Claremont Planning Commission

7 p.m.
March 15, 2016

Council Chambers
225 West Second Street
Claremont, California 91711

Handouts provided by Pomona College

https://www.pomona.edu/new-pcma
New Pomona College Museum of Art: Dispelling Rumors and Providing Key Facts

**RUMOR:** The new museum will be 40,000 square feet.

**FACT:** The proposed footprint of the new museum is about 23,800 square feet—similar in size and scale to Claremont City Hall and the Claremont Public Library—not 40,000 square feet (City Hall is approximately 20,000 square feet, and the library is approximately 23,000 square feet). An additional 9,500 square feet is below ground as a storage facility, making for a total of approximately 33,300 square feet. In addition, the height of the current conceptual design for the building is such that the museum would not be visible to someone standing outside of City Hall on Harvard Avenue.

**RUMOR:** Historic structures will be destroyed.

**FACT:** Pomona College is committed to preserving and relocating Renwick House, the structure on the site that has historical significance. Renwick would be relocated to the east side of College Avenue at Second Street—diagonal from its current position. The College is committed to following the state’s historic preservation guidelines and will continue to use the house for offices. As part of Pomona College’s Environmental Impact Review (EIR), the Architectural Resources Group (ARG) of Pasadena determined that the cottages on the corner of College and Bonita avenues do not have historical significance. They are the only structures that would be demolished.

**RUMOR:** The new museum will change the quaint feel of College Avenue.

**FACT:** The conceptual design limits the height of the building to be no higher than the cornice of Seaver House (approximately 35 ft. tall), located across Bonita Avenue, and is consistent with the building mass and placement of the area from every vantage point. Plans also call for providing ample outdoor “green” space at the new PCMA. Relocating Renwick House across the street will enhance the “neighborhood” feel of the south end of College Avenue.

**RUMOR:** The new museum will create parking problems.

**FACT:** The proposed location of the new PCMA is across the street from the current location, suggesting that the parking situation will not be significantly different from what it is now. The majority of visitors to the museum come on foot, and most vehicle traffic is from school buses that drop off their passengers and then park on the north side of First Street between Columbia and College avenues. The Pomona College parking structure at First Street and Columbia Avenue is sufficiently large to accommodate additional visitor parking.

**RUMOR:** It could easily be built somewhere else.

**FACT:** The College has conducted site evaluations on several possible locations over the past decade as part of our initial research for the Pomona College Master Plan. The proposed location on College Avenue between Bonita Avenue and Second Street is the best suited for the academic and programming needs of the museum, and provides the added benefit of synergy with both the civic core of Claremont and the commercial core of the Village. The alternatively proposed site on the corner of College Avenue and First Street would require the removal of the women’s softball field, for which there is no suitable alternative location.

