

**Report from The Perry House/Student House Options Committee**  
**May 2013**

**Membership:** Jerry Berenson (Chief Administrative Officer, co-convener), Danielle Cadet ('16), Alison Cook-Sather (Professor of Education, elected by faculty), Sasha De La Cruz ('15), Alexis De La Rosa ('15), Pim Higginson (Associate Professor of French and Francophone Studies, elected by faculty), Marissa Jackson ('14), Esteniolla Maitre ('15), Michele Rasmussen (Dean of the Undergraduate College, co-convener), Khadijah Seay ('16), and Angel Suero ('16).

**Charge:**

- **Perry House Coalition:** Formed by the Perry House Coalition in the Fall of 2012, the Perry House Committee “is charged with developing a process and policies for considering all options for the disposition of Perry House, and that the committee’s findings are the final determination on the future of Perry House” (Perry House Coalition Letter to Jane McAuliffe)
- **President McAuliffe:** To look at range of residential options with an eye toward a win-win situation, with particular consideration for how to sustain/re-imagine Perry House.

**Context:**

1. Perry House, which included the Black Cultural Center, was closed this year due to the poor condition of the building. There had been seven students housed in Perry. Maintenance on the building has been deferred for many years because of the high cost of other significant structural repair projects, which included Thomas, Taylor, Rockefeller, Denbigh, Pem West, and Pem East.
2. Batten House, similar to Perry House, is a converted residence that is in need of significant repairs and houses a small number of students. The issue is whether the building should be renovated and continued to be occupied.
3. There is a shortage of student housing at the College. Twenty-two students currently live in an off-campus apartment building, which is very expensive, and there isn’t housing capacity to increase enrollment, should we decide to do so.
4. In response to #1, students formed a coalition, wrote a letter to President McAuliffe, and submitted that letter, along with a letter signed by faculty (see Appendix I).

**Outline of Process (explained in more detail below):**

- Met eight (?) times between December 12, 2012, and April 24, 2013 (see Appendix III for meeting notes and Minutes)
- Clarified charge and discussed various options
- Designed and distributed a survey to members of affinity groups
- Held a campus-wide open forum
- Met with the campus architect to discuss key qualities of desired new building and possible designs
- Reframed conceptualization to consider unexpected and necessary renovation of Haffner
- Generated a set of recommendations

## **Deliberations, New Variables, and Recommendations:**

The Committee first focused on the need to replace Perry House and discussed four possibilities.

1. Renovate Perry to recreate the space that existed previously.
2. Renovate Perry, but add bedrooms to the third floor and/or expand Perry House so that additional students could live there.
3. Build a new Perry House at a different location.
4. Include in new student housing a section that would be the replacement of Perry House.

The Committee at first favored the option to either renovate Perry House or renovate and expand the residence. However, committee members raised several problems with these options. First, they only solved one of the three student housing issues faced by the College. Also, the cost of renovating Perry to house seven students is \$1.5 to \$2.5 million, which is very expensive for the number of students who can live there. In addition, the Black Cultural Center, housed in Perry, is remote from the center of campus and is not a convenient location for most students. The problem with using the third floor of Perry or expanding Perry is that the cost would be at the high end of the range due to the need to make accessible all floors to people with disabilities (which means putting in an elevator—in extremely expensive and involved proposition for an old residence of this nature) and would require additional township approvals. These approvals, based on particular zoning ordinances, could be difficult to obtain because of the location of Perry on the periphery of campus near residences.

Two meetings were held with students to provide an update on the work of the Committee and to solicit feedback. Also, a student survey was administered to solicit feedback about the student housing issues. Based upon the Committee discussions and upon feedback from students at the meetings and the survey, the Committee determined that the option to build a new Perry House at a different location might be the best option. A “New Perry” to be designed, would:

1. Integrate some literal parts of “Old Perry” (mantels, window frames, doorframes, etc.) and include key components that make Perry a home (e.g., kitchen, living spaces, social spaces) as well as be more intentionally connected to the history and academic mission of the College and to the art collection that is now largely inaccessible.
2. Include approximately 40 beds to accommodate student desire for this housing option (as expressed in the survey).
3. Include a large common room for meetings and other activities.
4. Include a fully equipped kitchen and dining space immediately attached to the kitchen for cultural and community activities that include dining.
5. Include a small office in which faculty associated through concentrations and minors (e.g., Africana and LALIPC) could hold office hours once or twice a week and serve as informal advisors on an as-needed basis.
6. Include a library space in which books for Perry House and additional materials could be housed in a way that they are accessible but also protected.
7. Include a showcase/display area for select works of art from the library collection.
8. Include a small but comfortable lecture/seminar space in which conferences and presentations connected to Perry House and the interests of its residents could be held.

See Appendix II for a fuller account of each of these points.

