

## KANEKO COMMONS DESIGN PROGRAM

### Introduction

The design program that follows is the result of two successive efforts: the *First Year Commons Physical and Program Design Committees* of 2003 and the *Residential Commons Steering Committee* in 2004. Although the idea of a first year commons has been abandoned in favor of a four-year integrated commons, much of the thinking about what residential commons at Willamette should be remained valid and was carried forward into this year's effort.

The purpose of this design program is to describe the Kaneko Commons project with sufficient specificity to enable the architect to prepare a concept for additions to Kaneko Hall that will meet the intentions of the *Residential Commons Steering Committee* (RCSC). The substance of this program has been drawn primarily from the deliberations of the RCSC which has been meeting regularly since early summer. The purpose of the committee has been to review and prioritize the many options that have emerged for the organization, design and management of campus housing configured in five residential commons.

Two important objectives of the change from conventional halls of residence to residential commons are creation of stronger academic and social communities at Willamette, and increasing the numbers of juniors and seniors who choose to reside on campus. Another important objective is to continue the Greek tradition at Willamette as a part of the residential commons concept.

Kaneko Hall was selected as the first building to be converted into a residential commons for several reasons:

- A large addition to Kaneko Hall can be made without displacing other beds;
- Learning and community spaces are already included in Kaneko Hall;
- The existing configuration of rooms allows for phasing of improvements;
- Financing of improvements may be easier at Kaneko Hall than at other planned residential commons;
- Strengthening of the east campus is an objective of the master plan;
- Kaneko Commons could provide an opportunity to showcase good sustainable design and practices.

### Sustainable Design

The University has long supported principles of sustainability in the design and operation of its facilities. A substantial addition to Kaneko Hall offers an opportunity to make a clear, physical statement on Willamette's commitment to sustainable materials, systems and practices. It can establish a precedent in both sustainable design, and in quality design and construction for subsequent residential commons.

The Kresge Foundation has developed a sophisticated 'green' design process that includes a number of carefully designed steps designed to ensure that all opportunities to achieve sustainability are considered. One such step is the 'eco-charrette', which establishes a collaborative approach to planning, project team formation, and establishment of goals within the residential commons mission. It includes consideration of site, building orientation, building skin, lighting, water management and parking. The first eco-charrette was held this week.

A product of the eco-charrette will be a statement of vision, and a set of performance goals for the project. The eco-charrette includes people from each constituency within the University, as well as design professionals and representatives of the Energy Trust and the Oregon Office of Energy. The eco-charrette orients the project team in the methodologies for tracking and attaining an optimally sustainable commons. The eco-charrette will set the scene for a more focused effort during design for attainment of LEED certification.

### **Housing Types**

Existing Kaneko housing is mostly in the form of double rooms with fixed furniture. In time some of those doubles could be converted to singles, and some community spaces that have been converted to student rooms could revert to communal uses. Thus the shortfall is in housing that is likely to appeal to juniors and seniors, so that is the focus of new housing that is to round out the Kaneko Commons.

Observation and research at Willamette and at other comparable colleges and universities across the country have persuaded the committee that suites and apartments are the preferred form of housing among juniors and seniors, and have the greatest likelihood of persuading them to remain resident on campus. Some members of the committee observed that six people in a suite or apartment is too many, and that four is probably preferable, although student representatives said that they would accept six if there were significant cost savings in doing so. Because whatever we build now must be able to compete effectively with peer institutions twenty years from now, four person suites and apartments with single bedrooms, and one bathroom for every two beds will be the norm.

Food service facilities in Kaneko Hall would be insufficient to serve the whole commons. Choice in dining options is recognized as an important issue for all residents, especially juniors and seniors. There should be the option to prepare one's own food, the ability to eat at odd hours, and a choice of venues for most meals. There should also be an opportunity for the entire commons to dine together on special occasions, and perhaps more frequently. Thus there should be a large space capable of seating the entire population of the commons and some guests, and there should be a finishing kitchen capable of serving that many full meals. The finishing kitchen should also have the capability of serving breakfast and lunch, including hot items, to a smaller number, approximating a third of the commons population. There should be a separate kitchen

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available to students to cook their own meals, with access to two multi-purpose rooms that can be set up as dining rooms. The Kaneko Commons finishing kitchen, the communal student kitchen and the kitchens in each apartment would supplement services already provided at Goudy Commons, Montag and the Bistro.

An important aspect of the residential commons is the idea of active mentoring. Each commons is to have a resident faculty mentor who will promote both examples to and involvement of students at every level in the community of the commons as well as in the University as a whole. The faculty mentor will have a residence that is either part of, or adjacent to the residential commons. He or she will also maintain an office in the commons in which meetings with RAs and others will be held.

