

Ten-year plan committee debates major campus improvements including additional dorms

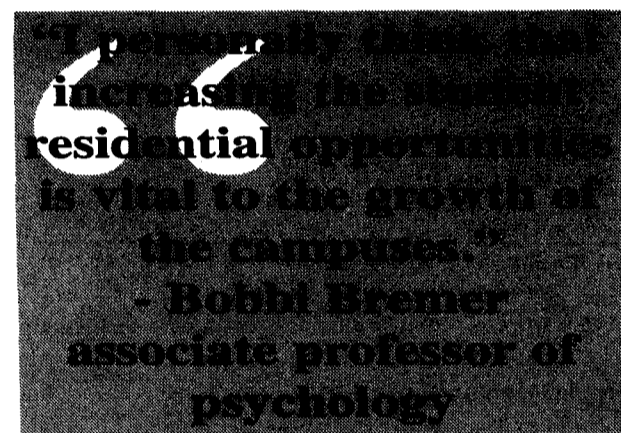
By **KAREN PLOTT**
Advertising Manager

Penn State Harrisburg's Master Plan Committee and Master Plan Ad Hoc Committee have been and will continue to brainstorm and debate over an interesting issue. They are to literally "dream" about what the campus should and could be like 10 years from now. Their main guideline is to simply "think outside the box."

"While not yet complete, the master plan is addressing all of the program requirements outlined in the Capital College's Campus Ten-Year Program Statement," said J. Douglas Wenger, RLA University planner.

The changes and ideas proposed to Penn State's Board of Trustees hopefully in April will reflect how the campus could be improved to better accommodate the learning and cultural environment for the students. Areas of concern include what the campus should look like, what kind of spaces should be or could be created for students, what types and quality of space may be needed to achieve the academic mission, as well as what real estate properties should be purchased.

The most important problem to be tackled is the movement of tractor trailers through campus en route to the Capital Business Center located behind Olmsted.



"One of our fundamental ideas to solve this problem is to propose to PennDot to build an interchange connector from the airport for trucks to access the Capital Business Center without having to drive on campus," said William J. Mahar, associate provost and senior associate dean.

Another main goal is to reduce the use of auto-

mobiles on campus by transforming it into a pedestrian friendly campus.

"The committee believes that siting future buildings in the academic core of campus and linking to the EAB Building across College Avenue by means of a pedestrian bridge will help make campus more walkable and thus reducing the reliance on automobiles on campus and developing a more vibrant college campus," said Wenger.

Many additional ideas have been formulated due to the expansion of the campus into a four-year institute. These plans focus primarily on student life and involvement.

One idea is for more housing to accommodate 500 additional students.

"We have completed the first phase of this expansion which included a new food services operation," said Christopher Hurley, general manager of Housing and Food Services. "We now must make sure that the new housing being considered for Phase Two will meet the needs and be appropriate for first-year students as well as continuing students."

Another idea set in motion is the incorporation of sports fields on campus to satisfy the four-year college atmosphere. The committee has discussed implementing soccer, baseball and softball fields as well as volleyball, tennis and basketball courts.

Associate Professor of Psychology Bobbi Bremer feels versatility in student activities is a main part of a growing college campus.

"I personally think that increasing the student residential opportunities is vital to the growth of the campuses, and creating activities (academic and leisure) for the students must go hand in hand with the growth in the student population."

The planning of sports fields into the campus is a difficult task for the committee due to the lack of space available for campus use; therefore, intricate drawings and maps have to be planned, and discussions for purchasing adjacent real estate are in motion. The committee also has to work around the future transportation center to the airport and the relocation of the Middletown Train Station, both of which are to be built over route 230.

There are also environmental concerns to take into consideration.

"We need to take a look at our planning and see what works the best at promoting environmental sustainability and spiritual, physical and learning needs for the students," said Mahar.

There is talk about redoing the stream adjacent to the campus currently by making it environmentally attractive so students can have outdoor classes or just go sit and talk. This would include landscaping and integrating benches near the stream.

Other ideas for the future of Penn State Harrisburg include adding a Nittany Lion



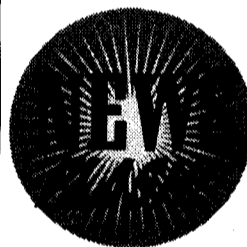
shrine, which would make it more of a "Penn State atmosphere." Another idea being considered is changing the entire look of Olmsted so that it does not look like a military building.

"I am very excited about seeing the campus morph from an unattractive Air Force base into a pleasant and attractive center for higher education," said Bremer.

Still another idea is to combine all of the financial and admissions concerns for the students into one building so they only have to go to one place to ask questions.

Another idea has been proposed to turn our one quad campus into a three quad campus. One would be in front of Olmsted, another in student housing, and the third in front of the EAB building.

Of course all of these ideas are not set in stone. The plans have to be accepted by the Board of Trustees. Then, they have to work through problems or barriers such as funding and space allocation.



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