A ‘Master Plan’ for the Future

The University officially unveiled its facilities master plan for the 21st century. This schematic for planned growth is required every five years by the University System of Maryland Board of Regents. New construction is funded through the State’s capital budget for academic facilities and, for non-academic buildings, by bonds, user fees and private fund raising.

Fifteen months in preparation, the plan charts the growth of the campus for at least the next decade, if not longer. “This has been an extensive and inclusive planning process,” said President Janet Dudley-Eshbach. “Besides students, faculty and staff, the process has included alumni, political leaders, Salisbury University Foundation board members and representatives of area homeowner associations. This is a dynamic campus community which has collectively forged a creative blueprint for the future. In challenging times, I think they have succeeded in creating a vision that can inspire us.”

The facilities plan proposes that the University purchase the Dresser property across Rt. 13 which is currently vacant. (The Salisbury University Foundation is negotiating for the property’s purchase, but that has not been finalized.)

A Campus Corridor

The plan also distinguishes itself from its predecessors by its attention to the University presence along Rt. 13. When the plan’s architects, Cochran, Stephenson and Donkervoet, Inc. of Baltimore, first came to Salisbury, they drove down Rt. 13, and initially couldn’t distinguish the campus from the rest of the business corridor, said Provost David Buchanan.

Three new academic buildings will be constructed. These buildings, devoted to education and technology, will be placed at the corner of Rt. 13 and College Avenue on what is currently parking space. This $50 million dollar project funded by the State will be an estimated 165,000 square feet, some 20,000 square feet larger than Henson Science Hall. It is expected to open in 2007. To make up for the loss of parking, a new four-level parking structure holding 800 cars would be erected beside it. The structure is expected to be a private-public partnership, Buchanan said. Also along Rt. 13 a new combination visitor’s center and home for University Police would be erected near the Rt. 13 underpass.

The second and third academic buildings include a new library, proposed for the location of the current Caruthers Hall, and a new home for the Perdue School of Business, now in Holloway Hall. The Perdue School would have three site options: one, on College Avenue beside the new education building; two, along Rt. 13 at the Allenwood Shopping Center, which is owned by the SU Foundation; or three, where Blackwell Library is currently located.

Arts & Sports Spread East

The master plan also calls for construction of two major student facilities: a new field house, located on the current Dresser property close to East Campus athletic fields, and a new performing arts center. The latter has two possible locations: the Dresser property or near the Guerrieri University Center and Allenwood. In either location, the center would be accessible to parking and easy community access, as would the new field house.

Parking is an issue that is addressed in the plan for new facilities. Dogwood Village, a housing complex intended to be temporary some 20 years ago, would be removed and turned into parking. It may also be the future site of a second parking garage. On East Campus parking could be expanded at Dresser. The outdoor tennis courts near Fulton Hall also could be moved east of Rt. 13 allowing the old courts to be turned into additional parking for the main campus.

To compensate for the housing loss of Dogwood, a new residence hall may be constructed near the current housing cluster of Chester and Severn halls.

An underlying principle of the plan is to keep all academic functions on the main campus with student housing and other services such as the Guerrieri Center and Commons toward the south end. Support functions could be housed on the east side of Rt. 13.

Along the north and west sides of College and Camden avenues respectively, future University development will be limited. Any new University facility would be in a residential style compatible with current neighborhood housing. No high rises are planned there, said Buchanan.

A Walking Campus

Planners want to maintain the Georgian architectural influence in the new academic buildings and also expand green space along the campus periphery. Despite planned growth across Rt. 13, SU will remain a walking campus throughout, especially in its central mall, and also preserve the human scale in architecture. Uniting East and West campuses is the Rt. 13 underpass that is almost directly centered between the two when viewed on a map. Planners hope that surrounding businesses will cooperate with University landscaping plans which would help to visually unite the east and west sides of Rt. 13.

View the entire Master Plan online at www.salisbury.edu/academic/masterplan/