**RUMOR:** The College is trying to rush the plan through without public input.

**FACT:** The College began discussing the Master Plan, which includes plans for the new PCMA, with city and community leaders in 2013. Since that time, the College has participated in the Master Plan and EIR public review and comment processes, has held numerous community forums on campus and has made several public presentations to community groups around Claremont. President Oxtoby has met personally with city officials, community leaders and various local groups to share the College’s plans, answer questions and solicit feedback.
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<th>Date</th>
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<td>Jan. 17, 2013</td>
<td>Master Plan Preview Meeting with Claremont Heritage, and Pomona College (Location: Garner House)</td>
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<td>Feb. 21, 2013</td>
<td>Master Plan Review: College Community Discussion Forum with Students (Location: Smith Campus Center)</td>
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<td>Feb. 26, 2013</td>
<td>Master Plan Review: Claremont Community Discussion Forum (Location: Frank Blue Room)</td>
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<td>Oct. 16, 2013</td>
<td>Public Notification of Preparation of Environmental Impact Review</td>
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<td>Dec. 8, 2014</td>
<td>Public Comment Period for Environmental Impact Review Draft Opened</td>
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<td>Jan. 14, 2015</td>
<td>Claremont Architectural Commission Hearing: Discussion of Environmental Impact Review (Location: Claremont City Hall)</td>
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<td>Jan. 22, 2015</td>
<td>Claremont Traffic and Transportation Commission Hearing: Discussion of Environmental Impact Review (Location: Claremont City Hall)</td>
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<td>Feb. 6, 2015</td>
<td>Public Comment Period for Environmental Impact Review Draft Concluded</td>
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<td>March 15, 2015</td>
<td>Final Environmental Impact Review Available to Public</td>
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<td>April 7, 2015</td>
<td>Claremont Planning Commission Hearing: Discussion of Environmental Impact Review (Location: Claremont City Hall)</td>
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<td>April 28, 2015</td>
<td>Claremont City Council Meeting — Master Plan Held in Abeyance (Location: Claremont City Hall)</td>
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<td>May 12, 2015</td>
<td>Pomona College Hosts Claremont Community Forum (Location: Smith Campus Center Room 208)</td>
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<td>June 3, 2015</td>
<td>Pomona College Museum of Art Plan Presented to Claremont Village Marketing Group (Location: Claremont City Hall)</td>
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<td>July 10, 2015</td>
<td>Revised Master Plan Submitted to City of Claremont</td>
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<td>July 22, 2015</td>
<td>Pomona College Museum of Art Plan Presented at Sunrise Rotary Club (Location: St. Ambrose Church)</td>
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<td>Sept. 29, 2015</td>
<td>Pomona College Hosts Claremont Community Forum (Location: Millikan Room 1051)</td>
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<td>Oct. 24, 2015</td>
<td>Pomona College Hosts Museum of Art Plan Information booth during Village Venture (Location: Claremont Village)</td>
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<td>Oct. 28, 2015</td>
<td>Claremont Architectural Commission Hearing (Location: Claremont City Hall)</td>
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<td>Jan. 26, 2016</td>
<td>Pomona College Museum of Art Plan Presented at Claremont Chamber of Commerce (Location: Chamber of Commerce Offices)</td>
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<td>Claremont Planning Commission Hearing: Discussion of Recirculated Environmental Impact Review (Location: Claremont City Hall)</td>
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Since May 2015, Pomona College President David Oxtoby has met with individual and small groups of Claremont community leaders to discuss the Pomona College Museum of Art plan and provide opportunities for questions and feedback. More than a dozen such meetings were held.
College Avenue Elevation
Site Context
Locations considered for Museum of Art

SG Mudd Library
Seeley G. Mudd Science Library was considered for renovation and expansion, with an assessment conducted over several months. But the building configuration and footprint posed severe limitations to functionality and lacked adequate space. Also, placing the art museum here would close off future programmatic expansion for the sciences, a fast-growing part of the Pomona curriculum.

Bridges Auditorium
Expanding at the southern side of Bridges would be disruptive to the historic porticoes and terraces. Also, this internal campus location would result in a loss of public visibility and connection to the larger Claremont community, qualities fundamental to the museum’s mission.

College and Bonita
The College and Bonita Avenue site on the seam of college and city, adjacent to the Claremont Village, the Public Library and the new Shelton Park Band Shell, is well positioned for a civic purpose. Abutting the academic core, at the junction of two major pedestrian and bicycle ways, the site is also well suited for student and faculty access. Bonita Avenue is an arts corridor, a cultural nexus lined with the College’s major arts facilities. This site accommodates the museum with a building that maintains a two-story scale, provides for entrances from College and Bonita avenues and contributes substantial open space related to College Avenue. This “gateway” corner serves as the primary guest entry to the College. This site best meets the planning and programmatic criteria set out by the College, and brings key benefits to the Village and community.

Seaver Theatre Parking Area
The Seaver Theatre north parking area was considered but its position deep in the interior of the campus would have left the museum much too far from the arts district and public visibility. Instead, the new Studio Art Hall was built here, as the area was better suited for the more disruptive functions contained in that hall.

