



**Campus Master Plan Ad Hoc Committee Meeting**  
**Thursday, October 17, 2024**  
**FIU, Modesto A. Maidique Campus, Graham Center 243**

**MINUTES**

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**1. Call to Order and Chair's Remarks**

The Florida International University Board of Trustees' Campus Master Plan Ad Hoc Committee meeting was called to order by Committee Chair Natasha Lowell on Thursday, October 17, 2024, at 11:01 AM.

General Counsel Carlos B. Castillo conducted roll call of the Campus Master Plan Ad Hoc Committee members and verified a quorum. Present were Trustees Natasha Lowell, *Committee Chair*; and Alan Gonzalez, *Committee Vice Chair (Zoom)*; Provost and Executive Vice President Elizabeth M. Bejar; and Vice President for Operations and Safety and Chief of Staff Javier I. Marques; and Trustees Francesca Casanova; Marc D. Sarnoff; and Roger Tovar, *Board Chair*.

The following Board members were also in attendance: Noël C. Barengo and Dean C. Colson.

Committee Chair Natasha Lowell welcomed the Committee members, Trustees, and members of the University administration. She also welcomed faculty, staff, members of the University community, and the general public. She commented that Trustee Alan Gonzalez, and consultants Krisan Osterby and Stuart Isaac were joining virtually. She detailed that the goal of the meeting was to reach consensus on the potential site of the Aquatic Center and to release the draft of the Campus Master Plan for the second round of public hearings. She added that the expectation is for the 2015-2035 Campus Master Plan to be presented to the Board of Trustees for approval in November 2024, after the conclusion of the public hearings.

**2. Discussion Items** *(No Action Required)*

**2.1 Introduction and Meeting Goals**

Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration and Chief Financial Officer Aime Martinez thanked all who were in attendance at the meeting and those who have participated in the Campus Master Plan process. Sr. VP and CFO Martinez shared the goals of the meeting which included: 1) reviewing public comments and endorsing proposed responses, 2) approving the Aquatic Center site for placement in Campus Master Plan Update, 3) recommending approval of the 2015-2035 Campus Master Plan Update to the FIU Board of Trustees at the November 2024 meeting.

**2.2 Recap of Process, Timeline and Next Steps**

Associate Vice President for Facilities Management John Cal thanked the Committee members, and Trustees for their involvement in the planning process. He commented that in June 2023, the recommendation was made to form a Campus Master Plan Ad Hoc Committee and noted that there have been four (4) meetings since. He detailed that land use and available building sites have been

reviewed and that the Campus Master Plan has been aligned with the University's Strategic Plan. He commented that the goal of the fifth meeting would be to decide the placement of the Aquatic Center on the Campus Master Plan. He provided an overview of the agenda and meeting goals. He reviewed the master plan requirements including the associated regulatory regimen, rationale, and key parameters.

Mr. Cal provided a review of the master plan requirements. He shared the next steps and timeline associated with the Campus Master Plan. He noted that the first public hearings and the 90-day comment period were held. He reviewed the planning scope and timeline, explaining that the second round of public hearings will take place on November 1, 2024. He advised that the intention is to bring the plan forward for Board of Trustees approval on November 21, 2024. He mentioned that there will be a review of the public comments received, as well as a presentation of renderings and videos to visualize the potential sites of the Aquatic Center.

### **2.3 Summary of Public Comments**

Krisan Osterby from DLR Group, shared that the plan was reviewed with the respective public agencies and that there were no major contentions with the proposed inventory analysis and improvements to campus. She presented the major themes and proposed responses associated with the public comments. She detailed that the Bureau of Community Planning and Growth/Division of Community Development commented on the 2015-2035 Campus Master Plan date and updating the date/projections in the inventory and analysis tables. She shared that the comments from Miami-Dade County Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) included advocating for connectivity, sustainability, and pedestrian prioritization. She added that comments from the Miami-Dade County Department of Solid Waste Management related to solid waste and stormwater management. Ms. Osterby shared that comments advocating for the Planetarium site approved in 2015 and voicing concerns for the aquatic center on the Graham Center Quad location, lighting, and campus conflicts were provided by Professor James Webb, FIU College of Arts, Sciences and Education. She advised that additional comments were received after the public comment period deadline and that said comments were reviewed.

### **2.4 Aquatic Center Vision Study: Conceptual Designs and Cost Models**

Mr. Cal advised that the Committee members were provided with hard copies of read-ahead materials related to the Aquatic Center Concept Study. He presented the two (2) proposed sites for the Aquatic Center: 1) Graham Center Quad and 2) Parking Lot 4. He provided an overview of the impacts of the placement of an aquatic center behind the Graham Center, noting the future Graham Center expansion. He explained that approximately one-third of the Graham Center Quad would be taken up by the Aquatic Center and that there would be an impact to the tree canopy at that location. He presented a concept site plan and floor plan of the Aquatic Center detailing that it would contain a 2-story building of approximately 18,000 square feet, facing west. He shared image and video renderings of the proposed Aquatic Center at the Graham Center Quad site.

Trustee Noël C. Barengo shared the concerns of the Faculty Senate members. He shared that the Faculty Senate opposes the construction of the Aquatic Center at the potential site between the Graham Center and Observatory. He detailed the concerns related to the impact on the Stoker Astro Science Center, campus safety, and loss of strategic green space. In response to Trustee Barengo, Mr. Cal advised that the emergency access route has been taken into consideration and accommodated in the plan.

