DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: March 15, 2002

Meeting No. 34

ATTENDEES: Michael Arntz  
Colin Gardner  
Bob Hatler 
Elvin Hatch  
Everett Kirkelie 
Carol Pasternack  
Barton Phelps  
Bruce Tiffney  
Ric Williams

ABSENT: Edson Arni 
Dan Dal Bello 
Pamela Burton  
Brian McGuire  
Buzz Yudell

OTHERS PRESENT 
Michael Bade  
Barry Berkus 
Lars Bildsten  
Ed Blaschke  
Jim Blascovich 
Barbara Bodine  
Erich Brown  
Laura Burnett  
Frank Castanha  
Greg Christmann  
Jon Cook  
Bob Cunningham  
Julie Cunningham 
Steve Eggemeyer  
Paul Gawronik  
David Gross  
Chuck Haines  
David Inouye  
Ed Johnston  
James Kolker  
Ilze Landfried 
Mitch Lawrence

Martie Levy  
Gene Lucas  
Jennifer Metz  
Roger Monte  
Jim Moore  
Mark Nocciolo  
Duke Oakley  
Melba Ortiz  
Lynne Pritchard  
Stephanie Psomas  
Tye Simpson  
Mark Schwartzbach  
Peter Steiner  
Deborah Storm  
Ron Struhl 
Fred Sweeney  
Thea Van Rensburg  
Robert Venturi  
Jack Wolever  
Harry Wolf  
Mehrdad Yazdani

ITEM DESCRIPTION

1. Minutes of February 15, 2002 meeting were approved.
Progress Review, California Nanosystems Institute and Parking Structure

- Jack Wolfever and Duke Oakley explained that because the focus has been on what the building looks like and a cost estimate to verify that the project is within budget is not yet available, design approval has been postponed to the next meeting.

- Robert Venturi started his presentation by noting that although he would discuss mostly the outside design of the building, it is important to keep in mind the background of the interiors. He discussed the importance of context, noting the continuation of the campus pedestrian and bicycle scale at the cafe and the larger, more rural context of the building along the road. The iconic nature of the building and the way the building is seen in increments as one drives past is important to the design.

- The two vertical elements on the east will be a kind of identifying obelisk for the project and will frame the view of “infinity” toward the ocean. There is consistent arcade on the east and there is a raised planter with trees that helps to make a communal space by Kohn Hall. Robert Venturi discussed the importance of rhythm in the exterior design. With the office window openings and arcade, there is a consistent rhythm on the east facade but, as you go around the corner to the north facade, the rhythm created by the palm trees, windows and wall stripes inflects and comes to a climax at the digital wall. A natural material such as a darker stone will create the stripes. The digital wall is an element of iconography appropriate to digital/media area of the building and the iconic image becomes the equivalent of a gate since the campus does not have a pedestrian gate that is typical of university design.

- The digital wall is still somewhat controversial in that it could represent the digital sciences or the art department and the subject matter could be art or communication. Viewed for only a few seconds while driving by, the wall would be a kind of MTV or quick communication piece. It is a new idea and there are issues regarding programming, vandalism and cost. George LaGrady will be wiring up his ideas for it. If the project does not go ahead with a digital wall, it could be a mural.

- Bob Haller reported on the morning meeting the Landscape Subcommittee had with the landscape designers. The subcommittee was enthusiastic about the open, inviting forest design envisioned for the courtyard and suggested adding more plant diversity to it including vines. There was some concern that the east west courtyard trees would not sufficiently screen Engineering 2 and the designers were encouraged to rethink the use of pines, to improve balance and to provide more screening. After the meeting, some members expressed concern about whether something less formal than palms might be better along the north. Maybe eucalyptus would be more appropriate. Bob Venturi said that in driving to campus the landscape is informal and he thinks the area by the building should be more formal with a planting relating to the rhythm of the architecture rather than softening the facade with picturesque or naturalistic planting. Carol Pasternack said she would not want the landscape softened since the asymmetrical aspect of the design might be lost. Barton Phelps praised the strong, highly intellectual connection of architecture and landscape in the presentation by Robert Venturi and said the composition with the palms should be respected. Carol also pointed out that palms would relate to the palms at University Plaza, another entrance, and that citriodoras might merge too much with the rest of campus. Barton asked what could be done to shorten the time to get the large palms that
are depicted and Ric Williams suggested moving some existing campus palms to the project. Laura Burnett suggested that it would be possible to get the desired rhythm by using different size plants as well as by spacing. Duke Oakley said that cost is a consideration and the estimate will be explicit about what will be provided.

