

CAMPUS/COMMUNITY PLANNING COMMITTEE

Minutes of October 21, 2021 Meeting

PRESENT

Manu Agni
Michelle Bui
Tara Cameron
Jorge Cortes
Vikki Cutri
Bob Frazier
Drew Hunsinger
Jeff Kaplan
Francisco Salinas

ABSENT

Janis Jenkins
Joshua Kohn
Michael Holst
Richard Garfein
Frank Silva
Wendy Matsumura
Cristy Winter

CAMPUS PLANNING STAFF

Robert Clossin
Anu Delouri
Rae Hartigan
Todd Pitman
Elyse Sanchez
Ginger Stout

GUESTS/CONSULTANTS

Bryan Hooks, Facilities Management
Ji Song, Nanotechnology
Graham Griffin, Rogers Garden Volunteer
Will Tanaka, Rogers Garden Volunteer
Jasmine Chen, Rogers Garden Volunteer

BUSINESS ITEM: APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

The minutes from the September 16th, 2021 meeting were unanimously approved without further comment.

BUSINESS ITEM –COMMITTEE CHARGE AND OVERVIEW (Robert Clossin)

Robert Clossin began the meeting by reviewing the role of the Campus/Community Planning Committee. The primary focus is on the physical development of the campus, mainly at La Jolla, but additionally Hillcrest projects, Elliot Field Station, and the relationships with the surrounding community. C/CPC meets monthly and is as an advisory committee to Vice Chancellor Resource Management and Planning and to the Chancellor. Committees are a way of socializing what is going on around campus and Clossin encouraged the members to

share the information with other constituents in their VC areas. Related sub-committees include the Open Space Committee which reviews any project with a large landscape element or public realm component, and the Marine Sciences Physical Planning Committee which advises on projects at Scripps Institution of Oceanography. C/CPC reviews projects and provides comments to the Design Review Board, which reviews the design of new buildings and is led by the Campus Architect who advises the Chancellor on design guidelines of building projects. Additionally, Planning Advisory Committees (PAC) are created to guide the development of more focused district and areas plans. Building Advisory Committees are formed of potential building users, administration, and project architects, who work together to with appointed design professionals on individual building projects.

The campus Physical Design/Planning Framework follows the goals of the Campus Strategic Plan and other campus plans. The Long Range Development Plan (LRDP), approved by the UC Regents in November 2018, identifies the outer envelope of development for the campus and identifies the land use plan. One goal of the recently updated LRDP was to increase the percentage of students housed on campus. The LRDP identifies approximately 30% of the land as Open Space Preserve (OSP) and has guidelines limiting development within the OSP. An associated Environmental Impact Report (EIR) analyzed the anticipated impacts at a program level. The LRDP can be updated if any parameters are anticipated to go beyond the projections, such as campus population or enrollment.

The 1989 Master Planning Study has five master planning principles that have formed the foundation for campus development over the years, including University Center, Open Space Preserve, Academic Corridors, Connections, and Neighborhoods. Neighborhood Planning Studies are specific to different areas of campus and they provide the details and massing, capacity, and urban design guidelines to the future project architects.

C/CPC oversees several project types, including: business items, which provide project updates; site evaluations, which identify and confirm the project site, and these come as both information and action items; and schematic design, which is where C/CPC provides comments that are shared with the Design Review Board. Planning studies are also reviewed by C/CPC.

Clossin provided a summary of projects that were presented to C/CPC last academic year, which included review of the following projects: La Jolla Innovation Center, Urban Design Challenge, Gilman Corridor Mobility Study, Cycle Track Pilot, Adaptive Traffic Signals, Fire Station Update, City's Coastal Rail Trail, University Community Plan Update, Campus Road Name Updates, Health Sciences West Planning Study, East Campus Neighborhood Planning Study, Sanford Courtyard, Theatre District Shuttle Stop, and Pepper Canyon East Rim Multimodal Path & Bioretention.

Projects expected for the upcoming year include East Campus Loop Road Expansion, Marshall Housing Expansion and Housing Plan Update, Viterbi Vision Research Facility, Triton Pavilion, Science Research Park, and a Multidisciplinary Research Building, among others.

INFORMATION ITEM – ROGERS COMMUNITY GARDEN SITE EVALUATION (Todd Pitman)

Pitman shared that the department of Urban Studies and Planning (USP) is requesting site endorsement for a 3-yr site approval for the Roger's Community Garden (RCG), which is located in the Urban Forest section of the Open Space Preserve to the southeast of the Theatre District and south of Ché Café. This site evaluation was presented to the Open Space Committee and was endorsed.

Pitman explained that student-led gardening activities have occurred in the location for many years. Gardening activities include planting, harvesting, and cultivating of fruits and vegetables, composting, and other associated activities. Pitman emphasized the RCG is in alignment with a Strategic Plan goal to be a live-learn-play campus and a welcoming destination for students, staff, faculty and the community.

