SEATTLE PACIFIC UNIVERSITY MAJOR INSTITUTIONS STANDING CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE DRAFT MEETING NOTES

August 19. 2009

Seattle Pacific University
Major Institutions
Standing Citizens
Advisory Committee

Members

Darlene Hickman, Chair
Nancy Ousley, Vice Chair
Douglas McNutt
Doug Jennings
Elaine King
Emily Evans
Jay LaVassar
Kim Orr
John Coney
Bob Drovdahl

Ex-Officio Members

Steve Sheppard – DON
Colin Vasquez – DPD
David Church – SPU

Committee Members Present

Elaine King	Kimberly Orr	John Coney
Jay LaVassar	Doug Jennings	Douglas McNutt
Darlene Hickman		
Emily Evans	Bob Drovdahl	Nancy Ousley

Staff (Ex-officio)

Steve Sheppard	Colin Vasquez	Dave Church

Others:

Melanie Whitehead – SPU	Bob Hull – Miller Hull Partnership
	Norm Strong – Miller Hull Partnership
Rolfe Kellor – Kellor Associates	Jess Wilcoxon
Terry McCann – Bluman Consulting Group	

I. Opening of Meeting and housekeeping

The meeting was opened by Darlene Hickman who thanked attendees . The agenda for the meeting and minutes for Meeting 1 were approved

II. Update on the University Center Project

A. Presentation on Design - Dave Church from SPU was introduced to lead the discussion of the project. Mr. Church noted that SPU had provided information on the University Center Project at the last SAC meeting and that much of the information to be presented tonight was a repeat. However, there is also new material that represents SPU's attempt to incorporate the SAC's comments received at that last meeting.

Mr. Church noted that SPU had selected the Miller Hull Partnership as the design firm for the project. SPU has hired the firm in the past. They did the Science Building as well as Otto Miller Hall and a significant renovation to Marston/Watson Hall. He noted that Bob Hull was present and would give the presentation.

Editors Note: Much of Mr. Hull's presentation related to drawings and slides and was not easily converted to a verbal format.

Mr. Hull noted that the project will have three major functions: 1) music, which includes band, orchestra, and choir; 2) art; and 3) theatre. The project will also include a 1,100 seat capacity auditorium (Performance Hall) that will be used for various events on campus from concerts to seminars and some larger events. Functions that are in different buildings will be consolidated into this new University Center along with the new Performance Hall. The project will include an "Art Street" a shop and their scenery building area, along with about 12 classrooms.

Care will be taken to assure that the building fits within its context, and efforts are being made to assure that the exterior elements of the building blend with the surrounding buildings. He noted the strong verticality of Alexander Hall and the stateliness of McKinley. This has led to the use of brick on the base of the building. He noted that the SAC had raised concerns at the last meeting concerning the treatment of 3rd and had asked

that the designers make extra efforts to assure that the facades along 3rd Avenue did not read as secondary. He noted that this was partly due to the great emphasis put on the design of the "art street".

Mr. Hull then presented partial plans and elevations focusing on 3rd Avenue. He stated that the upper levels have been changed to created more interest. The two story lobby is now open to 3rd and can be entered off of that street. You can look into the lobby and see the activities happening within. There is also an upper level to the lobby with a terrace. In addition the façade will be modulated as called for in SPU's Design guidelines. This creates step-backs along the façade to add interest and avoid large uninteresting blank walls.

The project will stay within the allowed 50 foot height limit with the exception of some of the mechanical penthouses which will be screened not only to reduce noise but also to reduce visual impacts. In addition efforts are being made to assure that the project does not overpowering that corner.

B. Presentation on Possible Amendments Required to Accommodate the Project- Dave Church stated that prior to application for a MUP, SPU will request an amendment to the current plan and will write a letter to DPD outlining its case for considering the amendment a minor amendments. SPU has looked at this project and, even though it might be able to make a case that it's an exempt project, as the plan includes demolition of Crawford which was not anticipated under the Adopted SPU Major Institutions Master Plan , it probably would be considered a minor amendment.

Steve Sheppard noted that the process for considering the amendment issues is set out in the code. Once SPU formally forwards its application for an amendment, DPD will forward it to the committee for your comments on whether it should be considered a minor or major amendment; and any conditions, it any, you recommend should be attached to the granting of the amendment.

Ralph Kellor was introduced to further discuss the amendment request. He briefly went over a draft of the letter that has been sent to DPD. Mr. Kellor stated that the letter lays out SPU's evaluation of the project. SPU believes that the project fits within both the spirit and intent of the Master Plan and should be considered a minor amendment. It meets all development standards (height, setbacks etc.) and the total level of development allowed under the plan, is an allowed use, and all the elements included in the project are identified in the MIMP. The actual project is smaller in some ways that previously anticipated. Initially it was anticipated that the auditorium be as large as 3,000 seats

He noted that the code specifies that an amendment can be a considered minor if it is consistent with the intent of the adopted plan, and it meets one of several criterion including that it does not result in significantly greater impacts than those contemplated within the master plan. The other criterion wouldn't apply to this particular case. There are also lists of criteria that automatically constitute a major amendment such as increases in height designation or expansion of boundary, or any change in a development standard that is less restrictive than that included in the Master Plan. None of that is the case in this situation.

