

# Evaluation of Williams College Theater and Dance Center Siting

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# Introduction

On April 30, 1998, Present Harry Payne informed the Williams College community that Herbert A. Allen '62, generously pledged \$20 million for a new performing arts facility. Since that time, there has been considerable debate about whether or not there should be such a facility, where to put it, and what it should look like. Creating such a facility will not only affect the College community, but it will also impact the residents and townscape of Williamstown. Our role, as Environmental Studies 302 (Environmental Planning) students, has been to answer the question of 'where to put it'.

Following the structure of Environmental Studies 302, the purpose of our project has been to practice environmental planning and site evaluation through first hand experience. Our goal has been to evaluate a number of possible sites, determine an optimal location, and suggest feasible alternatives. Our evaluation process has included gathering physical data from each site in addition to addressing legal issues, integration with town development, the long-term impacts of such a facility, and the concerns of the Williams College and Williamstown communities

Throughout our process, we have considered the following criteria. First of all, we assume that such a facility is going to be built, thus disregarding the "no build" option often associated with environmental planning. Secondly, a performing arts facility will result in an ongoing benefit to both Williams College and Williamstown communities that will outweigh the costs of construction and operation (i.e. the facility will be a net benefit as a "community resource" regardless of location). Thirdly, an optimal site is a location that is accessible to students and the community to the extent that Theater and Dance Center functions are successful, the development has minimal negative impacts to neighbors, is aesthetically pleasing (keeping with the character of the area and town), has the most beneficial/least detrimental environmental impact, meets all zoning and wetlands regulations, and maintains the 10 minute walking time between academic buildings associated with the time allotted between classes. Lastly, although the final design of the facility has not been solidified, we assume that such a facility will have a 30,000-40,000 square foot foot-print with need for a parking lot containing 100+ spaces.

The College has hired a professional firm, Sasaki Associates, to recommend a site. Although we have had contact with them, we did not work under their guidance. In addition, we have come to our own conclusions independent of the College, and we do not represent their opinions or final decisions.

# History and Development

## Williams College History and Development

When Herb Allen, the donor of the Theater and Dance Center, was graduating from Williams College in 1962, the College was very different from what it is today. Many changes have taken place on campus, both psychologically (in how students and faculty regard education, or in the definition of a Williams student) and physically (the buildings and appearance of the campus). There are two major reasons for these changes: the admission of women as students (starting in 1969), and the abolition of the fraternity system. To accommodate a larger student body, and one that changed dramatically in composition, it was required that the College construct new student housing; as well as new academic spaces to accommodate the new programs. Though some fraternity housing was taken over by the College for dorms, it was not enough for a residential campus with a goal of allowing freshmen to live together, and a student body that would form one cohesive community.

The College then embarked on a series of large-scale construction projects, which separates this period, from late 1960's to today, from earlier Williams history. Below is a time line illustrating the development history of the College and major changes in its internal structure. Following the chronological course of development around a campus map, (Figures 1 and 2 in Appendix A), it is clear that development has not concentrated in any one area, or grown in any one particular direction. Winthrop Wassenar, the Director of Building and Grounds, concurs that development has moved all around campus, and no one area has been targeted.

### TIME LINE

- 1964 - Greylock Quad built
- 1968 - Bronfman Science Center built
- 1970 - First women students admitted (exchange students from Vassar College)
- New Dance Program established
- Fraternities abolished
- Towne Field House / Hockey Rink built
- 1971 - Mission Park Dormitory
- 1976 - Sawyer Library
- Late 1970s - New Theater Department established
- 1979 - Bernhard Music Center
- 1983 - Downstage addition to Adams Memorial Theater
- 1986 - Williams Museum of Art/Lawrence Hall
- 1987- Chandler Athletic Complex
- Recent construction
- Spencer Art Building (for the Art Department)
- Science Center (ongoing construction in 1998-99)

From this timeline, it is clear that the College has been expanded in several academic and extra-curricular realms. No major future housing construction is expected to take place, however, because the College currently plans to maintain its student body at the current size. The admission of women fueled a new growth in the Arts at Williams, which led to an updating of the curriculum. Many of the Arts, such as dance, were traditional “female” interests. According to Sandra Burton, previously, Williams offered a traditional liberal arts curriculum that involved predominantly “book learning” and neglected “experiential learning” associated with the Arts. Now, new spaces have been provided for the new departments: Bernhard Music Hall for the music program; AMT Downstage for theater (with a financial gift from a student’s parent, providing a smaller space than the Mainstage for teaching and productions, which the new academic department greatly needed); and Spencer Art Building for the Art Department, with its large studio classrooms and Wilde gallery. “Music, art, dance and theater came into their own at coeducational Williams... for example, in 1983, the Art department had the second highest student enrollments of any Williams department.” (Williams 1793-1993, p. 238)

It is evident from this timeline that the Arts have grown at Williams, and that every arts program has by present time been given a new home, except Dance, which remains housed in its original location in Lasell Gymnasium.

