

Chronicle

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STOKES HALL



A view of Stokes Hall as seen across the new Campus Green from Carney and McGuinn halls. (Image by Tsoi Kobus & Stephen Stimson Assoc.)

Work to Begin Monday on BC's New Humanities Building

After years of planning, Stokes Hall, a cornerstone of the University's Institutional Master Plan and the first academic building to be constructed on the Middle Campus since 2001, will break ground on Monday, October 4.

The 183,000-square foot academic building, which will become the home of the University's humanities departments, was formally approved by the Board of Trustees on September 24. Walsh Brothers, Inc., a Boston-based construction company, was awarded the construction contract. The project is expected to be completed in the fall of 2012.

"The construction of Stokes Hall represents the first of our Master Plan projects and will provide classrooms and academic office space that will enhance the educational experience for students and faculty at Boston College," said Executive Vice President Patrick Keating. "It is an exciting time for the University, and the beginning of more than a decade of planned construction projects."

Stokes Hall will be built on the Middle Campus between Lyons Hall and McElroy Commons, and will include faculty offices for Classical Studies, English, History, Philosophy, Theology, the College of Arts & Sciences Honors Program, Arts & Sciences Service Center, Academic Advising Center and First Year Experience offices, as well as 36 new classrooms, a commons area, coffee shop, conference rooms and outdoor gardens and plaza.

Bearing the family name of current trustee and former board chairman Patrick T. Stokes '64 in recognition of his \$22 million gift, Stokes Hall will help to foster interdisciplinary collaboration among humanities departments,

while also enabling staff from the Academic Advising Center and Office of First Year Experience to interact with faculty who teach the largest segment of undergraduate students.

"Stokes Hall embodies this university's enduring commitment to the liberal arts," said College of Arts & Sciences Dean David Quigley. "The Jesuit, Catholic tradition of higher education has emphasized for centuries the civilizing and liberating power of an education rooted in the humanities disciplines that will call Stokes home. This beautiful building has been designed in the Collegiate Gothic tradition and will include numerous new classrooms, elevated spaces worthy of the teaching that will take place

throughout Stokes."

The Stokes Hall construction project signifies the end of the planning and permitting stages and the beginning of the implementation phase of the University's Institutional Master Plan (IMP). The IMP, which was announced in December of 2007, was created to provide the facilities to support initiatives outlined in the University's Strategic Plan of 2006. The IMP proposed new academic buildings, a student center, recreation center, fine arts district, playing fields for baseball, softball and intramurals, and undergraduate housing to reach 100 percent of demand. The projects planned within the City of Boston were formally submitted to the Boston Redevelopment Authority in 2007 and, after two years of extensive community meetings, were approved by the city in June of 2009. Stokes Hall, which will be built within the City of Newton, was reviewed and approved by Newton planning officials over a period of 11

Continued on page 4

STOKES HALL

•183,000 square foot academic building

•Offices for:
Classical Studies
English
History
Philosophy
Theology
A&S Honors
A&S Service Center
Academic Advising Ctr.
First Year Experience

•36 new classrooms

•Conference rooms,
lounge, commons area,
outdoor gardens and
plaza

"Stokes Hall embodies this university's enduring commitment to the liberal arts."

—College of Arts & Sciences Dean David Quigley



Stokes West Lawn as seen from College Road. The top of Gasson Tower is visible at left in the background. (Image by Tsoi Kobus & Stephen Stimson Assoc.)

Q&A with Executive Vice President Patrick Keating



“Despite our best efforts, this construction project will be an inconvenience at times, but it is a necessary step in our effort to improve Boston College and to provide the best possible facilities for our students, faculty and staff in the years to come.”

With Trustee approval now complete, when will construction of Stokes Hall begin?

KEATING: The construction project will begin on October 4. It is a two-year project that we anticipate will be completed in the fall of 2012.

What is Stokes Hall and how will it be used?

KEATING: Stokes Hall is a 183,000-square foot academic building that will be the first major project of the University’s Institutional Master Plan. It will be built on the Middle Campus between Lyons Hall and McElroy Commons, and will include faculty offices for Classical Studies, English, History, Philosophy, Theology, the College of Arts & Sciences Honors Program, Arts & Sciences Service Center, Academic Advising Center and First Year Experience offices, as well as 36 new classrooms, a commons area, coffee shop, conference rooms and outdoor gardens and plaza.

What should the University community expect regarding construction?