In addition to the faculty mentor's facilities, each residential commons is to have spaces that can accommodate social and learning activities - both group study and more formal seminars. Kaneko Hall already includes a number of seminar rooms and other teaching spaces, so a new wing or wings built to supplement existing housing need not include these.

Entrance to the residential commons will be important in the ways in which it functions socially. It should provide the opportunity to socialize, but should also enable students to come and go without running a gauntlet of people with whom they would rather not linger. Depending on the configuration of the housing addition, the existing main entrance into the south wing of Kaneko Hall could, with little modification, serve this role. There will, however, be pressure for a private short cut, similar to that provided by the door at the west end of the existing south wing.

**Kaneko Residential Commons Draft Design Program**

The following list of components has been agreed upon by the committee, but consensus has not been reached on the number or quantity of some. Also, as the Kresge protocol is to be followed in ensuring a 'green' building, each program item should be reviewed in that light before being fully defined.

- New construction adjoining Kaneko Hall at each floor should include approximately 175 beds, mostly in suites and apartments comprising two, four or six beds each. Some freshman and sophomore rooms may be interspersed among them. Noise proofing would be important close to the railroad.
- Housing construction should allow for future construction of additional beds.
- Suites, apartments (apartments have kitchens, suites do not) and accommodation for freshman and sophomores should be arranged in floors or sets that function as identifiable community subsets of 18 to 24 students each. Interspersion of accommodation for students from all four years throughout the commons is important to the success of the program.
- Circulation patterns and incidental meeting and study spaces should be configured to encourage community. Buildings should be configured to minimize circulation-only space outside the suites and apartments. However,

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- incidental seating and meeting areas, preferably with natural light, should be included in general circulation areas for study and social purposes.
- In addition to incidental study spaces, there should be some study rooms, suitable for group and individual study. One or more of these should be sized and furnished to accommodate seminars.
  - There should be multi-purpose rooms: two of them usable as dining rooms with the communal student kitchen, one equipped with mirrors and a floor suitable for dance, another with unfinished walls and floor suitable for art projects, and one quiet space furnished for meditation and worship. One of these rooms should be equipped with a piano.
  - Public and private spaces should be well provided with power outlets and data ports on a port per pillow basis. In addition, rooms should be equipped with key card systems.
  - Living spaces in suites and apartments should generally be about 12'x 12', depending on configuration.
  - Bedrooms should be no smaller than 10'x 12' to provide flexibility in furnishing arrangements.
  - Bedrooms and living spaces should all have natural light and ventilation.
  - Bathrooms should be shared by no more than two bedrooms.
  - Two apartments should be included for one or two professional supervisors, or one RA and one for visiting faculty.
  - Housing for the Faculty Mentor could be free-standing or attached in some way to the commons. It should have its own private entrance, as well as one oriented towards the commons. The kitchen should be larger than a typical domestic kitchen so that events can be catered there. A large dining room and living room should be included, as well as private family space. If possible, there should be a private back yard and a garage. There should be one or two study rooms, and three or four bedrooms. There also needs to be storage space and a private living space for family. Two stories could accomplish a degree of family privacy. This house might be across the street. Noise proofing would be important close to the railroad.
  - The cafeteria space in Kaneko Hall should be enlarged sufficiently to seat the full Kaneko Commons population for a communal meal. This will require a new and larger finishing kitchen with truck access and service yard, with appropriate access for delivery of food from Goudy. The finishing kitchen should be capable of producing hot breakfast and lunch for at least a third of the Kaneko Commons population. Equipment should enable continued preparation of Japanese cuisine.
  - The large cafeteria space should be equipped with a movable stage, and with fixed theater lights and sound fixtures to enable multiple uses. There should be adjacent storage for chairs, tables, the movable stage, and other equipment.
  - Storage space will be needed in the commons for each of the following:
    - Student personal belongings over the summer;

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- Program equipment for student organizations (sports equipment, sound systems, event decorations, stage components etc.);
  - Extra furniture for teaching and living spaces;
  - Indoor bicycle storage;
  - Recycling containers
  - o Closets will be needed for:
    - Washers, driers and other self-service laundry equipment;
    - Janitor's equipment and supplies;
    - Telecom equipment on each floor.
  - o An adjacent paying field for recreation, intramural events and outdoor celebrations would be desirable.
  - o A sufficient number of secure parking spaces will be needed for additional population in Kaneko Commons, and to replace spaces displaced by the new building. These will remove parking demand from the rest of campus.
- Consider adding:
- o A separate, central location for student mailboxes as well as a space to receive packages (a mini mail room).