### **History of Dance and Theater at Williams**

Although dance and theater are separate programs, the two are often associated with one another. In addition, there has been much interaction between the faculty of the two programs and discussion about an integrated future.

### **Dance Program**

The dance program was founded in 1970, and until 1997, had only one full-time professor. Joy Dewey was the coordinator of the program from its beginning until 1983. She established a strong connection with Bennington College (in southern Vermont) which has a strong focus on Fine and Performing Arts. Several academic classes in dance were offered at both colleges and taken by students at each. These were generally successful classes, and allowed the growing dance program at Williams to interact with a strong one at Bennington. The new dance program also had a strong connection with the town community. Many townspeople have taken advantage of the classes and workshops offered, and the two dance companies have often worked with area schools in teaching dance to local children. In addition, the program has acquired a strong audience base among the townspeople (as well as Williams student body), including many senior citizens and children. A booklet from the '96 school year performance says that Dewey, “...established a program that offered both students and area residents opportunities in dance technique, choreography, performance, and culture.” During Dewey’s time here, Dance Company was founded to provide advanced, more intensive learning (mainly in modern dance), as well as performance experience, for students desiring to work more in dance.

In 1983, Sandra Burton (herself having received her MA in Dance at Bennington) became the

coordinator of the Dance Program. She started teaching African Dance as PE, and soon Kusika, an African dance company, was established. The faculty has grown, so that now Holly Silva also works full time, and there is a part-time professor. In addition, Mr. Brown, from the music department, is able to help out with Kusika drumming since it falls within his academic interest. The year Burton came here, there was one dance performance. In contrast, during the school year 1997-98, there were more than 20 performances. The program now includes PE classes (involving about 30 students per academic quarter), two dance companies, many visiting artists, and many other student initiated efforts. Many of these efforts include bridging the arts departments (Prism, a new student singing group which was in this semester's dance concert; or "This is Why I Sing," a performance that was a student's senior thesis). Students use the space, Lasell gym, for projects as performances in theater or art.

Physical education classes are currently offered in African, Modern dance, and in Ballet, as well as other offerings during Winter Study. Dance Company, which focuses on modern dance, has 26 members this year; and Kusika, which includes drummers and dancers and often works with visiting artists, has 41 members this year. The popularity of the two dance companies has grown to such a large extent that this fall, auditions became competitive and many people were turned away. Currently, all the professors and the space (essentially the one space in Lasell) are being used during the day. In order to accommodate the other students in classes that are turned away from the dance companies, more classes and flexible scheduling need to be offered, which can exist only with more practice space!

The inadequacy of the current dance offerings became clear as the program prepared for this semester's dance performance. The show involved more than 70 people, including both dance companies (26 and 41 people), two 'visiting artist' bands which worked with the dancers and drummers, Zambezi Marimba band (a group under the music department) and the student group Prism. All of these people had one space to use both for practice and performance. Faculty locker rooms for Lasell sports facilities became performers' dressing rooms; a new walkway built for Goodrich Hall now blocks the loading dock for sets (or the marimbas in the concert, which made transporting them from the music building difficult.) The space is inflexible – the audience sits up on the bleachers, which serve as seats, and cannot be rearranged, for example, around the stage as the performers may desire (flexibility of performing spaces is a major goal for the proposed Center.) Also, all the performers could hardly fit on the stage during numbers! There is no real backstage in Lasell; there was no good place for performers to wait between numbers or marimbas to be stored.

There are numerous shortcomings to the facilities at Lasell. There is no box office, which makes it confusing for the audience to buy tickets at the door, and for the ushers to recognize who has pre-purchased tickets. In addition, there is no handicapped access to the building (which violates the existing law). The access is also difficult for the senior citizens who must walk up a long flight of stairs to reach the performance space. During performances, the space is very hot and uncomfortable, and it commonly gets extremely crowded as audiences often exceed fire marshal capacity for the building (Lasell seats 250 people.) It is evident that the current dance space in Lasell is inadequate both for the Dance program (with its links to music and theater) and for its viewing audience.

