

Relocation of East Campus Facilities/Wooded Hillock Relocation

March 20, 2009

Introduction:

The University of Maryland must relocate the current East Campus facilities to another site(s) so that the development of the East Campus initiative can begin.

Background:

On October 20, 2005 the Provost and the Facilities Council appointed an East Campus District Subcommittee (ECDS). Among other tasks, the ECDS was specifically asked in their charge statement to "Refine site alternatives and costs for displaced East Campus functions". If approved, the sites recommended would then be offered to potential developers as part of the proposed East Campus development process.

ECDS members included: Frank Brewer (Chair), Jack Baker (O&M), Karen Breen (Business Services), Carlo Colella (Architecture, Engineering and Construction), Ken Krouse (Police), Vicki Levy (Academic Affairs), Pat Mielke (Student Affairs), Joe Nagro (City Manager, College Park), Andrew Rose (SGA President), Terry Schum (College Park Planning Director) and Brenda Testa (Facilities Planning).

Decision Criteria:

The ECDS used the following criteria to identify, evaluate, and subsequently recommend relocation sites:

1. All East Campus site development costs, including relocation costs, must be born by the developer. That is the University had no additional revenues for this relocation.
2. The service levels, effectiveness and efficiency of the functions to be relocated must not be reduced as a result of the relocation. As a result, the ECDS determined that these units must remain geographically central to the campus and that departments that work closely together must be co-located.
3. Because the current East Campus activities are relatively unattractive "back of the house" operational functions, they should be relocated to a site which is less visible to the campus community and visitors.

4. The environmental impacts of the relocation must be minimized to the extent possible.

Chronology, Analysis, Recommendations, Approvals:

From November 2005 through May 2006 a number of alternative sites were considered by the ECDS with the aforementioned criteria in mind.

- 1.7 acre site off Greenmead Drive and adjacent to the Gudelsky Veterinary Center. Reasons eliminated from further consideration: Insufficient size; significant tree removal required; sensitive wetlands are adjacent; and use would contribute to traffic congestion on Mowatt.
- 1.3 acre site north of Denton Community. Reasons eliminated from further consideration: Slated for undergraduate housing; inadequate size; may be used to relocate Residential Facilities. Facilities would be visible from the adjacent student residence halls.
- 4.6 acre site known as Parking Lot 11b. Reasons eliminated from further consideration: The site is within the 100-year flood plain with corresponding implications for possible upstream flooding; site is surrounded on three sides with sensitive wetlands; construction costs to utilize this small site in the flood plain would be very high; site is quite visible from the Comcast Center and Paint Branch Drive; site currently accommodates 975 parking spaces which serve double duty by providing visitor parking for events at the Comcast Center. Should this site ever be considered buildable, consideration should be given to its use in direct support of academic program needs.
- 4.6 acre site where the Physical Distribution Center is located. Reasons: eliminated from further consideration: Cost concern resulting from fact that existing facilities on this site would have to be relocated; developer may wish to develop this site adjacent to the College Park Metro station at some future date; some negative impact to service levels if service functions located there.
- 2.8 acre site known as Parking Lot 4i. This parking lot was determined to not be in the 100 year flood plan by MDE. This site is surrounded on three sides by sensitive wetlands and is visible to the campus community and visitors as it is near a campus entrance and the Comcast Center.

- Center for educational Partnerships (formerly Riverdale Hills Elementary School). Reasons eliminated from further consideration: First priority for the use of this site was to develop a partnership with this struggling community; too small to be of much use; would greatly reduce service levels of departments located there due to distance to campus.
- 11.8 acre site (known as Metzerott Road Landfill). Reasons eliminated from further consideration for major construction: Because of topography and Environmental Protection Agency monitored landfill, site would be difficult and perhaps expensive to build on; extensive utilities infrastructure network would need to be provided from Metzerott Road, and campus service levels likely reduced due to traffic congestion on Metzerott; a significant number of trees impacted; head waters of Campus Creek may be impacted; this site use opposed by City of College Park because of expected increased traffic congestion on Metzerott Road. A small cleared section of this site over the landfill was determined to be viable for limited use.
- 15.4 acres (known as Metzerott Gateway, corner of Metzerott & Adelphi Roads). Reasons eliminated from further consideration: Future “front door” of campus; departmental service levels reduced because of distance from campus; City of College Park opposes this site use because of expected congestion on Adelphi and Metzerott; site fully forested with sloped topography (extensive tree removal, grading and fill required); extensive utilities infrastructure network would need to be provided from those located along Metzerott Road and Adelphi Road.
- 22.4 acre site known as Wooded Hillock (west of Comcast). This site is heavily forested with sloped topography (extensive tree removal and grading required). Utilities infrastructure network would need to be extended and provided.
- 2.4 acres of East Campus near and including Pocomoke. Use of this site could impact adjacent “old town” College Park neighborhood.
- 5.4 acres adjacent to Paint Branch Parkway at Patapsco Building. Reasons eliminated from further consideration: First priority is to use this site for expansion of M Square Research Park; would reduce service levels because of distance from campus; site is an inadequate size for facilities relocation and is very visible.
- 13-acre site on Lafayette Drive (known as Golob property). Reasons eliminated from further consideration: First priority is to use this site for an expansion of M Square Research Park and/or graduate housing; use would significantly reduce service levels of service units due to distance from campus.