- David Gross asked how the changes to landscape at ITP will be handled, in particular the changes resulting from the pedestrian drop off that is shown. Duke Oakley said that there is a need for drawings that clearly show the bus turn-around and the drop off. Martie Levy said that the whole eastside of campus as well as ITP needs the drop off and the bus stop. These are not strictly in the CNSI project but should not be ignored.

- Bruce Tiffney asked about whether a tower or curved form at the northeast corner would help the relationship with ITP. Robert Venturi said that there is harmony from contrast as well as similarity and the interior layout does not need a curved form or tower. Barton Phelps said that at the last meeting there had been interest in that corner and concern about its presence as a gateway. It seemed there was something there but it was not well worked out. Robert Venturi said that the emphasis or “whammo” is the LED wall not the corner which should be smaller and lower so that it relates to ITP. It should not extend out and more space is not needed inside. Barton Phelps suggested that surface is what its all about, “the murality of wall”. In this way the arcade makes sense, but the recess and porch at the corner could be handled differently.

- Lars Bildsten said that ITP is still concerned about the large number of people who will be using the cafe. Gene Lucas said that a smaller parking structure has solved a lot of problems and the parking committee would be happy if rates do not have to be increased. Michael Bade said the architects have come up with a solution that works. It has a big lab building and a big parking structure. He was encouraged by the care with which the landscape was being considered, he found the courtyard interesting and liked the suggestion of using vines.

- Carol Pasternack asked about color and Robert Venturi said that they want the whitish architecture of Santa Barbara but do not want to use white stucco. They are looking at materials with a warm white-grey cast rather than yellowish. The recessed area of the arcade will be the same as the outside but the cafe interior will have a bold color (but not one that will compete with the color of ITP). Duke Oakley said that the estimate will include a porcelain enamel mural rather than LED.

- Robert Venturi agreed to look again at the interaction of the garage wall with the courtyard where a stair had been suggested at the last meeting. Lars Bildsten will be invited to meetings with the Landscape Subcommittee when it deals with the landscape of this porject. Duke Oakley said that although East Gate is not part of this project there may be some landscape suggestions that come from the East Gate design effort.

3. **Action Item: Design Approval Psychology Building Addition and Renewal**

- Ron Strahl characterized the project as having two components, a new building wing and renewal of the existing Psychology building that will be undertaken when occupants of existing offices have moved into the new wing. The DRC last saw this project in March 2000. Fred Sweeney said that the issues from the last meeting were the relationship with the Life Sciences project and the transition from an urban university setting to a residential
neighborhood. The addition will have as many windows as possible and be a different architectural style from the 1960's building that has no windows along its south side. The courtyard between the buildings will be a lush seating place with raised planters that reflect the curve of the building parapet. The addition has been angled to capture as many views as possible and relates to the Life Sciences building to form a gateway to the campus. The eucalyptus row will be maintained.

- The design changes made to the building since the last meeting are that there is no screen or trellis element on the south side of the existing building and the stair tower is less articulated. Jim Blascovich said the department is happy with the way the project is going.

- Barton Phelps said he thought the courtyard works well and is a good antidote to the original building that does not have views but he wondered if there was not a missed opportunity in the addition of getting some views to the north. He asked about the inspiration or reason for the shaped parapet and Fred Sweeney explained that they felt they had a rather nondescript building and needed some architectural statement that had some meaning to the department and to the gateway concept of the design. It gives some pizzazz to the building.

- Bruce Tiffney pointed out that the designers should think about what plants should go into the area on the eastside of the building where there are some clay deposits and a wet area. It may not be a wet area after construction but it is worth noting. Bruce said he likes the curves and suggested that it might be better to have two larger gunite planters that the students can sit on. He liked the boulders and Japanese idea for the garden.

