Design Review Board Minutes

July 8th, 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/
Campus Affiliates:	
Gary Brown	FP&M CP&LA
Bill Elvey	FP&M
Stu LaRose	FP&M CPD
Megan McBride	FP&M CPD
Brian Paulus	FP&M CPD
Emily You	FP&M CPD
Joel Stibbe	FP&M CPD
Pa Nhia Yang	FP&M CPD
Babcock Dairy Project Team:	
Thomas Whitte	Zimmerman Architects
Brain Hatzung	Zimmerman Architects
David Drews	Zimmerman Architects
Russ Van Gilder	DFD

Babcock Hall Dairy Plant
Project Background:

The College of Agriculture and Life Sciences' (CALS) goal, with the addition and renovation to the Babcock Hall Dairy Plant and Center for Dairy Research, is to provide a state of the art production, teaching and research facility for both the Department of Food Sciences' dairy plant and the Center for Dairy Research (CDR). The proposed site for the addition and renovation of Babcock Hall Dairy Plant is located on the west end of the current building, on the south side of Linden Drive and east of Farm Drive. The scope of the project includes only the Dairy Plant and portions of the CDR. The project includes approximately 30,000 gross square feet of addition and 30,000 gross square feet of remodeled space. 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 originally approved in 2012.

Babcock Hall Dairy Plant
Presentation:

1. The purpose of this project is to modernize the Babcock Hall Dairy Plant and to build an addition, increasing the space for the Center for Dairy Research (CDR). Currently, the CDR is using office space within the Babcock Hall Dairy Plant.
2. The dairy plant and makes ice cream, cheese, and milk.
3. The current mechanical addition on the north side of the existing building will be removed as part of this project.
4. The proposed addition will consist of a three-level structure, including a milk product intake bay attached to the building. The addition will also include a space that allows for future expansion.
5. The existing east side of Babcock Hall is not in the scope of this project, with the exception of the loading dock, which needs to be renovated to better accommodate trucks and loading resources.
6. The building site is limited, with Linden Drive to the north, the existing dairy plant to the east, and a recently upgraded steam line running north/south along the west end of the site east of Farm Drive.
7. The intake dock, an enclosed loading dock for a milk tanker, is required for the daily milk receiving process. The location of the intake dock has yet to be determined, although it doesn't need to be located adjacent to processing plant. There are site issues related to fire code as well as hygienic concerns that the design team is still working on.
8. The existing loading dock does not function well in its current configuration with trucks backing into the dock. A drive through intake dock is not necessary but may allow for easier traffic movements around the buildign. The DRB would like the design team to consider the location of the dock as it relates to safety concerns and surrounding traffic.

9. Two to three large stainless steel exterior milk silos are also required as part of the project. Currently, these silos are laid out horizontally inside the building, although the design team believes that if the stainless steel silos were positioned on the exterior the building, this would make Babcock Hall more easily identifiable as an agricultural building. If the tanks are placed on the interior, due to their weight, they would need to be placed on the ground floor.
10. The design team is also still looking into whether the tanks need to be insulated.
11. The dairy plant doesn't have many pieces of tall equipment except for a few pieces in the research area.

Facade

12. The new building design would ideally take cues from the Stock Pavilion architecture to provide a more traditional appearance rather than reference the rectilinear post war buildings in the area. The design team is also looking at a curved entrance lobby at the North West corner, which they believe flows well with the surrounding landscape and buildings and relates better to the open green area across the street. This entrance will primarily be an entrance for the CDR.
13. The CDR group wants a clear and separate entrance to their space. This is very important to the user, whereas there is a belief by the users that the context of the surrounding area isn't as important to visitors.
14. Staffs in the dairy plant have said that "daylight is the enemy of dairy". With this in mind, the users have requested that the research and production areas have no windows. It is in the best interest of the project to determine what specific aspects of sunlight harm dairy products in order to select the appropriate type of window, if any. Filtered light, spandrel glass windows and a trombe wall were discussed as possible alternatives to windows that allow direct light into the processing facility.
15. Most of the dairy plant systems are closed, so the design team is looking into if daylight will truly affect the process.
16. It is the architect's goal to optimize the placement of spaces that can have windows in order to enhance the public face of the building and provide daylighting for the staff and visitors of the facility.

Landscape/Exterior

17. The front of the existing and proposed building clearly faces Linden Drive; however the back of the building is visible from Campus Drive through gaps in existing trees. The design team discussed addressing the rear façade where the parking will be located.
18. Many of the buildings along the south side of Linden Drive are located close to the street with the exception of the area in front of the Stock Pavilion which has a larger green setback.
19. There isn't much activated green space in the area, with the exception of the dairy store, and the design team is looking to change that by possibly adding an activated plaza space off the northwest corner of the new addition.
20. There is a pedestrian bridge that crosses Campus Drive on the south and there is a pedestrian path that travels north towards the lakeshore residence halls and

tennis courts. One of the goals listed in the 2005 Campus Master Plan was to increase the north/south connections across campus. There seems to be a possibility in this area to accomplish that goal, although this path is one of the minor routes.

