

# COMPROMISE BRINGS NO CHANGE

The campus development committee (CDC) said yes, the building committee or the Board of Governors said yes, and Friday, the Board itself said yes; but the department of advanced education said no, or at least, not yet.

Although the three campus bodies reaffirmed an earlier decision to place the proposed business administration and commerce (BA-C) building in front of the Tory building in the Arts court, the provincial government's recently announced capital grant to the University seems to have relieved that site for at least another year.

The provincial grant of \$16 million for capital costs will "allow approved capital building, to continue, but there will be no new major construction . . . until enrolment trends rise sharply," minister of advanced education Jim Foster said in a statement announcing the grants.

In the CDC hearings on the site of the proposed building held before the grants were announced, vice-president (planning and development) W.D. Neal stressed the necessity for compromise in discussing the issue which had been raised by outspoken opponents of the proposed site.

The compromise chosen by the campus development committee was to decide to leave the building where it had originally been planned.

Much of the discussion at the hearings dealt with a detailed brief submitted by Peter Smith, professor of Geography, who opposed the site.

Smith argued that not enough attention had been given to the impact of the building on the Tory building and the Arts Court when the site was chosen.

The benefits of an enclosed walkway, which he said was the only justification for building on the Arts Court site, and relief of pedestrian traffic in Tory, were put forward "with no consideration of the potential costs," he said.

Costs cited by Smith included occupying offices and classrooms in Tory whose windows faced directly onto the new building, an increase in traffic through the second floor of Tory with the resultant noise, lack of privacy and loss of space to departments, including Geography, which have offices there.

He also argued that it was "absurd to reduce open space (in the Arts Court) while increasing the population of the area by 1,500 students," the planned student population of the new building.

He cautioned campus planners against getting "locked in" to single solutions to design problems.

Richard Baird, the associate professor of political science whose letter-writing campaign sparked the movement to reconsider the site, protested the planned location on aesthetic grounds.

Placing the BA-C building in front of Tory would, he maintained, "carry on some distressing aspects of the planning which has gone on here. For me, this campus is a demoralizing place to be—and I'm sure it is for students as well."

Leaping to the defense of the campus planners, J.F. Forrest, professor of English and a member of the campus development committee, said Baird's comments to the press "put my control under some considerable strain."

"Such statements do the university no good and slander those who have spent a great deal of time trying to do planning," Forrest said.

Also defending campus planning and the proposed site was Jim Humphries, a grad student and chairman of the SUB housing commission, the body responsible for the construction of HUB.

The walkway issue was not peripheral to the discussion as suggested by Smith, but a "good, solid argument for the present site of the building," Humphries said. "If the building is not built, undergraduate students will suffer."

Disparaging the consideration of aesthetics in the discussion, Humphries related his experience in posing a matter for aesthetic judgment to seven individuals "with aesthetic training."

Only two of the seven agreed in their judgment, and the remaining five reached five different conclusions, Humphries said.

The only rupture in the polite facade of the hearings came with the presentation of a petition by Greg Teal, a second-year arts student who led a student campaign against the site.

Teal said that among the 1,020 signatures were nearly 50 from the department of history, 25 from sociology and 25 from HUB, all groups to be affected by the building. Forrest and Neal launched a barrage of questions at Teal challenging the amount of information petition signers had available to them in making their decision to oppose the site, and the method of distribution of the petition.

Abandoning the non-participatory role proper to news reporters, Terri Jackson, Gateway reporter covering the hearings, told the committee that never, except in meetings of the Board of Governors, had she seen "such contempt for students displayed."

She charged that the challenges to the petition, particularly those of Forrest, were "based on the premise that to be a student is to be uninformed."

Forrest later replied that he had always maintained a "very happy relationship with students," but was concerned that the value of the petition was "diminished" by the way in which it had been circulated.

More opposition to the site came from Peter Boothroyd representing the Urban Design Group, and John Owen, an environmental consultant.

Barton Myers and A.J. Diamond, the architects responsible for the university's long range plan were in Edmonton to defend the siting of the building.

Diamond devoted most his remarks to the Smith brief, contending that other briefs made in "patently obvious that the plans had not been read."

