MEMORANDUM

TO: Dr. Mark A. Hussey
   Interim President, Texas A&M University

SUBJECT: CBE Recommendation: Engineering Education Complex & Zachry Renovation - Schematic Design Stage

At its October 9, 2014 meeting, the Council for the Built Environment (CBE) discussed the Engineering Education Complex & Zachry Renovation. The Design Review sub-council reviewed the Engineering Education Complex and Zachry Renovation project at 100% Schematic Design. This project was previously reviewed by the DRsc on June 20, 2012 for concept and project approval. It was reviewed by the CBE on July 10, 2012 and approved by the President on February 24, 2014.

The project includes renovation to the existing Zachry building, located along University Drive between Spence Street and Bizzell Street, with an addition of approximately 200,000 square feet to provide a total of 533,000 gross square feet. The original total project budget was $125 million, and the new total project budget is $168 million.

The interior design is organized around an atrium and staircase space, and allows for many layers of transparency and natural light through the use of skylights. The programmatic spaces within the building include faculty and administration, education centers (classrooms), common amenity spaces (fitness center, recreation center, and technology support center), laboratories, grab and go café, and building support spaces. To accommodate these spaces, Zachry will be completely renovated, which includes elimination of the basement parking and an expansion to the north and south. A fourth floor will be added to the building. The goals driving the exterior design include the creation of an innovative facility that promotes transparency, engages pedestrians to be drawn into the building, and is viewed as “elegantly complex.” The proposed exterior façade wraps Zachry to provide a new face and helps organize the entries into the building. The existing pre-cast concrete will be removed and use of curtainwall and vertical limestone banding provide the main components of the exterior design. The exterior façade incorporates focusing elements which comprise the “middle” portion of the façade.

The DRsc reviewed the proposed facility against the Campus Master Plan (CMP) design principles. The design as presented complies with many of those principles but does not meet all of the guidelines in totality. The building complies by reinforcing the street edge along University Drive; keeping within the recommended building height of 3-5 stories; articulation of base, middle, top; consistency in use of materials, such as limestone and champagne finish of metal overhangs; and connection between interior and exterior. The DRsc’s recommendations address the concerns for those elements that are non-compliant.
The DRsc unanimously voted to recommend approval of the Engineering Education Center – Zachry Renovation project as proposed, with the following caveats:

- Further refinement of the exterior design. While many of the CMP design principles are met, DRsc members feel that there are architectural elements that read as “busy” and the achievement of “elegant complexity” is lost.
- Resolve confusion of exterior design to provide more rhythm and harmony to the façade as discussed in the CMP guidelines.
- Building entrances get lost within the facades and more clarity and detailing is needed.
- Further study of the contextual relationships to Jack E. Brown and ETED along University Drive is needed.
- Redesign of exterior hardscape and landscape may be necessary if the proposed Engineering District Plan is not approved.
- Further review of the design (detailed landscape and hardscape plans, samples of exterior materials) should be presented to the DRsc and CBE at 100% Design Development in accordance with DRsc procedures.

The CBE voted unanimously to recommend, with the noted caveats, the President’s approval of the Engineering Education Complex & Zachry Renovation schematic design.

Karan L. Watson  
Provost and Executive Vice President  
Co-Chair, Council for the Built Environment  
10-29-14

Jerry Strawser  
Vice President for Finance and Administration  
Co-Chair, Council for the Built Environment  
10-12-17

Mark A. Hussey  
Interim President  
11-1-2014

Concur or not concur with CBE’s recommendation: Contingent on implementation of CBE recommendations by May

cc: Sub-Council Chairs, Council for the Built Environment
MEMORANDUM

TO: Dr. Jerry Strawser  
Co-Chair, Council for the Built Environment

Dr. Karan Watson  
Co-Chair, Council for the Built Environment

FROM: Ms. Lilia Gonzales, AIA  
University Architect and Chair, Design Review Sub-Council

DATE: October 8, 2014

RE: Design Review Sub-Council (DRsc) Report
   Engineering Education Complex and Zachry Renovation –
   100% Schematic Design

On October 8, 2014 the Design Review sub-council reviewed the Engineering Education Complex and Zachry Renovation project at 100% Schematic Design. This project was previously reviewed by the DRsc on June 20, 2012 for concept and project approval. It was reviewed by the CBE on July 10, 2012 and approved by the President on February 24, 2014.

