



TO: Carl Moses and College of Arts & Sciences Faculty

FROM: Bruce Taggart, Vice Provost for Library and Technology Services

DATE: May 21, 2004

RE: Update on the Linderman Library Renovation Project

Linderman Library is one of Lehigh's architectural and intellectual treasures. The last major investment in Linderman Library was over seventy years ago, and in contemporary terms it is a building with real deficiencies. For example, Linderman is not air conditioned, which is not good for people or books. It's also hard to find one's way around the building and handicapped access is poor. Linderman also has a number of lovely rooms that are essentially hidden and definitely underutilized. What is great is that Linderman has the potential to be both a showcase for the humanities collections at Lehigh and a center for study – an intellectual hub for Lehigh University- which more effectively meets the needs of today's students.

For all these reasons, the university is embarking on a major restoration of Linderman. We have hired MGA Partners of Philadelphia and are working on the design phase. MGA has extensive experience on projects in higher education and is known for its work on historic buildings.

The renovated and transformed Linderman Library is intended to be a focal point for humanities activities at Lehigh and an intellectual gathering place for students, faculty and staff from across the campus. There will be several new teaching spaces (seminar rooms) in the existing building which are a direct result of faculty interest in having more seminar-style classrooms. We will also add a number of group study areas (collaborative learning spaces) to accommodate students' desire to work together. You will also be able to enjoy a cup of coffee with a student after class in a small cafe/reading area in the ground floor rotunda. As a result, more of the building will be available for public use.

Enhancements to the Linderman building infrastructure include: new heating and air conditioning systems, new lighting, the latest in technology, both wired and wireless, handicapped access and a new elevator, and, finally, enhanced navigation throughout the building. We anticipate adding new stairs to both open up the building vertically, but also to meet building code requirements.

One of the realities of doing this kind of renovation in an old building is that modern code requirements related to ADA and to other life and safety issues (egress in case of fire, protection from smoke, etc.) must be incorporated which will reduce the amount of stack space. Some of the code-related changes take up space we would have liked to use for other functions and dictate that some areas that now contain stacks, like the ground floor rotunda, can no longer house them or can accommodate fewer. As a part of our planning process, we projected collection growth to 2017 and looked at our three facilities, Fairchild-Martindale, Linderman and the Library Materials Center in terms of overall space and where we might add more compact shelving. Librarians have already begun work on the collection management issues involved in determining which materials need to stay in Linderman and which can be shelved elsewhere. In short, we are working diligently to maintain as much collection space in Linderman as possible.

The program plan for the building (what functions will be included) is pretty much set and the planning group (Gordon Bearn, Sue Cady, Tony Corallo, Jean Farrington, Bruce Taggart, and Tony Viscardi) is actively working with MGA Partners on the specific location of those functions in the building which will probably be determined by the end of the summer. This design and development phase will result in a set of construction documents by April 2005. If the trustees give their approval and all goes according to plan, then the actual construction phase will begin in May 2005 and last through calendar 2006 with a target occupancy date of January 2007.

We do not know yet whether or not Linderman will need to be closed entirely for the 18-month construction phase or for only a portion, but we expect to have this information by the end of December 2004. In the meantime, we are actively working on a number of contingency plans to maximize both service and access to the collections and will be taking full advantage of the facilities we have at the Library Materials Center (LMC) on the Mountaintop Campus. We expect to have fulltime staff coverage Monday to Friday at the LMC, and faculty will be able to make prior arrangements to consult materials on site as well as having them delivered to lower campus. This fall, we will introduce digital delivery to the desktop of selected LMC materials when copyright, condition of the material and extent of the request permit. Additional study spaces for students to use during any Linderman closure period will also be made available elsewhere on campus.

This milestone is the culmination of five years of work on the part of staff in LTS and several faculty members from the College of Arts and Sciences. The planning effort also included several focus groups with humanities faculty, individual meetings with CAS department chairs and Student Affairs staff, and consultations with and presentations to the Library Users Committee, Library Materials Liaisons Council, Student Senate, Graduate Student Council and the Council of Student Presidents.

To keep the Lehigh community current on the project, we have created a new Linderman project Web site (<http://www.lehigh.edu/lts/linderman>). This site will be updated regularly and there will be additional meetings with faculty and others scheduled in the fall. I personally am very excited that we are moving forward and welcome your questions and comments.