

*Historic Buildings Evaluation  
For Act 250 Review*

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**First Year Student Housing and Dining Project**

**University of Vermont  
Burlington, Vermont  
April 2015**

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INTRODUCTION

Liz Pritchett, Historic Preservation Consultant, has been retained by the University of Vermont (UVM) to review the proposed construction of the First Year Student Housing and Dining Project, which will be located on the south end of the Central Campus Quad. This letter report provides an inventory of the resources in and adjacent to the project area, a determination of their historic and architectural significance, and their eligibility for listing on the State and National Registers of Historic Places. It provides important information for planning purposes required to evaluate the potential effect of the undertaking on historic resources for purposes of Act 250 review under 10 V. S. A. Chapter 151, Criterion 8. Project review identifies potential impacts to historic buildings, structures, historic districts, historic landscapes and settings, and to known or potential archeological resources. The scope of work for this review includes site visits, research of the history and architectural significance of the buildings adjacent to the project area, and review of project plans.

Literature review involved research of Burlington files at the Division for Historic Preservation offices in Montpelier, Vermont, and University of Vermont files in the UVM Campus Planning Services Department and Special Collections. The purpose of the file search is to inventory significant historic sites in the project area that are currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NR) and the Vermont Historic Sites and Structures Survey (also called the State Register/ SR), or have been determined NR or SR eligible by the Vermont Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

The determination of potential effect of the undertaking is that the construction of the First Year Student Housing and Dining Project will have no adverse effect on historic resources in or adjacent to the project area.

SETTING

The project area of the First Year Student Housing and Dining Project comprises the south end of the Central Campus Quad, a grassy, open area that has been previously disturbed by fill, which raised the grade of the lawn area several feet above the central and northern portions of the Quad. The project area is surrounded by the following historic resources: Converse Hall and Rowell Hall to the east, Bailey-Howe Library to the south, Royall Tyler Theater to the southwest, and Fleming Museum to the north. The Chittenden-Buckham-Wills Residential Complex to the east, and Cook Physical Science and Angell Lecture Center to the west, are slated for demolition. The new STEM Building will be constructed on the site of Cook Physical Science and Angell Lecture Center.

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The University Green Historic District is located directly west of Cook Physical Science and Angell Lecture Center. Royall Tyler Theater is a contributing resource in the district. Other buildings also in the district include Old Main, Williams Hall, Billings Library, and Ira Allen Chapel. Fleming Museum, noted at the north end of the Central Campus Quad, has been determined eligible for the State and National Registers. Converse Hall to the east is listed in the State Register and is currently being nominated to the National Register.

A substantial number of resources that were built from the 1960s through 1980 around the Central Campus Quad reflect the period of expansion on campus following World War II. These buildings contribute to the Modernist period of architecture on the UVM campus and Vermont, and include the Brutalist Style buildings Cooke Physical Science, Angell Lecture Center, Rowell Building and Howe Library addition. Bailey Library, Votey Engineering, and Chittenden Hall, Buckham Hall and Wills Hall are representative of the International Style.

The Central Campus Quad is identified in the UVM Campus Master Plan as an important landscape feature. The long, rectangular, green space is primarily an open grass lawn crossed by sidewalks that provide access to the surrounding campus buildings. An important landscape feature in the northern half of the Quad is a grove of trees laid out in a grid pattern, which was designed by nationally acclaimed landscape architect, Dan Kiley. Within the grove of trees are two metal sculptures of female figures. Three other sculptures in this series, called Lamentations, are currently undergoing conservation.

#### DESCRIPTION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF HISTORIC RESOURCES ADJACENT TO THE PROJECT AREA

The following historic resources adjacent to the project area at the south end of the Central Campus Quad have the potential to be affected by the construction of the First Year Student Housing and Dining Project.

##### State Register listed sites:

1. Converse Hall was nominated to the State Register in 2001. This Chateau Style building, an example of High Victorian Gothic architecture in Vermont, was constructed in 1895 by the Wilson Brothers, Philadelphia, PA. It is currently being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.

##### State Register eligible sites:

1. Robert Hull Fleming Museum was designed in the Colonial Revival style by UVM architectural firm of the time: McKim, Mead & White and built in 1931. The later addition to the museum, built in 1983, was designed by Crissman and Solomon Architects. A draft nomination for listing the Fleming Museum in the National Register of Historic Places was prepared in 1998 but never submitted to the Vermont Advisory Council for review and subsequent submission to the National Park Service.

