Carleton College

Residential Life Task Force

Report on Student Housing Capacities and Options

May 15, 2007
Introduction

In 2005, plans were initiated for what came to be known as the Maple Street Apartments. This sixty bed facility was to replace an existing house and apartment and would have added approximately 47 net new beds. Following the planning and schematic design of the new Maple Street Apartments, the President halted that project and asked this task force to “step back” and consider the residential life capacity situation in a more complete context. Responding to the need for more on-campus housing, the President asked that we assess the desired longer term capacity for on-campus residential facilities and consider both alternative sites and alternative configurations for housing students. The committee engaged Perkins and Will as an advisor and began to meet in November of 2006. Over the past six months, we have considered these issues and have formulated answers to four questions, as outlined in the report which follows. We have met with students in a variety of small groups and have had discussions with CSA and with the Resident Assistants. We have sought input from faculty and staff. In the end, this report is our best effort to advise the College about a course of action in this important, expensive and somewhat complicated endeavor of seeking to house more of its students on-campus. Our recommendations begin on page 4.

Committee Members
Fred Rogers, Vice President and Treasurer
Hudlin Wagner, Dean of Students
Mark Kanazawa, Professor of Economics
Clifford Clark, Professor of History and M.A. and A.D. Hulings Professor of American Studies
Beverly Nagel, Associate Dean of the College; Assoc. Dean of the College; Ada M. Harrison Distinguished Teaching Professor of the Social Sciences
Gary Wagenbach, Winifred and Atherton Bean Professor of Biology, Science, Technology, and Society; Director of Environmental and Technology Studies
William Zietz, Associate Dean of Students
Steve Wisener, Director of Residential Life
Robert Lampa, Senior Project Manager/Owner's Representative
Steven Spehn, Director of Facilities and Capital Planning

Krisan Osterby, Perkins+Will
Dana Anderson, Perkins+Will
Janet Stegman, Stegman +Associates
Background

History

"Carleton College is a residential academic community. We believe that the liberal arts experience is enhanced in an environment where students live and learn together." - 21st Century Report, May 1998

Since the 21st Century Report was received, the College has renovated Nourse and Severance, constructed new townhouses along Division Street and expanded its use of smaller houses for student living. However, the number of students living off campus in commercial housing – the Northfield Option – remains at or above 200. The ability of the College to house its full student body requires planning in both total enrollment and in student housing. Current plans call for no further increase in enrollment, and thus the focus today is on adding housing capacity to accommodate the current enrollment.

In the 1960’s and early 1970’s Carleton policy required all students to live on campus, except in unusual situations. In 1973, growth in enrollment required that the College consider allowing additional students to live “off campus” in commercial rental properties not owned or controlled by the College. The initial target for this housing was to be 30 seniors, chosen from those who applied. By 1980, this number had risen to more than 100 and to 162 by 1984. Since then, the number of students living in commercial housing has fluctuated up and down, but it has been in roughly the range of 175-220 for a decade or more. The following chart shows the off-campus participation (since named “Northfield Option”) for each term for the past 8 years and the maximum participation in each year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Winter</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
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<td>195</td>
<td>217</td>
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<tr>
<td>2000-01</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>221</td>
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<tr>
<td>2001-02</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>196</td>
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<td>2002-03</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>176</td>
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<tr>
<td>2003-04</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>189</td>
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<tr>
<td>2004-05</td>
<td>177</td>
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<tr>
<td>2005-06</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>189</td>
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<tr>
<td>2006-07</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>211</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The present task force feels that the sustained level of approximately 200+ students living in off-campus commercial facilities is not in the best interests of the College for a variety of strategic and operational reasons. Following construction of the townhouses Northfield Option participation decreased, but continuing enrollment growth has returned the current situation to a level similar to what existed before the townhouses were built.

The Impact of Off Campus Enrollments

In addition to overall growth, campus housing is impacted by the uneven distribution of students studying abroad from term to term. The College budget is built on the basis of an average FTE enrollment, which is the budgeted comprehensive fee income divided by the per student fee.
Because Carleton has no part-time enrollments, this amounts to the average enrollment residing in Northfield, i.e., not studying abroad or on leave and absent from Northfield for some other reason.

Because more students study abroad during fall term than in other terms, the demand for on and off campus housing is much greater in the winter and spring than in the fall. Thus, the housing inventory required to meet an average enrollment is larger than it would be if the study abroad population were constant across the three terms. Our task force did not address the issue of off-campus study, and term-by-term enrollment. If there were more Carleton off-campus programs in the winter and spring and fewer students went off-campus in the fall, the net effect could be to reduce demand for on-campus housing by as much as 50, with no change in overall average enrollment and thus income. This is estimated by subtracting the minimum study abroad enrollment from the average study abroad enrollment by year. This is a question for another committee to address.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>Total Avg Enroll</th>
<th>Total FTE Budget</th>
<th>Max On Campus Residents</th>
<th>Average Study Away</th>
<th>Fall Study Away</th>
<th>Winter Study Away</th>
<th>Spring Study Away</th>
<th>Avg - Min. = Diff.</th>
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<tr>
<td>1999-00</td>
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<td>1,740</td>
<td>1,570</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>82</td>
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<td>194</td>
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<td>161</td>
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<td>78</td>
<td>32</td>
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<tr>
<td>2003-04</td>
<td>1,898</td>
<td>1,776</td>
<td>1,611</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>190</td>
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<td>86</td>
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<td>2004-05</td>
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<td>1,780</td>
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<td>168</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>87</td>
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<td>2005-06</td>
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<td>149</td>
<td>93</td>
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<tr>
<td>2006-07</td>
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<td>1,814</td>
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<td>119</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>64</td>
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</table>

