Invitation to the Annual Forum

You are invited to attend Carleton’s annual forum on Tuesday, January 24 at 5:30 p.m. in the Alumni Guest House Meeting Room. Carleton administrators will discuss campus planning and construction schedules. This is your opportunity to learn about upcoming plans and ask questions about the College. We hope that you are able to join us.

Old Northfield Middle School

Carleton College closed on the purchase of the old Middle School on October 13. The closing followed a series of meetings, approvals, surveys, and assessments of the facility that began in February 2005 when Carleton formally expressed interest in the building.

It may be at least two years before any major renovation and new construction begin. In the meantime, Carleton is working with the City of Northfield to identify appropriate and acceptable temporary College uses.

Campus Electrical Upgrade

Due to anticipated campus growth during the 1990s, utility studies were conducted in 1991 and again in 1997 to assess the chiller and boiler capacity, demands on the aged electrical system, and backup electrical generation for campus. The conclusion was that the electrical distribution of the campus needs to be converted from 4,200 volt to 13,800 volt. Many changes have been made since 1991. However, the main campus electrical distribution system was never replaced. Now it’s time to run the new electrical wires and transformers throughout campus and convert the delivery of electrical energy from 4,200 volts to 13,800 volts.

Over the next three years, each of the distribution loops on campus will be converted over to higher voltage as well as all the transformers and joint boxes replaced. Delivery of piping (conduit) for new wiring has almost been completed and placed in all affected tunnel areas. Preparation and portals into the Facilities building have been completed for future removal of the facilities transformer. The next several months we will be pulling wires in the conduit for one of the first loops. This upgrade will create a more reliable and efficient electrical distribution with added capacity for the campus. Electrical power quality within offices may not change until each building is remodeled and new wiring is installed in the building.

Arts Planning Committee

The Arts Planning Committee (APC) finished its report and submitted it to President Oden. The report can be viewed on-line at http://apps.carleton.edu/campus/doc/assets/ArtsReport.pdf. The opportunity to think about the old Northfield Middle School as a place where the arts can physically come together has allowed the APC to imagine bold curricular innovations. At the Fall 2005 faculty retreat, both President Oden and Dean Bierman talked about why they believe the old Northfield Middle School is so important to Carleton’s future. The President has asked the APC to convene again in 2006 to address the curricular and programmatic issues that will define the space uses of the future Arts Center.

Student Housing – Watson House

Programming and conceptual design for a new student residence has continued over the past several months. Carleton, the A/E design firm of LHB, and landscape architect, Spencer Jones, have collaborated to develop a new housing plan for the site to the south and east of Watson Hall. The original concept outlined a plan to develop two separate 20-student facilities to be built in a two-phase construction period (over two summers). The new concept proposes a single 53-bed complex. It includes a community room with a full kitchen; ten suites with integral living rooms, bathrooms, and kitchenettes for three to five students each, including two accessible units; landscaped community courtyard(s); community laundry room; lower level storage lockers; and direct access to Watson Hall via an underground tunnel. The new design maintains the residential scale at the street and is only three stories high in the rear. This facility is anticipated to be built on the site of the existing Watson House, Faculty Club annex, and Chaney House garage. Chaney House itself would not be affected. Design will continue into Winter Term with construction scheduled to begin after Reunion ’06 is completed. The new facility is intended to be ready to house students by Winter Term ’07.
Carleton’s Energy Future
With rising and fluctuating energy prices, Carleton is investigating ways to better manage energy consumption as well as costs. Since the early 1970s, Carleton Facilities staff have been involved with energy conservation. Overall energy usage per square foot has been stable for some time. While heating costs on a square-footage level have been declining because of the construction of more efficient buildings, electrical costs per square foot are rising. Students bring much more electronic equipment with them each year, as well as other accouterments of dorm living such as microwaves, refrigerators, and stove tops. The College, as a whole, has employed more computers and electronic audio visual systems for teaching and learning. Since 1985, the College has added about 25% more square footage. The electrical energy usage and cost has risen about 30% in the last fifteen years. Fortunately, electrical energy prices have been relatively stable during the same time period.

The College is looking at ways to get a better handle on energy purchases as well as energy production itself. In a wildly oscillating energy market it will be difficult to suggest any one solution. The final answer will be a combination of energy sources used in a combination of ways to match Carleton’s energy requirements.

The ENTS faculty discussed Carleton’s energy future in an interdisciplinary manner during their winter faculty retreat December 7-9. One by-product of this investigation might be the development of faculty and student research projects to explore specific alternatives.

Student Housing Fire Protection
Last summer, installation of sprinkling and upgraded fire alarm systems was completed in Farm and Benton Houses and initiated in Burton and Davis Halls. Burton and Davis is completed and testing of these systems took place last October. With the exception of Evans Hall, this completes the sprinkling installation for all student residences. Sprinkling in Evans Hall is slated to be done when the whole dorm is renovated. Seccombe and Jewett Houses are not scheduled to house students for the long term, and may be looked at for other functions.

Small Projects Completed Last Summer
The following work was completed last summer:

• The Sayles-Hill main entrance now has an ADA power assist device on two doors. Phase one replacement of the deteriorated concrete and pavers on the east porch and approach plaza has been completed. The replacement to granite and/or precast pavers is about 20% completed.
• Olin 141 has been upgraded with touch-pad technology to control room lighting and projection. Also, new comfortable rolling chairs were added.
• Headley House is fully accessible to the first floor with a ramp to the front door and the first-floor restroom was remodeled to meet ADA requirements.
• The Library has the full collection of DVD’s and VHS tapes now that were once in Scoville. Shelving was installed on the fourth floor for this collection.
• The deteriorated surface areas of the Arboretum tennis courts were scraped, milled, leveled, and recoated. This will temporarily repair the deteriorating base conditions that made the courts unacceptable for play. The courts need major renovation or should be relocated within five years.

Student Studies Our Emissions
During last summer, Jason Lord ’06, conducted an emission assessment of all Carleton emissions. He sought estimates of our electrical, gas, travel, fertilizers, and solid waste contributions to total emissions. One interesting finding was that although electrical energy comprises about 30% of our energy use, it contributes to about 55% of College emissions when generation effects are included. The heating plant accounts for about 36% of total emissions. Travel to and from work for faculty and staff, and travel to and from school for students, faculty, and staff accounted for only 9% of the total emissions.

When breaking down the transportation element of emissions, the emissions of commuter travel almost equals the emissions of air travel of faculty and staff for conferences and student off-campus study programs—45% and 46% respectively. This reflects the high emissions associated with air travel.

Jason will continue to work to process and analyze the information to understand the implications of our