

Committee on Priorities and Resources  
Meeting Minutes – February 4, 2020

In attendance: Professor Javier Corrales, chair; Professor Andrew Dole; Professor Jill Miller; Professor Monica Ringer; Library Administrative Assistant/Bookkeeper Susan Bradley; Director of Financial Planning Thomas Dwyer, *ex officio*; Provost and Dean of the Faculty Catherine Epstein, *ex officio*; Assistant Director of Athletics Kelly Mannix; Chief Human Resources Officer Maria-Judith Rodriguez, *ex officio*; Chief Financial and Administrative Officer Kevin Weinman, *ex officio*; Brooke Harrington '22, *ex officio*; James Hulsizer '23; Steven Hegarty, recorder

Not in attendance: Sydney Ireland '23

Guests: Jim Brassord, Chief of Campus Operations; Jesse Barba, Director of Institutional Research and Registrar Services

The meeting came to order at 8:30 am.

### Proceedings

Jim returned to update CPR on planning for the new student center, and to review the current supply and condition of office and classroom space.

#### 1. New Student Center

- a. The center will create spaces for social and intellectual engagement, well-being and community. In addition, the reuse of the Merrill-McGuire site is a college priority.
- b. Herzog & de Meuron (HdM) architects were selected over the summer. They are working with another firm, Beyer Blinder Belle (BBB), to identify the programmatic aspirations of the building and needs of the community. The goal is to build a uniquely Amherst College building -- fun, creative, intellectually engaging, with space for social groups, etc.
- c. BBB has provided the program to HdM to begin conceptual design process. This early design work defines the project and budget. The conclusions are expected to be shared with the board in May. We are in the early stages of the process, and there is plenty of room to shape and influence plans. Jim is receptive to CPR providing feedback throughout the design process.
- d. Dining is being explored as a separate but connected facility. Val is overdue for upgrade or replacement. With a move of Dining to the Student Center, the existing space can be repurposed, potentially for academic use.
- e. CPR noted conference-scale restroom facilities will be important. They must accommodate large number of users all at once during brief event breaks. There should not be lines to wait to use facilities.
- f. Currently, the program suggests a Student Center building of 80,000 to 100,000 square feet. By comparison, Keefe is 35,000 ft<sup>2</sup>, Val is 40,000, Merrill/McGuire is 210,000, and the new Science Center is 250,000.
- g. There will be a strong focus on sustainable design and construction, including the reuse of current foundations. Where possible, demolition materials will be retained onsite and incorporated in the new structure.
- h. CPR highlighted the importance of having more feedback from the community, and from the CPR, before actual design plans are finalized.

## 2. Offices

- a. To date, increasing need for office space has been partially accommodated through incremental growth as well as some building renovations/conversions.
- b. For additional progress, the college needs data. KRA architects and space planners have been hired to study the issue. They are looking both at positions and the inventory of spaces, and their report will help evaluate current and future needs.
- c. For short term help, the Shared Services offices are now located off campus (in Hadley). Also, by the summer of 2022, the conversion of 197 South Pleasant Street for academic needs will be complete.

## 3. Classrooms

- a. Jesse noted a need for more seminar rooms, and 40 to 50 student classrooms. In the meantime, the Registrar's office is working to "right size" classroom to class sizes.
- b. Moving toward flexible furnishings (e.g. chairs and tables on wheels) with rooms large enough for each class to re-configure.
- c. Need for upgraded classrooms that can readily adjust to different class sizes.
- d. Scheduling issues are caused by the popularity of 10-12/2-4 class times, Tue/Thurs class schedules, and the restrictions against scheduling classes after 4:30 pm. The imbalance in fall/spring enrollments (due to study abroad programs) exacerbates scheduling during the fall semester

Adjourned 9:37 am.

Respectfully submitted,  
S Hegarty