At a meeting of the committee in April, Jerry Berenson reported that there was a new development in the plans for improvements to Haffner Hall that would have a significant effect on the student housing options discussion. The College has been planning a renovation to Haffner's plumbing system, bathrooms, and laundry rooms similar to renovations we have done to many of our dormitories over the past several years. However, the presence of asbestos-containing material on structural beams in the residence halls requires a much more extensive renovation. The presence of these materials and the need to remove them in order to renovate is not unusual. What is unusual in this case is the extent of the work that needs to be done and the cost. A planned \$2 million project has become an \$8 to \$9 million project.

Pre-construction testing showed that asbestos fibers are not present in any occupied space, and so there is not a concern for current occupants. Nevertheless, the problem must be solved and this sooner than later.

Jerry reported to the group that the College might consider replacing Haffner with new student housing. This would cost more, but would allow the College to increase student housing capacity and to design new housing to meet current student interests. The cost of either the Haffner renovation or new student housing would limit the College's ability to pay for any other student housing projects. The committee then discussed how a new Perry House could be incorporated into a renovated Haffner or into new student housing. Haffner is a complex of four buildings including the Dining Hall and three student residences. One of the student residences could become the new Perry House. Students felt this might be an acceptable option if a third floor could be added to the building that would be the Black Cultural Center and other public space. Students were more excited about the possibility of designing a new Perry House as part of a new student housing complex that would replace Haffner.

The College is also considering the renovation of Haffner and building a new student residence somewhere else on campus. The new residence could be the new Perry House or it could include the new Perry House if it was decided that a new residence should also include the Batten House program and/or include space for the students currently living off-campus.

Since the Haffner and Perry House decisions will be made this summer by a subcommittee of the Board of Trustees Finance and Buildings and Grounds Committee, students from this Committee, who will be in the area this summer, will be selected to work with the Facilities staff on the design of the housing that will include the Perry House program.

## Appendix I: Letters

To: Jane Dammen McAuliffe, President of the College and The President's Advisory Committee

From: The Perry House Coalition

Date: November 19, 2012

Having met with Jerry Berenson, Michele Rasmussen, Vanessa Christman, and Stephanie Nixon about the future of Perry House, we were under the impression that other senior campus administrators had been made aware of the complexities involved in making a decision about the future of this space, and that our previous conversations had been shared with the senior most members of the campus' administration. We concluded therefore that as this conversation broadened, it would include all perspectives presented to date, including the prioritization of the personal, historical and community value of Perry House. We were disappointed when the discussion at the recent SGA Big Cheese Forum was framed by financial considerations only. Additionally, it was clear that some members of the panel were unaware of the arguments put forth in conversations with some of the above-mentioned administrators concerning the non-financial or intangible significance of Perry House, including our meeting with Jerry Berenson four days before the Big Cheese Forum.

It is our sincere desire to work in active concert with the College to come to a decision about the future of Perry House - a decision that should take into consideration all of the complexities of valuing this space. What we experienced at the Big Cheese Forum felt like a betrayal of that commitment, and more in line with a decision that has already been made. If that is the case, we ask that the College inform us honestly, directly, and immediately. If however, the disposition of Perry House is still truly up for discussion, and in order to move forward in good faith, we request:

- A commitment to include student and student ally voices in all conversations about Perry House, e.g. campus wide, President's Advisory Group, the Board of Trustees meetings (February and April), alumnae groups, etc.
- A committee of faculty, staff and students (including representatives from Sisterhood, Mujeres, and BACaSO), selected by the current group of involved students (The Perry House Committee) is formed immediately. We request that this committee be majority students.
- The Perry House Committee is charged with developing a process and policies for considering all options for the disposition of Perry House, and that the Committee's findings are the final determination on the future of Perry House. We make this request in part to reverse a tradition of students of color having to shoulder the greater burden of conducting these types of ongoing conversations disproportionate to the long term time commitment counter to their academic wellbeing, and to the amount of political capital they are able bring to such issues. We ask that student representatives from this committee present these findings at the Board of Trustees meetings in February and April.
- Representatives from the Perry House Committee meet with the Board of Trustee's sub-committee on Campus Diversity and Finance and other appropriate Board Committees. These include but are not limited to the December 13th, February and April 2013 Board Meetings. We also request meetings with individual board members Fall semester 2012 and Spring semester 2013.
- The Perry House Committee reviews all communications to the College community, alumnae groups, and to the general public concerning this matter.

- A fund through the college's Development Office in which alumnae and current seniors can donate specifically to Perry House.
- A letter from President McAuliffe supporting the committee's final findings
- Perry house is more than a residence hall, and more than a Black Cultural Center. When the college designates a value to the history of a building, it designates a value to the people that inhabit that building. It is a place for us to grow into our identities as women of color. In erasing Perry House you are perpetuating the erasure of our identities, dimensionality and our histories as women of color, which is something that society does by default by means of subtle oppression and purposeful ignorance. The space that Perry provides for students of color is a place where there are no judgments or limitations on self and cultural expression. The relevancy of its existence nearly fifty years after its establishment is that it is a living breathing space of resistance--it is a physical symbol, with its own history, that represents the imagined solidarity in which we attempt to live day to day in the struggle against our oppressive silencing.

