

Design Review Board Minutes

October 21, 2014

Project Review: Babcock Hall Dairy Plant

Present:

Board Members:

Annette Wilkus	Design Review Board
Phil Certain	Design Review Board
Pete Anderson	Design Review Board
Dan Okoli	Design Review Board /FP&M CPD

Ad Hoc Member

Doug Sabatke	Assistant Dean of Agricultural & Life Sciences
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Campus Affiliates:

Gary Brown	FP&M CPLA
Bill Elvey	FP&M
Stu LaRose	FP&M CPD
Megan McBride	FP&M CPD
Rob Kennedy	FP&M Transportation Services

State Affiliate:

Russ Van Gilder	DFD
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Babcock Dairy Project Team:

Thomas Witte	Zimmerman Architects
David Drews	Zimmerman Architects

Babcock Hall Dairy Plant Project Background:

The College of Agricultural and Life Sciences' (CAL S) goal for the Babcock Hall Renovation/Center for Dairy Research Addition project is to provide a state of the art production, teaching and research facility for both the Department of Food Science's dairy plant and the Center for Dairy Research (CDR). The proposed site for the project is on the west end of the current building, south of Linden Drive and east of Farm Drive. The original project included approximately 30,000 gross square feet of new space for the CDR and 30,000 gross square feet of remodeled space in the dairy plant; however, changing circumstances have led to the realization that additional research space is needed. The new research space is estimated to be approximately 40,000 gross square feet. Additional private funding contributions have enabled the project budget to be larger than that originally approved in 2012.

Babcock Hall Dairy Plant Presentation by Consultants:

1. The design team began by stating they are happy with all the great discussions that have come about at the past meetings.
2. As a reminder the new building includes research, office, and ground floor educational space.
3. The dairy buildings to the west are white, even the stock pavilion and horse barn, so there is a sense that agricultural buildings at the university are white. In addition to this, the research that the design team has done has indicated that dairy facilities are generally white. Clean and modern terminology has also been used to characterize the new dairy plant which evokes notions of white and stainless steel imagery.
4. The dairy barn complex is currently white with human scaled detailing. The horse barn is white with grey trim and the Stock Pavilion uses painted white cast concrete in its detailing.
5. The Center for Dairy Research wants a unique identity but the design team must also consider how the addition relates to the attached, existing building.
6. The design team is working to develop a form that fits into the context but still is worthy of the UW-Madison's premier program in America's dairy land.
7. At the last meeting, the design team heard that there was a desire to have richness but not be disjointed from the existing building.
8. The design team feels that they have now added elements that give the building more scale than was present at past meetings.
9. The design team has two versions; a rectangular version that has more scaled features and a toned down curved version. The curved version is now just two segments and contextual in that it addresses the open space across the street. The design team feels the curved version is more promising but they have also continued to develop the rectangular version.

10. The design team is looking at materials and incorporating a metal, terracotta, or milk glass grid to add scale and detail to the blank walls. They are also working on adding hierarchy and some verticality to these facades.
11. The design team has been looking at figure ground drawings and how to create undulations within the dairy plant massing that respond to the surrounding context.
12. The main idea focuses around opening the entrance out to the green area across Linden Drive.
13. The design team has also been looking at including internal access to the dairy plant store terrace.

Curved Scheme:

14. The curved scheme addresses the open space and the first brick wall aligns with the Stock Pavilion.
15. One concern that the design team has heard is that the building is very close to the sidewalk. Portions of the building extend north out farther than the existing building and the design team is looking in to whether they can pull this edge back. The curved scheme is pulled back a bit more than the rectangular scheme.
16. One advantage to the scheme is that it connects the existing building over to the new. It also allows access to the dairy store terrace in a more fluid way.

Rectangular Scheme:

17. In the rectangular scheme the design team has added a balcony on the west facade to give the building scale.
18. The back of the building incorporates a small addition for the milk intake that needs to be a 85-95' long drive through facility. In both schemes, one would be able to see into the space. One scheme is more rectilinear and one scheme has an arched window. In both cases the glass would be developed in a similar fashion to the windows on the north side of the building and may include some translucent glass to give the space additional scale.
19. The design team does not see the rectangular scheme working but they are struggling to make the curve something more than a curve.

Hybrid Scheme:

20. The design team has since developed a third option that is a hybrid of the two other schemes.
21. With all the training and dairy store activity it seems the northwest corner will be the public entrance and deserves to read clearly as an entrance. It was commented that the Stock Pavilion holds a number of public events throughout the year as well.
22. The design team is looking at treating the front plaza as a widened sidewalk which pulls from the landscape to the north, across Linden Drive.
23. The design team doesn't like how the curve terminates in the curved scheme and they believe the hybrid scheme addresses this issue in a better manner.
24. The hybrid scheme has a gentle "S" curve and does not form a complete curve.
25. The hybrid also addresses Linden Drive more than previous schemes but still acknowledges the corner entrance and landscape.
26. The base of the hybrid adds brick and begins to add more hierarchy vertically on the building.

