Chapter 7

Administrative, Management, and Policy Recommendations

Introduction

The goal of the University of Cincinnati Campus Heritage Plan is to address the process and guidelines for implementing change. The plan’s intent is to “initiate a dialogue about the nature and practicality of continuity and change” and to ground that dialogue in the context of the campus as it has developed over time, particularly as a result of the remarkable transformation introduced by the new “signature” buildings and landscapes of the master plan. This final chapter focuses on the management issues, concerns, and objectives of the University of Cincinnati through administrative, management, and policy recommendations intended to support the vision of the university master plan and preserve UC’s unique sense of place.

Preceding chapters reviewed existing conditions and character-defining features or elements of buildings and landscapes, which are cataloged in the plan’s appendices. Potential impetuses for change were forecast on the basis of interviews and observation of the unique characteristics of each. This activity helped the planning team to better understand the degree to which change can be accommodated without sacrificing the significance of the buildings and landscapes that have brought acclaim to UC. Potential treatment recommendations were then provided as guidelines for the further development and implementation of maintenance standards based on “best practices.”

Management Issues

The potential forces for change can be summarized as a series of management issues, which the planning team identified from university representatives’ responses to the following questions:
- **New Development on Campus:** How and where should new development occur as remaining land banks and building infill locations are built out to reflect the vision of the master plan? What should happen if planned development in these areas does not occur? How should future development relate to neighborhood redevelopment along campus boundaries? How might changes fully realize the potential for a rich residential community life on campus and affect signature buildings and landscapes?

- **Removing Existing Buildings:** In the current master plan, certain buildings are considered for demolition. Should they be reconsidered for an appropriate new use? How will the university evaluate what might be lost or gained by a proposed demolition?

- **Re-Conceptualizing Existing Buildings and Open Spaces:** The new signature buildings and landscapes will mature. Programmatic needs or expectations are likely to change over time and may be outpaced by accelerating changes in technology. The users will test expectations for these facilities and the assumptions about their intended functions. What weight should be given to the intentions or opinions of the original designers as the university community evaluates and reconsiders their work? How might changes affect the public image of the university?

- **Maintaining Buildings and Landscapes:** Many of the signature buildings employ modern curtain-wall or cladding systems, the long-term performance and life expectancies of which remain uncertain. Some landscapes are identified in the master plan as requiring a high level of maintenance. How should the university maintain the unique design characteristics of the materials chosen for these buildings and landscapes, which may be impacted on by shortfalls in maintenance funding and capabilities? What guidance can the Campus Heritage Plan provide about making wise choices when faced with limited funding? Where should maintenance facilities be relocated to most effectively and efficiently care for the university’s landscapes?

- **Sustainability Initiatives:** The university is evaluating its operations as they relate to sustainability and the impact on the environment. This initiative bears directly on the previously cited management issues: How might any proposed sustainability guide lines (and potential legal mandates) impact on the maintenance or proposed alteration of signature buildings and landscapes?
The answers to these and many other questions are not so self-evident that they can be prescribed in detail for all circumstances. Indeed, each of these issues will need to be addressed specifically in the context of each campus character area. Rather than adopting a prescriptive approach that will quickly become outdated, the following management and policy recommendations suggest a process for informing good decision-making, promoting communication and teamwork, and providing tools that develop and reinforce the awareness of best practices by managers, consultants, faculty, and staff.

**Accommodating Change: Management and Policy Recommendations**

How should the university’s signature buildings and landscapes be considered when new development or alterations are proposed? How will change be managed? The Planning + Design + Construction department within the Division of Administration and Finance is responsible for setting the pace and direction of inevitable change. Under the leadership of the University Architect, PDC plays the pivotal stewardship role on behalf of the Board of Trustees in shaping the environment that survives into the future.

Several key factors are crucial to success in fulfilling the university’s stewardship goals:

- Oversight by experienced, trained staff with awareness of and commitment to appropriate stewardship;
• Participation of consultants who have expertise in preservation approaches, contextual design, and sustainability;
• An internal design-review process that considers stewardship issues;
• Integration of best-practice guidelines in the cyclical maintenance of historic and signature buildings and landscapes (as called for in this Campus Heritage Plan) and in planning for changes; and
• Funding levels that support effective preservation and stewardship.

Staff Oversight
The ongoing maintenance and treatment of character-defining building and landscape fabric depends on fostering an awareness of and commitment to appropriate stewardship among university decision-makers and within the existing facilities maintenance process.

Preservation Planner/Architect
It is recommended that the university establish or designate a position for a preservation planner, architect, and/or landscape architect within Planning + Design + Construction to direct and implement the guidelines in the Campus Heritage Plan in the context of the university’s strategic planning and sustainability initiatives. This person would serve as the University Architect’s liaison between maintenance staff and other decision-makers, review proposed work for compliance with conservation standards, make recommendations and serve as an institutional resource to building managers and maintenance staff, and participate in the development of cyclical maintenance plans and training programs.

Trained Personnel
Building materials conservation experience should be one consideration in the interviewing and hiring of new maintenance personnel, including supervisors and master craftspersons. Initiating a regularly recurring preservation training program for all staff levels would also instill a preservation ethic as a key component of all planning, construction, and maintenance activities.

