**Design Review Committee (DRC)**

**Meeting Minutes**

October 5, 2021

**Meeting Location and Time:**

ZOOM Meeting

3:00 – 5:00pm PST

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Susannah Scott, Co-Chair, Senate Chair, Professor, Chemical Engineering

Renée Bahl, Co-Chair, Associate Vice Chancellor, Design, Facilities & Safety Services

Dawn Holmes, Senate Appointed Faculty Representative

Dennis McFadden, Design Consultant, Architect & Design Director, Leo A Daly

Derrik Eichelberger, Design Consultant, Landscape Architect, Arcadia Studio Landscape Architecture

Jack Johnson, AS Student Representative

Julie Eizenberg, Design Consultant, Architect & Founding Principal, Koning Eizenberg

Julie Hendricks, Staff Representative, Campus Architect & Director, Design & Construction Services

Ram Seshadri, Senate Appointed Faculty Representative

Pedro Craveiro, GSA Student Representative

Silvia Perea, Acting Director, University Art, Design & Architecture Museum

Volker Welter, Senate Appointed Faculty Representative

Staff Support – Ed Schmittgen, Associate Director, Design & Construction Services

**Welcome:** Co-Chair, Renée Bahl

Ed Schmittgen – conducted role call, those below were in attendance.

1. Susannah Scott
2. Renée Bahl
3. Dawn Holmes
4. Dennis McFadden
5. Derrik Eichelberger
6. Jack Johnson
7. Julie Hendricks
8. Pedro Craveiro
9. Ram Seshadri
10. Silvia Perea
11. Volker Welter

**General Business:**

Co-Chair Renée Bahl gave an overview of the charge of the Design Review Committee.

In summary the Design Review Committee is a recommending body focusing primarily on the exterior features and aesthetics; siting and contextual relationship with adjacent buildings; circulation including pedestrian, bikes and vehicles; landscape design, and other environmental matters.

Ms. Bahl then reviewed the standard DRC process and emphasized the Munger Hall Project has not followed the typical process.

**Action Items:**

Munger Hall – 100% Schematic Design Level Review

*Project Proponent: Gene Lucas*

*Architect of Record: Navy F Banvard, VTBS Architects*

MUNGER HALL DISCUSSION: Ms. Bahl turned over discussion to Gene Lucas

Gene Lucas was introduced and provided a project background

Dr. Lucas noted that this is a donor assisted (funded) building: Charles Munger Hall. The donor has been working with the architect VTSB for approximately seven years, evolving the concept. A primary objective is to satisfy an LRDP goal of providing 5,000 more beds. Another objective is to maximize the potential of modular/prefabricated construction. The project has been a learning experience for all, and has made UCSB as a leader in construction technology.

Ms. Bahl introduced architect Navy Banvard & team:

Navy Banvard, VTBS Architects - guided us through a PowerPoint presentation, in summary:

*Mr. Banvard reviewed the history of the project, which first and foremost is intended to address the urgent need for more student housing. The team has been working closely with an engaged philanthropist whose passion for Student Housing has resulted in three significant built projects: Stanford University – Law School, University of Michigan – Graduate Student Housing, Kavli Institute for Theoretical Physics (KITP) at UCSB.*

*An overview of site context and site design was presented, describing the constraints of the Mesa Road site, vehicle and service access. Site circulation was emphasized, in particular, two bike parking areas to the north and south that would accommodate 3,000 bicycles, a “Flying Stair” to provide pedestrian access to the south, and a bike path extension to direct bicycle traffic east to the Recreation Center along Mesa Road. Landscaping was briefly reviewed, identifying a mixture of pines, oaks, Catalina ironwoods, and eucalyptus as primary elements.*

*An overview of site lighting emphasized lighting at entrances, pathways and roads, featuring campus standard, dark sky compliant fixtures.*

*Floor plans were reviewed, with floors 1-10 being organized around a north/south central corridor. The ground floor features staff apartments and a market and bakery to provide retail & amenity space at north and south locations.*

*Residential floors 2-10 feature 8 “houses” per floor. Each house has 8 suites with 8 persons per suite. 10 exit stairs per floor facilitate emergency egress.*

*The 11th Floor – “Our Town in the Sky”- is an amenity level, featuring a fitness center, a demonstration kitchen and a multi-purpose room. A central courtyard would be covered by a transparent roof (similar to LA’s SoFi stadium in Englewood). The courtyard features a series of themed landscape areas with lush vegetation.*