We suggest that the cost of renovating Perry House today is in direct proportion to the many years of deferred maintenance it has endured in the past. And we submit that the treatment of the building is analogous to the institution's lack of commitment to the well-being of Black, Latina and women of African and Caribbean descent at Bryn Mawr. We are in discussion about a number of different actions that we may be forced to make if the college does not meet these requests.

We understand that our fight for Perry House is comparable to the kind of leadership that Bryn Mawr instills in its students. This is the type of women's empowerment that the college supports and promotes around the world. Therefore, there should be no problem with us taking action and preserving these values domestically at Bryn Mawr. Refusal to renovate Perry House seems like a step back from the commitment to leadership, diversity, and inclusion that the college promotes. However, we know, that given Bryn Mawr's missions this is not the case.

Perry House is and can continue to be as relevant as it was fifty years ago. However, if we are not comfortable with being students of color on Bryn Mawr's campus, if we feel disrespected, and our agency is in reality little more than lip service, perhaps Bryn Mawr College is not yet ready for the diversity it so proudly proclaims to prospective students and faculty. We are concerned that a failure to renovate Perry House will diminish the progress that Bryn Mawr has made in regards to diversity and inclusion in the past 50 years. What are we to say to future Black, Latina and women of African and Caribbean descent about how this college values their well-being and success? How will the public react to such a reversal of the racial progress of this college? We are protecting not just our own interest, but also the college's reputation as a leader in higher education. Perhaps the national and international brand that the College is building and holds so dear is not yet deserved.

We submit this memo to the President and members of the President's Advisory Board both to inform them and as an agenda for a soon to be re-scheduled discussion with President McAuliffe as soon as our mutual schedules allow. We hope that you share it with the Board of Trustees.

Respectfully,  
The Perry House Coalition and Allies

\* \* \*

19 November 2012

Dear President McAuliffe and Members of the Cabinet,

The faculty and staff whose signatures appear below heartily support the goal of celebrating Perry House and the students who have lived and do live within its walls and ask the College to consider all realistic options for the future of Perry House. For this reason, we strongly encourage the College to hold any decision in this regard in abeyance until there has been a free exchange of ideas among all those with a stake in the outcome of a fair and reasonable process.

- |                         |                             |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Michael Allen        | 21. Mark Lord               |
| 2. Penny Armstrong      | 22. Michaile E. Rainey      |
| 3. Linda-Susan Beard    | 23. David Ross              |
| 4. Don Barber           | 24. Katherine Rowe          |
| 5. Mady Cantor          | 25. Kelly Sheard            |
| 6. Monica Chander       | 26. Elliott Shore           |
| 7. Jody Cohen           | 27. Anjali Thapar           |
| 8. Alison Cook-Sather   | 28. Karen Tidmarsh          |
| 9. Selby Cull           | 29. Michael Tratner         |
| 10. Ellie Esmond        | 30. Elly Truitt             |
| 11. Greg Davis          | 31. Sharon Ullman           |
| 12. Tamara Davis        | 32. Jennifer Harford Vargas |
| 13. Anne Dalke          | 33. Alicia Walker           |
| 14. Victor Donnay       | 34. Bob Washington          |
| 15. Louisa Egan Brad    | 35. Amanda Weidman          |
| 16. Michelle Francil    | 36. Arlo Weil               |
| 17. Ignacio Gallup-Diaz | 37. Susan White             |
| 18. Tim Harte           | 38. Rob Wozniak             |
| 19. Carola Hein         | 39. Pim Higginson           |
| 20. David Karen         |                             |

Faculty, Staff and Alumnae Signatures Gathered by Students

Enrique Sacerio-Gari, Department of Spanish  
Kathy Huynh, Bryn Mawr College '09  
Anne Dalke, English and Gender Studies  
Trudell (Smith) Knox '03  
Dawn Bruton Housekeeping  
Joanna Pinto-Coelho '09  
Kalala Ngalamulume, Associate Professor of History and Chair  
Jody Cohen, Education Program  
Yarimee Gutierrez '05  
Margaret Ernst  
Stephanie Nixon, Ally, Director of Diversity, Social Justice and Inclusion Pensby Center  
Joelle A. Webb, '04  
Pim Higginson, Acting Chair, French and Francophone Studies Coordinator of Africana Studies  
Whitney Miller '13

Linnea Segen '12  
Michael Tratner, Department of English  
Professor Sharon Ullman, Department of History, Coordinator, Program in Gender and Sexuality Studies.  
Alice Lesnick, Professor of Education  
Lilian Mengesha, 2010  
Kate Thomas, Associate Professor of English  
Nikki Lopez 2010  
Jessy Brody 2010  
Sundes Kazrnir 2011  
Bethany Schneider, English Department  
Alison Cook-Sather, Professor of Education, Coordinator of the Teaching and Learning Initiative and of The Andrew W. Mellon Teaching and Learning Institute  
Megan Bailey 2008  
Akilah Abdul-Rahman 2012  
Juan Manuel Arbona, Associate Professor and Chair, Growth and Structure of Cities Department  
H. Rosi Song Department of Spanish  
Gilda Rodriguez 2007  
Mzimeli Morris '08  
Mary Osirim, Dean of Graduate Studies and Professor of Sociology  
Robert Washington, Professor of Sociology  
Addie Rutkowski Ansel12012  
Linda-Susan Beard, Associate Professor of English  
Vanessa Christman, Director of Leadership and Community Development  
Stephanie Kearse-Gaston 2008/09  
Jennifer Harford Vargas, Department of English  
Erika Marquez, Post-Doctoral Fellow Department of Sociology  
Kelly Sheard, Associate Director, Civic Engagement Office  
Karen Tidmarsh, Professor of English

