

Regents to review plan to change campus

University project will add parking garages, move sorority house if implemented

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Senior staff writer

Regents

The NU Board of Regents will mull over a plan Saturday that could change the face of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln campus within the next 12 or more years.

The regents will focus on the preliminary master plans for all four NU campuses as they decide whether the blueprints map out the course they want the university to take at the 8:30 a.m. meeting at the Nebraska Center

for Continuing Education, 33rd and Holdrege streets.

The board cannot approve all of the projects proposed in the plans Saturday. Those projects, such as the building of five new parking structures on UNL's campuses, have to be approved separately at different board meetings.

But NU spokeswoman Dara Troutman said it is possible that some

projects in the preliminary plans will be voted on as early as January or February 1999.

Major parts of the plan include a grassy corridor that will extend from Memorial Stadium to the Beadle Center, cutting traffic off at 14th, 16th and 17th streets on City Campus.

That traffic will be routed to Antelope Valley Parkway, a thoroughfare that is planned to run along campus' east side.

A 50-foot wooded area will surround East Campus on all but the west side. A new recreation center will be built on East Campus.

John Benson, director of institutional research and planning, said he anticipates at least one parking structure's program statement will be on the regents' agenda in the spring semester. The structure will be located at 14th Street and Avery Avenue.

The last time master plans were examined at a regents meeting was in December 1991, when the plans for the four campuses indicated a general direction, not a set path, for the university to take, Troutman said.

The difference between then and now, Regent Nancy O'Brien of Waterloo said, was that the regents now look at the university system as a whole.

In 1991, the university campuses were more segmented, she said.

"In this process we will be looking a little more at how the plans relate to each other and to the university as a whole," O'Brien said.

O'Brien also said the more recent plan is much more extensive than the 1991 blueprints.

Some of the changes that were proposed in 1991 are integrated into the plan to be presented to the regents at this week's meeting.

Those changes include the roadway that will wind around the east

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NANCY O'BRIEN
NU regent

side of campus and the changing of 16th and 17th streets to two-way.

Benson predicts the university will follow through on many projects in the plan.

"There's certainly a substantial group that will go forward," Benson said. All of the projects included in a deferred maintenance bill passed by the Nebraska Legislature, LB1100, will be finished as well, he said.

Those projects were OK'd in the 1998 legislative session in which \$5.5 million was allotted to renovate buildings on all four NU campuses in the next 10 years. The university will provide matching funds to supplement the state's contribution.

For example, both Lyman and Bancroft halls will be knocked down to make way for a new building.

In presentations to groups at UNL, Benson said people have been most responsive to the idea of parking structures. People also like the idea of an advanced shuttle system.

However, in the same way, some have expressed concern that all the new construction will take away parking spots the garages won't replace, Benson said.

Unlike the most recent plans, no controversial items appeared on the 1991 plans, Benson said.

On the new plans, the vacant Sigma Alpha Mu Fraternity house will be demolished and not rebuilt.

Also, the Alpha Chi Omega Sorority house will be moved to 16th and R streets, replacing the small plaza east of the Wick Alumni Center.

More than half of the 106 sorority members plan to be present at Saturday's meeting.

The sorority's attorney, Mark Hunzeker, will present some proposed changes to the plan at the meeting.

Alpha Chi Omega members were mostly concerned the university would go ahead with its master plan and not listen to the sorority's concerns, Hunzeker said.


A proposed amendment would change that, he said, by giving the members more say in the process of looking for possible locations for a new house and determining a timeline for its construction.

The agreement will be made before Aug. 1, 1999. Hunzeker said if an agreement isn't made, the Alpha Chi Omega house would stay put.


"We're going to be (at the meeting) in support of the agreement," Hunzeker said.

Though sorority members originally were upset about the proposed displacement of their home, many are now starting to accept the idea.

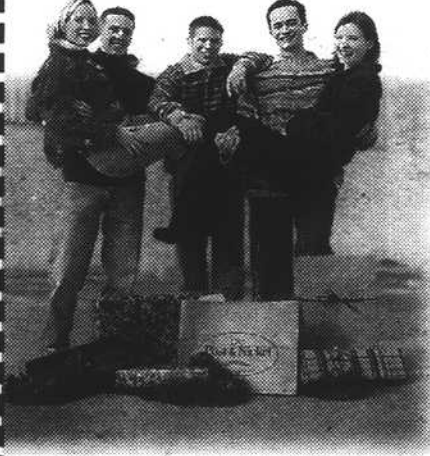
"I think everybody has had a chance to digest it," Hunzeker said. "The (proposed) change in language is pretty significant."



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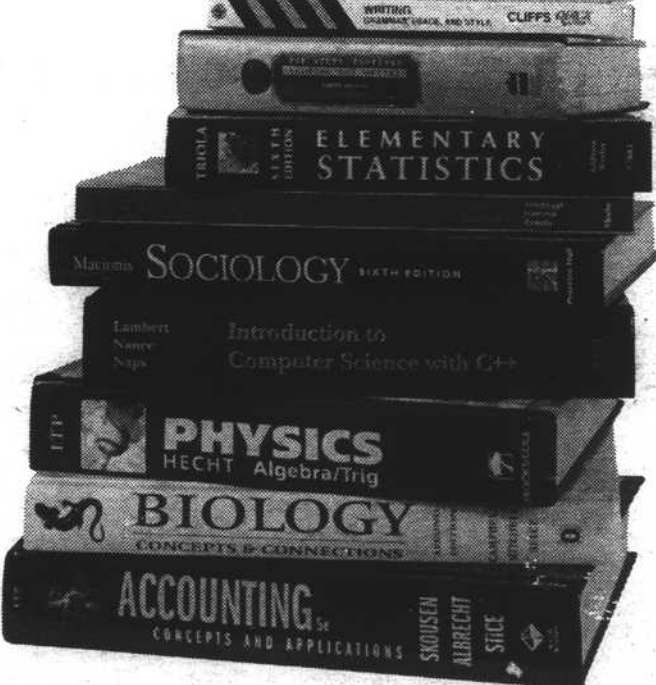
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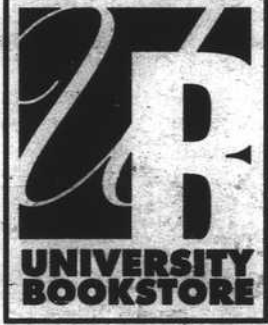
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