Marilyn Derby, Graduate Studies (Project Manager)
Brittany Derieg, Student Affairs (Project Assistant)
Aaron Fackler, Transportation Technology and Policy
Assistant Vice Chancellor Clayton Halliday, Design and Construction Management
Paul Johnson, Political Science
Professor Markus Luty, Physics
Professor Deb Niemeier, Civil and Environmental Engineering and Chair, Committee on Planning and Budget
Sara Petrosillo, English
Gordon Rees, Soils & Biogeochemistry
Ryan Reynolds, Mathematics
Professor Michael Rios, Human Ecology
Cutcha Risling Baldy, Native American Studies
Assistant Dean Rich Shintaku, Graduate Studies (Chair)
Erica Vonasek, Biological Systems Engineering, Vice Chair Graduate Student Association

SUBJECT: Student Family Housing Redevelopment Committee — Charge

Dear Colleagues:

Orchard and Solano Parks provide apartment-style housing for student families and graduate students at UC Davis. Both were opened in the early 1960’s and are operated by Student Housing. Orchard Park provides 200 two-bedroom apartments and Solano Park offers 108 one-bedroom and 168 two-bedroom apartments.

Due to increasing maintenance costs and expectations of significant costs to renew major utilities and amenities, a decision was made in 2009 to plan for the redevelopment of both Orchard and Solano Parks. That plan involved closing Orchard Park in July 2014 and redeveloping the site for family and graduate student housing to open in Fall 2016. Solano Park would then close in Fall 2016, but no specific plans were outlined for its redevelopment. At the same time, Student Housing developed plans for the replacement of the former Castilian housing, located just off campus. That project, now called 8th and Wake will open in Fall 2014, and will cater to single graduate students, who make up over half of the graduate student population.

Planning for Orchard Park’s redevelopment was undertaken over the past two years by a committee that included two graduate student representatives. On March 13th and 15th of this year, results of the planning process were presented to the community at two information sessions. Information was shared at the meetings regarding the proposed building configuration at the current Orchard Park site, types and sizes of units, project amenities and proposed rents. Information was also provided regarding a rent subsidy program for financially needy student families and single graduate students. It was through feedback from the information sessions and additional email from the community that specific concerns
with the redevelopment process surfaced. As a result of those concerns, a decision was made by Chancellor Katehi to stop the current redevelopment plans and embark on a new planning approach that focuses on those concerns as much as possible and reevaluates how best to proceed.

We are writing to ask that you serve on a new group to take a fresh and comprehensive look at our planning for the redevelopment of student family housing at UC Davis. Within this context, redevelopment may mean either renovation or reconstruction. The purpose of this group is to make recommendations for the future redevelopment of Orchard and Solano Parks to best meet the needs of students with families.

We believe that student family housing is an important amenity that helps UC Davis attract and retain a broadly diverse student population. Within this context, the Committee is charged as follows:

- We ask that you begin your work by developing broad principles that will guide our thinking about student family housing with specific emphasis on the redevelopment of Orchard Park. These principles should articulate the purpose and value of having student family housing on campus, identify the housing environment that will best meet the needs of student families, identify goals for affordability and develop strategies to meet these goals.
- These principles should be based on broad consultation with students, especially graduate students with families. Consultation should involve multiple methods, including open forums, surveys, focus groups, and a website on which relevant materials are made available and individual meetings with student groups.
- The Committee should identify model housing facilities and funding models at other institutions that embody the principles that the group has articulated and that meet the expressed needs of our students with families.
- The Committee should also offer several scenarios for the redevelopment of Orchard Park (redevelopment of Solano Park will be considered at a later time) consistent with the principles it develops and information gathered from similar projects.

We request that the Committee begin meeting in Summer 2014 and submit a final report and recommendations to us by no later than December 31, 2014. It is our expectation that this report will inform the more specific planning process to be undertaken by a new Project Advisory Committee beginning in January 2015.

Thank you for your willingness to serve in this capacity. We are confident that the Committee recommendations will provide a much needed strategic framework for addressing student family housing needs at UC Davis. Staff will contact you shortly to schedule the first meeting of the Committee. You need not respond to this letter unless you are unable to serve.

Thank you,

Jeffery C. Gibeling
Vice Provost – Graduate Education and Dean – Graduate Studies

Adela de la Torre
Vice Chancellor – Student Affairs