Academic courses have been offered by Sandra Burton in the past, in theater performance and in history of dance. However, the current situation of having dance under the Physical Education department makes it difficult to teach academic courses. There is an agreement with the theater department that classes in dance, which can be taught by Silva or Burton, will get theater academic credit. However, the college has a quota for each of its academic departments on how many professors they can hire (and pay), in order to keep constant salary budgets. Since the theater department has filled its quota with theater professors, classes in dance can only be taught if there is an opening in the department for the given year or semester – that is, if a theater professor happens to go on leave. Because of this, dance academic courses are currently offered infrequently. With the new Center, the Dance faculty hopes to offer more academic courses, as discussed below.

## **Theater Department**

Williams has had a long theatrical tradition in the form of Caps and Bells, a student group. However, academic courses started to be offered only in the late 70's, when Jean-Bernard Bucky, who is now the Chair of the program, established the department. Currently, there are 4 full-time professors, and also 2 technical instructors. The program offers courses in acting, design, and directing. It has grown to the point that it was able to hire a new professor this year to teach theater theory. The professors, in addition to teaching academic courses, are highly involved in student productions, which they direct. The theater space is Adams Memorial Theater, with its Mainstage that seats an audience of 479, and Downstage which seats 96. One inadequacy of the AMT (much like Lasell) is that there is no flexible space for performances. A black box theater in the new Center would accommodate this need.

The program produces a range of 3-12 theater majors a year. However, this number does not reflect either the scope of the department's reach, or the use of its space in Adams Memorial Theater. For example, the department lists 23 academic courses in this year's course catalog, of interest to students from various departments (there are many courses geared to English students, for example.) There are 94 students enrolled in theater courses this semester; of these, many take the introductory class, theater 101, which sometimes has enrollments that go up to 75. Extra-curricular activities in theater involve the whole campus, and the interest is great: there are over 150 students involved with performances this semester, and at a recent audition, around 100 students showed up! In addition to teaching space and performance space for faculty-directed shows, AMT serves smaller, student-directed productions (such as one-acts); Caps and Bells – a student theater organization; and a local community theater group. Overall, AMT is being used beyond full capacity.

The Williamstown Theater Festival (WTF) takes over the space during the summer. The faculty has expressed interest in having a space during the summer for possibly a summer program, which they would be able to do with the new Center. With the new Center, and all or most of the academic department relocated there, WTF would also be interested in having the AMT space beyond the summer months, into which they would be able to extend their season.



**Why do the programs need the new facility?**

In regard to Herbert Allen's donation for the Center, Professor Burton has said: "The gift offers an opportunity to address needs that would otherwise take a long time to catch up on — in an area in which Williams is behind other schools." The faculty, including Burton and David Eppel, a theater professor who is the head of the Program Committee dealing with the Center, has given two major reasons for needing the facility. First, Dance and Theater as disciplines are evolving to include elements from each other. The new building would allow easily for, say, a theater performance involving the Dance Company. Second, a long-term faculty goal over the previous decades has been to unite theater and dance under one academic department. The new Center will get the programs well on their way to achieving that goal.