21. There are bus lines that travel on Linden as well as on Observatory Drive.
22. Keeping in line with the Campus Design Guidelines, the Babcock Dairy Plant will establish open spaces and linkages, present a better face to Campus Drive, and emulate the traditional agriculture campus neighborhood's building massing and balance of open space, while addressing the programmatic needs of the building.
23. The design team has challenged themselves to create a green space or a break-out space located at the northwest corner of the site. They have also laid out internal break out spaces and an auditorium on the first floor, at grade, so they believe an exterior breakout space is a logical extension. The exterior plaza space was not specifically requested by the users but the design team feels it would be a nice addition and would create a good connection to the dairy store terrace. The DRB believes the exterior space will create a nice visual connection between elements in the area.
24. Currently, there is an exterior patio terrace just outside of the Babcock Dairy Store. The Dairy Store unfortunately is only accessible indirectly, through the building and up an elevator and still does not provide access to the existing exterior patio. The new design proposes an accessible route to the Babcock Dairy Store terrace from the northwest entrance.
25. It is not possible to create an exterior ramp to the exterior dairy store terrace since there is not enough room to include a switch back ramp or long, linear ramp. An exterior lift would be required.
26. The DRB encourages the design team to consider the connectivity of each part of the building with regards to the dairy plant, the research center and the dairy store. Even though the dairy store is not included in the scope of this project, the DRB is interested in increasing a sense of connectivity within these spaces.
27. The design team will look into the possibilities of connecting the dairy store through the renovation, internally, or see if a more aggressive approach, that attaches directly to the terrace is required.
28. There is limited space to implement a significant landscape plan due to the limited amount of space and slope of the exterior grade.

Babcock Hall Dairy Plant
Design Review Board Comments:

1. The DRB believes the design team has pulled together one of the best program analyses they have seen in a long time.

2. All sides of the building should be kept in mind as the design team moves forward, including the back of the building along the highly traveled Campus Drive.
3. There are no defining features of the current Dairy Plant. For the DRB it isn't so much a question about the color of brick as it is about the texture the building takes on and the richness of detail that is incorporated. Once the scale, texture and details are refined, the building will fit into the area and will improve the rest of Babcock Hall.
4. The DRB encourages the design to think about what the Babcock Dairy Plant can borrow from other buildings in order to give it the right massing and finishes, closer in human scale and texture to the surrounding historic agricultural buildings.
5. The DRB would like the dairy plant to avoid mimicking the heroic and bland mid-century buildings in the area.
6. The character, texture, and interest of the windows and other exterior features should be thought about in greater detail to compliment the history of the area.
7. The DRB would like the building to read as part of the agricultural district and balance with the type of buildings on the east end of Linden Drive.
8. The location of the two or three milk silos is a key component that needs to be determined due to the impact they will have on space inside or out. The location of these silos will ultimately affect the location of other items such as the loading dock and space for the CDR group. The DRB is looking for more progress on this issue at the next meeting.

Entrance

9. The conversation surrounding the shape of the entrance is a bit premature. At this point the DRB is interested in its function.
10. To take the front entrance and make it curved takes away from the entrance itself and presents a question of where the space is going.
11. The entrance should be clear in nature and should be detailed to read as an entrance. This could be accomplished through a glass or a lighter structure.
12. The entrance should not overpower the building or the area. The DRB doesn't see the entrance as extremely grand. At the same time the entrance should work thoughtfully into the existing building and not just slam up against the existing structure.

Site

13. The landscape and green space is very important in this historic area of campus. It should be considered and respected as the design moves forward.
14. It is important to keep the university's civic mission in mind when designing any building. The project team should think about how this building can add value to the overall campus landscape without necessarily adding scope.
15. The possibility to change the accessibility issues at the existing dairy store terrace is very important and a concern of the Board, in that the design must leave the possibility of future expansion in this area open and not ignore this space, despite the fact that it is not in either the scope or budget of the project.

16. The idea for the outdoor space(s) should encourage people to come out and down from the dairy store. Currently, there are not many activated outdoor spaces in the area and the dairy store terrace is fairly small for the level of activity is current sees.
17. There is some concern about creating a functional outdoor space when for many of the months it will be too cold to enjoy such a space.
18. The Wisconsin Historical Society (WHS) will need to review this project as a neighbor to the National Register Stock Pavilion to the west.
19. The city of Madison fire marshal will need to be consulted as the site is being evaluated and fire lanes are being established.
20. Transportation Services will also need to be brought into the conversation as the parking lot gets redesigned.
21. The exterior building materials are still a topic of discussion that needs to be addressed and decided upon.
22. It is extremely important to keep the entire building and its site in mind throughout design even though the specific scope is limited to a constrained space.
23. The analysis and direction of the site is very well thought out and well documented. The project is heading in the right direction, but details need to be worked out and brought back to the Board for comments.

Babcock Hall Dairy Plant
Summary:

1. The project is headed in the right direction but there are issues to work out.
2. There has been a lot of thought put into the background and the design, which is much appreciated.
3. The DRB wants to see the ADA issues to the Dairy Store addressed to some degree, either through this project or providing the ability for it to be addressed in a future project.
4. The design team should look at the entire space and pay attention to how the entrance relates to the whole historic landscape on this end of Linden Drive.
5. It will be important for the design team to pay attention to the details of some of the surrounding buildings, like the Horse Barn and the Stock Pavilion but not to replicate them.
6. The DRB would like the design team to come back at the next review with proposals worked out for the loading dock intake location.
7. It was suggested by all, that September is the next best date for the design team to return. The third Tuesday of every month is generally when the DRB meets; however the next meeting in September will be held on September 23rd.