Repairs typically handled by university maintenance staff and/or contractors who are unfamiliar with appropriate conservation practices could result in damage to historic or significant character-defining fabric and features. Specialized knowledge and skills are often required for complex work on roofs, flashings, sealants, masonry, windows, and unusual building fabric. Conservation specialists should conduct routine maintenance
procedures or monitor contractors experienced in specialized types of maintenance and conservation work. Continuous improvements should be made through development and application of recommended treatment guidelines for significant buildings and landscapes.

**Consultant Participation**

The participation of professional consultants who have expertise in preservation approaches, contextual design, and sustainability is recommended to supplement the expertise of Facilities Management staff in determining appropriate treatments for significant buildings and landscapes. Specialist contractors should be able to demonstrate sufficient hands-on experience and should employ conservation personnel experienced in building materials conservation and its practical application. To ensure a high quality of workmanship and materials, contract documents for treatments should list best practices and specify the appropriate qualifications of specialist firms and individuals performing the work.

**Design Review Process**

The University Architect, working with a design review committee experienced with the master plan, historic preservation, and stewardship issues, should be designated to respond to potential design and preservation treatment issues associated with building and landscape improvement projects. Conservation issues related to building and landscape maintenance should be subject to expedited review by qualified staff on the basis of established guidelines. The design review committee, however, would most likely exercise its advisory role when considering the issues of new development on campus or the removal of existing buildings, and in reconceptualizing existing buildings and open spaces.

When the university undertakes construction projects that are associated with historic or signature buildings and landscapes, it is recommended that the following process be followed:

- Review project-specific requirements provided by or developed in conjunction with the university;
- Consult with the Facilities Management department and building managers on building-related issues, requirements, and codes;
- Consult the landscape and building assessment and guidelines portions of this Campus Heritage Plan for information on the general
project approach and treatments for the specific building or landscape area being affected;

- Consult the treatment recommendations included in this Campus Heritage Plan for historic fabric that will be affected;

- Submit conceptual plans for the proposed work that describe the project in drawings and text, and that demonstrate how the proposed work will conform to these guidelines; include options and alternatives that have been considered, if appropriate;

- With respect to the conceptual plan, obtain the approval of the University Architect and the Campus Planning and Design department, including the design review committee as advisers in the review process; and

- Prepare construction documents for the work consistent with these guidelines and submit them to the University Architect, Planning + Design + Construction, and the design review committee for review.

**Best-Practice Guidelines**

The general principles of this Campus Heritage Plan encourage long-term conservation of the character of significant buildings and landscapes. A university-wide policy reinforcing the importance of appropriate stewardship would help develop an awareness of best practices by managers, consultants, faculty, and staff.

The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards should be considered when planning maintenance, reuse, renovations, new construction, and other future work on UC campuses. The catalog of buildings and landscapes in this plan can be used to develop treatment guidelines and maintenance standards based on “best practices.” Together with cyclical maintenance plans, periodically refined and updated, these valuable reference resources can be shared with facility managers, maintenance staff, and design reviewers charged with implementing plan recommendations.

**Cyclical Maintenance Plans**

The foundation for good stewardship is a program of sound preventive maintenance, one that emphasizes the importance of routine cyclical maintenance by staff members who are trained in the methods and materials appropriate to the individual buildings and landscapes. The university already has a successful program of cyclical inspection and repair for roofs, which could well serve as the cyclical maintenance model for other systems and materials in a holistic preservation program that includes the participation of conservation specialists.

Cyclical maintenance plans for signature and historic buildings and landscapes should include schedules for each type of maintenance and should be linked to the Facilities Management department’s record of the maintenance work undertaken on a year-by-year and building-by-building basis. The plans should include information about recommended products, methods, and materials, and best-practice techniques for the maintenance and repair of significant materials. As buildings and landscapes evolve, the cyclical maintenance plans and recordkeeping will become the institutional memory, transmitting crucial facility and treatment information to new managers and maintenance staff.
Implementation Strategy

Adoption of the Campus Heritage Plan as the university-wide preservation policy will promote communication, collaboration, and teamwork. First, it is recommended that the university Board of Trustees formally adopt this Campus Heritage Plan as an addition to the campus master plan and direct that it be consulted as part of the university’s maintenance, planning, and design processes. Second, enhancing knowledge of campus heritage among faculty, students, staff, administrators, and alumni through the university’s Web site and other media will play a critical role in strengthening any commitment to implement the principles, recommendations, and guidelines for reasonable and responsible stewardship included in the plan. The development of guidelines to address specific management issues in each campus character area, through the involvement of the design review committee, could also provide teaching opportunities. Third, consideration should be given to allocating resources for hiring or designating a university preservation planner/architect to facilitate implementation of the plan upon its adoption. A knowledgeable community and staff support will be essential to developing the consensus needed for funding the remaining stewardship objectives of the plan.

The Getty Campus Heritage Program and the University of Cincinnati have been partners in an initiative to make stewardship of historic and modern “signature” buildings and landscapes a major goal in the university’s strategic planning. In adopting the plan as a flexible guide to inform good decision-making, rather than a rigid rule book, the university will be taking another significant step toward fulfilling its planning goals by preserving the rich heritage and tradition of this unique academic environment.
Endnotes

2 Getty Campus Heritage Grant Application, June 6, 2006.

Photography

All photography for Chapter 7 was supplied courtesy of the following offices of the University of Cincinnati:

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