In addition to the positive impacts of RCG, Pitman explained activities associated with the RCG have caused negative site impacts to the Open Space Preserve. Impacts include installing unpermitted overhead structures, performing activities not supported by current land use and University policies, removing trees, driving and parking vehicles in the Urban Forest, and compacting soils.

Pitman explained that under the 2018 Long Range Development Plan (LRDP), expanding facilities or structures in the Open Space Preserve is strongly discouraged. Efforts should be made to reduce development footprints and replenish the Urban Forest to enhance the integrity of this open space.

Over the last year, staff from UC San Diego Resource Management and Planning (RMP), the USP department and student volunteers have worked collaboratively to bring the garden into conformance. This includes removing unpermitted structures, and removing trash.

The new proposal seeks to create a consistent, formal, and sustainable approval and management for the garden so it can continue to thrive. The proposal would allow for the reforestation of areas of the Open Space Preserve previously impacted by gardening activities as a distinct feature of this part of the campus. Pitman explained USP and the RCG would not be responsible for the reforestation but that USP would provide oversight and help manage site administration/activities to remain consistent with the approved use.

The proposed fenced boundary is 13,000 sf within the Urban Forest. As proposed the site is consistent with the 2018 LRDP, the 2015 Open Space Master Planning Study, and the 2021 Historic Grove & Urban Forest Land Use Guidelines. Pitman emphasized that growth or expansion in this location would not be supported.

Approved activities include gardening, and associated activities. Composting is limited to on-site material only. The site must be kept clean and well maintained, and free from debris. All tools and equipment must be stored out of public view. Tree removal, overhead structures, pedestrian/vehicle paths, and live animals are not allowed. In order to remain consistent with this new approval, no additional paved pedestrian access will be provided.

Three overhead structures currently exist within and adjacent to the site, and directly support the garden use. These include a greenhouse at the eastern boundary, a hoop house at the western boundary and a concrete shed just outside of the fenced garden to the north of the site. These structures were reviewed by Facilities Management for structural soundness and are proposed to remain.

If approved, site approval is good for a period not to exceed three years. This temporary site approval can be withdrawn at any time if the University requires use of the space. At the end of the temporary site approval, the USP department may contact Campus Planning to extend the site approval. If garden activities are relocated, or the site approval expires, the area would be restored to an Urban Forest condition.

Comments from the Open Space Committee included stressing the importance of proper management of the site to avoid site expansion and activities inconsistent within the Urban Forest.

Manu Agni questioned why a pedestrian path is excluded from the site. Pitman explained the requirements for a formal pathway would include paving through the Urban Forest and providing lighting. Further, pathways compact the soil and prevent the ability to plant in the area. Robert Clossin explained the more “organic” access would remain as it exists today given this area is part of the open space network.

Agni pointed out that some of the compaction of the area was from recent construction activity. Pitman verified recent construction projects compacted the soil in the area south of the Che Café and those projects were responsible for reforesting the area, which has been completed.

Agni inquired about engagement with student organizations regarding the garden. Resources Management & Planning along with USP has been working towards formalizing the program with the students involved with the garden. A map of what could be approved was created and everything outside of the boundaries needed to be removed. Working parties for site clean-up were created, including the USP department chair.

Robert Frazier asked why the shed isn’t included within the boundaries. Pitman explained some gardening equipment needs to be locked up, and this request for endorsement asks for inclusion of the shed without having to add additional fencing.

Frazier asked why the endorsement is for three years. This time frame gives the ability to check in with USP and ensure the program is aligned with the agreement. Frazier is glad to see interest in the garden from students has been maintained over the years.

Tara Cameron reminded everyone that the utility project had proposed to double the number of trees planted. This has been done and more trees are scheduled to be planted with the sidewalk project.

The Committee endorsed the Roger’s Community Garden site as presented.

ACTION ITEM – EAST CAMPUS NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING STUDY (Raeanon Hartigan)

Hartigan reminded everyone they have received the link to the planning study to provide comments. The Study was presented to the Committee last month. Comments received from Open Space Committee, C/CPC, and Design Review Board have been incorporated into the Study. The East Campus Neighborhood Planning Study (ECNPS) was endorsed by C/CPC & DRB in 2017, but needed to be updated because the following items have been identified: a new development parcel, planned road modifications, and the Voigt Transit Operation Center (VTOC) parking facility.

Today’s request is for final endorsement of the document.

Pitman shared the comments received from OSC:

1. Plant material and design - The Committee suggested expanding the tree palette to include species from Asia, Africa and South America.

2. Open Space Preserve – The Committee requested the team highlight the Open Space Preserve boundary within the planning study.