The floor was then opened to questions and comments from the Committee.

Jay LaVassar stated that he believes that the project might have a major impact on traffic and parking. He stated that the Seattle Municipal Code calls for one parking space for each two hundred square feet of assembly area not counting fixed seats, and one parking space for each ten seats on the floor itself. He observed that service levels in the area are already at level E and that additional traffic from this development might to push it to level of service F which may warrant consideration of signals at Bertona and Dravus and that SPU should do further traffic study, and follow the Municipal Code on additional parking spaces. He also stated that the project appears to eliminate 65 parking spaces and that by the criteria in the code SPU might have to provide several hundred additional parking spaces and that is a major impact and needs to be addressed.

Dave Church responded that SPU anticipates that an EIS Addendum will be required and that a parking and transportation study will likely be included in that Addendum. He also stated that SPU has every intention of following all of the requirements of the applicable Seattle Municipal Code.

Several members expressed some confusion concerning the parking requirements. Steve Sheppard responded that the master plan sets the minimum and maximum parking and if they go beyond that or below it would require

an amendment to the plan. He noted that the section that lays out the parking requirements for an auditorium or gymnasium is in a separate section of the code (23.54.015). It has been the interpretation that the Master Plan appears to supersede this. He also noted that the SAC's recommendation is just that, a recommendation not a firm decision. DPD will make the formal City Recommendation.

There was brief discussion of design elements including the facade and rooflines and building materials. John Coney asked why the building roofline is different from others the campus which often have sloping roves and observed that he did not feel that its style was consistent with that of other street frontage on the campus. Bob Hull responded the façade and roofline is related to the church across the street in that that roof form and that it is a way to mitigate height.

Doug Jennings stated that, while he has comments concerning the design his broader issue is the SAC's role in design review. He stated that he had always considered design presentations as for information only but that it appears that there is some greater role. He noted that he had asked Mr. Sheppard for clarification but had not yet heard from him. He also stated that he continues to have questions concerning the vision for this campus. He observed that the SAC is trying to assure that the intent of the plan is met. This is a campus and it has a very broad master plan vision and all of these projects that we're looking at should fit into that one way or another. He observed that on this particular site, Mr. Hull has done a good job explaining how it relates to the interior, but has been less successful concerning context looking outward.

Dave Church responded that all of the projects SPU has brought before the SAC since the plan was adopted, including this one, were listed in the Master Plan, and all are consistent with that plan's development standards. So in a sense we've laid out our campus vision in that plan. He suggested that it might be useful to have a presentation on the master plan itself.

Steve Sheppard stated that the issue of design review is complicated. The code says that the SAC shall comment on projects that come under the master plan. However there is no specific reference to design review neither any criteria in the code nor a process laid out. The general practice has evolved to include the SAC's comment on the design of any building that require discretionary decision, such as a plan amendment, conditional use of that is subject to additional environmental review. But even this is open to interpretation. It's assumed that that comments on these types of issues go to DPD. That's as far as it goes. There is no code criteria of guidance provided. The SAC does not have the same kind of roles as the design review board. However, in recent years the City has encouraged institutions to include design guidelines in their plans to both guide their internal review process and give the SAC's some criteria to reference when or if they provide recommendation to the institution or City. Darlene Hickman noted that the SPU plan includes such criteria in its Appendix F

There was a brief follow up discussion of process. Bob Drovdahl stated that he believed that additional presentation on both the design and further consideration of the amendment requests was necessary at one or more follow-on meetings. The Committee members agreed and it was decided that at least one additional meeting would be held on this issue.

Terry McCann stated that he didn't believe that it's necessary for this committee to have drafted its comments prior to us submitting for the MUP so further committee discussion would not negatively affect the project time-line.. However, there is more pressure concerning the amendment issue. DPD isn't going to decide though on a major or minor amendment or react to that without your comments which are absolutely required by the Code.

III. Property Ownership Outside the MIO

Melanie Whitehead briefly outlined SPU property purchases outside of the MIO. She noted that SPU put two adjacent properties on the corner of 11th and 12th up for sale. They have both sold to private parties. SPU also owns two houses west of campus that are used for faculty staff housing. The University has decided to put one on the market; the other will be retained as transitional housing for new incoming faculty and staff.

IV. Adjournment

The appointed time for adjournment having been reached the meeting was adjourned.