



# Master Planning Council (MPC)

MEETING NOTES - May 1, 2013

Office of the Architect for the University

## Student Housing Planning & Related Survey, Battle Building/Clark Park Landscape Plan, Current Land Use Planning; UVa Redevelopment Zones

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Ida Lee Wootten  
Director of Community Relations

### Student Members

TBD  
Graduate Representative

Barrett Johnson  
Undergraduate Representative

### Meeting Agenda

- Student Housing Planning & Related Survey by Gay Perez, Associate Dean of Students and Executive Director of Housing & Residence Life
- Battle Building/Clark Park Landscape Plan by Mary Hughes, University Landscape Architect
- Current Land Use Planning; UVa Redevelopment Zones by David Neuman, Architect for the University

### Presentation Summaries

David Neuman began the meeting at 3:30 PM with brief remarks.

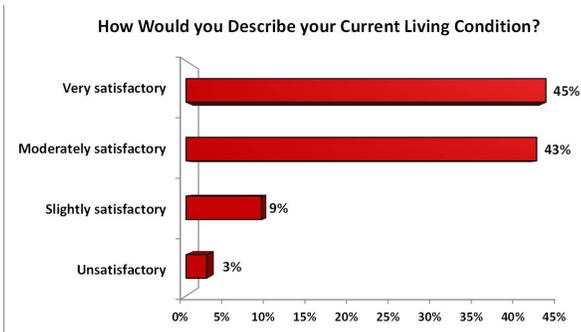
#### **Student Housing Planning & Related Survey by Gay Perez, Associate Dean of Students and Executive Director of Housing & Residence Life**

A student housing assessment and survey started in the fall of 2012 with the consultant firm of Brailsford and Dunleavy. The main purpose of the assessment and survey was to study the existing residential living program at UVa in addition to how it enhances the student experience. The housing survey and report revealed much about the state of housing at UVa, both on and off-Grounds and where there may be opportunities to improve the program in the future.

For reference, the current enrollment at UVa is approximately 21,000. The University houses 42% of its undergraduate students and 30% of all students (including graduate students). In the Fall of 2012 the University had an occupancy rate of 99.56%. In Spring of 2013 the occupancy rate was 96.89%. The drop usually occurs because of a combination of fall graduating students and study abroad programs. The University has a first-year guarantee for housing. As a result, there has been a trend that the number of beds for 1st years has been increasing and the number of beds for upper class students and graduate students is declining.

To develop the survey, Brailsford and Dunleavy met with UVa constituents in a series of focus groups for administrators, first years, upper class and graduate students. The on-line survey was distributed to 9,000 students of which approximately 2,500 responded. The survey was designed to answer the following questions: 1) Is there unmet demand for on-Grounds Housing? 2) What factors do students apply in their decision on where to live after their first year? 3) What are students looking for in their living space?

In general the analysis found the following trends: 1) a comparatively high 88% of all respondents have moderate to high satisfaction with their living



**Housing satisfaction: On and Off-Grounds**

situation. 2) Graduate students are under served by University housing. They desire 1BR/studio configurations. 3) 2nd, 3rd, and 4th years want high density apartment style housing. 4) For undergraduates, location and walkability are the greatest factors of satisfaction. 5) Analysis of location and survey results indicates that living closer to Central Grounds leads to higher housing satisfaction. 6) UVa housing portfolio does not mimic national trends. Because of the first year guarantee, there is a much higher proportion of dorm-style housing than at other peer Universities and 7) At UVa, undergraduates prefer a 4BR-2BA unit.

The study also found that housing decisions are influenced by different factors for undergraduates and graduates. Undergraduate housing decisions are motivated by proximity to Grounds, the ability to choose their own roommate, availability of a private bedroom, and to a lesser extent, the total cost of the unit (rent+utilities). By contrast, the motivating factors for graduate students are (in decreasing importance) kitchen facilities, the total cost of the unit (rent+utilities), availability of a private bedroom and proximity to Grounds.

Currently UVa housing has implemented a number of changes aimed at improving its occupancy and the experience for students living on-Grounds. For returning students, the application process has changed such that applicants are now more likely to receive their first housing choice and are more likely to be able to stay together with a group of their choice. In addition, the first year experience focused on transitioning and cultivating relationships and an upper class experience that focuses on engagement and leadership opportunities is an important value-add to on Grounds housing.

The final part of the housing study examines what the unmet demand for on-Grounds housing is at UVa. Currently, there are 6,142 existing undergraduate beds. The consultants found that there is potential demand for 1,591 new beds, mostly for 3rd and 4th years that do not currently live on-Grounds. Graduate students appear to have a large unmet demand for UVa housing: There are only 400 beds available for graduate students, but there is potential for 2,672 new beds.

The University has made no decisions to pursue additional housing on-Grounds, but there appears to be potential demand, should they decide to move in that direction. In the meantime, the University will continue to focus on the 1st year housing experience and begin to look more strategically at graduate student housing and aligning it with academic programs.

**Battle Building/Clark Park Landscape Plan by Mary Hughes, University Landscape Architect**

Clark Park is a piece of UVa land that is located directly across JPA from the proposed Battle Building landscape. The Blake Building is currently being demolished to provide the space for the Battle Building landscape.

Both the Grounds Plan (2008) and the Health System Area Plan (2010) envision the JPA/West Main Street intersection as an eastern gateway to the Health System and to Grounds.

As a result, the planning for this area to include the Blake Building site and Clark Park. The landscape is being designed for Battle Building occupants and the general public. The plant palette is drawn from Clark Park for harmony and the design incorporates the City's West Main design guidelines.



