

TO: Hon. Mayor & Council
City Manager Charles Strome III

FROM: Matthew Fasciano, Chair ~~MC~~
Community-College Planning Committee

RE: Interim Report on the Planning Process

DATE: February 16, 2012

Pursuant to the Community-College Planning Committee Planning Document (attached), the Planning Committee respectfully submits this interim report for the Council's information.

INTRODUCTION

The Committee began meeting in mid November 2011 and has met six times since then. Committee members have been fully engaged in attempting to identify a location or locations to recommend as the site(s) of future residence hall(s). The Committee has worked diligently and in consistent good faith to explore all available and appropriate options within the parameters of the preconditions. Our goal has been to balance the immediate remediation of the College's housing needs and the larger and longer-term needs of and benefits to the City, College and surrounding neighborhoods.

COLLEGE PROPERTY

As articulated in the planning document, representatives from Iona College have kept the Committee informed of plans and efforts to renovate existing college property to create new student housing. Although the Committee has no approval authority over such actions, we have been made aware that the College has plans to:

1. Renovate Walsh Hall, located in the center of campus, to include 3 stories of dormitory space that will accommodate approximately 115 students;
2. Convert common space in Rice Hall, on the northeastern end of campus, to dormitory use, yielding approximately 37 beds;
3. Construct a three story residence hall on President or Hubert Street with entrance onto campus.

EXISTING RESIDENCE HALLS

A condition created in the planning document allows for a temporary "increase" of the "local occupancy limits for existing residence halls to match recent practice" and to conform to State Dormitory Authority guidelines for the current and 2012-2013 academic years. This pre-condition also creates an option to extend this increase or make it permanent, which would have the effect of reducing the quantity of new student housing required elsewhere.

ADDITIONAL OPTIONS

In order to promote discussion of other student housing options, including options on the North Avenue corridor, the Committee has begun a process by which property owners and builders (or their representatives) within the contemplated radius will be invited to submit and present concepts within parameters specified by the College. Concepts meeting the specified parameters, as determined by the College, will be presented to the Committee for review as soon as practically possible.

INITIAL CONCLUSIONS

The Committee has reached conclusions in support of the Walsh Hall and Rice Hall plans referenced above, coupled with a temporary four to five year extension of the occupancy limits for Iona's existing dormitories. The Committee also supports the concept of a three-story residence hall on President or Hubert Street, provided such plans are developed in consultation with the Halcyon Park neighborhood. These steps are recommended with the understanding that Iona will issue a request for concepts, described above, for its unmet bed requirements.

HOUSING STATUS & TARGETS

If the College (1) constructs Walsh Hall, (2) increases occupancy of Rice Hall, (3) builds on Presidents or Hubert Streets, and (4) receives the aforementioned extension of the occupancy increase as recommended by the planning committee, the College projects a remaining bed need of 170-200 beds in the initial years. If the occupancy limits in existing residence halls were allowed to expire, then an additional 150 beds would be required. In addition, the bed need could and would increase if the college reduced occupancy at other non-Iona College owned property. Regardless, the College agreed to release a call for concepts for 170-200 beds. The bed range is indicative of minor variations in bed count based on construction and unforeseen variables.

Overall Bed Need	570
Walsh Hall	110
Rice Hall	30
President Street	110
Occupancy Waiver Extension	150
Remaining Bed Need	170-200

PUBLIC COMMENT

The planning document provides for comment on a draft plan by various community constituencies (See, Planning Document, pg. 3). The Committee has begun a discussion as to how best to create a forum for comment on the proposed plan. This issue is still under consideration by the Committee. The goal is to hold a public comment session or sessions in March.

The Committee is making best efforts to adhere to the timeline for the submission of its recommendations by May 15.