by Appalachian State University. That group reported to the Chancellor and Senior Staff, and will provide further recommendations by the end of September.

Rob Nelson presented the Wayfinding and Signage manual developed by the NC-based PBC+L architectural firm. Their recommendations included signage for the entire campus as well as an initial Phase I focusing on the visitor experience and an emphasis on Admissions. This includes defining the boundaries of the campus, through the use of “pole banners” that would line roads on the periphery of campus and also lead visitors into campus via the uphill University Heights road (from the Weaver Blvd. traffic circle) and via Campus Drive. Prominent signage using stone walls would be used to define these roads as the two main entrance points to campus. The corridor to campus via Edgewood Road would not be highlighted as a main entrance. Implementation of phase one will likely occur throughout the fall semester. Future phases will depend on success in identifying additional funding.

UPC members provided the following feedback:

- The Bermuda Triangle might be better managed with a traffic circle than a T-intersection.
- Changing University Heights to a one-way traffic pattern could alleviate the problem at the Bermuda Triangle.
- Removing parking partially from University Heights has also been voiced. Making a decision about University Heights should occur at the same time decisions are made about the Bermuda Triangle.
- Traffic could get backed up at a T-intersection. Will traffic studies be conducted to ensure a new pattern would work efficiently?
- Have people with disabilities been considered with these sign (i.e., color blindness and the colors chosen for the signs)?
- Consider including English and Spanish on the signage
- How will departments be able to get their event on the changeable pole banners?
- Governance when a new building comes on line or a name change occurs. Who changes the maps, signage, websites, etc?
- How will the signage be affixed? After the City issues with signage have you checked into the durability of the signage?
- Edgewood neighbors have concerns about speeding. How will a change in the road help this concern?
- They are beautifully designed signs.
• Carefully consider signage placement on the quad to preserve its beauty.

3. Dr. Meigs led a discussion of the property at 525 Broadway. He referenced the minutes of the May 10, 2012 UPC meeting and asked for additional feedback for what that property might become the future home of for UNC Asheville.

• No academic uses for the space; preserve the academic core in the heart of campus.
• Choose a use that links the campus to the larger community.
• A greenway would provide that link and connection to the community.
• Student apartments would be ideal.
• Family housing for non-traditional students, as well as faculty and staff, with an on-site child care facility.
• There is a shortage of recreational space; carving out one more intramural field would be terrific.
• Make it a multiuse space, for students, faculty/staff, and the community.
• We will need to think creatively about parking.
• Safety will need to be a priority since it’s on the campus periphery. Consider lighting, traffic flow along Broadway, increased campus police patrols, etc.
• There is a community need for a concert hall in Asheville. People drive to Cullowhee and Brevard for performances. There are donors who would get on board with this project.
• Continue to keep Montford Community in the know about our plans.

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