- Fred Sweeney said they have a fairly contemporary palette of colors for the UCSB block (relates to existing block) and stucco building. There are bright colors at the columns, lots of color at the stair tower and eyebrows/balconies. Fred explained how the alignment of buildings, the procession down Ucen Road, and the curve of the parapet is meant to draw the eye away from the existing building. Barton Phelps said that the curved parapet seems less elegant than some of the other moves they have made (i.e., the color scheme). Tye Simpson said that the best thing about the parapet is that it screens the mechanical equipment; otherwise it does not work for him. Tye expressed concern that the separation of the building and addition is not interpretive of the campus system of courtyards and it would be better if it were less like a slit or were emphasized in some way.

- There was discussion about whether angling the addition contributes to the gateway quality that is desired. Barton Phelps said the ideally the courtyard should be shaped by the angle but the addition could be orthogonal with respect to Ucen Road. Michael Bade agreed that it would be better for approval by the Regents if it were orthogonal and were obvious that it is a gateway. Fred Sweeney agreed that they could rework the design.

**ACTION**

The design was approved with the agreement that the architects will align the south edge of the addition in the same plane and extend it as far south as Biology building. The will also rework the north element and will come back for color and exterior materials at a later date.
5. **Action Item: Intercollegiate Athletics Building**
   - Mehrdad Yazdani said that the ICA project is at 80% Construction Documents and the estimate shows it is on budget. They are planning to use campus block at the base and around the lobby. The parapet will be smooth, (fine sand) stucco plaster in an off white cream color. There will be clear glazing in Kynar metallic silver colored frames and, where appropriate such as at the workout area, the glazing will be translucent obscure glass. The office block will have concrete block at the base and darker plaster on top. The curvilinear form is a lighter plaster. The precast pavers in the lobby continue to the exterior.
   - Stephanie Psomas presented the landscape plan. There will be large planting wells around the Ficus trees that are to remain along Ocean Road. The pedagogical value of the palm trees is an important element of the design and she pointed out other features such as the west outdoor study, the hedge at the track, grass in the courtyard, Santa Barbara brown concrete paving, and the chain link fence with the bamboo forming a foreground to the distant view of the mountains.

**ACTION**

The exterior materials and colors were approved as shown. The landscape plan was approved with the suggestion that the designers consider carefully whether the Phoenix dactylifera will survive at this site.

6. **Concept Review: Alumni House**
   - Ron Strahl reviewed the history of the project and Barbara Bodine, recently appointed regent, spoke about the purpose and enthusiasm for the project as expressed by alumni and students. Barry Berkus discussed the 17,000 square foot site and its limitations, adjacencies, and views. He showed various images of the old campus on the Riviera and the current campus and said that they would like to incorporate some of the character of the old campus/Santa Barbara in architecture of the project.
   - Bruce Tiffney said that before moving forward the Landscape Subcommittee would like the issues raised by the map it saw from the Lagoon Management Plan sorted out. The Coastal Commission in 1996 apparently approved the map and it appears that the Alumni site may be in a setback. Tye Simpson said that the best way to resolve the site boundary is to do a wetland delineation. Since the size of the site could not be resolved at the meeting, Michael Arntz suggested the DRC continue and deal with the aesthetics of the project. Michael said that what Barry Berkus has said before sounded wonderful but he was concerned about going forward in the 21st century and therefore the old Santa Barbara style was not appealing to him. He would have hoped that Barry would incorporate his more modern individualistic approach to the design of the project. Barry said he would like to refer to the historic background of the campus but also would reference the current campus and look forward with more modern influences. He suggested that Michael look at a very modern building he is doing on Ortega Hill. Carol Pasternack said the functions and layout of the building looked great and that she would like the building to pay homage to the older style but also play off of it and the current campus context.
   - Barton Phelps said that he appreciated the beautifully organized presentation that showed the accrued history of the project and believed it important that the site go through the
appropriate evaluation. He hoped that Barry would consider what the building could do for the campus beyond the program. He has thought that the site involves making some kind of portal that would include the Faculty Club and San Raphael and he wondered if the scope could be increased. Barry said he would not want to connect the building to the Faculty Club and had thought the portal would be between the building and the Faculty Club. He expects to do an important entry. Barton said that this site is more difficult than the Faculty Club and a non-orthogonal placement is a problematic solution that separates it from the other buildings. It gives the building a residential quality but Barry should remember that the house metaphor on campus is different from the house metaphor of a country club.