## **Appendix II: Ideas for Perry House Design**

The following set of ideas emerged through discussions within the Perry House Committee, taking into account the results of the survey distributed to members of the most directly affected campus affinity groups and informal discussions with various members of affinity groups and other members of the campus community.

We considered several possibilities, from keeping the old building basically as is and renovating it to a habitable state, to building an altogether new building elsewhere on campus. There were arguments on both sides, suggestions for creative compromises, and ideas that took us beyond thinking about the building as a residence alone.

We were influenced significantly (but not only) by the role the Lower Merion Township zoning board will play in relation to any proposal. It is the Committee's sense that if a given proposal were to cost hundreds of thousands of dollars to submit, take years to go through the process of review, and have little chance of being accepted, we should choose another path. Our goal was to develop a proposal that would have the best chance of: addressing student needs and hopes, meeting with approval from the Board of Trustees, and creating the least number of obstacles to approval by the township. That is what we hope that we present here.

None of what follows is etched in stone; indeed, we do not know what Bryn Mawr can afford in this regard or again whether the township would accept these plans as presented here. Nevertheless, based on the data and factors cited above, the Perry House Committee feels that the most viable option and one with a significant number of advantages is a new building, called here for the sake of practicality, "New Perry House." What follows represents a first attempt to sketch out what a New Perry House might look like and the decisions that need to be made regarding its design, location, and features.

### **(1) Integrating and Preserving the History and Meaning of Perry House**

We first want to note that a particularly intriguing and symbolically charged suggestion emerged to establish a bridge between Original Perry House and New Perry House. We suggest that a group of students (perhaps members of the committee supplemented with representatives from the affinity groups) should select significant elements from Original Perry House that would be incorporated into the new building. By this we mean that windows, stones, steps, mantles, or any other item that seem representative of the old building could literally be removed and integrated into the new building as a reminder of the connection between the two. Done tastefully and with a thought to what made the old building special, this would help preserve the spirit and history of the old building in a new one.

### **(2) Choosing a Design**

Should the new building attempt to reproduce the style of Perry House in terms of architectural design? This would be a discussion to be had among those groups most impacted by the building, those people holding the budget, and the architect. It should be noted that a more modern design would in all likelihood allow for far more comfort and features that the survey suggests would be essential to the building. Again, this should be open for discussion.

### **(3) Choosing a location**



Where should the New Perry House be? There are, apparently, several places on campus where this new building could be located: between the old Perry House and Arncliffe; on the tennis courts; on either side of Brecon; or next to the Pensby Center. All parties should be involved in the decision as to where the building would be located with all the usual factors being considered: proximity to other living spaces on campus, particular features made allowable by the building's footprint, likelihood that the zoning board will accept the proposal, etc.

#### **(4) Deciding on Features**

Finally, what features should this building have? We begin with the (still debatable) assumption that this building should house some forty students. There are two strong arguments for this size:

(a) The survey demonstrates that there is a significant demand for a larger living space than Old Perry House. Currently, with only seven rooms, the building excludes more potential applicants than it accepts. New Perry House would allow for a significant number of students from the affinity groups to be housed together. Having approximately 40 beds would allow those students wishing to live in New Perry House the opportunity to live there but will bring other important benefits as well.

(b) There are benefits of scale to be achieved by having a larger building and these will significantly expand what can be achieved. A larger building size makes it more justifiable and affordable to create large, common spaces — among the most important features identified on the survey. Based on this figure of 40 students, and answering the wish-list of criteria that have been proposed by various constituencies—particularly the affinity groups—we would like to suggest the following for the space itself.

The ground floor would be divided into two interconnected spaces. On one side of this space would be:

- A very large common room in which various elements could be incorporated (television, games, surround-sound system, etc.). This would be the “party space” that shows up on a number of the survey responses — a casual meeting and gathering space where all sorts of activities could safely and comfortably be organized and that would give the building a feeling of home and community that students desire.
- A fully equipped kitchen. This is the single most significant feature of the new building that is mentioned by a majority of survey respondents. Clearly, this needs to be a carefully thought out space that is recognized as a centerpiece of the building.
- A dining space immediately attached to the kitchen. One possibility would be to have an open kitchen design in which dining room and kitchen are all part of the same space. The relationship of this to the “events space” and kitchen would all be part of detailed design plans that can't be speculated upon here.

