

The future of the SUB

In the years since the SUB's construction there have been numerous calls for expansion as it has become more difficult for the building to accommodate its users. An obvious example of the space inadequacy is the SUB cafeteria. As anyone who tries to find a table at lunch can attest to, it is simply too small to meet the needs of students. There are approximately 115 tables/460 chairs in the cafeteria. If only full-time UNB undergraduates went to the cafeteria, there would still only be enough seats for 6.6% of them. While not everyone uses the cafeteria at the same time, a large number of students, faculty and staff do use it, or attempt to use it, around noon and the facility is unable to accommodate them.

In total, there are 13,000 students, faculty and staff from UNB and St. Thomas on the College Hill campus on a regular basis, all of whom should have access to the Student Union Building.

Over the past thirty years, there has been an annual average increase of 3.7% in full-time undergraduates at UNB, with an increase from 3,814 when the SUB opened in 1969 to 7,012 in 1992/93.

STUDENT SURVEY

In the fall of 1992 an opinion survey was administered to UNB students to determine their level of support for an expansion of the SUB. This survey is considered to be statistically accurate with approximately 10% of full-time UNB undergraduates taking part. The sample contains respondents from all faculties and across all years. The results were favourable with 57% of students responding that they agreed expansion was necessary, 18% disagreeing, and 24% undecided. Furthermore, 58% of the students indicated that the SUB is too small for the UNB/STU campus. This survey also indicated the level of importance students placed on Student Union services, UNB Administration services, and other facilities being included in a student centre. The general feeling among students was that more services should be centralized in the one building, making the SUB a focal point of the campus for students.

A number of potential facilities to be included in an expanded SUB were indicated in the student survey. Many of these represent services which are lacking on the UNB campus. The inclusion of group study labs, for instance, would be a great help for students, with the increasing amount of group-related work in courses. Many respondents also felt the need for more conference rooms, as the few currently in the SUB can often be difficult to book because they are in such high demand by so many groups.

Students indicated that they strongly supported the centralization of UNB Student Services in an expanded SUB. The Dean of Students, Counselling Services, Health Services, Awards Office, Student Placement, and satellites of the Registrar Office and the UNB Post Office are all facilities which students would like to see in the building. Other facilities which had highly favourable ratings were the inclusion of a full-service bank, a pharmacy, the UNB Bookstore, and the Writing and Study Skills Lab.

Another feature requested by a large number of students was increased office space for clubs and societies. Currently, these groups have very limited space, if they are fortunate enough to have space at all. Both international student organizations and graduate students need a central location so as to provide service to more students and to feel they are part of the UNB community. One of the greatest goals of SUB expansion is to create more interaction among students of different faculties, cultures, and age groups. The UNB campus undoubtedly represents the most diverse community in New Brunswick, and as such it has incredible potential for improved mutual understanding.

ACCESSIBILITY

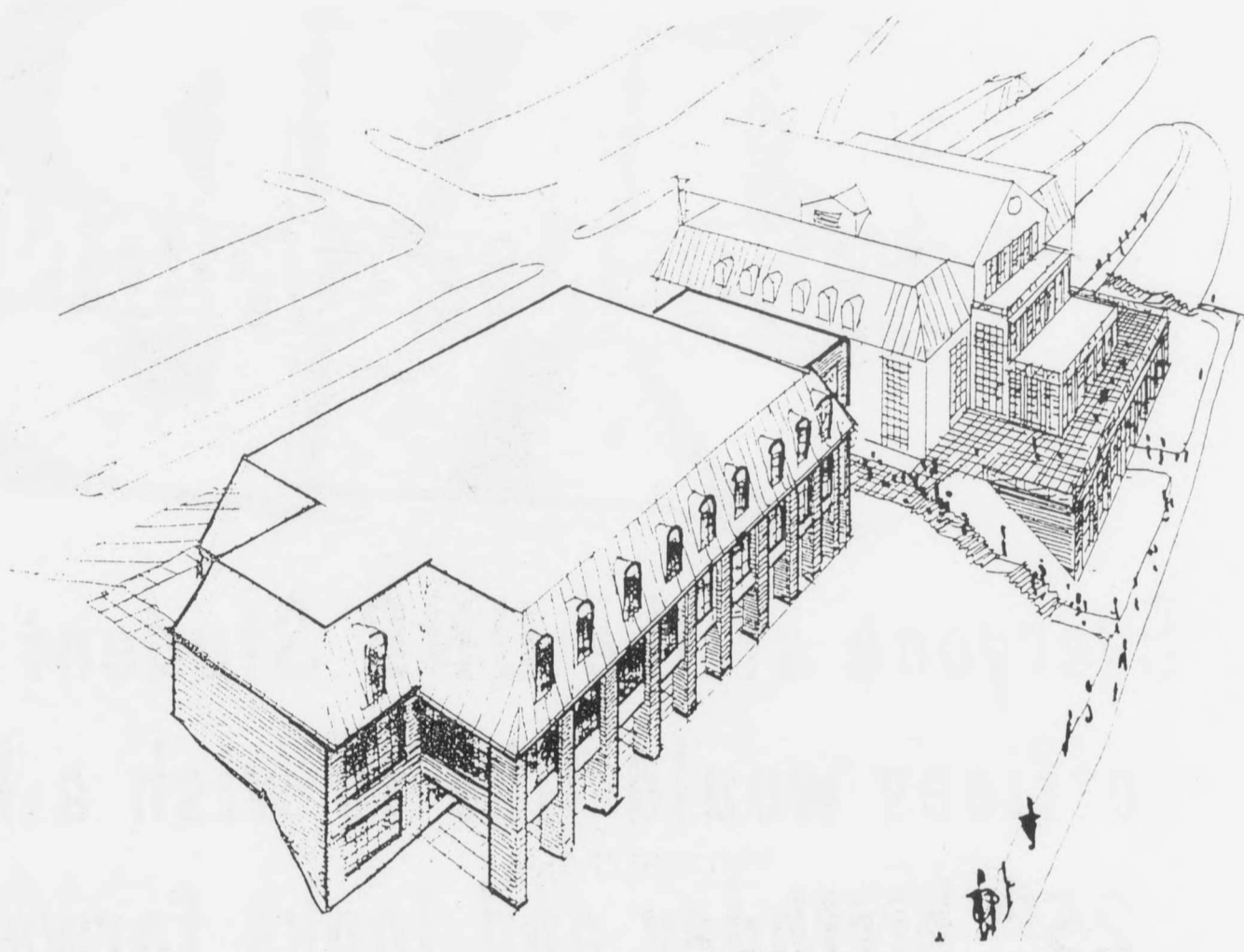
One of the most serious concerns about the current Student Union Building is its lack of accessibility for students with physical disabilities. This issue has been criticized since the SUB first opened in 1969, and the criticism has continued to present. The second and third floors of the west wing, on which the UNB and STU Student Union Offices, and CHSR-fm are located, are completely inaccessible for students with mobility difficulties and movement from floor to floor in the remaining sections of the building can only be done through a service elevator (which is in the cafeteria kitchen on the first floor). As the awareness of human rights issues has increased, so has the realization that there must be accessibility without unnecessary restriction.