KEATING: The project will begin with the installation of a fence along the perimeter of the construction site to provide an enclosed working area that will ensure the safety of all members of the University community. Once installed, construction will involve three phases:

Phase 1: Utility relocation, excavation and foundation work. The noisiest of the three phases, this two to three-month phase will include excavation and ledge removal through minor blasting and hole ramming.

Phase 2: Erection of structural steel and masonry walls around the building. This phase, which will be much less intrusive, will take approximately six to nine months to complete.

Phase 3: Exterior stone façade and interior work. This final phase will take approximately 12 months.

Construction hours for all three phases will be Monday–Friday from 7 a.m.–3:30 p.m. Efforts will be made to schedule the most disruptive work during non-peak classroom hours.

How will the Campus Green be affected?

KEATING: Unfortunately, the fence along the perimeter of the construction site will encompass most of the Campus Green

area for the duration of the construction project. The Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs is developing alternatives for student activities that have traditionally occurred along the Campus Green area.

Once the project is completed, a beautifully landscaped grass quadrangle, approximately the size of O’Neill Plaza, will be located on the present site of the Campus Green.

How will pedestrian traffic be affected?

KEATING: The construction of Stokes Hall will cause a major re-alignment of traditional pedestrian walkways. Pedestrians will no longer be able to enter the Campus Green from the stairways on College Road adjacent to McElroy Hall. Instead, they will enter through McElroy or through the McElroy Gate entrance off Beacon Street. Police officers and flagmen will assist in managing traffic along Beacon Street near the entrance of McElroy and Carney.

How will Middle Campus parking be affected?

KEATING: Beginning on October 4, parking spaces on Middle Campus between Lyons and McElroy will be eliminated. The “A” permit spaces will be relocated to the roof of the Commonwealth Avenue Garage, closest to O’Neill Library.

In addition, Linden Lane will no longer be available for daily permit parking.

Once construction begins, the Linden Lane roadway will end at Gasson Hall. It will no longer be possible to drive across the Middle Campus from the Main Gate to the McElroy Gate.

Is there a website where members of the BC community can go for more information?

KEATING: Yes — www.bc.edu/stokeshall. Updates will also be posted regularly on BCInfo [www.bc.edu/bcinfo].

What advice do you offer to members of the BC community regarding this construction effort?

KEATING: We ask for your patience and understanding. Despite our best efforts, this construction project will be an inconvenience at times, but it is a necessary step in our effort to improve Boston College and to provide the best possible facilities for our students, faculty and staff in the years to come.



Stokes looking North from Carney Hall. Gasson Tower is visible in the distance at right. (Image by Tsoi Kobus & Stephen Stimson Assoc.)

Q&A with Vice President for Student Affairs Patrick Rombalski



“UGBC is assisting in the communication and resolution of issues that arise throughout the construction.”

What will be the major effect of the construction project on BC students?

ROMBALSKI: I perceive that there will be at least three effects on students from the construction of Stokes. First, students on Upper Campus and College Road cannot walk around the northwest side of McElroy. They will either need to go through McElroy or down Beacon Street to get to Middle or Lower Campus. Second, we will not have the Campus Green/“Dustbowl” available for programs or leisure so we will need to utilize different parts of campus for the next two years. And, third, the noise from the construction, at least early on, will be noticeable in and around the construction area.

What about “Dustbowl” activities – such as Student Activities Day and various social events?

ROMBALSKI: We are working now to find a suitable location for all planned student events previously scheduled on the “Dustbowl.” Possible substitute locations include the lawn of Bapst Library, O’Neill Plaza, and the plaza in front of Conte Forum.

Will other parts of the campus be designated as recreation/student activity areas to make up for the loss of the Campus Green?

ROMBALSKI: We will not designate other parts of campus as “recreational” areas until we have a better sense of what spaces are more appealing to students. But once we identify spaces, we will be willing

to pursue reserving space for more leisurely or recreation activities.

Will the large “footprint” of the construction site disrupt students who travel to and from Upper Campus to other parts of the University?

ROMBALSKI: The rerouting of pedestrian traffic will mostly impact residents of Upper Campus, employees of Middle Campus, and other students visiting those areas for class or programs.

Will McElroy Commons have extended hours during the construction period?

ROMBALSKI: McElroy will definitely have extended hours during construction. We will look to keep both main entrances open to McElroy from 6 a.m. to 2 a.m.

What about “special” or one-time activities – such as ESPN’s “College Game Day”?