In the other half of the ground floor, and separated by a lockable divider of some sort that would create a distinct and independent space, would be:

- A small office in which faculty associated through concentrations and minors (e.g., Africana and LALIPC) could hold office hours once or twice a week and serve as informal advisors on an as-needed basis. We feel this would create a formal connection between the affinity groups and faculty that is currently lacking and would contribute powerfully to a broader “affinity” community that extends from students, to staff, to faculty.

- A library space in which books for Perry House and additional materials could be housed in a way that they are accessible but also protected. A small cozy reading space connected to the New Perry House library space would be ideal.
- A showcase/display area for select works of art from the library collection. Again, this would create a connection between New Perry House and the various institutional resources and people having a bearing on the interests, concerns, and history of what Original Perry House has stood for and New Perry House will stand for in the future.
- A small but comfortable lecture/seminar space in which conferences and presentations connected to Perry House and the interests of its residents could be held. This space could also be thought of as part of the common space in the “residential” half of the ground floor but it would be a nice addition to have it as a distinct space keeping the “party space” distinct and part of the students only area.

It should be stressed that there would be two entryways to these ground floor spaces so that those living in New Perry House would not feel as if their privacy in any way affected by the presence of a faculty member in the building (even if this presence would only be for a few hours a week). In addition, having two separate entrances would assure that collections and books would be secure.

Two additional things should be noted about having these separate spaces. The first, already mentioned, is that it would bring together affinity groups, residents of Perry House, and their most obviously affiliated academic programs. Strengthening these bonds can only contribute to the health and influence of all involved.

The other reason, more pragmatic perhaps, is that it gives a larger group of people, including faculty, a stake in the new building, thereby assuring that it has the kind of broad support that would be needed for its completion.

Beyond the ground floor, the living spaces would need further discussion. The following questions need to be addressed:

- Should the building be divided up into wings or floors that provide distinct spaces for each affinity group?
- Or instead, should there be an effort to recognize the blurring of boundaries and the shared concerns across groups, something that could be represented but a more blended space?
- Further, should this be a building principally consisting of singles? Should it be a series of suites? A mixture of singles, doubles, triples?

All these questions would need further discussion that would include the cost and feasibility of each model.

As should be clear, we have discussed some of these issues and we have made some suggestions based on those discussions but these are not set decisions. In other areas, the overall design of such a building, its location, and many if not most of its elements beyond the ground floor have not been discussed at any length. Should the option of a New Perry House be considered, any successful design will be the result of broad discussion, careful consideration of the costs and benefits of each option, the history and symbolic significance of Original Perry House, and the ways to merge the history of the two buildings.

## Appendix III: Minutes from Meetings

### Inaugural Meeting—Student Housing Options/Perry House Committee

December 12, 2012

Taylor 212, 6 PM

Present: Jerry Berenson, Alison Cook-Sather, Jane McAuliffe, Michele Rasmussen, Alexis De La Rosa, Esty Maitre, Marissa Jackson, Sasha De La Cruz, Angel, Suero, Danielle Cadet, Khadijah Seay

Absent: Pim Higginson

- 1) Introductions, reasons for being on committee include following:
  - Coming from a diverse community it was a shock to see colored people as minority; transition to BMC was tough;
  - BMC has taken steps to be diverse; ignoring this issue would be a step backwards; easier to be a minority on campus when people can come together;
  - Doesn't want Perry House and related issues to fall to wayside; joined affinity groups late last year; found a second family; Perry House gave a space for people to come together;
  - Any time there is a huge change for students of color, wants to be involved;
  - Students want one thing, admin wants something else;
  - History of Perry House important to the history of this campus; how BMC handled this issue; community; importance of having people I can go to and lean on; support and interconnectivity;
  - Make BMC community aware of what these students are experiencing; a campus issue.
  
- 2) President McAuliffe is launching the *process* of this committee. The committee can decide how to shape its charge. As a prelude to this process, JDM wants to share what she thinks are the major questions she suggests the committee address:
  - a. Has a decision already been made about Perry? NO: committee is not a sham process.
  - b. Is the decision only about dollars? NO. But consideration of financial trade-offs is necessary to make informed recommendations.
  - c. Who makes the decision? Board of Trustees approves any major financial commitment. But Board does not make decisions solely on basis of \$. The decision to re-allocate money intended for Park to improve Schwartz and quality of student and community fitness experience is an example.
  - d. Is Perry's current building and location the most important thing to preserve? Or can the essential components of Perry be recreated elsewhere on campus?
  - e. Are there factors that affect the process and timing around committee's work? Students' recommended Fall 2014 time frame for Perry's readiness is problematic because of local township zoning rules and procedures. Buildings on the periphery of campus more likely to be held up than buildings in the center of campus.
  - f. What decisions need to be made about the Black Cultural Center? Does the committee want to take this on as part of its charge?

- 3) President McAuliffe suggests that first meeting or two be a listening period to hear voices from current students and even alumnae (who could phone in if they are not able to attend in person). Committee can then go on record as having listened to input and including those inputs in its subsequent deliberations.
- 4) Committee could also look at range of residential options with an eye toward a win-win situation.

