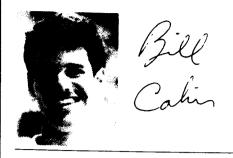
Campus decisions should reflect student opinion

I would like to thank James Dungan, director of the University's office of facilities maagement and information, for his time and thought in answering my questions.



On Sept. 18, the University Board of Trustees approved a large-scale building plan for the first time since 1974. The plans include some remarkable changes; one of the most obvious additions will be a classroom building erected on the Pollock athletic fields along Shortlidge Road. The plan also calls for buildings to be constructed on the White Golf Course. (For more about the plan, see "PSU plan turns fields into labs." *The Centre Daily Times*, Sept. 19, 1987, Section A, page 7)

One classroom within this new 15,000-

square-root building will have a capacity of 200 students. Other new classrooms will not be as large. Instructional "wet labs" will also be included in the new facility so that organic chemistry may move in from the second floor of Whitmore Lab. Deteriorating classrooms in Armsby, Sackett and Moore will no longer be used for teaching purposes once the new building is completed.

In an interview, Jim Dungan, director of the University's board of facilities information and management, said the classroom sizes would be influenced by the size of the wet labs and by specifications from the Bursar's office. No classrooms will be as large as those within the Forum, he said.

An architectural firm from Pittsburgh known as IKM SKE Inc. will handle the design challenge. Construction on the \$5 million facility, to begin next fall, is expected to be completed by fall of 1990.

The area in question is used by the lacrosse team for practices and games. It is also used for physical education classes, and students use it for pick-up games of soccer, football, and other sports. An alternative location for these activities has not been named.

Available space on Pollock fields is scar-

square-foot building will have a capacity of 200 students. Other new classrooms will not be as large. Instructional "wet labs" will

Exactly when the decision occurred is a point of confusion among students, myself included. An April 30 article which appeared on page B-1 of the Centre Daily Times mentioned the issue. At that time, the trustees were considering Pollock fields as a location for a new classroom building. The next article concerning the topic appeared on May 23, shortly after IKM SKE Inc. was granted a contract to construct a classroom building on Pollock fields. The final decision to build on Pollock fields must have occurred sometime between April 30 and May 23, pre-dating the master plan approved on Sept. 18.

Notice the timing: Spring Semester ended on May 9. If the student body was to be informed of the issue, this was perhaps the worst possible time of the year to make the decision. Why? The Daily Collegian was not in print for finals week — when students' noses were buried in textbooks and exams. Students, therefore, were not informed of current events.

If the decision was made after finals week, when students had left the University for the summer, then total disregard was shown for student concern on the issue. Students simply were not around to register complaints. When I asked Jim Dungan of the decision, he said that it had occurred in the spring, but he did not recall the exact day.

Some might argue that a great deal of attention was paid to student input. Two students served on the facilities resource subcommittee which recommended a location for the new classroom building. These two students were members of the University Student Executive Council and Jim Dungan himself acted as liason between the Facilities Resource Committee and USEC. This was done in an effort to get student input into the issue.

However, student opinion was not accurately represented. The FRC, which is composed only of administrators, chose Pollock fields as the site for the new building. In contrast, the Center Halls Residence Association voted 23 to 0 against the measure. Many students are vociferously attacking the plan, but they do not know where to direct their opinions. Moveover, it is not clear if students were even in school when FRC's decision was made.

Compensations should be made for the lost recreational space. Improvements

could be made upon existing athletic facilities, such as Pollock basketball courts. New recreational space could be created since the size of Pollock fields will be decreased.

The poultry plant along Bigler Road is scheduled to move within the next five to seven years, Dungan said.

There is a possibility that a second building may be constructed on Pollock fields. according to Dungan. A strong effort should be made by student institutions — Undergraduate Student Government. USEC, students on the FRC subcommittee, and the Association of Residence Hall Students — to see that student opinion is accurately represented in the decisions concerning this second building.

The poor timing of the Pollock decision, whether intentional or not, left the student body uninformed. Their present confusion and aggravation is justified — the building decision was deplorable.

If students object to building plans, then something in the University's decisions should reflect this. Thus far, this has not been the case.

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