CITY OF SEATTLE - UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEETING NOTES
Meeting #105
February 9, 2010
University of Washington Tower
4333 Brooklyn
Seattle, WA 98105

Members and Alternates Present

Betty Swift, Portage Bay Roanoke Park
Matthew Steele, ASUW
Matthew Stubbs, UW At-large
Matt Fox, U-District Community Council
Daniel Kraus, UW Staff
Pat Cowen, University Park Community Club

Eric Larson, Roosevelt Neighbors Alliance
Hien Dang, ASUW
Elaine King, Montlake Community Club
Eric Larson, Roosevelt Neighborhood Alliance
Ashley Emery, UW Faculty
Chris Leman, Eastlake Community Council

Staff and Others Present

Steve Sheppard, City Department of Neighborhoods
Theresa Doherty, University of Washington

I. Opening of Meeting/Approval of Agenda/Housekeeping

The Meeting was opened at 7:10 by Daniel Kraus. The Agenda and Minutes for Meeting 104 were approved without substantive change.

II. Review and Discussion of the University Agreement and CUCAC By-laws

Steve Sheppard was introduced to discuss the topic. Mr. Sheppard noted some issues had come up about how broadly CUCAC's responsibilities are defined and particularly related to South Lake Union. Two documents outline CUCAC's charge: 1) the City/University Agreement; and 2) the CUCAC By-laws. Mr. Sheppard passed out brief summaries of the relevant portions of the documents.

Mr. Sheppard summarized the main thrust of these documents. Basically CUCAC is a standing advisory committee to comment on the implementation of the University's plan. That includes review of amendments to the plan, the review of annual reports, and the reviews of TMP's on an annual basis. The University technically has a 10-year plan the plan remains into effect until all the square footage allowed under the plan is used. The University has not developed anywhere near its allotted 3,000,000 gross new square feet of development so the current plan will likely continue in effect without major change for many more years.
Mr. Sheppard noted that there are a few items in the City/University Agreement that have not occurred. One is that there would be an inter-departmental team by the Department of Parks and Recreation, Economic Development, etc. to look at leasing. Similarly there are provisions for a Community Outreach Plan. The University developed this during the development of the initial plan but it is unclear whether this provision was intended to survive adoption of the plan and CUCAC might want to consider this question.

CUCAC clearly is given broad discretion in identifying other issues it wishes to advise on, or be informed of. CUCAC has a broader charge than other major institution advisory committees. Steve Sheppard noted that the CUCAC by-laws state that the City will be responsible for regularly updating CUCAC on public and private physical development activities affecting the greater university area in a timely manner.

Mr. Kraus asked if there were any comments or questions from members.

Chris Leman offered the opinion that CUCAC appears to have the power to comment on just about anything. Over the years, there have been times when CUCAC was willing to go to the mat on some issues but we have been more selective in recent years. In some cases issues have arisen without CUCAC being informed or involved. A recent example was the City Council approval of the University’s application to have the 30 year-old sky bridge that connects the UW Tower parking garage across the street renewed. Sky bridges are not generally desired in the city as they don’t encourage street life. But it wasn’t brought to CUCAC. There are other examples of requirements of the agreement that have not occurred. For instance there is a very strong policy regarding tree removals. In other instances there were decisions made during development of the original plan that slipped past CUCAC and present current problems. One example, in his opinion, of this latter problem is the Denny Yard where one of the development sites would impinge on this hallowed historic part of the campus. Mr. Leman stated that continues to urge CUCAC be more proactive. CUCAC could be in a more interactive relationship with some of the other bodies on campus. We could ask to meet with the Landscape Committee or the Architectural Committee.

Matthew Stubbs stated that one is the UW farm trying to get an anchor on campus. Students supporting this have been trying to talk to all these bodies but never appear to get any hearing. But CUCAC has a closer liaison with the students, then CUCAC might have been able to give some support to that group. Theresa Doherty noted that she was unaware of this.

Chris Leman noted the CUCAC bylaws state that the University shall be responsible for regularly updating CUCAC on its physical development activities. There’s nothing that limits this to the University Campus and there has been some discussion before CUCAC of University development in South Lake Union. He stated that he thought that this was positive and offered the opinion that the Agreement appears to require that the University update CUCAC concerning this type development. He noted that Eastlake Neighborhood lies between the University Campus and the new buildings in the South Lake Union area with University busses going back and forth so that the neighborhood is experiencing greater impacts.

Betty Swift noted that other sections of the documents appear to contradict this. Matt Fox agreed and stated that this section clearly relates to the greater university area, adjacent community business areas and that it would be a stretch to argue that South Lake Union has a certain adjacency. After brief further discussion, Matt Fox suggested that the City and University formally get legal and other advice to define the greater university area. Others noted that the key part of this decision is whether the committee’s charge extends to non-adjacent but connected large parcels either owned or controlled by the University of Washington, and particularly South Lake Union. Mr. Fox further clarified that this question should relate to properties in Seattle only and not to either Bothell or Tacoma.

Eric Larson noted that the community councils on CUCAC are in the immediate University Area and if this committee intends to make comments on University development that’s outside of the immediate or greater University CUCAC would have to amend the by-laws to add representation from those areas that CUCAC would be extended to. He further suggested that another approach would be to have the University periodically update CUCAC on South Lake Union development. Daniel Kraus noted that as CUCAC does not have a specific role concerning South Lake Union, that this might not be very productive. Chris Leman responded he didn’t think that the City’s would say CUCAC that the committee did not have the right to comment on South Lake Union.

