

NEWS

What type of residence hall would you want to live in? Project management firm sizes up potential new options for new dormitory on campus.

CALLIE JENNINGS
Staff News Writer

The spring 2016 semester just began, but renovations for old residence halls are already in the works, as well as tentative plans for a brand new residence hall, hopefully ready to open fall of 2018.

"It is still a proposal. In fact, we just presented some of it to the University Planning Council, or UPC, on Thursday," said Nancy Yeager, associate vice chancellor for Student Affairs Administration. "The most important thing is that this needs to be a residence hall that students want to live in. I always want to make sure that the student is at the center of our decisions."

Brailsford & Dunlavy, a program management firm, conducted a market study last spring both on and off campus to determine what type of residence halls students want. Brailsford & Dunlavy considered overall demand, price comparisons, peer reviews with other UNC systems and student surveys, Yeager said. Additionally, they conducted individual meetings with students, staff and some faculty in order to generate a report showcasing the need for a new residence hall.

"They felt that we could easily accommodate a 300-bed residence hall, but this time what our students are looking for are apartments," Yeager said. "We don't have any apartments on campus, and that is one area where we are at a competitive disadvantage with the rest of the schools in our system."

If an apartment-style residence hall were built, each unit would likely have full kitchens, four bedrooms and two bathrooms, or some variation of these options. Initial thoughts from Yeager also gear this hall to be a primary upperclassman residence hall, not for freshmen.

"None of the design has happened yet," Yeager said. "So, what the buildings would look like, whether or not it would be multiple smaller buildings as opposed to one large building, is still undecided."

Ideas about the new residence hall, however, have been vast, such as the creation of a living learning community or year-round housing, Yeager said. Additionally, the possibility of opening them to faculty for summer use, having parking near the buildings and the overall level of sustainability have been considered.

The board of trustees already approved the new residence hall proposal, followed by advanced planning approval by the board of governors. Currently, the UPC, comprising students, faculty and staff, is reviewing the 13 bids received from an open ad. From there, the design process can begin.

"The UPC are sending me their evaluations, and I am consolidating them to invite between six to eight bids to give presentations," Yeager said. "From that group, the UPC would narrow it down again to three in priority order, which would be sent back to the board of trustees for their Febru-

Section Editor: Larisa Karr
lakarr@unca.edu

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The Blue Banner
Spring 2015
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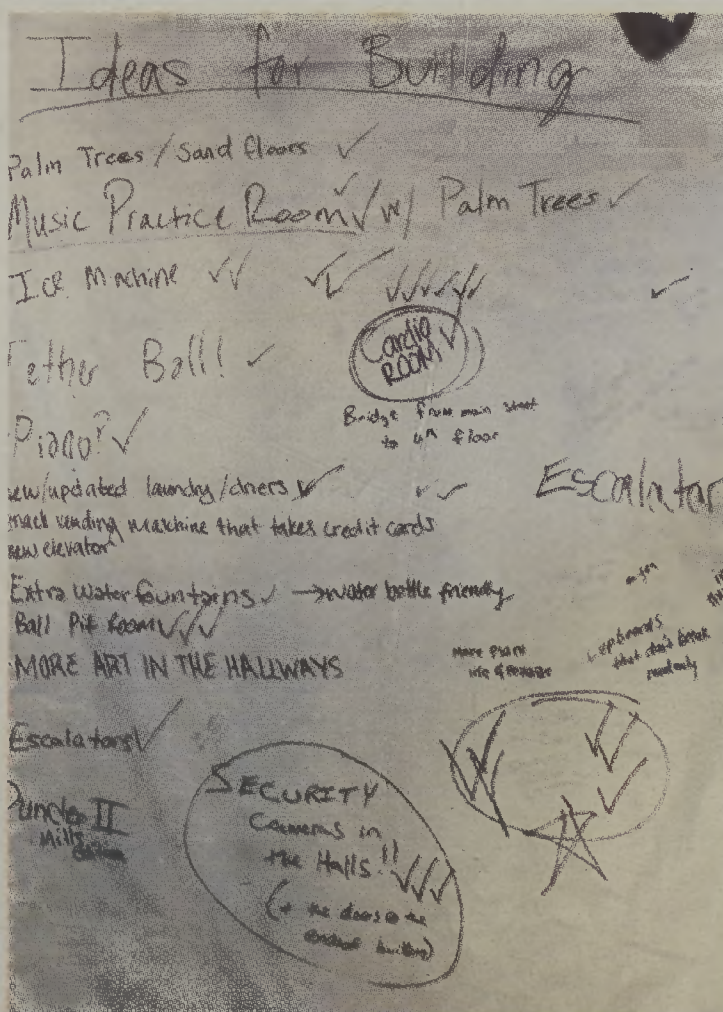
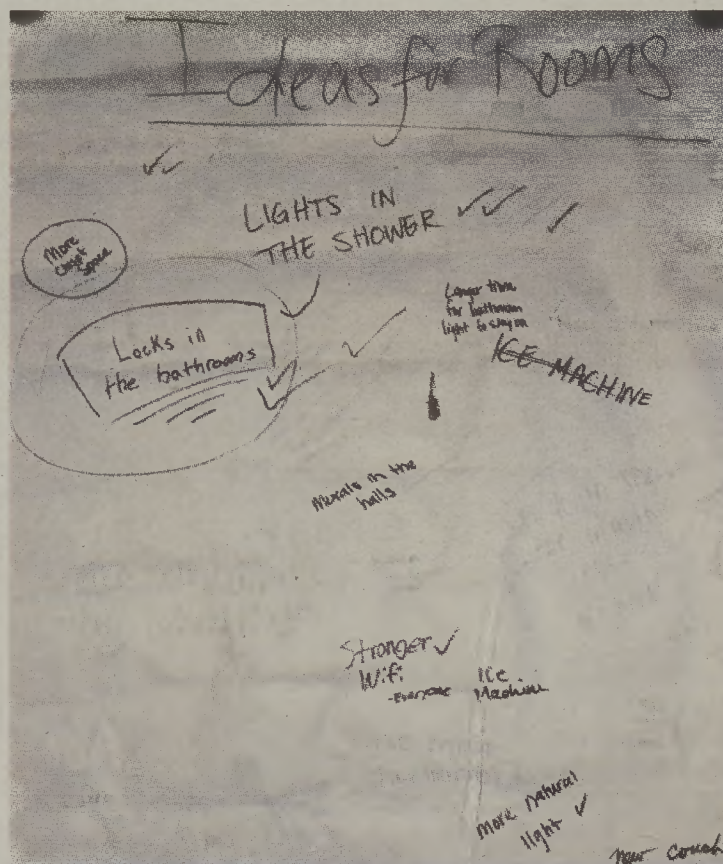
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Photos by Callie Jennings - Staff News Writer
NEW BEGINNINGS: Mills Hall encouraged students to write any and all ideas they had for upgrades. Some, like new filtered water fountains, have already been added.