27. The hybrid concept softens up the space and allows for better pedestrian circulation.

Future Growth:

28. The vertical extension for the future building would be the same as the proposed vertical extension in the hybrid scheme with the majority of the future addition set back behind the curved front portion of the building.
29. The future extension may happen at the end of this project or may be completed many years down the line.
30. The existing dairy floor-to-floor height is 15 feet which is too short for the current functions and equipment. The user group would like 28 feet clear on the dairy floor. In the current design, the team has struggled to get to a total floor height of 18 feet which is only an additional 3 feet to the upper floor.
31. In the new plan, there is a stair and elevator on the north that will need to carry up into the future expansion which means the height of the building will only be set back as far as the stair and elevator will allow. On the other hand, there is a private elevator on the south that might be the only elevator necessary for the future, in which case the north façade could step back further.
32. The peak of the Stock Pavilion is higher than the penthouse of the proposed addition but it is set back. Any future addition would be well above the height of the Stock Pavilion.
33. The design team imagines the set back at 10-12 feet with a colonnade that would set back other elements further.
34. The existing building is not designed structurally to add additional floors. Currently the team is struggling to add mechanical equipment to the roof.
35. The current dairy industry is all about fun and colors and not so much about tradition. This is clear from dairy commercials, so the design team is looking to add a fun counterpoint in the building somewhere.
36. One additional idea the design team has been thinking about is an extension of the brick wall that juts out and creates a window in which one might look through from Campus Drive. There was a strong consensus from the DRB that this would be an appropriate element.

**Babcock Hall Dairy Plant
Design Review Board Comments:**

1. The DRB is concerned about the future expansion height of the building and would suggest looking at jogging back the stairs, on the north, to allow for an adequate setback.
2. Authority to construct the project will be sought in the spring of 2015 at which point the additional floors will not be able to be added unless funding is established by that point.
3. Regardless of when expansion happens, the current project should be designed in anticipation of an appropriate expansion in the future.

Curved Scheme:

4. Some of board members enjoy the curved scheme and the simplification that is beginning to taking shape; however, there were concerns that the northern most vertical wall that intersects the curve is hindering the scheme. It was suggested that something could come through the curve at the ground level but it seems arbitrary to make the move through all the floors. On the other hand, the southernmost vertical wall makes sense.
5. It was stated by some members that the curved scheme looks reminiscent of an office park. The older curved scheme looked tighter and better resembled a silo.
6. The current curved scheme doesn't seem to relate to the surrounding buildings.

Rectangular Scheme:

7. It was commented that the rectangular scheme is jumbled and heading in the wrong direction, however from the site plan the rectangular scheme seems to create better space with the surrounding buildings and masses.
8. The rectangular scheme does need more work and seems like a large glass block.

Hybrid

9. The Design Review Board is in agreement that the design team would be better off pursuing one scheme from here on out.
10. Some believe the hybrid scheme to be more collegiate.
11. It was commented that the west squared edge of the hybrid is appealing and it was discussed that it might be nice if the west edge was comprised of brick depending on the function behind the wall.
12. There was some consensus that the hybrid, although it needs some work, is a fitting image for a world class university dairy facility. There seems to be something proud about the form. It gives interest to the building but still respects the context of the surrounding area.
13. The subtleness of the arch in this design seems to be heading in the right direction and the height of the brick on the first floor provides a nice human scale along the street.
14. There was some concern for the reverse "s" curve. Classically, curves come from a square form which is rich with tradition and academic feel whereas the "s" curve takes away from the classical form. The DRB is in agreement that it would prefer to see the richness of a squared corner. The squared form would still allow windows in the brick but the expression would be reminiscent of a traditional design.
15. There is interest in seeing how the "s" curve could be changed although there isn't a consensus about the dislike for its current form.
16. The most important and public view is the view from Linden Drive and the elevation along this street.
17. A nice element of the hybrid and arched schemes is the connection to the Dairy Store terrace.
18. There was a desire that the design team eventually consider the coordination of the new penthouse with the existing penthouse. Currently the two penthouses are rendered differently. It was also noted that the future addition should not extend higher than the designed penthouse.
19. The DRB has asked the design team to think about making the brick wall on the west circulation to address any issues with future expansions and setbacks.

20. The further articulation of the glass in all three schemes is very much appreciated. The building seems to be taking on a much more human scale.

Dock:

21. The only purpose of the dock is to transport goods around campus.

22. Further discussion is needed on the overall design of the milk delivery dock on the south side of the building.

Landscape:

23. The Landscape Architect on the design team (Tom Disalvo from Zimmerman) is currently on vacation but needs to be at the next meeting.

24. The design team is considering moving the terrace away from a rectangular form and moving in the direction of a more informal widened sidewalk that is fluid. The DRB however, does not like the widened terrace and would like to see the space relate to the other side of the street. It was stated that a grass lawn panel would be a nice option for the area but there was discussion about how grass and truck access would intertwine in one space. The plan is to have trucks and semis moving through the area regularly.

25. The DRB would like the design team continue to work on the landscape and potentially send something to the board in between now and the next meeting.

26. The translation of the corner landscape does not have to be literal; it should be about the larger idea of adding green to the south side of Linden Drive.

27. The DRF questioned whether the turning radius was adequate for trucks. The design team stated that Auto Turn has been used to confirm the distance and turning radii.

28. UW Transportation stated trucks will most likely approach the dairy plant from the west and move one way around the building.

Babcock Hall Dairy Plant

Summary:

1. The DRB commends the design team for all their efforts on this challenging and exciting project. The DRB recognizes the work the design team is putting into finding an appropriate design for this project.
 2. The DRB would like the design team to focus on the hybrid scheme and drop all other schemes.
 3. The landscape plan needs to be developed and the landscape architect needs to be present at future meetings. The landscape should reference the green space across the street and not the Memorial Garden on the east side of the existing building. The landscape can be simple.
 4. The south elevation should be developed and presented at the next meeting.
 5. The DRB would also like to see the truck movement and circulation paths, especially on the southeast side of the building.
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