Steve Sheppard responded that CUCAC is always free to comment on any University action during the City’s public comment periods but has no special role concerning South Lake Union.
Matthew Fox observed that the real issue is South Lake Union and whether University development there constitutes the development of a separate ancillary campus that falls outside of the current campus master plan.

Theresa Doherty responded that while she has always assumed that both the by-laws and the City/University Agreement relate to the Master Plan and the physical development within that master plan, at the same time, don’t see why periodic updates on South Lake Union could not be done. After further discussion Theresa Doherty was asked to look at the overall ownership and leasing around the UW and particularly in South Lake Union and update CUCAC on that. Mathew Fox noted that much of this is already contained in the University report on leasing.

Daniel Kraus asked if there have been any consideration of modifying the master plan to include these satellite campuses. Steve Sheppard responded that he was not aware of any such consideration.

III. University of Washington General Site Selection Process

Theresa Doherty was introduced to discuss this topic. Ms. Doherty distributed a copy of the University of Washington’s General Site Selection Process and noted that this topic had been discussed previously with CUCAC. She stated that the initial site proposal normally comes from the Department proposing the new building who will work with the Capital and Space Planning Office and Capital Projects Office to look at an initial list of possible available sites from the master plan. Considerations in this initial evaluation include adjacencies to other Departmental function, building sizes and site sizes. A list of potential sites is identified and brought to the Faculty Council on University Facilities and Services. In addition academic buildings are reviewed by the Academic Advisory Committee on Facilities or AACF. Following this initial review the initial site options and recommendations are presented to CUCAC.

Once a recommended site is identified the Architectural Commission becomes involved. The Architectural Commission gathers information from faculty and community council consultations. CUCAC’s has seen many of these projects repeatedly as they go through both the site selection process and early design review. CUCAC also receives a presentation on the semi-annual report to the regents.

Ms. Doherty noted that she had reviewed the process used for the Business School, the Molecular Engineering Building, and the moving of Cunningham Hall. Each of these three projects came to CUCAC. In the case of the Molecular Engineering Building and the moving of Cunningham there were several different configurations, several different sites. She noted that the decisions regarding renovations and expansions are different in that there is obviously no separate site selection.

Matt Fox stated that his experience seems different. He note that when projects have come to CUCAC and CUCAC has expressed reservations the University has often stated that the site has already been approved by the Architectural Commission, so that in practice it appears that the CUCAC consultation or initial presentation is listed earlier in this overview than it actually occurs and that CUCAC is really the last of those three to be notified. He offered the opinion that if the process outlined in the hand out was actually followed much of the current concern from CUAC might be eliminated.

Chris Leman concurred with Mr. Fox’s observations. He further noted that site decisions at the medical complex and often have become contentious or difficult. Other examples were sited including the Business School. Members noted that the building itself is acceptable but was poorly sited as it encroaches into Denny and the historic part of the University. It was noted that this site decision has left a lot of bad feeling.

Steve Sheppard asked if there is a different level of concern on CUCAC regarding sites that are on the periphery of campus versus sites internal to campus. Matt Fox responded that he felt differently concerning new construction versus renovations. He stated that it he is less concerned with whether the proposed development is on or off campus or on the periphery as the characteristics of the specific site. Others agreed that there was some relationship between the visibility of the project to the surrounding community and CUAAC’s level of concern.

Eric Larson noted that CUCAC had been both more aggressive and ultimately more successful in its review of and initial opposition to the site selection for the indoor practice facility. Matt Fox responded that this difference was partly due to changes in the University’s plans. The review of the indoor practice facility was done under the older General Campus Development Plan which granted CUCAC greater latitude.
Matt Fox noted that Chris Leman had repeatedly taken issue with development that impinged upon the Denny Yard. He offered the following Motion concerning this issue:

That CUCAC formally takes a position in opposition to any new buildings on Denny Yard, on that building site.

The motion was seconded by Pat Cowen.

Matt Fox noted that this would relate mainly to one possible development site and that this site is clearly identified. Daniel Kraus stated that this would clearly constitute a CUCAC request to remove this site from future consideration for new development. Mr. Fox stated that would be the intention of his motion and restated the original motion as follows:

That CUCAC recommend that the University not build on site identified in the Campus Master Plan that includes part of Denny Yard.

Chris Leman stated that he would support the motion as he considered this the most threatened spot on campus right now. He noted that the site in question opens to Denny Yard and to Memorial Way with its memorials to University of Washington graduates who died in World War I and the recently opened Medal of Honor shrine.

The question was called and a vote taken. The votes were six in favor, three opposed with one abstaining. A quorum being present and the motion having received a majority vote of those present, the motion carried.

General Updates

Theresa Doherty passed out copies of initial drafts of a CUCAC annual report. These reports will be completed for CUAC review over the next few months.

New Business

There was a brief discussion of increasing CUCAC liaison with other Campus groups. A decision was made to identify possible groups and have selected CUCAC members volunteer as liaisons for the groups. This might simply include being on mailing lists for agendas.

Adjournment

No further business being before the committee, the meeting was adjourned.