He said that if the building were not built in the proposed location, it "would encroach elsewhere." The site was chosen to "stimulate ease of intercommunication" of the users of the building and departments in Tory.

The amount of open space left in the Arts Court after construction of the building will be comparable to Trinity Great Court at Cambridge and the Place Vendome in Paris, he noted.

He termed the desire to see coordination in the styles of campus buildings "simply a nostalgia for a medieval campus." He said he was pleased that the university did not "dictate" building style to architects designing campus structures. tj

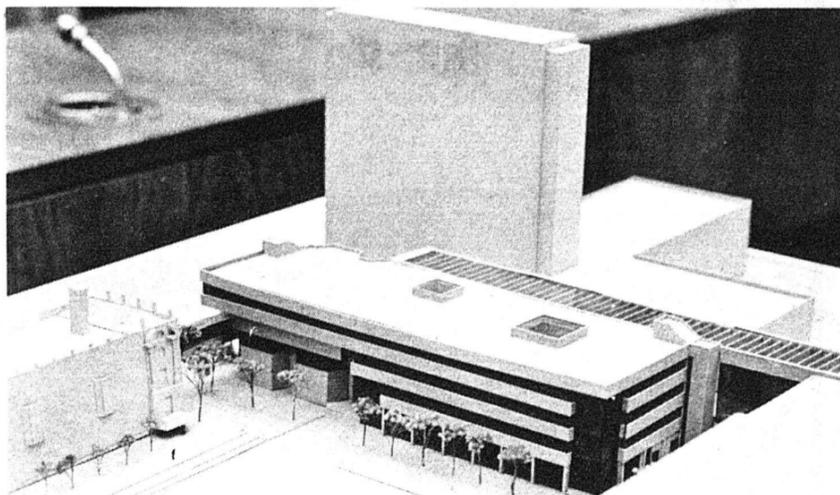


photo by Peter Johnstone

A model of the proposed Business Administration and Commerce building is shown on the site recently reaffirmed by the campus development committee as the site of future construction. The old Arts building is shown at left, the Tory building directly behind the new building, and HUB at right.



The area christened "Garneau Green" by campus planner A. J. Diamond and promptly rechristened "Garneau Gravel" by the observers gallery, is shown here in its present state: parking lot. It was one of the areas on which the BA-C building would have "encroached" had it not been placed in the Arts Court.

## council may revamp exec.

The special "informal" meeting of students' council held last Saturday at Rob Spragin's apartment was intended to be a vehicle for a serious re-examination of students' council priorities and directions. Not surprisingly, it failed to generate a dramatic clarification of the SU's future but it did recommend ways to resolve some of the nagging problems which have faced this year's council.

Called as a result of the blow-up between Gerry Riskin and the four members of his executive, the meeting recommended that the executive be enlarged by the addition of three councillors who would serve on a rotating basis for a term of one month. If the recommendations are passed at a formal meeting, the five executive members will be retained, but each will run for office individually. Last year, the president and executive vice-president ran on the same

ticket.

Other recommendations issuing from the meeting included:

- a split responsibility for the budget. "The present students' council will formulate only the administrative budget for next year. The incoming Students' Council will formulate their own budget

for services."

- to support "in principle the philosophy" of Operation Placement. The SU should act as consultants for students organizing summer work projects.

- to call one extra meeting a month to deal exclusively with representations.

## Beal heads CUP

Bob Beal, last year's Gateway editor, now a CUP field worker, has been elected next year's president of Canadian University Press.

The choice, made at the CUP Conference held in Winnipeg over the holidays, reinforced the expulsion of the Gateway from the union.

The expulsion, CUP's consistent policy to recognize only those student newspapers which practise staff democracy, was officially endorsed at the conference. CUP has refused to recognize the Gateway, due to last years

appointment of an editor by the Students' Union.

The Poundmaker has been recognized as a member of CUP and as such is entitled to belong to the Youthstream ad co-op, which gives that paper an access to national ads and hence much needed funds that the Gateway will not have.

Incidentally, the Gateway was not the only youth paper to have the fickle finger of expulsion pointed at it. Vancouver's Georgia Straight was also expelled partially due to its centralized control and hence lack of staff democracy and also due to its recent "soviet" attitudes. ic