Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of the Council for the Built Environment
October 13, 2015

I. Attendance

A. Voting Members
   1. Present: N. K. Anand, Glen Laine, Eleanor Green, Penny Riggs, Andy Armstrong, Joseph Benigno
   2. Absent: Daniel Pugh, Katherine Banks, Marc Sicilio, Christopher Lyons

B. Non-voting Members
   1. Present: Bill Dugas, Jim Grau, Bob Strawser*, Christian Nygren*
   2. Absent: Paul Ogden, Leslie Uptain, Hannah Wimberly

C. Ex-officio Members
   2. Absent: Karan Watson, Kevin Hurley, David Morrison

D. Guests
   1. Shelly Janac, Matt Fry

(*office/organization representation for the Vice Presidents, Agencies, CPI, USC, GSC and SGA have voting and non-voting members; in meetings where the voting member is absent, the non-voting member assumes voting status.)

II. Welcome

A. Co-Chair Strawser called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

B. The September 2015 minutes were declared approved as drafted.

III. Presentations by Sub-Councils

A. Teaching Gardens Complex Schematic Design

   The College of Agriculture and Live Sciences requested approval to proceed toward construction of the Teaching Gardens Complex, which is Phase 1 of the Gardens & Greenway District Plan and encompasses approximately six acres. The Gardens & Greenway District Plan has been approved by CBE.

   The 25-ft. fire lane adjacent to Agriculture Headquarters Building #4 will also serve as an entrance plaza into Phase 1 of The Gardens, with a nearby event lawn. Two 11-ft. tall arbor structures flank the entry portal into the gardens. These structures are constructed of galvanized steel and wood supports. An 8-ft. wall separates the gardens from the event lawn area. As there is currently very little shade in this area, the intent is to use small structures throughout to provide gathering spaces for visitors as they move through the
gardens. The primary clientele will be students, K-12 students, and faculty/staff. There will be interpretive systems and signage throughout the gardens for educational purposes. The primary goals of the gardens is to create a premiere teaching garden and to create a beloved outdoor space.

There are a variety of different gardens showcased throughout Phase I, including a Vineyard. Two heritage gardens will display the influences of certain cultures on Texas landscape design and the way we garden. These are currently proposed as the Spanish Heritage Garden (may contain a plaza, water feature, and archways) and the German Heritage Garden (may contain a windmill, cistern, small kitchen garden, and traditional German fencing). The Bee & Butterfly and Texas Superstar gardens may incorporate some whimsical features into the design. To help provide shade, a 60-ft. long Grand Arbor is proposed. The design as shown will likely be modified to incorporate a solid roof to provide shelter from the rain. There will be an Herb Garden and Vegetable Garden, which will likely include a Gourd Tunnel Walk, at-grade farm garden beds, and kitchen gardens in raised beds. There will be open lawn around the planting areas, and there are plans to transplant a large oak tree in this area. Phase I will also incorporate a grass plaza area with terraced steps. This area could be used for outdoor events.

Along the creek path, there is a picnic area and Overlook Structure. The exterior material of the overlook will be a combination of wood and metal. At its highest point, the Overlook sits 8-ft off of grade. There is potential that the area underneath the Overlook Structure will be utilized for storage. Adjacent to the overlook is a Bird Garden. The Food and Fiber Crop Garden will contain a center pivot to be used as a teaching element. A nearby Student Landscape Demonstration Garden will function like an art gallery with changing student exhibits each year. The Earth-Kind Garden features organic gardening, and the Rain Garden will utilize water from a nearby bioswale that takes water from the parking lot in order to study water quality impacts. The Green Industry Outdoor Classroom is a simple structure to provide gathering space for classes as well as an enclosure for storage and a volunteer center. Rainwater harvesting will be used throughout the gardens, which won’t be enough to irrigate the entire garden but will be used for educational purposes.

The goal for the Pavilion is to create an iconic structure, and a recognizable focal point for this phase of the gardens. It will have an octagonal shape, which is in keeping with the axes, is a common garden-like structure, and is consistent with the German heritage. The pavilion will remain open 70% of the time but has the ability to be closed with sliding glass doors. It will have a split-HVAC system and is approximately 1,400 sq. ft. with an additional 8-ft. of roof overhang. The pavilion is 111-ft. long, 60-ft. wide, and 35-ft. tall. The standing seam metal roof will be constructed of green zinc, if funding is available. Two other smaller structures will be attached: a catering kitchen with storage, and a restroom facility. The intent is to create three individual structures that relate to each other.