### **Committee Discussion**

(Sasha) Coalition wanted to focus committee on Perry issues and future only. Is this still the case? The committee will set its agenda and charge. But the BOT is ultimately going to want to explore *all* residential options before making a financial commitment (could be anywhere between \$1.5 and 2.5 million) and decision, so if the committee can do that work it would be beneficial.

(Angel) Clarity on president's role.

JDM will not attend future meetings but is open to attend if invited by the committee.

(Marissa) Administration wants a large Mermont-esque dorm or apartment complex...but students have not seen renderings or plans.

There is no plan...but committee could take on role of examining residential models with an eye toward seeing if Perry could be accommodated in a way other than restoring the existing house.

(Michele) Importance of community. Hopefully, the committee can keep this goal and value in mind as it does its work.

(Esty & Sasha) Need time to talk things over with committee members and get to know our different perspectives. Need conversations about what Perry means with each other.

(JDM) Committee may need two rounds of listening – one early on and one later when committee has more knowledge of the range of options.

(Alison) Use Google docs or Serendip as a venue to share thoughts? We are about to depart for break and may want to capture our thoughts before then.

### **Meeting Frequency/Schedule**

Esty will coordinate. Once Spring '13 dates are set, Michele will ask Joann O'Doherty to identify meeting location(s).

### **Final Thoughts**

- Importance of situating Perry within context of residential space in order to recruit allies and wider community support.
- Committee has a significant opportunity to educate community.
- Pulling together sources about Perry for posterity.  
Explore seeking outside funding for archival work.

**Third Meeting—Student Housing Options/Perry House Committee**  
**February 13, 2013**  
**Campus Center, Room 200, 4 PM**

Present: **Jerry** Berenson, **Alison** Cook-Sather, **Alexis** De La Rosa, **Esty** Maitre, **Marissa** Jackson, **Sasha** De La Cruz, **Angel** Suero, **Danielle** Cadet, **Khadijah** Seay, **Pim** Higginson  
Absent: **Michele** Rasmussen

**Report from affinity groups:**

Mujeres meeting: good discussion; told them about the survey; we were discouraged at first, but then more discussion; all said they want to keep Perry House (the building on campus); they want to be able to renovate that; think singles could be divided into doubles and triples or split; brought up idea of third floor to have more space; asked if there is a possibility to change up Perry to allow for more space; alumnae said they would start a fund for Perry House; could keep building and add onto it to make it bigger. So first priority is keeping building.

**Move into general discussion:**

The physical space: problem is accessibility; the more floors we use the more accessible we have to make the building; in terms of making the building bigger, it would make it harder to get approval to do it; if we are just renovating as is, you still need to get approval from township. If we were to change it, we could run into opposition. Any changes to the building add risk.

Would there be a possibility to build a new building?

There are several possibilities for a new building: either side of Brecon; the tennis courts; between Perry and Arncliffe (better chance because farther from neighbors); and finally next to multicultural center, where the two houses had been torn down (but there are requirements for how far buildings have to be from the road).

Lower Merion has requirements; but is it impossible to rebuild Perry?

No, not impossible. But everything has to go through zoning hearing board. All we have is the history of what the township has approved and not approved. In general, if you put things in the center of campus away from neighbors, they generally approve it. If you put stuff near neighbors, and if the neighbors object, you can get stuck. Example: Baldwin gym. Took 5 years plus building time and thousands of dollars in lawyers' fees.

Instead of talking about zoning and regulation, can we talk about what we hope to do with Perry?

There are still several steps: If we recommend that we rebuild Perry, that would have to go to the College Finance Committee for approval of funding. Then you have to spend money to design renovations (with architectural drawings). Then have to get it through the township.

Sisterhood is more open to a new building. Informal conversations suggest that (nothing formal).

If Mujeres has keeping the existing Perry as non-negotiable, and that doesn't fly, how do we make sure Mujeres has a voice going forward in conversations? If there is an alternative that can serve more students, how do we get Mujeres back in?

They want library, kitchen, laundry — but maybe not actual space?

Scale matters: the more students you can house, the more you can include good public space.

They were fine with having department chairs there. A lot of people liked the new space idea.

So what is really important is to preserve much of the building? What if we reused the stones and other components in a new building? What if we were able to incorporate both the literal parts and the spirit of Perry into a new building?

Jerry has images of what other colleges have done: small-scale student housing with good public space. Townhouse clusters. Small projects with first-floor public space and sleeping space upstairs. They don't look like Perry House. We have an architect who could draw out images of new spaces that include Perry House features. We could design something that could incorporate actual parts and also features of Perry.

Maybe present some images to the community?

Would be good to get a sense of ideal size/scale, and at each level, what possibilities that opens up for multi-use spaces. Hard to find buildings that are less than 40-50 students (except for townhouse clusters)

From survey, it seems like there are enough students who would want to live there that we could fill a 40-person building. It's clear from the survey responses that public space is really important. That's easier to do with that many people living there (harder with fewer bedrooms). Easiest to do with different sections of a building — so a community within a community.