ECDS Chair Brewer briefed the Facilities Council on the work of the Subcommittee and the four sites recommended by ECDS for the East Campus relocation facilities at their August 29, 2006 meeting. These sites were:

- 1) Metzerott Landfill for grounds equipment and material;
- 2) Wooded Hillock for O&M Shops and Motor Pool;
- 3) 4i for Shuttle UM and Recycling Yard;
- 4) East Campus for the FM Office Building, UM Mail Facility and UM Police Department.

In September 2006, Brewer recommended to Provost Bill Destler and Vice President John Porcari that these four relocation sites be offered to potential developers by the University in the RFP process. Porcari and Destler approved the utilization of these four sites in the RFP as locations to which the selected developer may relocate existing East Campus service activities.

Subsequent Approvals:

On March 15, 2007 the University announced the selection of Foulger Pratt-Argo Investments (FPA) as its East Campus Development Partner. FPA indicated to the University their intention to relocate current East Campus facilities to the sites identified in the RFP document.

After working closely with the departments directly impacted by this need for relocation, on May 3, 2007 ECDS Chair Brewer recommended to the Facilities Council that the Wooded Hillock area be utilized to house a number of relocation facilities because it best met the above criteria, and:

- Its utilization allowed the elimination of the construction of 468 employee parking spaces, which would have had to have been provided had another site been recommended, because it is adjacent to 468 vacant parking spaces in the Comcast Garage.
- It is contiguous to the already existing site developed for Landscape Services operations, which is being incorporated into the relocation site for development and use for other Facilities Management operations.

ECDS Chair Brewer also recommended that the impact on the Wooded Hillock be minimized through the construction of underground or structured parking spaces for the 410 State vehicles. A concept plan depicting this goal was provided to the Facilities Council. The Facilities Council approved the use of the wooded hillock for relocation activities and the recommended conceptual site plan.

After reviewing the University's concept plan for the wooded hillock that included underground or structured parking, FPA indicated that the cost for underground or structured parking could not be contained within their relocation budget. The University would have to accept surface parking and a larger footprint, or provide significant additional funding.

After working further with the departments directly impacted and working closely with FPA, FM recommended to the Facilities Council on January 24, 2008 an updated version of the conceptual site plan for use of the Wooded Hillock which greatly expanded the impact on the forest at the Wooded Hillock because it excluded any structured parking and included Mail Services. The Lot 4i site was recommended for use by Public Safety and Shuttle UM. On a preliminary basis, FPA stated that believed these plans could be accommodated within their budget. The Facilities Council approved the conceptual site plan for these locations.

In July 2008, FPA indicated to the University that they could not provide a foot print on the East Campus for the FM Office Building and make their financial model work. FM then proposed to consolidate the FM Office Building on the Wooded Hillock with other FM facilities as the next best alternative. September 4, 2008 the Facilities Council approved this adjustment with instruction to minimize any further impact to the Wooded Hillock than indicated in the concept plan approved on January 24, 2008.

The current Wooded Hillock site plan provided by FPA on February 13, 2009 includes the FM Office Building and the entire development is within the area approved by the Facilities Council on January 24, 2008.

Based upon a conceptual site plan and design by Grimm and Parker, on March 11, 2009 FPA provided a cost estimate for re-constructing the East Campus facilities on Parking Lot 4i and the Wooded Hillock of \$39,720,314.

Loss of Green Space:

The University campus is composed of approximately 1250 acres. Though 437 acres of that area contain tree canopy, about 297 acres meet the definition of forest according to the Forest Conservation Act. Of these 297 acres, 29.8 acres of campus forest are bounded by Route 193 to the west, Comcast Center to the east, the campus property boundary to the north, and the Epley Recreation Center to the south.

According to Grimm and Parker, FPA's design team, the current proposed Wooded Hillock site plan will require the removal of 8.75 acres of forest, which

Grimm and Parker categorized as “poor to fair condition” as a result of the tornado that passed through that area in 2001. The removal of 8.75 acres of forest represents 2.9% of the 297 acre campus forest total.

Grimm and Parker indicated that approximately 1.5 acres of the 8.75 acres of disturbed forest can be reforested or returned to green space with tree canopy at the end of construction.

The University’s Tree Bank, a permanent forest easement registered with the State Department of Natural Resources (DNR), currently includes 48.71 acres. A new easement for 21.85 acres of forest is under development that will provide the University an expanded “forest bank” to accommodate the university’s future growth and development. Assuming the University implements its plan to use the Tree Bank for mitigation, the loss of 8.75 acres is expected to require approximately 6 to 9 acres from the Tree Bank. The specific amount of mitigation required will be determined by DNR upon review of FPA ’s forest conservation plan which will be submitted during the course of design.