**Residence Hall Capacities**

Finally, the Committee examined the question of the number of housing facilities and their desirable capacities. Carleton is presently using 9 residence halls, 10 townhouses and 29 houses of varying sizes to accommodate students. Some of these residence halls are operating above their design capacity, due to the use of lounges as resident rooms or overcrowding within rooms. For reasons of cost and for reasons of program, the committee believes it would be better to have more, larger residence halls and fewer, very small houses. These objectives could be accomplished by removing students from some current facilities, in whole or in part, and by reassigning them to other facilities. In some cases, it is likely that the College will want to consider replacing older, smaller facilities with newer, slightly larger facilities that will better serve the purposes of the current students and which will be lower cost for the College to operate. These new facilities could contain within them spaces for interest group programs or spaces where students could draw in a group, as is the case today in some of the separate houses.
should be to add a net of 80 to 100 beds to the existing capacity of 1,665 by constructing a new residence hall of approximately 120 beds. The detailed chart in the appendix shows the current inventory of residence spaces and the proposed capacities of each type or building. These capacities are broken down between Intermediate Term and Long Term.

3) What are the most desirable sites to consider for building new student housing?

Response: After considering many sites, we recommend six sites for building new student housing. These sites are identified on the adjacent campus map as A-F. According to a preliminary analysis by Perkins and Will, these sites could support the construction of more total student residence spaces than we recommend adding. Thus, not all of these spaces would need to be utilized to reach the recommendations of the Committee. Note that some of these sites are occupied by existing buildings. The timing or reuse of these existing buildings would have to be carefully considered as part of the recommended housing uses of these sites in the future. Criteria that figured heavily in the selection of potential sites included:

- Expansion of housing zones on the campus, East and West, and the avoidance of creating a new, more isolated zone
- Proximity to dining
- Proximity to utilities, streets and parking
- Impact of these proposed new facilities on the overall campus planning objectives of openness and vistas, as identified in the CIVITAS plan
- Attractiveness of the final concept at each site to students who are intended to live there.

4) Which components of new housing should be built first?

Response: After identifying these sites, we developed a list of opportunities and challenges for each site. (Attached to this report as an appendix are the analyses of each site.) The sites were discussed with students in a number of group settings and committees. We have walked each site and have asked our consultants to assist us in estimating how many students might be accommodated on each site. We do not believe that all of these sites are equal nor would we expect to build on all of them. We were also made aware of the sense of urgency by trustees and others that our recommendations enable the campus to begin to plan for construction which could be in service during the 2008-2009 academic year.
We believe that there should be a larger conversation and process for comment among students, faculty and staff, trustees and members of the Northfield community, before we reach a final recommendation. However, it is the sense of the Committee that the sites identified as proximate to Goodhue and Cowling represent the best balance of amenities, cost efficiency, infrastructure support and attractiveness to potential students. We also believe that – because these two sites would bracket Evans, which is itself in need of renovation – placing new residence hall housing in these two locations and updating Evans would create a very robust and attractive residential community in this east side of campus.

The site identified along Union Street, where small interest houses are today is an area which we feel should be reserved for townhouse construction and a possible new campus community center in the future. In this way we, believe that the interest housing style can be extended in townhouses, which could be used for expandable groups of interested students. Additionally, the community service programs of some of these specialized houses could be enhanced and facilitated through a shared and expanded community service space in this same area.

5) What else should be considered?

Response: We believe that there are a number of factors to consider, as identified in the opportunities and challenges listed on the maps for these sites (see appendix). Among these issues is the crucial concern of student Dining and how the capacity and choices available through Dining affect the viability and attractiveness of student housing. We understand that a consultant has recently been hired to assess the Dining program and to make recommendations as to how it could be improved. We recommend that these assessments be studied and evaluated in the context of proposed new student residences on both the East West side of campus and their planning and timing be coordinated with expansions in housing.

A common issue for all of these sites will be parking. Depending upon the type of housing that is constructed and which site is selected, the parking needs will be greater or less. Parking is an issue that requires further consideration in terms of management of the use of cars and planning for spaces and their assigned use.
## Detailed Residence Life Capacities and Changes

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<th>Hall / House</th>
<th>Existing</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Near-term</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Long-term</th>
<th>%</th>
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<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
<td>1,239</td>
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<td>1,335</td>
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<td>New Units</td>
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<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
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<td>6%</td>
<td>185</td>
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<td><strong>Houses</strong></td>
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<td>Page Hse East</td>
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<tr>
<td>Watson House</td>
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<tr>
<td>Williams House</td>
<td>Interest</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Wilson House</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Wilson House</td>
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<td><strong>Reductions TBD</strong></td>
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| TOTAL               | 1,665    | 19%| 1,735     | 17%| 1,840     | 10%|

Strategic Housing Task Force Report  7  05/15/2007
Site Analyses – Opportunities and Challenges of Each

Issues & Opportunities

- Campus: Up to 100 Suite/Studio Style Beds
- Housing Balance:
  - Add critical mass to North of Lyman Lake
  - Add missing bed types to East Campus
  - Create opportunity for 6-year residential experience
- District Features:
  - Parking Access
  - Downtown parking
  - Existing hotel services
  - Good views / sun exposure
- Student Life Opportunities:
  - Rec Center Access
  - Amenities
  - Enhances visibility of 3rd District Hall
- Cost & Development Challenges:
  - Historic Development
  - Inefficient design
  - Architectural Standards
  - Accessible facilities
  - Good geometry

Strategic Housing Plan

- A
- B

Strategic Housing Task Force Report

05/15/2007