**Recommendations:**
The Design Review Sub-Council (DRsc) members determined the plan as proposed is in alignment with the original intent of the Gardens & Greenway District Plan and the Green Reserve as noted in the Campus Master Plan.

The DRsc unanimously voted to recommend approval of the Teaching Gardens – Phase 1 as presented at 100% Schematic Design with the following caveats:

- Maximize adaptability of the pavilion structures to perform multiple functions without substantially increasing cost.
- Request further clarification of exterior materials as there are concerns with weathering of the steel and other proposed materials.
- Request further investigation to mitigate conflicts between pedestrians and bicycles.
- Request further exploration of the naming of the Spanish Heritage Garden and German Heritage Garden.
- Further design details, including clarification of materials, lighting, and signage are to be presented at 100% Design Development in accordance with DRsc procedures.

The Technical Review Sub-council (TRsc) supports the proposed review of the Schematic Design for the Teaching Gardens Complex within the Gardens & Greenway District Plan with the following caveats:

- **Facilities Services**
  - The design team should continue to ensure that the project does not increase the rate of storm runoff into local creeks.
  - The project team should continue to coordinate with Grounds Management for landscaping and irrigation concerns.
  - The project team should continue to ensure that the facility is designed to minimize, as much as practical, the effort needed for future maintenance. It is preferred that items requiring maintenance be easy to service, be easily accessible from ground or floor level, have generous clearances and be easy to isolate from energy sources with minimal impact to the rest of the facility. Elevated items requiring maintenance that are difficult to service by ladder or lift should have permanent maintenance access platforms with permanent stairs or ladders, built-in fall prevention, and davits for hoisting parts and tools.

- **EHS and SASE**
  - This project will require a Texas Storm water Construction General Permit for the entire development. Even if this project is further subdivided into smaller phases, a permit is still needed because the overall the development is over 5 acres.
  - Site security is a significant concern for the entire Teaching Gardens development. Lighting to meet university standards and video surveillance will be required. Some combination of fencing and/or site security staffing must be evaluated and appropriately funded.
Telecommunications
- Depending on the grading work that would have to be done for this project TAMU-IT has fiber located vertically in line with the pavilion.
- There are 3 Manhole/Handhole boxes located in the Phase 1 area that will have to be worked around.
- What is the vehicular access proposal in the event work needs to be done in the area to pull or repair new fiber cable?

Utilities & Energy Services:
- The ability for utility line owner (UES-CHW & HHW lines) to have access to easement should be maintained and area should remain free of any structures. At any time where owner (UES) might need to perform maintenance on line, they do not have to replace in kind any structure or surface material that is obstructing the easement area.
- The project and design team will need to follow the applicable TAMU UES Design Standards https://utilities.tamu.edu/design-standards/
- The project and design team will need to follow the TAMU policy on digging on campus- prior to any excavation - https://utilities.tamu.edu/digging-campus/

University Police:
- While supportive of the concept, much work will need to be done to ensure the Gardens and Greenway can be designed to allow the University Police department the ability to properly monitor and secure the facilities.
- There are many questions and challenges to work through in regards to safety and security. UPD has the following questions/concerns:
  - The proposed plans are accurate.
  - Visibility levels throughout the site. Will it be obstructed by tall trees, hedges, or mounds?
  - Site plan for the proposed lighting and emergency phone or phones within the project.
  - A photometric study of the site that includes lighting sources around the site, including any proposed lighting to be installed before this project is completed.
  - Will the site be accessible to police vehicles conducting patrols or other emergency vehicles?
  - The visibility of the public or police from the surrounding roadways. Avoid having obstructions if possible (e.g., tall grasses, trees, shrubs etc.)
  - If this area is accessible to the public, then lighting standards apply.

Action: The CBE voted to recommend the President’s approval, with noted caveats, the request from the College of Agriculture and Live Sciences to proceed construction of the Teaching Gardens Complex.

Responsible Parties: Co-Chair Strawser
B. Overview of Campus Master Plan Update

- Solicitation Process/Firm Selection

In early 2015, the DRsc solicited for qualified firms and received seven submittals. The six members of the Evaluation Committee shortlisted down to four firms. Interviews were conducted in May 2015. Ayers Saint Gross (ASG), in Arizona, was selected as the planning firm in July 2015.

