

The Chronicle

March 22, 2007

Major Plans in Works for West Union

By Adam Eaglin
Journal Reporter

As the campus community evaluates the recommendations in the recently released Campus Culture Initiative report, the University has also begun a rigorous evaluation of the West Union Building and other social spaces on West Campus, administrators confirmed Wednesday.

Officials are now working through proposals that include major renovations of the West Union and the possible construction of an additional adjacent building, Executive Vice President Tallman Trask wrote in an e-mail.

The proposed building-which may focus on dining-would be attached to the West Union on the building's west or north sides facing the West Campus Plaza, Trask said, adding that the idea first arose after assessing the costs of a full-scale renovation of the dining facilities within the West Union.

Larry Moneta, vice president for student affairs and vice chair of the CCI Steering Committee, noted that administrators are looking well beyond the West Union in their evaluation of students' needs.

"We're starting to build a much more robust set of space needs for all of West Campus," he said.

Moneta added that the discussions underway in the Office of Student Affairs, the Office of Student Activities and Facilities and Residence Life and Housing Services will be coupled with Provost Peter Lange's efforts in assessing the CCI



Media Credit: CHRONICLE file photo

Administrators are considering major renovations to the West Union Building and other West Campus sites.



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University officials said they are considering an addition to the West Union building that could focus on new dining options for students.

report's recommendations.

"Since our work will elaborate and expand upon those recommendations [relating to facilities], I would anticipate that it will have a considerable bearing on the renovation plans for West Union and other West Campus facilities," Lange wrote in an e-mail.

Moneta said conversations had begun between him and Chris Roby, director of OSAF, and Eddie Hull, dean of residence life and executive director of housing services, to ascertain what changes need to be made on West Campus in order to meet student needs.

Roby said he has begun engaging in discussions with students in his office, as well as reviewing a 2003 space-needs report drafted by Brailsford and Dunlavey, a facility-planning firm in Washington, D.C. Moneta added that the study-which he said Roby would work to contemporize-assessed space needs in the Bryan Center and West Union, and led to the proposal for the Plaza.

"I would say that the first piece of that puzzle will be the West Union-the role of how it uses food service and dining," Roby said, referring to administrators' assessment of West Campus space needs.

Although some administrators said they hoped to see renovations begin by the end of the calendar year, Lange said he expected it would take about a year for West Union-related projects to start.