



May 22, 2015

Mr. Michael Behrendt
Director of Planning and Community Development
Town of Durham
8 Newmarket Road
Durham, New Hampshire 03824

Re: Hamilton Smith Project

Dear Michael:

Hamilton Smith Hall is the University's most heavily used classroom building and is also the oldest academic building not renovated in the past 30 years. It is in serious disrepair and has major life safety and ADA deficiencies. While this project doesn't constitute a significant change of use per RSA 674:54, I am submitting the attached materials using the format of that RSA to describe the elements and construction of this project to you and the Planning Board. This is the last of the five University projects submitted this year, and which will all start construction sometime in 2015.

The existing 58,000 sf Hamilton Smith Hall was constructed in multiple phases. The earliest portion was built in 1907 as a combined Town of Durham/University library funded by a Carnegie grant to the University and a bequest to the Town from Mr. Hamilton Smith of Durham. The original building was designed by the distinguished Washington, D.C. architect George Oakley Totten. The East and West additions were designed by Eric Huddleston, the campus architect, and built in 1938 and included three WPA murals, two of which still exist today. It remained the library until 1959 when it transitioned to an academic teaching facility, and two floors were added to the rear "stack section" for office space. Finally a major irregular shaped addition was built in 1965 to expand classroom space and provide additional faculty offices. Unfortunately, the book stacks and the rear addition were not built at the same floor to ceiling heights and as a result there are varying small to significant stair cases which are now ADA accessibility barriers. The configuration of the 1965 addition creates several egress conditions of increasing concern to the State Fire Marshal. Because of these constraints the University has determined that the 1959 and 1967 additions must be replaced, while the original building and the 1938 wings will be renovated.

Where the 1959 and 1967 additions were removed, two new gabled forms will be created on the steeply sloping hillside that leads down to the College Brook Ravine,. These are three stories at the top of the hill and four at the bottom. The design provides entrances from the ravine, from each side, as well as from a new pedestrian bridge that will connect Hamilton Smith directly to Library Way, which is one of the most heavily traveled pedestrian routes on campus. This will not only improve access to Hamilton

Smith it will also serve as a major pedestrian route from Library Way to the MUB and Holloway Commons. The exterior features of the renovated building will be restored and the interior will keep the significant architectural features of the public space with the two wings becoming large lecture halls, somewhat recreating the large reading rooms that had existed up until the 1960s. The completed project will be approximately 76,000 sf.

The exterior appearance will incorporate materials and design elements that are similar to those of other recent center campus projects. There are no wetlands impacts, and no additional exterior lighting. Fourteen parking spaces will be removed to accommodate this project, but accessible parking and service access will be maintained. The existing water and sewer connections have adequate capacity and will remain as currently configured. Because of the use of ultra-low flow fixtures we expect the water use to be equal to or less than that currently used in the building, even though the building will be larger with more classrooms. The building will remain on the central heating distribution system that utilizes the heat generated at our Combined Heat and Power Plant that is served by the EcoLine landfill gas.

Attached are the most current drawings available at this time for review. Demolition of the rear portions of the building will begin later this summer with full construction starting later this fall. The project is scheduled to be completed by the spring of 2017. I am prepared to meet with the Planning Board at their convenience, and answer any questions they may have about this project.

Respectfully,



Douglas C. Bencks
University Architect and Director of Campus Planning

Copy: Paul Chamberlin, Chris Clement, Mica Stark

Attachments:
Location map
80% completed construction documents
Building exterior images