Project Description

New Academic Building
Project # 12-23-99

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I. Executive Summary

The New Academic Building is an 80,000 square foot building that will fully host the Nursing, Public Health, and Communication Disorders Departments on the site of the Coach House. There is additional space on the lower level for the Communication Disorders Clinic. The project includes 16 general purpose classrooms, which includes two active learning classrooms and two seminar rooms. Additionally, there is a generous lounge on the main level with a food service vendor and large and group study areas distributed throughout the building.

The building exterior includes a roof terrace, a plaza facing Speert Garden, and approximately 28 access controlled parking spaces that meet the requirements of ADA and the clinic. The roadways to the rear of Raubinger Hall and Hobart Manor will remain and the site on the Wightman side will be developed. Site landscaping will include an underground stormwater retention basin and native plantings.

The overall cost of the project is estimated at $40 million, with construction commencing in 2014 and occupancy scheduled for 2016.

II. Introduction

This program statement contains information and requirements for the programming and design of a New Academic Building on William Paterson University’s Main Campus at the site of the Coach House.

The New Academic Building will be designed to provide permanent locations for three academic departments (Nursing, Public Health, and Communication Disorders) within the College of Science and Health, department specific laboratories, classrooms for general instruction, and other amenities that may include collaborative study space, common area lounges, and an Einstein Bagel concession.

The University recently completed its Strategic Plan, which is intended to provide guidance through 2022. Campus teams and committees are actively discussing the plan and are developing a framework for implantation. Other recent developments since 2012 include a completed traffic study, plans for the construction of a 1000 space garage, and an update of the Academic Zone Plan.

The University updated its Academic Zone Plan with the assistance of Perkins Eastman. The proposed New Academic Building is located within the Academic Zone. The updated plan provides the background decision making and preliminary programming
for the New Academic Building. In addition, Perkins Eastman concluded: “The Academic Zone Plan envisions an invigorated core that compliments recent investments in the University Commons by expanding opportunities for informal and social learning, as well as providing a wider array of active learning classrooms and class labs. These efforts are complimented by an integrated system of gently flowing walkways and distinctive open spaces that bolster the University’s sense of place. Once realized, the Academic Zone will be a visual hive of social activity, intellectual investigation and cross-campus interaction – the heart of campus intellectual life”

A New Academic Building is required to meet the growing demands of the University and the needs of its students. The building is to be located with the Academic Zone, at the site of the former Coach House, in the area bounded by Raubinger, Hunziker Hall, Hunziker Wing, Wightman Gym and the service road. The New Academic Building will need to reflect its site context, use, and the University’s vision. The construction process cannot unduly interfere with ongoing business and academic operations and requires careful consideration about the continuous appearance of the site.

This program statement focusing on the user’s needs, and is supported with inputs from the following units of the University:

- Facility Advisory Committee
- College of Science and Health
- Departments of Public Health, Communication Disorders and Nursing.
- Instructional Research and Technology
- Learning Spaces Committee
- Information Technology
- Capital Planning, Design, and Construction
- Physical Plant Operations
- Parking Sub-Committee
- Office of the Vice President of Administration and Finance

III. Background of the Project

The space, infrastructure, and deferred maintenance needs of buildings on the Academic Zone are long recognized. The first major step in the Academic Zone Plan is
defined as a New Academic Building at the site of the existing Coach House, which will be demolished. The new building will provide permanent locations for academic departments, currently in other buildings, which would subsequently be renovated in a phased approach. Perkins Eastman has analyzed and defined the potential size, location, massing, adjacencies, open space, and preliminary programming for the facility.

Perkin Eastman’s also commented: “It is important that future architects working on campus are attentive to issues of scale, and physical character, as well as desired connection to and activation of adjacent open space. While aesthetics are always subjective, the qualitative and antidotal conversations and interviews leading to the preparation of this report suggest that future buildings need to balance a desire for:

1. Human-scaled buildings (as opposed to the large-boxy structures in the campus core)
2. Buildings that visually reinforce the University’s image as a serious institution (a desire that usually pushes for larger and more imposing buildings)
3. More stone and brick and less concrete and glass.”

IV. New Academic Building Goals

The following goals have been extracted from the University’s Strategic Plan and Academic Zone Plan Update:

A. Address the University’s needs for additional instructional spaces, student/faculty common spaces, and faculty offices. Anticipate and identify evolving technology and delivery methods to improve teaching effectiveness and learning outcomes.

B. Ensure the campus is appropriately modernized and promotes a stronger sense of community for all. Provide new facilities that meet the requirements and future phases of the Academic Zone Plan update.

C. Build and sustain a vibrant campus-based community committed to the success of new students and continuation of that success into later years. Enhance student academic engagement with faculty, student support staff, and fellow students in and outside the classroom.

D. LEED Certification and development sustainable strategies for maintenance and operating requirements for new construction.

E. Leverage and create an appropriate campus gateway from the new garage.
F. Create and enhance memorable and lively open spaces.

G. The required overall building is estimated to be 83,160 gross square feet.

H. Engage the academic community in discussions about room utilization, station utilization, classroom size and other benchmarks to determine optimal sizes, required technology, and pedagogical delivery for new classrooms as it pertains to the New Academic Building.

I. Provide required utility infrastructure to support the New Academic Building and if appropriate, a future academic building at the Wightman Gym site.

J. Design pedestrian and vehicle connections to and around the New Academic Building including the pathways to the Garage Site, Speert Garden, Hunziker Hall/Wing, Raubinger, ADA Parking, Loading, and proposed adjacent development. This should be planned in accordance with future development potential identified in the Academic Zone Plan.

K. Inclusion of informal food service and collaboration space(s) for students, faculty, and staff to interact.

L. Documentation that supports and provides for the demolition of the Coach House to include asbestos abatement in the building.