The redesign of Clark Park gives the University a chance to address long-standing pedestrian safety issues. The design will include a new stair and sidewalk on the west side of JPA, which may be implemented in the future. Additional road width will be available with the demolition of the Blake Building,

**Sketch of proposed Clark Park looking east**

allowing for the preservation of Clark Park's historic stone wall along JPA.

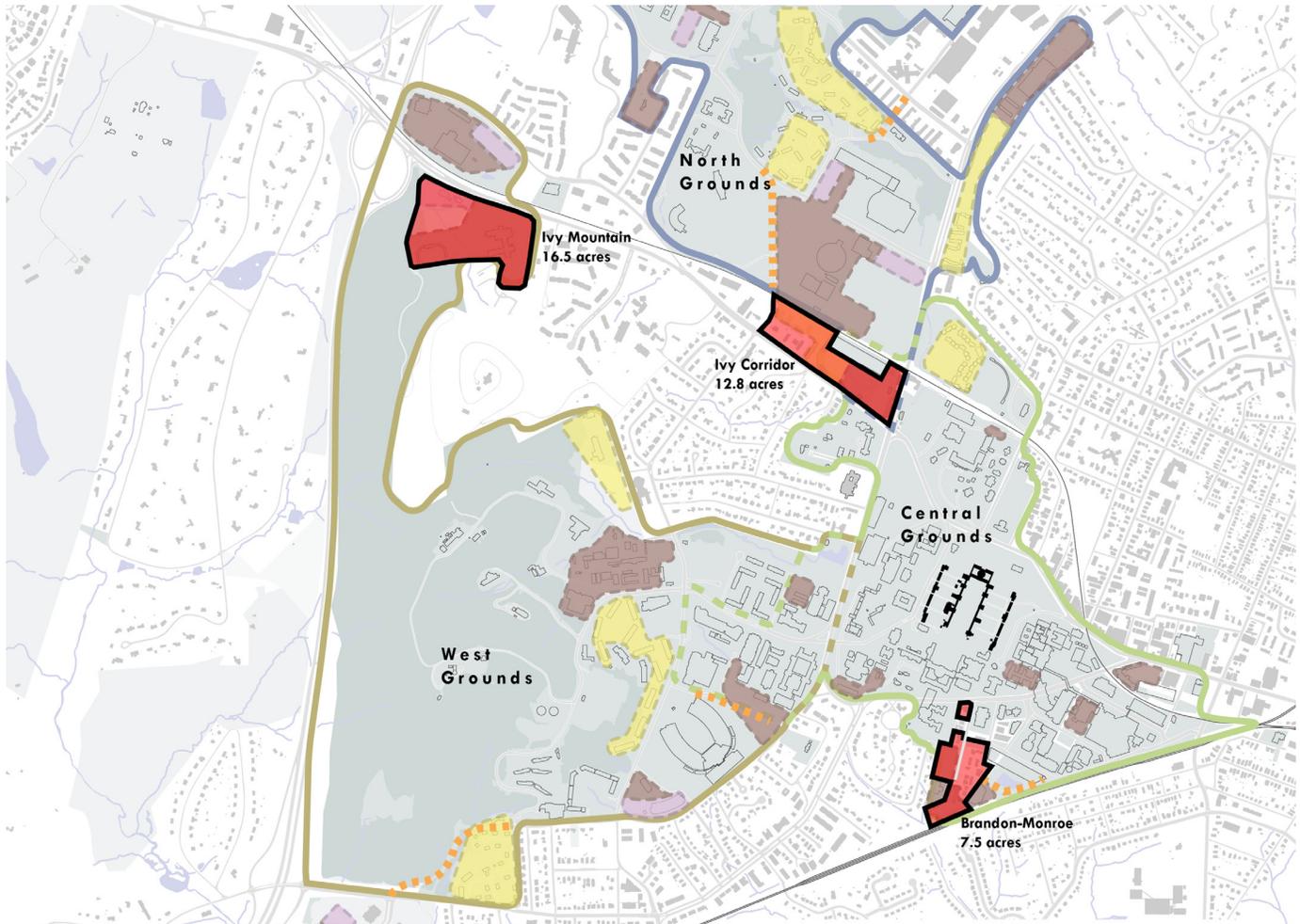
The sculpture in Clark Park is historic and listed on the National Register. It will remain as an attraction that brings people through the park to the new stair and sidewalk. As a park user looks toward the Battle Building, the parks on either side of JPA will look seamless because of the grade change of JPA at this location. Under grounding of utilities could also be a part of the park's redevelopment.

While the design of the park is funded, construction is not funded. Thus, there is no set timeline for when the work will occur.

### **Current Land Use Planning; UVa Redevelopment Zones by David Neuman, Architect for the University**

David Neuman gave the group an update on the district planning efforts of the Office of the Architect. The Office has identified three redevelopment zones that may have demands for potential development. The three zones are 1) Ivy/Emmett 2) Brandon Avenue and 3) the KCRC redevelopment zone. For each of these zones, and for future redevelopment zone planning, the office is clarifying the planning process. Broadly speaking, the process includes inventorying existing uses of the zone and identifying the potential program for the area. Following this, site information will be gathered and evaluation criteria will be determined. The result of the process will be a series of planning alternatives for each site and a recommendation for the best alternative.

In order to bring sustainability into the early stages of planning for these sites, the Office is looking at applying either the Envision Site Development system or LEED for Neighborhood Development to these sites. Special care will be given to planning for the provision of infrastructure to the sites.



**District Planning Sites**