The project includes renovation to the existing Zachry building, located along University Drive between Spence Street and Bizzell Street, with an addition of approximately 200,000 square feet to provide a total of 533,000 gross square feet. The original total project budget was $125 million, and the new total project budget is $168 million.

The interior design is organized around an atrium and staircase space, and allows for many layers of transparency and natural light through the use of skylights. The programmatic spaces within the building include faculty and administration, education centers (classrooms), common amenity spaces (fitness center, recreation center, and technology support center), laboratories, grab and go café, and building support spaces. To accommodate these spaces, Zachry will be completely renovated, which includes elimination of the basement parking and an expansion to the north and south. A fourth floor will be added to the building.

The goals driving the exterior design include the creation of an innovative facility that promotes transparency, engages pedestrians to be drawn into the building, and is viewed as “elegantly complex.” The proposed exterior façade wraps Zachry to provide a new face and helps organize the entries into the building. The existing pre-cast concrete will be removed and use of curtainwall and vertical limestone banding provide the main components of the exterior design. The exterior façade incorporates focusing elements which comprise the “middle” portion of the façade.
The DRsc reviewed the proposed facility against the Campus Master Plan (CMP) design principles. The design as presented complies with many of those principles but does not meet all of the guidelines in totality. The building complies by reinforcing the street edge along University Drive; keeping within the recommended building height of 3-5 stories; articulation of base, middle, top; consistency in use of materials, such as limestone and champagne finish of metal overhangs; and connection between interior and exterior. The DRsc’s recommendations address the concerns for those elements that are non-compliant.

Recommendation
The DRsc unanimously voted to recommend approval of the Engineering Education Center – Zachry Renovation project as proposed, with the following caveats:
- Further refinement of the exterior design. While many of the CMP design principles are met, DRsc members feel that there are architectural elements that read as “busy” and the achievement of “elegant complexity” is lost.
- Resolve confusion of exterior design to provide more rhythm and harmony to the façade as discussed in the CMP guidelines.
- Building entrances get lost within the facades and more clarity and detailing is needed.
- Further study of the contextual relationships to Jack E. Brown and ETED along University Drive is needed.
- Redesign of exterior hardscape and landscape may be necessary if the proposed Engineering District Plan is not approved.
- Further review of the design (detailed landscape and hardscape plans, samples of exterior materials) should be presented to the DRsc at 100% Design Development in accordance with DRsc procedures.

Selected images are attached. Please let me know if you need additional information.

cc: Tell Butler
    DRsc Members
    Bettyann Zito
GOALS DEVELOPED DURING DESIGN (WITH DR. BANKS AND THE COE):

The Engineering Education Complex must be:
1. Dynamic
2. Energizing
3. Exciting
4. Innovative
5. Engaging
6. Flexible
7. Open
8. Transparent
9. Transformative
10. A Gateway to the District and to the Campus
11. Home for Undergraduate Engineering Students
12. Elegantly Complex

The Engineering Education Complex must not:
1. Have one square inch of exposed pre-cast
2. Look like an addition to an existing building
ARCHITECTURAL PRINCIPLE 2: BUILDING HEIGHTS
DEPARTMENT

1 - PUBLIC INTERFACE
2 - ADMINISTRATION
3 - EDUCATION CENTER
4 - COMMON AMENITY
5 - LABORATORY
6 - GRAB-N-GO CAFE
7 - BUILDING SUPPORT
CIRCULATION

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
ENGINEERING EDUCATION COMPLEX
FOURTH FLOOR
PROPOSED LABORATORY LOOKING WEST TO CENTRAL ATRIUM
ARCHITECTURAL PRINCIPLE 6: BUILDING MATERIALS & ELEMENTS