ROMBALSKI: If Boston College has special events, we will definitely look for appropriate replacement sites.

Will students from the Undergraduate Government of BC be involved in the planning of alternative sites for displaced activities?

ROMBALSKI: UGBC is currently involved in helping us identify appropriate replacement sites for activities. They are also assisting in the communication and resolution of issues that arise throughout the construction.

Will construction (especially noise, drilling, truck traffic, etc.) affect Upper Campus residence halls?

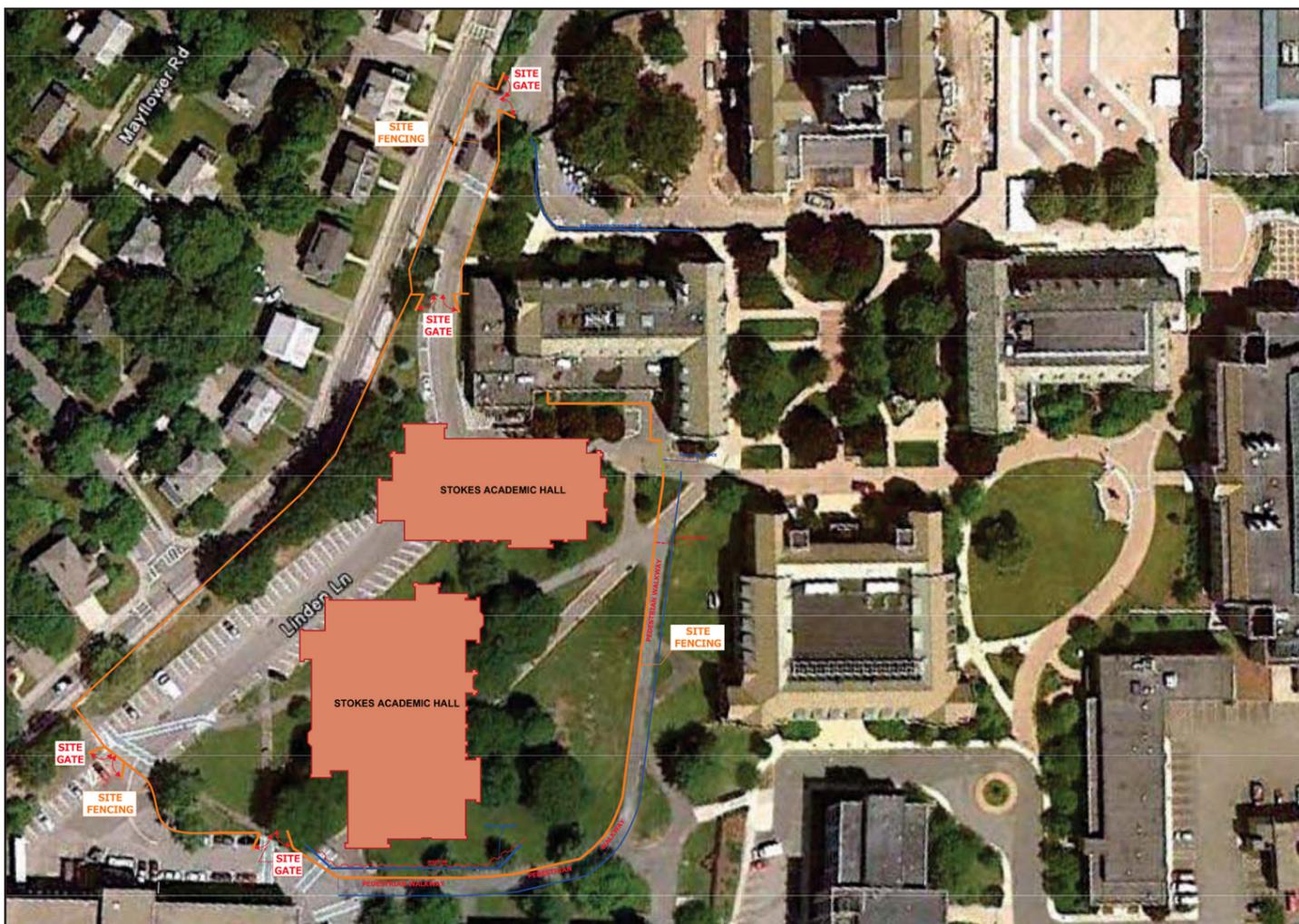
ROMBALSKI: It is difficult to say if the noise will disrupt the Upper Campus residence halls. The construction will take place Mondays through Fridays from 7 a.m.-3:30 p.m., so we will not have any disruption during evening or weekend hours.