Seems like a number of students felt they could establish community, even in Pem. Different responses about how central or peripheral the building should be — some like the distance, others want to be more central.

Should we present the survey at the NAACP meeting this coming Sunday? Invite Vanessa Christman and Stephanie Nixon. But maybe that meeting needs to be just students? Whereas other groups are wanting to have more than just students present. So Sunday only students and then another meeting open to others?

Survey: Great range of ages of respondents. Real, compelling voices. The fact that some people said not they wouldn't live there makes the evidence even more compelling. This is very powerful data.

When do we want to have a floor plan?

That has to be prepared really carefully. We have to agree and to have reached some sort of consensus and have tentative/vague ideas of what that means, and then those outlines need to get filled out with the community with the knowledge that you have been synthesizing. Need to outline a draft of what we want to say. Need to go in with a sense of where we hope to end up but also open to input (delicate balance).

Getting to a place of making decisions:

- Perry House as it is and where it is or a revised Perry?
- Scale: 7? 20? 40?

Do we lead community through the same process we went through or present our recommendation with an explanation of how we got there? The former might get us bogged down. But the second approach might not create enough space for emotional processing. The sense of the group seemed to be that the second approach would be better if students have time to work/talk through feelings as well as ideas, as we have had. This Sunday conversation will give students a chance to process emotionally.

### **Next steps:**

1. Sunday's NAACP event: only students (Vanessa and Stephanie could be invited just to listen but not talk); tell people what we have done so far as a committee (3 meetings, survey, etc.); share survey results and also notes from our meetings
2. Jerry will send architectural plans to all of us
3. Esty will plan next special meetings (planning meeting and open meeting)
4. Pim will write out what building could look like
5. Next regular committee meeting: February 27, 5:00 p.m.

### **Fourth Meeting—Student Housing Options/Perry House Committee**

**February 27, 2013**

**Pensby Living Room, 5 PM**

Present: Jerry Berenson, Alison Cook-Sather, Michele Rasmussen, Alexis De La Rosa, Esty Maitre, Marissa Jackson, Sasha De La Cruz, Angel Suero, Danielle Cadet, Khadijah Seay

Absent: Pim Higginson

### **I. Recap of Constituency Meetings**

Went well

No student opposition once they heard presentations from committee members

Seniors are willing to attend township meetings

Jerry suggested finding community allies

### **II. Strategies**

What if Board says “no”?

Addressing the self-segregation concern

### III. Planning for March 19-20

Joseph Marra and architectural renderings

\$150K per bed would be proposed figure

What we need for BOT: Concepts only, no need for specific renderings; location? (Impervious surfaces is where we could build)

Fill out outline and present on 20<sup>th</sup>

Each committee member will reach out to particular constituents, including alumnae

#### **Perry House Committee**

##### **Meeting 6**

**April 3, 2013**

Present: Pim Higgins, Alison Cook-Sather, Jerry Berenson, Michele Rasmussen, Esty Maitre, Sasha De La Cruz, Alexis De La Rosa, Angel Suero, Marissa Jackson, Danielle Cadet, Khadijah Seay

##### Agenda:

Haffner Issue

Brief on Report Back

SAW info from Sasha

##### Info from B.O.T. (Jerry):

- we should be rebuilding Haffner and building new housing to build what we want at that location.
- Most likely want to demolish Haffner
- Meeting of Friday with a group of trustees who deal with facilities issues.
- If the committee gets the go ahead they can start getting serious about planning.
- **Official Board Meeting April 26, 2013**

##### Haffner Space:

- Committee
  - Want a couple of students on the planning committee
  - Would be needed over the summer
  - Looking at what Perry House would look like in this new complex in place of Haffner
- This new complex would include ~100 beds
- A piece of the new project will be Perry
- The dining hall will still remain intact
  - May try to expand the seating a little bit
  - May be a challenge in terms of exterior look

##### Concerns:

Are we making our recommendations prior to this meeting?

- I thought I heard a preference for being able to design a new space. It depends on if this want we want moving forward in the process

- We want a clear cut recommendation regarding what is critical about Perry

- Ensure that Perry continues to be an important component



If this is approved in April then we can just move ahead and set up a design committee.

Other points:

Diversity Leadership Group presents a report to B.O.T. and this report will include the work of this committee. It will not be the recommendations, will be very factual.

The board is taking half of the time to talk about the Presidential Transition

Building and Community Finance Committee compressed into one 1-hour meeting

**A word from Sasha**

A group of Asian students is getting together they want to create a space to honor the first Asian woman that attended Bryn Mawr. A space to have meetings or something.

Each common room could be dedicated to someone? And the books could be related to that culture

Next steps:

*Make a version of the Recommendation to take to the buildings and grounds committee meeting*

*Report Back - Possibility of surveying the whole community*

*Bigger issue will be the design committee - Need people that will be here over the summer*

*Recruit People From Coalition to join this design committee over the summer*

*Next week having a meeting and inviting Joseph - 4/10/13 at 5 p.m. (Jerry making sure Joseph can come)*

*Michele sending DLG report*

**Perry House Committee Meeting 7**

24 April 2013

Present: Jerry, Alison, Esty, Sasha, Dani, Khadijah

The new dorm is a two-year process, need to start soon.