In order to help with the process, ASG engaged additional consultants. They will have a local architect to be a liaison for them. They will also engage additional consultants in the areas of Civil/Infrastructure Engineering, Landscape Architect, Transportation Engineering, Cost Consulting, MEP/Utilities Engineering, Sustainability Engineering, Historic Preservation, and Public Engagement.

- Planning Scope
  - Texas A&M University in College Station
  - Hensel Park, Research Park, and the Health Science Center
  - Holistic integration and evaluation of approved district plans, proposed district plans, and approved amendments

- Planning Goals
  - Intended as an update and not to redefine the foundation of the 2004 Campus Master Plan in terms of principles and major components.
  - Tool to better inform decisions to support TAMU’s strategic planning priorities and anticipated growth.
  - Visualization tool to facilitate capital campaigns and new directions in programs and research

- Elements of Focus
  - Development Framework Plan
    - Incorporate spaces that promote learning and teaching in classrooms and laboratories, dining and socializing, recreation/outdoor gathering spaces, and living spaces
    - Define campus buildable areas, particularly addressing spatial connectivity between and among the buildable areas
    - Evaluate campus edge conditions and connections to broader community
    - Synthesis with Vision 2020, Academic Plan, and Strategic Plan
    - High Level Space Assessment – college and/or primary unit
    - Aligning with utility infrastructure
    - Assessment of dining and housing facilities to identify potential locations for new facilities
  - Preservation / Adaptive Reuse Plan
    - Review current campus heritage buildings and identify necessary additions or deletions
    - Review and recommend revisions to protocols and guidelines for both heritage buildings and heritage places on the campus
• Revised guidelines incorporated into Campus Master Plan Update
  o Circulation and Transportation Plan
    • Evaluate green space, flow of campus circulation and transportation with intent to improve the pedestrian experience
    • Evaluate campus gateways and connections to surrounds
    • Incorporate recommendations from bicycle study
    • Evaluate current and future transit options, including parking garage locations
  o Sustainability Plan
    • Develop sustainability guidelines and standards that inform the planning effort and the framework plan
    • Review current built environment sustainability practices and recommend best practice revisions
    • Investigate ways to incorporate and implement sustainable strategies
  o Signage Plan
    • Develop signage and wayfinding master plan
      • Utilize TAMU brand guidelines
      • Identify new wayfinding locations
    • Develop new signage standards to facilitate campus navigation and identity
      • Directional Signs
      • Building Identification Signs
      • Orientation Signs
      • Monument Signs
  o Design and Landscape Guidelines
    • Review and recommend additions, deletions or modifications to current guidelines for architectural and landscape components
    • Evaluate current architectural and landscape principles and recommend revisions as necessary

• Levels of Engagement
  o Co-Chairs – Planning Process
    • Dr. Jorge Vanegas, College of Arch. Dean
    • Ms. Lilia Gonzales, University Architect
  o Levels of Engagement
    • First Tier
      • Executive Committee – Sets goals and objectives
        o President Young
        o CBE Co-Chairs (Watson and Strawser)
    • Second Tier
      • Advisory Group
        o Council of Deans
        o Council for the Built Environment
    • Third Tier
      • Focus Groups
      • Information Request Contacts
• Transportation Services; UES; University Architect;
Academics; Student Affairs
  ▪ Campus + Community Outreach
  ▪ Forums
  ▪ Campus Master Plan Update Website
  ▪ Surrounding Cities
    ▪ Engagement in process and discussions

• Planning/Duration / Current Status
  o Year long process – Anticipated completion by August 2016
  o Targeted milestones throughout process
  o Ayres Saint Gross conducted Campus Wide Analysis over last two months
    ▪ Multiple Campus Visits
    ▪ Gathering of data such as space utilization and utility infrastructure

• Next Steps
  o Kick-off Meetings – Introduction and overview of planning process,
    including topics for consideration
    ▪ Executive Committee
    ▪ Council of Deans
    ▪ Council for the Built Environment
  o Engagement with surrounding cities
  o Engagement with campus + communities
    ▪ Launch of Campus Master Plan Update website

Ayers Saint Gross will present at the November CBE meeting.

IV. Other Business

A. Additional Allocations for Deferred Maintenance and Classroom Renovation
Through a combination of base funding and the use of some of the salary sweeps from
the vacant positions from the PWC, the allocation for deferred maintenance and
classroom renovation has been increased by eight million dollars (4.5 from base funding
and 3.5 from the salary sweeps of PWC). Of that, six million will go to deferred
maintenance, 1.5 million to classroom renovation, and $500,000 for classroom
technology.

V. Meeting adjourned 2:05 p.m.