

CAMPUS

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said, stressing that the area would incorporate arts and humanities buildings like the Colonial Center and the Koger Center and would offer less common research opportunities for undergraduates, in addition to graduate students and faculty.

USC is planning a Dec. 15 groundbreaking for the property across Assembly Street from the Strom Thurmond Center where an abandoned Hardee's restaurant now stands. Two buildings, one primarily composed of laboratory space and the other of offices, will occupy the area.

Former Board of Trustees chairman Mack Whittle, who has worked on the initiative since its proposal two years ago, said cooperation like the S.C. Health Science Collaborative among USC, Clemson University and the Medical University of South Carolina provides the right foundation for partnerships with biomedical and technological corporations.

"We need the business community actively involved to make this happen," he said.

Sorensen said he was pleased with the turnout at both events. Eric Brenner, an adjunct public health professor and physician with the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control, had an opportunity to evaluate the initiative's goals from a university prospective and from that of a state agency.

"The goal is to raise USC out of the middle of the pack and into the top tier in research, and we can all get behind that," he said.

Gordon Baylis of the provost's

office said Tuesday's public forums were the first of a long series of developments in seeing the campus take shape from ideas and planning.

"This is a turning point for the university, it is a turning point for this city and for the state," he said.

The plan to increase research space to compete with top universities in the designated priority fields of nanoscience, health and environmental sciences and alternative energy comes on the heels of an announcement earlier this year of an initiative to procure 500 new tenure-track faculty members and 100 other faculty members for a net gain of 250 faculty additions once members in a state retirement program are considered.

"We need to give the top-notch faculty that we will be recruiting from across the United States the best facilities that they deserve and will, in fact, need," Pastides said.

The research focuses were chosen because, Pastides said, USC doesn't have the resources to be among the top universities in all programs. Instead, USC must target likely areas in which interdisciplinary study is necessary to receive recognition for innovation in those fields and resulting external funding for them.

Administrators also stressed the importance of the vision being shared by the community and that the vision include a city-campus melding in which academic and research buildings will be interlocked with the entertainment and recreational opportunities now offered in an area like the Vista.

"What we're going to do is give the ball to you and have you help us reach the desired result," campus planner Craig Davis told the audience.

Sorensen said he wanted to brief faculty members to show them the role they play in the research campus' development.

USC still has the obstacle of the Life Sciences Act that is stalled in a battle in the S.C. Supreme Court concerning its constitutionality. With the upholding of that law, USC would acquire \$220 million in earmarked funds for research and receive regulatory relief needed for corporations to build on university property.

Students can e-mail ideas for the research campus at researchcampusideas@cmsg.com

Comments on this story? E-mail gamecocknews@gwm.sc.edu

RHA discusses activity fee increase

By JACOB DAVIS
STAFF WRITER

Preston moderator Nicole Modéen updated the RHA Senate on the ongoing talks with the administration about raising student activity fees next year in the senate's final meeting this semester.

Modéen and others, including Senator Patrick Walsh have been speaking with administration officials including Housing and Resident Services official Tim Coley.

There is a proposal in the works to make the student activity fee \$20, a \$5 increase for residents in "large residence halls," those with more than 250 residents.

The proposal would also create an additional \$30 Resident Student Education Fee, which would provide money to campus RAs and RHDs for activities. The plan is just in the early stages and meetings will continue next year as Coley has asked to speak to the RHA Senate body.

While attendance problems

sometimes prevented the RHA senate from conducting business last year, attendance remained strong at the meeting Tuesday in Gambrell Hall.

This year the senate maintained a quorum at every meeting and also set a personal attendance record.

RHA President Adam Hark, Vice President Michael Dixon and adviser Sean McGreevey, among others, thanked the senate for their hard work and reminded the senators that there

was more important work to be done next semester.

"In the past we've had problems maintaining the energy and enthusiasm, but this group has done a great job. I hope you all remember your commitments to your constituents because there is more work to be done," McGreevey said.

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