"...every individual should have an equal opportunity with other individuals to make for himself or herself the life that he or she is able and wishes to have, consistent with his or her duties and obligations as a member of society, without being hindered in or prevented from doing so by discriminatory practices based on...disability..."

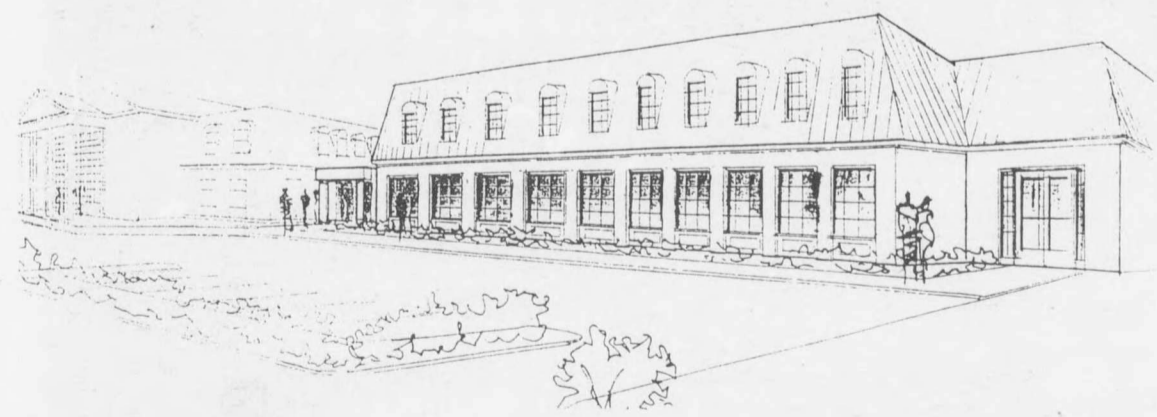
-Section 2, Canadian Human Rights Act
The issue of accessibility is also an

important reason for greater centralization of student services, which are currently located all across the campus. While some of these buildings may be accessible, the campus is not well-suited for an individual with a physical disability to move from one to another. Thus, it is very important to create a student centre that is accessible, and that has several student services located within it. The recent Report of the Task Force on the Quality of Student Life at the Fredericton Campus of UNB indicated concern "...about those students who have been admitted to the University but who have difficulty accessing the full life of a student because of...personal disability..."

In February students will be asked to vote in a referendum to determine the future of the SUB. The question will ask students if they are willing to contribute \$5.00 per year until the opening of the SUB, and \$25.00 thereafter. The initial fee is low because these students will not be immediately benefiting from the expansion, but a positive result from the referendum will indicate that students are willing to take the initiative and will remain committed to the project. While the \$25.00 fee may seem high, it is important to remember that students voted in favour of a \$15.00 fee in 1967, when they knew the building would not be completed for at least one or two years.



ARCHITECTS CONCEPTUAL DRAWING OF SUB EXPANSION



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CONGRATULATIONS
SUB
ON YOUR
25TH
ANNIVERSARY