Hartigan explained she would give updates on several concepts within the Study that had previously been commented on by the Committees. She shared the study area consisting of East Campus, north of Science Research Park, south of Scripps Hospital and Genesee Avenue, east of I-5 and west of Regents Rd.

The Study shows capacity to potentially double the square footage of the district. Changes to Health Sciences Drive will aid in expanding and simplifying the “Medical Center Loop”, easing wayfinding and creating the need for fewer visitor decisions. Widening the roads, adding traffic signals, and reducing the number of intersections are all proposed. Creating a more recognizable entrance at Regents Road through enhancements is proposed.

The east/west pedestrian circulation spine, called Health Sciences Walk, is proposed to extend towards Regents Road. A loop trail around the perimeter of the Study area is proposed and will follow along the tops of the canyons. Bicycle circulation was a concern from C/CPC in September and has been enhanced within the Study, and still needs some adjustments to bike lane classifications.

View corridors were included in the Study based on C/CPC comments and additional views from I-5 southbound will be included to keep views open to Jacobs Medical Center.

Three main planting palettes within the open space have been proposed, including Medical Center Core, Urban Transition and the Canyon Edge. Streetscapes are intended to follow a specific plant palette, and the Regents Entry is envisioned as a major entry that invites people into the campus.

The Medical Center Core palette would provide an evergreen canopy and ground plane for connecting spaces that are inviting year-round, and would include plants for seasonal color and change within special places. The Urban Transition palette would create an urban mixed grove character to north and east edges that relate to the character of edges on the central and west campus. This palette would include a combination of native and adapted Mediterranean trees. The Canyon Edge Palette would include a more natural and native mix along the canyon edges on both the north and south of the neighborhood, using oak and sycamore trees. The proposed plant palette would include native and native cultivars that are drought tolerant and consist of both evergreen and deciduous species for diversity and seasonal interest.

Three main campus entries to the neighborhood are proposed. These include one from Regents Road on the east, one from the LRT station and Campus Point Drive, and one from Gilman Drive bridge crossing from west campus. Each would include a hardscape and planting palette. Live oaks are proposed along the LRT entrance with canopy trees in the center islands. Canopy trees frame the Regents Road entrance. Torrey Pines are proposed at all entry points. The majority of service is along the south side of the neighborhood and a more native character is proposed along South Medical Center Drive. Evergreen trees are proposed along the realigned Health Sciences Drive on the north side of the neighborhood.

Bob Frazier stated the Study is very well planned and thought out and he supports the Study.

Clossin informed everyone that not everything they've seen on the plans may be completed, and some may be 20-30 years out. The Loop Road extension to Regents Road is advancing and will return to this Committee.

The Planning Study was endorsed.

ACTION ITEM – HEALTH SCIENCES WEST DISTRICT PLANNING STUDY (Raeanon Hartigan)

Hartigan reminded everyone they have received the link to the planning study to provide comments. The Study was presented to the Committee last month. Comments received from Open Space Committee, C/CPC, and Design Review Board have been incorporated into the Study.

Pitman shared comments received from OSC:

1. Plant material and design - The Committee appreciated the efforts to provide a sustainable and maintainable plant palette and suggested incorporating plants that have medicinal value where appropriate.
2. Plant material and design - The Committee suggested changing the Urban Forest Palette to the Gilman Entry Palette.
3. Plant material and design - The Committee suggested expanding the tree palette to include species from Asia, Africa and South America.
4. Open Space Preserve – The Committee requested the team highlight the Open Space Preserve boundary within the planning study.

Hartigan reminded everyone about the 10 different sections of the Study, and gave an overview of the urban design principles, development plan, and design guidelines. The proposed big moves include the removal of MTF and the re-envisioning of the Ceremonial Lawn, by creating a new central open space.

Massing studies and how the guidelines apply to future buildings is in the plan. Architectural guidelines within the Study include input on view corridors and materiality.

A strong sense of arrival with a streamlined access into and out of the district is proposed. View corridors between proposed buildings into the University Center to increase the sense of connection with the greater campus are an important goal. Connections for bicycles and pedestrians and making this area of campus more pedestrian friendly and less car centric is another goal of the Study. The Study looked at ways to reinforce the east/west and the north/south connections within the district and identified secondary opportunities for pedestrian connections.

A monumental sign would create a formal entryway at the Gilman entrance to Campus. The team proposed using the tree palette identified for University Center on the opposite side of Gilman Drive for consistency. Maintaining the rustic character of the southern part of Gilman Drive aligns with the Urban Forest at that location. Extending enhanced paving along southern Library Walk is proposed, as well as consistent tree spacing.

Manu Agni inquired how the process for incorporating comments that are emailed works. Hartigan will compile the comments and send them to the project team to include in the final update.

The Committee endorsed the Study.

This item concluded the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ginger Stout". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "G" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Ginger Stout
Associate Planner