Mr. Cal presented the Parking Lot 4 site. He noted that there is adjacency to the Blue Parking Garage and surface lots, also allowing potential for parking spaces on-site. He presented the concept site plan, noting the orientation of the pool and confirming that it meets the requirements for divers. He noted that the dive platform would be placed at the southern end of the pool. He added that utilities would need to be extended to the site. He pointed out that a building can also be accommodated on the site. He commented that there is maximum visibility of the pool to the community due to its location. He presented the floor plan detailing that there is more deck space than the Graham Center Quad site, a roof-top observation deck, and that audience members will not be facing west so they will not be affected by the direct sunlight. He commented that both site options have a dry land pavilion for the divers and a full-dive complex.

Trustee Marc D. Sarnoff inquired as to the placement of the bulkheads in the pool and the length of the pool. Stuart Isaac from Isaac Sports Group explained that there are two (2) bulkheads to create different length configurations of the pool. He added that it provides more flexibility to create different courses for competition and training. Mr. Cal noted that it is the same pool configuration as the proposed Graham Center Quad site. Mr. Cal presented a video of the renderings of the Aquatic Center at the Parking Lot 4 site. Ms. Osterby explained that the proposed building is included in the plan because it can help satisfy the space needs projections overall for the campus through 2035. She also added that it is reflected as a multipurpose space. In response to Trustee Dean C. Colson, Mr. Cal explained that the support facility adjacent to the pool could be made taller to accommodate programming. He also commented that using the space for dorms would not be ideal due to the times that the swim team conducts practice. Mr. Isaac remarked that the building height could impact sunlight on the pool area.

Mr. Cal pointed out where the sidewalks leading to the sites are located. Committee Chair Lowell asked about the access point to the Fair Grounds. Vice President for Operations and Safety and Chief of Staff Javier I. Marques explained that the access point is pedestrian only. Ms. Osterby also advised that there are sidewalks along the 16<sup>th</sup> Street entrance to the campus, emphasizing that there is a recommendation to include a pedestrian entrance to the dry deck of the Aquatic Center. Trustee Barengo expressed support for the placement of the Aquatic Center at the Parking Lot 4 site.

Board Chair Tovar commented on the importance of placing the pool in a central location on campus to facilitate a vibrant campus experience. Trustee Colson mentioned that the placement of the pool on Parking Lot 4 would likely be used mostly by student athletes as opposed to the general student population. Board Chair Tovar expressed concerns regarding accomplishing building the pool. University President Kenneth A. Jessell explained that the goal of the Campus Master Plan is to have the facility on campus and that a decision to build the pool is not being made during the meeting. He added that the Campus Master Plan allows the community to reflect on how the placement of the pool on campus affects infrastructure, traffic, or utilities. He delineated that having the pool on the Campus Master Plan is beneficial because once the Aquatic Center is ready to be built, would already be approved. President Jessell detailed that other pool configuration options can be explored and that the most important factor is to reach consensus on a site on the Campus Master Plan.

### **2.5 Wrap-up and Confirmation of Ad Hoc Committee Direction on Major Comments**

Trustee Colson commented that for the purpose of the master plan, the Parking Lot 4 site seems less disruptive. He mentioned that if the Aquatic Center were to be placed on the Graham Center Quad, then the cost of moving the observatory to a different location on campus should be assessed. He emphasized the importance of picking a site for the Aquatic Center and expressed support for the Parking Lot 4 site with the understanding that there may be another solution of building a simpler pool at a different location on campus. Trustee Sarnoff shared his experience at the University of Tampa where there was a pool in a central location on campus and concurred with Board Chair Tovar's idea of placing the pool in a central location. Board Chair Tovar agreed with the sentiments expressed by Trustees Sarnoff and Colson. He supported the suggestion by Trustee Colson to put a placeholder on Parking Lot 4 as the site for the Aquatic Center on the Campus Master Plan.

Mr. Cal agreed with the comments made by President Jessell regarding selecting a site for the pool, and that Parking Lot 4 appears the least disruptive. He explained that the location can be moved and that the Campus Master Plan includes multipurpose use areas which provide for flexibility. He presented the cost model summaries for both sites with optimal pool models that total at approximately \$30M each. He added that there are alternative pool options at lower costs. General Counsel Carlos B. Castillo clarified that there is not an action item for vote by the Committee members, but that consensus can be taken to determine if there is a majority in agreement with one site. Trustee Francesca Casanova commented that the cost difference between the sites can fluctuate and concurred with the comments made by President Jessell regarding selecting a location for the Campus Master Plan. Board Chair Tovar expressed that his goal is to have the pool on campus for the students.

Committee Chair Lowell asked that the Committee members vote on a consensus for the Parking Lot 4 site. She expressed support for the Graham Center site, and Trustee Sarnoff agreed. Trustee Alan Gonzalez explained that he is in favor of the Graham Center Quad site. Provost Bejar commented on the process of developing the Campus Master Plan and emphasized what was expressed by President Jessell. She explained that she perceives the differences in community impact of the pool between the two (2) sites to be negligible. She emphasized the importance of selecting a site. A consensus was reached to place the Aquatic Center on the Graham Center Quad site on the Campus Master Plan. General Counsel Castillo clarified that Trustee Barengo is not a member of the Committee and that a unanimous consensus was reached by the Committee members to place the Aquatic Center at the Graham Center Quad site on the Campus Master Plan. Committee Chair Lowell thanked Mr. Cal. Mr. Cal reviewed the Campus Master Plan timeline and confirmed that if the Board of Trustees approves of the Campus Master Plan at the November 21, 2024 meeting, that would finalize the renewal of the plan.

### **3. New Business** *(If Any)*

No new business was raised.

### **4. Concluding Remarks and Adjournment**

Committee Chair Natasha Lowell thanked the Committee, University Leadership, John Cal, Bob Griffith, DLR Group, and Isaac Sports Group. With no other new business, Committee Chair Lowell adjourned the meeting of the Florida International University Board of Trustees Campus Master Plan Ad Hoc Committee on Thursday, October 17, 2024, at 1:31 PM.