There is a sub-committee of the Board of Trustees.

Remake Haffner as it is now, and doing a small dorm somewhere else that would incorporate Perry House

-Where Batten is now

-Near Perry House and Arnecliffe

-West House

Whole Board will be informed of what's going on on Friday

Matt Gray wants to write an article about the committee and what we're talking about. He is

interested in talking to students, he will probably be reaching out around next week

Are we issuing a report?

-Editing the document we already have (in google docs) for the report

-Report to be issued on BMC website under ResLife or Pensby Center

Deadline?

-Before people leave

-May 10

*Action Items*

-Find students who will be on campus this summer

-Jerry to send update about where we are since the trustees meeting isn't happening in the way we planned

-Sasha copying and pasting everything (about the meetings) from the powerpoint into a document to be sent to Alison

## Appendix IV: Notes from Meeting with Campus Architect

### MEETING NOTES NEW PERRY HOUSE

APRIL 10, 2013

Committee/Attendees:

Jerry Berenson, Michele Rasmussen, Joseph Marra, Alison Cook-Sather, Pim Higginson, Danielle Cadet, Sasha De La Cruz, Alexis De La Rosa, Marissa Jackson, Esteniolla Maitre, Khadijah Seay, Angel Suero

The purpose of the meeting was to continue discussions for program requirements for New Perry House. The discussion summarized and outlined below may overlap and build upon earlier discussions documented in “Ideas for Perry House Design” and is intended to provide preliminary guidance for building space and program requirements/preferences as the scope for the project continues to develop:

- New facility to house the Perry House Community within it
- The structure of community space should not be rigid or closed walls where people feel caged-in but should have an open, inviting feel to it.
- The community space could be “modular” within the context of some fixed spaces. This could incorporate folding doors or sliding doors to open the space up for events.
- The housing could be a mix of singles and doubles although students expressed preference for singles. Doubles would potentially provide greater flexibility for additional use of space in the future.

A discussion of the existing Perry House followed. The existing building includes:

- Kitchen
- Communal space for events
- Library
- Sleeping rooms upstairs (presently accommodated approx.. 7-8 students)

The new building should consider:

- “Non-negotiables” including:
  - Separate Kitchen and dining area
  - Dining space to accommodate visitors up to 20-24 persons
  - Reconfigurable community space (ie flexible)
  - New Perry House Program to accommodate 30-40 persons total
- Kitchen which can be locked for controlled access. (Question regarding how/who will maintain and keep the kitchen space clean? Reference other kitchens on campus such as Cambrian Row).
- Space for heads of Africana (could maybe be part of the Library)
- Space for artwork or pieces from the collection. Space could include student works or even wall space for a mural created by the students.
- They currently exist as a “house” so the quality of the new space should feel like a “home” not an institutional dormitory building.
- Consideration must be given to how to keep the public and private spaces separated but yet connected.

- Consideration must be given to honor history of the old Perry House perhaps by photographs or even incorporating physical elements from the existing building such as fireplace mantles, doors, woodwork such as trim, or other features. In other words to remember Perry House in the new building.
- Like the idea of Cambrian Row where there are separate buildings interconnected with an arcade or pergola structure.
- Would like the Library to be set up so that books can be signed out by the campus community. Maybe a small desk that could be staffed?
- Daylighting and sunlight should be considered in the new design as well as space that interacts with the outdoor environment or garden. The atrium at Carpenter Library was referenced as a space having nice qualities that could be incorporated such as skylights and natural light in the communal and living room spaces. It should be modern but cozy (MIT).
- There should be 2-3 offices (faculty/staff/visiting) separate from the communal space.
- Possibly some “nook” spaces off the communal space or library/public spaces
- If there is a lecture in the communal space there should be provided a separate space for lounge/movies, etc.

#### Cultural Space/Other Programs

- New Perry House should have a nice identity
- Perhaps there could be historical markers throughout campus identifying where important people have been.
- Do not want to lose identity (ie not too global)
- Create spaces for identifying names of people who have visited over time (ie mapping of peoples on campus).
- Possibly put artwork in corridors

#### Sustainable Design

- Conservation principles such as water, light, energy, etc
- Daylighting and good lighting in spaces and corridors.

#### Bathrooms/Toilet Rooms

- It would be nice to have a bathtub in one of the bathrooms?
- Include cubbies in the bathrooms
- Avoid putting showers near the windows (ie not like Merion)
- Like the bathrooms in Haffner. Can close door at shower for privacy
- Can we incorporate European model for showers with removable heads?

#### Building Organization

- Program can function as stacked vertically with public/communal spaces on the ground floor and dormitory rooms on the upper floors
- Maintain coherence of program
- Program can be located on an uppermost floor of the building or the lower floor but not solely in the middle.
- Prefer the ground floor if a horizontal arrangement is dictated.

Next Meeting - Tour Old Perry House -Wednesday, April 17 at 5pm at Old Perry House.