*The exterior walls are structural shear walls. The façade reflects the program within, with a classical manner including a rusticated base. The living levels 2-10 constitute the main body of the façade. The 11th floor is articulated to emphasize “Our Town in the Sky”, with 28-30 ft tall ceilings. East and west elevations reflect the living spaces and convivial kitchen.*

*Primary exterior building materials for the walls of floors 1 through 10 are precast concrete. Windows are commercial grade aluminum windows. All glass will be fritted 30% to 40% to reduce the potential for bird strikes. The11th floor uses GFRC siding material. Iron railings add detail and shadow lines.*

This presentation led to a lively discussion, with comments and feedback from DRC members as follows:

The Design – DRC Comments:

*A concern was expressed that building code requires natural light and natural ventilation in bedrooms. The committee asked whether the design is consistent with the code-requirement for windows in bedrooms.*

*A concern was expressed that the extra-long twin beds, which are designed to be wall-to-wall, are too short to accommodate taller students.*

*A member of the DRC asked whether it is reasonable to expect eight students in one-bedroom cluster to walk to the bathrooms (if they are sick, etc.) through the living area?*

*Multiple concerns were expressed about how the site would handle the logistics of move-in days, when thousands of students need to bring cars with their belongings up to the structure within a relatively short period of time.*

*The height of the proposed building, at approximately 159 ft, was a concern. By comparison, Francisco Torres Tower (Santa Catalina) is between 120ft – 140 ft. A taller building may be in conflict with the environmental sensitivity of the campus, and impact sight lines towards the ocean and mountains. How does this reflect on UCSB as an environmental leader, and how is it compatible with our incredible Santa Barbara setting? The building’s size, heaviness and architectural language do not correspond to idea of co-inhabiting. Other UCSB housing projects have considered these factors. How do we justify overlooking them in this case?*

*Concerns were expressed about the justification of the building as a prototype (for other campuses). How could it be presumed to work on other campuses?*

*Concerns were expressed about the carbon footprint of the building. The lack of natural ventilation and extensive use of artificial lighting are not conducive to a low carbon footprint.*

*Regarding signage, will students have difficulty locating their rooms/pods when they are by design all the same. Will signage be needed to help orient students?*

*Adaptability/flexibility was discussed. How will the architecture adapt to changing uses over time? The plans seem very rigid, with no flexibility in the design of the spaces. For example, art students may have different space needs from students in more book-oriented disciplines. Can more flexibility be included in the pods?*

*A concern was expressed that the grading may be excessive and too close to the slope at the southern edge of the site. It was suggested to confirm this condition with the required setbacks.*

*A suggestion was made to clarify the interactions between bikes and pedestrians on the north and south sides of the building.*

*The site plan may benefit from additional plant material near the southwest, off the fire lane.*

*There appears to be a disconnect between the spaciousness of the amenity areas and the compressed size of the student living spaces. A committee member suggested rebalancing to better distribute the spatial resources.*

*A general concern was expressed that the building does not (visually) reflect UCSB’s principles of environmental sensitivity. Student residents won’t see or feel the panelized construction as environmentally beneficial. The rooftop garden is not visible from the outside or from the living floors. Can there be a greater emphasis on greenery throughout?*

*The amount of bike parking may not be sufficient for the number of planned residents.*

*A concern was expressed about access and egress for disabled students. For students with mobility issues, the site is quite a long way from the main campus. Also, how would an emergency evacuation of disabled students be accomplished?*

**Project Updates:** Julie Hendricks

Interactive Learning Pavilion: (formerly Classroom Building)

Ms. Hendricks reported that construction began approximately one year ago and is nearly 50% complete. Over the summer a storm water retention system was installed under the parking lot. Currently the average daily worker count is between 25 - 30 and will ramp up substantially when more trades come on the site at the conclusion of structural steel erection. Meanwhile work on underground utilities continues.

Furniture selection is progressing with a subcommittee reviewing options.

There is a DCS/DFSS website for ongoing information.

The project remains on schedule and on budget, opening in Spring 2023.

Associated Students Bike Shop:

Ms. Hendricks reported that the project is out to bid using the best value process. Five general contractors are shortlisted, invited to bid.

Bids are due October 12th

California Coastal Commission approval is anticipated this month.

Construction will start in November lasting 12 months.

Arnhold Tennis Center:

Ms. Hendricks reported that the project was completed last summer. The courts are fully operational for both the Men’s and Women’s Tennis teams. They are practicing daily while new recruits are being toured around, they are extremely impressed. The next big installation will be a camera system which will allow for live streaming for fans and parents to watch matches.