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2. Chittenden-Buckham-Wills (CBW) Residential Complex was designed by McKim, Mead & White and built in 1947. The three flat roof, brick, rectangular plan residential halls were substantially modified in 1982 when the classical entries were removed. These simple buildings reflect a transition from the Colonial Revival to the International Style of architecture. These buildings (along with a fourth residential hall, Coolidge Hall, attached to Southwick Memorial Hall on the Redstone Campus) retain significance primarily as the first known examples of precast concrete panel construction in the country. The three residential halls on the Central Campus Quad are slated for demolition.
3. Bailey/Howe Library was built in two phases. Bailey Library was constructed in 1960 in the International Style following designs by Roland M. Whittier, architect. The Brutalist style west side addition, designed by Robert Burley Associates Architects, was built in 1980.
4. Rowell Hall, designed by the Architects Collaborative in the Brutalist style, was built in 1970.

National Register listed sites:

1. University Green Historic District (entered in the National Register on April 14, 1975) comprises the buildings surrounding the University Green. Only one building in the district is directly adjacent to the First Year Housing and Dining Project site.
  - 1) Royall Tyler Theater, built in 1901 in the Victorian Eclectic Style was designed by Andrews, Jacques and Rantoul as the University gymnasium; the east addition was designed by A. L. Lawrence and built in 1915; in 1973-74 the interior of the building was redesigned by Burlington Associates for use as the University theater.

The nearby historic resources along College Row in the historic district are:

- 2) Old Mill, built in 1829 in the Federal style following designs by John Johnson. It was reconstructed in 1882 in the High Victorian Gothic style, and John J. R. Randall was the architect.
- 3) Lafayette, attached to the rear elevation of Old Mill, was originally built in 1958 following designs by Freeman French Freeman; it was dismantled and reconstructed in 1995 in the Post Modern Style, Northern Architects/ Smith Alvarez Sienkiewicz architects.
- 4) Williams Hall, built in 1896 in the Victorian Eclectic style, was designed by the Wilson Brothers (who also designed Converse Hall).
- 5) Billings Library, built in 1885 in the Richardson Romanesque Style, was designed by Henry H. Richardson.
- 6) Ira Allen Chapel, built in 1925 in the Colonial Revival Style was designed by McKim, Mead and White.

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National Register eligible sites:

1. Robert Hull Fleming Museum was designed in the Colonial Revival style by the architectural firm of the time: McKim, Mead & White and built in 1931. The later addition to the museum, built in 1983, was designed by Crissman and Solomon Architects. A draft nomination for listing the Fleming Museum in the National Register of Historic Places was prepared in 1998 but never submitted to the Vermont Advisory Council for review and subsequent submission to the National Park Service.
2. Converse Hall, which is one of the SR listed sites discussed above, is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places for its historic and architectural merit.
3. The CBW Residential Complex buildings are potentially eligible for listing in the National Register for their innovative engineering significance as the first known example of pre-cast slab construction in the country. Because they will soon be demolished, National Register status will not be pursued.
4. Bailey / Howe Library (1960 & 1980), Votey Engineering (1963), and Rowell (1970), appear eligible for listing in the National Register as contributing to a campus-wide historic district for their significance as part of the Modernist movement of architecture in Vermont.

DESCRIPTION AND POTENTIAL EFFECT OF THE UNDERTAKING

The First Year Student Housing and Dining Project comprises two, long, linear, brick, gable roof buildings that will be located at the south end of the Central Campus Quad. The buildings will contain 699 beds of student housing and a 500 seat dining hall. The eastern building will be a residence hall sited on a diagonal from northwest to southeast, and the western building, both a residence hall and dining hall, is designed as an L-shaped structure. The two buildings will be connected by an elevated walkway, which will span the Green Mountain Walkway as it passes southerly from the Central Campus Quad to the south-facing grass lawn that will be enclosed on the north, east and west by the two First Year Student Housing and Dining Project structures. A second enclosed elevated walkway has been proposed that will extend over Carrigan Drive between the new buildings and Bailey-Howe Library to the south. The dining hall, which is proposed to have a green roof, will be located in the south-east facing angle of the L-shaped, western building, and open air dining terraces are proposed for both the north and south sides of the western building. A service entrance will be located on the west side of the western building.

The architects for the project are WTW, Scott + Partners, and Wagner Hodgson, landscape architect. The two new buildings have been designed to blend with the historic resources in the nearby University Green Historic District, such as Williams Hall and Old Mill, in the selection of red brick for the façade material, and a predominance of traditionally-sized and regularly-spaced window openings. The tall rectangular forms of the buildings also reflect the historic buildings

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along the University Green, and will be compatible with the tall, rectangular massing of the new, brick STEM building which will be constructed on the west side of the Quad. The six story west building, and seven story east building will be just a few feet lower in height than the existing building.

