

Howard University Community Campus Plan Task Force

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

10 February 2011

Attendees

Mr. Thomas Dawes, Development Corporation of Columbia Heights
Ms. Anita Rice, LeDroit Park Resident
Mr. Patrick Nelson, Georgia Avenue Community Development Task Force
Mr. Benton Heimsath, Councilmember Jim Grahams' Office
Mr. Tony Norman, ANC 1B10, Chair, ANC 1B Design Committee
Mr. Eric Fidler, LeDroit Park Civic Association
Ms. Sylvia Robinson, Emergence Community Arts Collective
Ms. Teri Janine Quinn, President, Bloomingdale Civic Association
Ms. Maxine Brown Roberts, D.C. Office of Planning
Mr. Derrek Niec-Williams, Brailsford and Dunlavey
Mr. Brad Grant, Director, Howard University School of Architecture and Design
Ms. Maybelle Taylor Bennett, Howard University Community Association

Blackburn University Center (BUC)

Everyone in the meeting has visited the BUC except Eric Fidler, so most are familiar with it.

Derrek Niec-Williams made a presentation of the study of Blackburn University Center conducted by Brailsford and Dunlavey. He discussed: the various types of student unions that universities used; the internal circulation and non-assignable spaces in Blackburn; the eating and recreational facilities within the building; the ballroom, conference and meeting spaces; and the student organizational and staff spaces in the center. (See the attached Existing Conditions description)

Sylvia Robinson asked how someone walking into the BUC would know what's going on? There is a need to better identify the activities in the building, such as electronic notification of major events. There also needs to be improved connections to the community, and a better way for students to know what is happening in the community.

Anita Rice said there should be a separate space allotted for faculty and staff who may need a respite from exposure to students. Mr. Williams indicated that most faculty and staff are split in their opinions about that. Many welcome the exposure and the chance to interact with students, while just as many want to be able to get away from them temporarily throughout the day.

Mr. Norman wanted to know if Howard were encouraging people to use restaurants? If so, he felt the price was too high for the quality of food offered. The University should encourage alumni and the public to patronize the restaurant.

Professor Grant brought up the fact that the faculty would want segregated dining as well as, dining with students. Collegial faculty discussions are good for faculty and students.

Tony Norman expressed the concern that the University should not shut campus down on weekends. BUC needs to have extended hours on the weekends to prevent the students from hanging out in the neighborhoods because they have nowhere to go on campus.

Underclassman Housing

Maybelle Bennett announced the decision by the University's Board of Trustees to approve the construction of two new dormitories for Underclassmen along Fourth Street between Bryant and "W" Streets, in the vicinity of other student residences for underclassmen. She described the area as an "underclassmen" village, where a supportive community for students will be developed in an effort to bring students closer in to the University from the outlying dormitories. This is being done to improve the student quality of life, safety and integration into the campus life of the University.

Mr. Nelson asked if there were a housing policy that required students who live in neighborhood to move into rooms that would be vacated by freshmen once the Underclassman dorms are built? He felt this would get them out of non-Howard-owned housing in the neighborhood. He asked what housing policy would kick in? The response was that the housing policy that will be pursued once the new housing comes on line has not yet been developed. The full housing phasing plan must be fleshed out before such a policy is finalized.