FROM THE CLAREMONT COURIER, MAY 1, 2015

Dear Claremont Courier Editor,

Thank you for your coverage of Pomona College’s Master Plan and specifically the plans for a new Pomona College Museum of Art. As you reported, the College requested earlier this week to have our request for approval of the Master Plan, Environmental Impact Review and zoning change removed from this week’s City Council agenda.

In recent days we became aware of community concerns regarding the potential size and design of the proposed museum. These concerns were based on speculation about what might be built. Although design plans are not required at this stage of the process, we would like to promptly and openly address any concerns. We want our community to be as excited as we are about the type of museum and public space that will be created in the years ahead. The final proposed design will of course be submitted at the appropriate time to the City’s Architectural Commission.

Before we proceed further in the approval process, we will offer opportunities to share our aspirations and concepts with the community. While we have not made specific design decisions, we will work with our architects to provide concepts for review in the coming weeks and months. We will also plan for opportunities for the public to meet with the architect and the College’s project team.

As we sought an architectural firm that could embrace the unique character of the Claremont Village and the legacy of arts here, we instructed potential firms that “we will expect a building and site of distinction, and a transition between City and College that is suitable to the urban and architectural context of the district.”

After reviewing several firms, the College selected Machado + Silvetti, an experienced group with an outstanding portfolio of college museums. Their work is nationally recognized for its sensitivity to architectural and community contexts. Over the past several months they have provided us with concept studies that have given us much to consider and to evaluate going forward.

I believe that meeting with the architects and understanding our charge to them will result in a much better understanding of our desire to connect the College with the community, build an important regional asset, and advance Claremont’s interest in and passion for the arts.

We look forward to seeing and hearing from the community in the months ahead.

Sincerely,

David Oxtoby
President, Pomona College