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The two new buildings have been sited on the south end of the Central Campus Quad in a manner that will not block views of Converse Hall to the east when standing at the north side entrances to both new buildings. The walkways along the north elevations of the new buildings are directly in line along the east-west axis with the walkway and proposed restored allee leading to the front (west) entrance of Converse Hall. In addition, the significant landscape element at the northern half of the Central Campus Quad, the Kiley grove of trees, will not be impacted, but rather will be incorporated into the new curve of the Green Mountain Walkway that will extend along the eastern part of the Quad.

The First Year Student Housing and Dining Project is sited a sufficient distance from other historic resources adjacent to the project area, so that the new buildings will not appear too close to these resources. Views of the historic resources will not be compromised by the new construction. For example, the north side of Bailey-Howe Library will remain clearly visible from the south-facing lawn of the western building. Royall Tyler Theater, Rowell Hall, and Converse Hall are sufficiently distant from the new construction so that the historic character and setting of these resources will not be affected by the new construction. In addition, with the removal of the Chittenden-Buckham-Wills Residential Complex, the maintained grass lawn of the Quad will be increased in the area of these former dorms along the east side of the Quad.

## SUMMARY

**Based on research and site visits, in the professional opinion of Liz Pritchett, who has prepared this report, the proposed undertaking to construct the First Year Student Housing and Dining Project will have No Adverse Effect on historic resources.**

**Overall, the First Year Student Housing and Dining Project respects the cultural landscape that is defined by the Central Campus Quad and the historic resources that surround it. Views to the Kiley grove of trees, Fleming Museum and Converse Hall are well preserved and to some degree will be enhanced without the obstruction of the Chittenden-Buckham and Wills Residential Complex. The siting of the new buildings, their massing, details and designs reflect similar features in the surrounding historic resources. Existing circulation patterns now found in the various walkways that join the buildings around the Quad will be retained overall, with some adjustment for the new Green Mountain Walkway.**

**No construction will begin until all permits are in place and the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation has signed off on all plans and elevations for the new First Year Student Housing and Dining Project.**

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PHOTOGRAPHS OF ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES IN THE PROJECT AREA 15 2015

Photos dated May and June 2014

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1. View looking southwest toward Bailey-Howe Library, left, and the rear elevation of Royall Tyler Theater, right. Grass lawn in foreground is the northern portion of the project site at the south end of the Central Campus Quad.



2. Looking north from the project site in the Central Campus Quad toward the Kiley grove of trees and Fleming Museum (center), Kalkin Hall (left), and Chittenden Hall and University of Vermont Health Network (right).

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3. View from the project site looking east toward Wills Hall, Converse Hall is in distance to the left behind the trees, and the University of Vermont Health Network is a far left.



4. View from the project site looking northeast from left to right, Buckham Hall, University of Vermont Health Network, Converse Hall (behind trees), and Wills Hall.

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5. View just east of the project area looking toward Converse Hall (left), Given Hall (center) and Rowell Hall (right).



6. Additional view from the project area toward Chittenden and Buckham Halls (left to right), which will be demolished, and toward the walkways that will be reconfigured somewhat for the Green Mountain Walkway.



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7. Looking north toward the Kiley Grove of trees and Fleming Museum (center), and Kalkin Hall (left).



8. View to northwest from the project site showing Cook Physical Science (left), which will be replaced with the new STEM building, and Kalkin Hall (right).

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9. Looking northwest from area west of Converse Hall toward Cook Physical Science, which will be demolished for the new STEM building. The Central Campus Quad in front of (east of) the new STEM building will be retained. Note the bell tower of Ira Allen Chapel in upper right.



10. View looking west toward the project site on the far left.

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Historic Photographs Courtesy of the UVM Landscape Change Program

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11. Photo dated 1939

Aerial View of the University Green and fields to east, which now comprises the Central Campus Quad. Converse Hall and its allee of trees is in the upper portion of photo east of Old Mill.

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12. Photo dated 1947-1957

Aerial view showing new housing built after World War II. East Hall (now gone) is at the north end of what is now the Central Campus Quad, and the Chittenden-Buckham-Wills Residential Complex is at the east side of the Quad.

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13. Construction of East Hall, 1946? Royall Tyler Theater (formerly the gymnasium) is in the background.



14. Converse Hall, 1939, looking east from what is now the project site.