How do you plan to spread the word about the changes that will be brought about by the Stokes construction project?

ROMBALSKI: We will communicate through e-mail, the Vice President for Student Affairs website [www.bc.edu/offices/vpsa], and community meetings about the construction and related issues. We will also be collaborating with the Office of News & Public Affairs, which is working to communicate news and information on the Stokes construction project through a variety of channels, including a website [www.bc.edu/stokeshall], the University newspaper *Chronicle*, frequent articles in *The Heights*, banners along the construction fence site and postings on BCInfo [www.bc.edu/bcinfo].

What do you see as the benefits for students when Stokes Commons is completed?

ROMBALSKI: Obviously, the reason why the community is willing to endure some of the inconvenience for the next two years is that the end product — a beautiful, new campus building — will improve the overall quality of the student experience at Boston College.



This aerial photograph of the Main Campus shows the location of the future Stokes Hall, as well as the work area that will be in place while the building is under construction. This map will be available for reference at the Stokes Hall website, www.bc.edu/stokeshall.

For more information:
www.bc.edu/stokeshall

Campus Impact: 'Some Logistics Will Change Over Time'

Boston College Facilities Management administrators say they are well aware of the impact the Stokes Hall project will have on the University community, and are making every effort to ensure the construction work causes as little inconvenience as possible.

To cope with the changes, they say, BC faculty, staff and students can stay abreast of the project by going to the website www.bc.edu/stokeshall and through updates in various campus media, including BCInfo [www.bc.edu/bcinfo], the *Boston College Chronicle* and other resources.

"What's important to understand," said Associate Vice President for Capital Projects Management Mary Nardone, "is that there will be necessary adjustments to parking and both vehicular and pedestrian traffic, as well as other aspects of campus life. Some of these logistics will change over

time, but the University will do its best to keep people informed."

The most conspicuous change, administrators say, will be the installation of temporary fencing in the Campus Green to encompass the construction area. The fencing [as shown in the above photo] will affect foot traffic to McEl-

roy Commons and Carney and Lyons halls, but these and other buildings adjacent to the Campus Green will still be accessible. Vehicular traffic and parking in the Campus Green area will be prohibited during construction. [Executive Vice President Patrick Keating discusses these changes in

the Q&A on page 2.]

Said Senior Construction Project Manager Edward Stokes, "It's going to take some patience on everybody's part for a project of this scale. We've been preparing for this project with an eye to every contingency we can think of, but there are always going to

be some things that don't quite go as planned. Fortunately, we have some talented, experienced people involved in the Stokes Hall project, who have worked on the BC campus in the past, and they will ensure there is as little disruption as possible."

Stokes Hall Project Begins Monday on Middle Campus

Continued from page 1
months.

Keating noted that in light of the economic downturn and the sequencing imposed by the City of Boston, the University has been forced to prioritize its IMP projects and establish construction plans over five-year phases. The first phase includes Stokes Hall, Gasson Hall renovations, the renovation of administration buildings on the Brighton Campus, a new dining facility on the Middle Campus, the conversion of the 2000 Commonwealth Av-

enue apartments into a student residence, and the construction of a new student residence hall at the More Hall site.

In addition to the Stokes Hall construction and ongoing Gasson Hall renovations on the Middle Campus in Newton, the Board of Trustees also approved the first IMP project within the City of Boston on September 24. As a result, renovations will begin later this month on 129 Lake Street, formerly known as Bishop Pe-

terson Hall, to serve as the new location for the Human Resources and Finance divisions, which will move from their current locations in More Hall. Subject to final trustee approval in December, renovations will also begin at 2121 Commonwealth Avenue on the Brighton Campus, the former headquarters of the Archdiocese of Boston, to accommodate the relocated staff from University Advancement. Once the renovation work and relocations are completed, More

Hall will then be razed to make room for a new residence hall that will provide beds for approximately 470 undergraduates.

"With all of the approved construction taking place on campus, there will be some inconveniences, but we are confident that the University community will be understanding and supportive as we embark on these projects that will greatly benefit Boston College," said Keating. "It is an exciting time in the University's history."

A cut-away view of Stokes Hall shows several second floor classrooms, the second floor College of Arts & Sciences Honors Library and part of the second floor link connection to Stokes North, as well as the grand stairs from the first floor, and the first-floor commons area.

