



Queens Proposes County Partnership for an Off-Site Sports Complex

Faced with limited field space for both athletic programs and intramural sports, Queens officials are exploring a partnership with the Mecklenburg County Park & Recreation Department to provide a much-needed expansion to its competition and practice facilities. If approved by the County Commissioners, Queens will develop 60 acres of property into state-of-the-art facilities for sports including soccer, lacrosse, softball, cross country and tennis. Currently, with the addition of men's and women's lacrosse programs, Queens fields 14 NCAA Division II sports programs. However, all of the field sports have only one field to utilize for practice and competition, and this lone field is shared with the Myers Park Traditional School which sits behind Queens campus.

"The existing space is not only inadequate and difficult to schedule for our field sport programs," noted Athletics Director Jeannie King, "but it also inhibits any growth in intramural sports and recreational activities for all of our students on campus. Given these conditions, it is

even more impressive what our coaches and athletes have been able to accomplish."

The potential partnership began in December of 2002, when President Dr. Pamela S. Lewis met with Park & Recreation Director Wayne Weston, who agreed to approach the county about Queens developing park property into a sports complex. Both sides agreed that the Marion Diehl Park, 3.7 miles from Queens campus, was the best site. The agreement currently before the county proposes Queens privately funded development of track, soccer, lacrosse, softball and baseball facilities, as well as walking trails and accessible recreation space for disabled populations. In addition to the competition and training space, Queens would develop a field house to accommodate coaches' offices and athlete locker room facilities.

Mecklenburg County and Queens would enter into a long-term joint-use agreement that would give Queens priority use of the facilities during its sports' practice and competition periods but would offer the general public extensive access at all other times.

"We feel this joint-use arrangement is consistent with Queens mission to be involved in our community," said Dr. Lewis. "We want the growing success of our athletic program to also benefit our neighbors throughout Mecklenburg County."

Already supportive of the partnership concept are local senior citizens and special populations groups, who currently use the existing Senior Center and the Marion Diehl aquatic facility on this property. Queens design will add valuable recreation space to enhance both of these facilities' programming.

To assure this design makes most efficient and effective use of the property, Queens has funded preliminary studies by Land Design, Inc. and Olympus International to best determine how the property can be utilized to meet recreation, high school and NCAA Division II specifications. Specific consideration has been given to maintaining the natural resources of the park, integrating them into the county's Greenway and assuring appropriate buffer zones for the adjacent neighborhoods.

For the community at large, Queens private development of the property would be a significant advantage, because it would precede Park & Recreation's ability to fund a similar project by 10 to 15 years. Also beneficial is Queens ability to bring faculty, staff and student volunteer potential to the facility and its constituent populations. If approved by the County Commissioners in August 2003, Queens will accelerate its fundraising plans to develop the complex, beginning with the soccer, lacrosse and track facilities.

Queens Explores Addition of a Law School

Speculation in the Charlotte media and legal community continues about the possibility of a local law school, and Queens Trustees and administrators are exploring whether to be part of such a plan. Reports of other North Carolina schools expanding their programs into Charlotte led University officials to form an advisory committee with local attorneys and Queens faculty and staff. The committee first explored the question of whether there should be a law school in Charlotte, and after concluding that indeed a Law School will be a reality in the near future, the committee is now turning its attention to the question of whether Queens should be the institution to establish it.

The 30 person committee, led by President Dr. Pamela S. Lewis and Trustee Joseph W. Grier, partner in the Grier & Furr law firm in Charlotte, has divided into four sub-committees to best assess the implications of such a plan. The committees include academic planning, facilities planning, market research and community support.

"As an excellent liberal arts institution, Queens in many ways is well suited to explore legal education in Charlotte," noted Dr. Lewis. "But we should not take on such an endeavor if we cannot be assured of the caliber of academic programming Queens is known for, or if we cannot be assured of the legal community's support."

The committee will present its recommendation at the October 2003 Board of Trustees meeting.



Queens Acquires New Home for the President

The Queens Board of Trustees announced late in 2002 the purchase of a new home for the President at 2038 Roswell Avenue. The beautiful Tudor-style residence is adjacent to the campus property, sitting behind the Withers House and a block away from Selwyn Avenue. The property had been home to several generations of the Medearis family but became available in the fall of 2002. While the President's home on Selwyn Avenue had served the institution well for many years, most recently as the residence of President Emeritus Billy O. Wireman, the Roswell Avenue property offered Queens a facility closer to campus and one with better parking, since it sits next to a small lot adjacent to the Withers House.

The transaction was even more attractive to the University because it

required no institutional funds to complete the purchase. The cost of the home was funded by the sale of the Selwyn Avenue property as well as by generous gifts from three anonymous donors, which made the purchase possible.

"I am very pleased with the outcome of this transaction for Queens," noted Board Chairman Hugh L. McColl, Jr. "We have added a much more highly valued asset to our balance sheet without cost to the University and have acquired property that is strategically valuable to us given its contiguous location to our existing campus. In short, I believe this has been a very important acquisition for the university that will serve us quite well in the long term."

While currently serving as the residence for President Dr. Pamela S. Lewis, the home has also already provided the University with a valuable host site for numerous student, alumni and donor functions during the spring.