College and First Street*
The College Avenue and First Street site is at the furthest edge of the campus, a location that is not appropriate for academic purposes. It is removed from the academic core, compromising student and faculty access and academic connections. Civic connections to the library, Shelton Park and the Village are lost. Wig Beach is open recreational space and home to the women’s softball field, a long-standing land use designation that must remain. Major construction on the site is inconsistent with the College’s commitment to retain and improve open space and to support sustainable development by building only on previously developed sites. For these reasons, College Avenue and First Street is not an appropriate site for the museum construction.

Montgomery Hall
Montgomery Hall does not meet the academic or community engagement needs of the museum. Limited exhibition space strictly limits the number and type of exhibitions that the Museum can present. Montgomery lacks sufficient and environmentally-controlled collections storage, gathering and event space for classes and Museum programs. It also lacks sufficient office space for staff and workspace for exhibition preparation, cataloguing, research, preservation and care of the collection. The primary building material for Montgomery is concrete, severely limiting adaptability to accommodate contemporary program needs. The concrete exterior walls make it difficult to open the building to light and interior/exterior views.

*This site was reviewed after it was proposed during public meeting.
Softball Field: Review of Non-Viable Alternatives

A  
Current Location  
(College Ave. & 1st Street)

B  
On top of Parking Structure  
(Insufficient space for a regulation softball field; also, home to women's lacrosse)

C  
Blanchard Park (The Wash)  
(Protected space and home of more than 400 live oaks, including many centuries-old heritage trees)

D  
Proposed location in 2015 Master Plan for future residence hall.
The PCMA is primarily an academic museum, so most of its traffic is from campus, by foot or bicycle. Given that the proposed location is across the intersection from the current location, we expect no significant change in parking issues for off-campus patrons.

The primary parking for museum patrons will remain the First Street Parking Structure, which has 608 parking spaces and 9 electric vehicle (EV) charging stations and is within walking distance. In addition, there are street and handicap parking spaces available along College and Bonita Avenues and additional parking for major events in the Metrolink lot on First Street.

School and charter buses will drop off passengers at the Bonita Avenue loading zone east of College Avenue, and take Columbia back to First Street to park.
President’s House
BUILT: 1900
USE: residence

Seaver House
BUILT: 1900
MOVED: 1979
USE: offices

Proposed Location of Museum of Art

Proposed Relocation Site for Renwick House
BUILT: 1900
PLANNED MOVE: 2017
USE: offices

Baldwin House
BUILT: 1890
USE: emeriti offices

Cook House
BUILT: 1895
USE: faculty residence

Sumner House
BUILT: 1887
MOVED: 1901
USE: College guest house.
Spaces for Community Activities

Claremont residents enjoy the benefits of living in a “college town” because of the intellectual, cultural and artistic activities that take place on campus and are open to the community. The new Pomona College Museum of Art includes in its conceptual design both indoor and outdoor space for community activities.

**Meeting room** – An important part of the PCMA building design is an indoor multi-purpose room with separate access from the galleries and offices. The proposed location of the new PCMA provides for convenient access for Claremont organizations and residents to gather for:
- Claremont: On The Same Page reading groups
- Arts club meetings
- Chamber of Commerce events
- Summer programs
- Cultural events and celebrations
- Rotary Club meetings
- Voter registration drives

**Courtyard** – The central courtyard of the new PCMA not only provides a welcoming outdoor space for museum visitors. It can also serve as the backdrop for a number of important community events, such as:
- Village Venture
- Claremont ArtWalk
- Claremont Village Brews and Blues
- Friday Nights LIVE!
- Claremont Village Wine Walk
- Claremont Community Foundation events

Located across from the Claremont Lincoln University Community Performance Stage at Shelton Park, the new PCMA community spaces will strengthen the presence of the arts engagement in the Claremont Village.