- Everyone agreed that the next step is to correctly define the site. Barry said he expected the design to pivot around the rotunda element. Barton Phelps suggested that Barry remains open to exploring and does not zero in too quickly on a solution. Ric Williams asked that Barry keep in mind that the students living in campus housing by the site should not feel they are facing the back door of the project.

7. **San Clemente Housing Design Critique by Michael Bade**

- Michael Bade said he needed to catch a plane and so was sorry his discussion would need to be cut short. His group at OP is asked to validate projects, to look at them to make sure they will be an asset. They do not have a standardized yardstick but try to develop pragmatic criteria. This is especially true of housing projects, which are economically sensitive and involve a lot of labor. It is very easy to overwhelm the contractors in the region where the project is and logistics can effect costs. His group wants to be sure that capital is being well allocated in the design and that capital resources are being used efficiently. He looks for consolidation of services, party walls, redundancy, a service spine. He has seen good ratio of value in what developers have been able to provide (at Irvine for instance) but there is no set standard. They have asked the campus to look for where it can save costs and still give students a good place to live.

- Bruce Tifney asked how OP responds to the aesthetics of a project and Michael said that there are many ways to express aesthetics. OP does not have set standards and is open to an argument from the campus about a really appropriate way to do something. He would ask that the campus goes back and looks at efficiencies. Other approved projects are not cheaper but have allocated resources differently. He was not suggesting that the campus goes to a developer standard but it should look for effective allocation of resources. Housing units take a beating and should stand the test of time and not be a maintenance/repair burden.

- Barton Phelps said it seemed that the bar was being raised in accountability and explanation. Michael replied that a project must make sense to his superiors and the rest of the staff. Projects go through peer review but must also get the concurrence of OP. He had thought from the last meeting that there was a possibility of building more efficiently. Barton Phelps asked if OP was expecting Harry to make the case for the costs. Everett Kirkelie said it is difficult to understand the benchmarks by which the project is being judged. The campus has a good record in building housing and has built quality designs that will have long term benefits. A developer standard of housing, which was once tried and resulted in leaking buildings, etc., is not a fair benchmark. He thought that perhaps the campus needed to do a better job of presenting the value of what is being proposed. The
campus does not want to do anything that would cause delay, which could cost more than redesigning. It will work to better its communication.

- Michael Arntz said that it would not be in the interest of the university to short change the aesthetics of the project and Michael Bade express confidence that whatever Harry does it will be aesthetic. OP is open to arguments regarding what will be done differently from a developer. Everett said the project is unique and is for housing graduate students which requires a different understanding and design than undergrads. Michael said he had been captivated by the images that Harry showed before but that the integration he expected in the Los Angeles courtyard style for example is not in the design he sees now. He just wants to be sure that the campus is spending its money prudently.

- Harry Wolf said that at first he had thought the objections he was hearing were financial but then he heard something stylistic. There were different ways of building inherent in the early images that he showed and he believes he is following a kind of developer standard in the L. A. courtyard pattern but making it a more articulate style. As he worked he was thinking pragmatically, prudently and was mindful how the approach would effect cost.

- Michael Arntz said that the character of the site dictates the character of the solution. Carol Pasternack said that, from her graduate student days, she knows how crucial it is to have a living space with such things as air passing through and light from both sides. Michael Bade cited an example in San Francisco, which also had a unique and difficult site, but the resource allocation was better in that they could add units and lower the cost per unit by maximizing the use of the structure they built. Barton Phelps said that the campus can look at other studies, not reinvent the wheel and decide which features are crucial and what the tradeoffs are. Everett said the campus would work with Michael Bade on the solution and Harry said he was confident he would be able to do so.
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Minutes were prepared by: 

Ilze Landfried

Date: 4/6/02

Attachment

cc: Committee and Attendees