# Site Overview

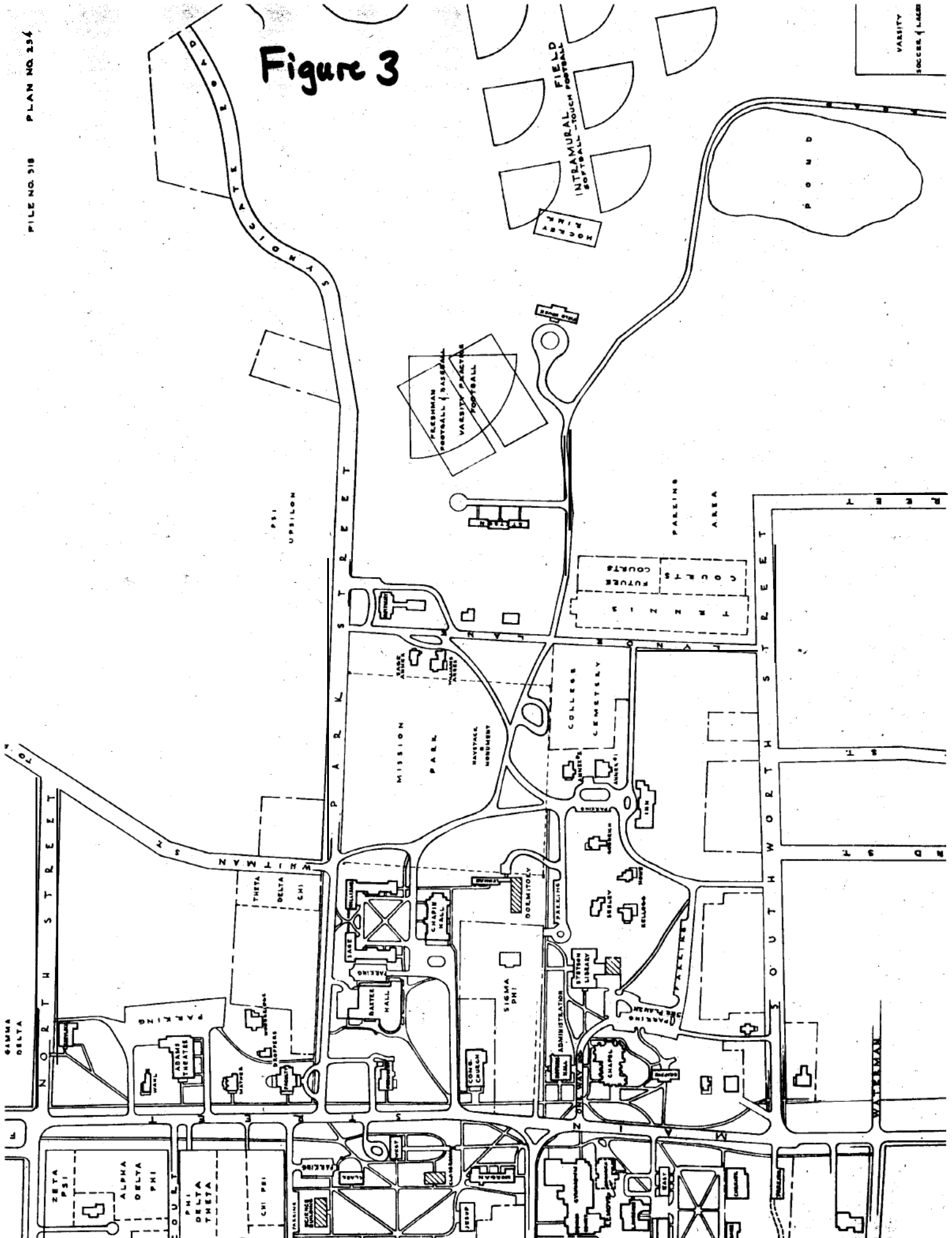
## Five Sites: Advantages and Disadvantages

We started our site evaluation procedure by examining the possibility of numerous open spaces on campus. However, various restrictions prevented us from being able to feasibly consider a number of locations. The following is a list of some of the sites we originally considered, and the reasons we eliminated these sites early on in our evaluation process.

1. Mission Park Lawn, or behind Chapin Hall. This area boasts extensive space, good access, and a central location, but falls within the boundaries of a State Park, which can be seen in **Figure 3**.
2. Flat area atop hill north of Greylock swamp. This area north of Whitman Street and east of Route 7 has been noted on several Williams College development plans as an area of potential development. However, there is now a building restriction on the area that came about as a result of an agreement associated with the development of the new science facilities.
3. Open field west of Thompson dormitory, west of Syndicate Avenue. This area has good space and access, however, there are significant drainage problems on the land.
4. Lawn in front of Sawyer Library. This area is extremely visible, has excellent access, and is very centrally-located, however it is too small to accommodate the dimensional requirements of the building and its accompanying parking lot.
5. Garfield House Lawn. This site, although technically falling within the 10-minute walking circle, actually has poor pedestrian access due to the number of privately-owned residences near the site. The necessary round-about access route makes for difficult student access.
6. Buildings and Grounds building site, and town garage. This site would require the demolition of the Buildings & Grounds building and its relocation, which would be far beyond the working budget of the project (\$40 million, as opposed to \$20 million). Also, access would be difficult for students.

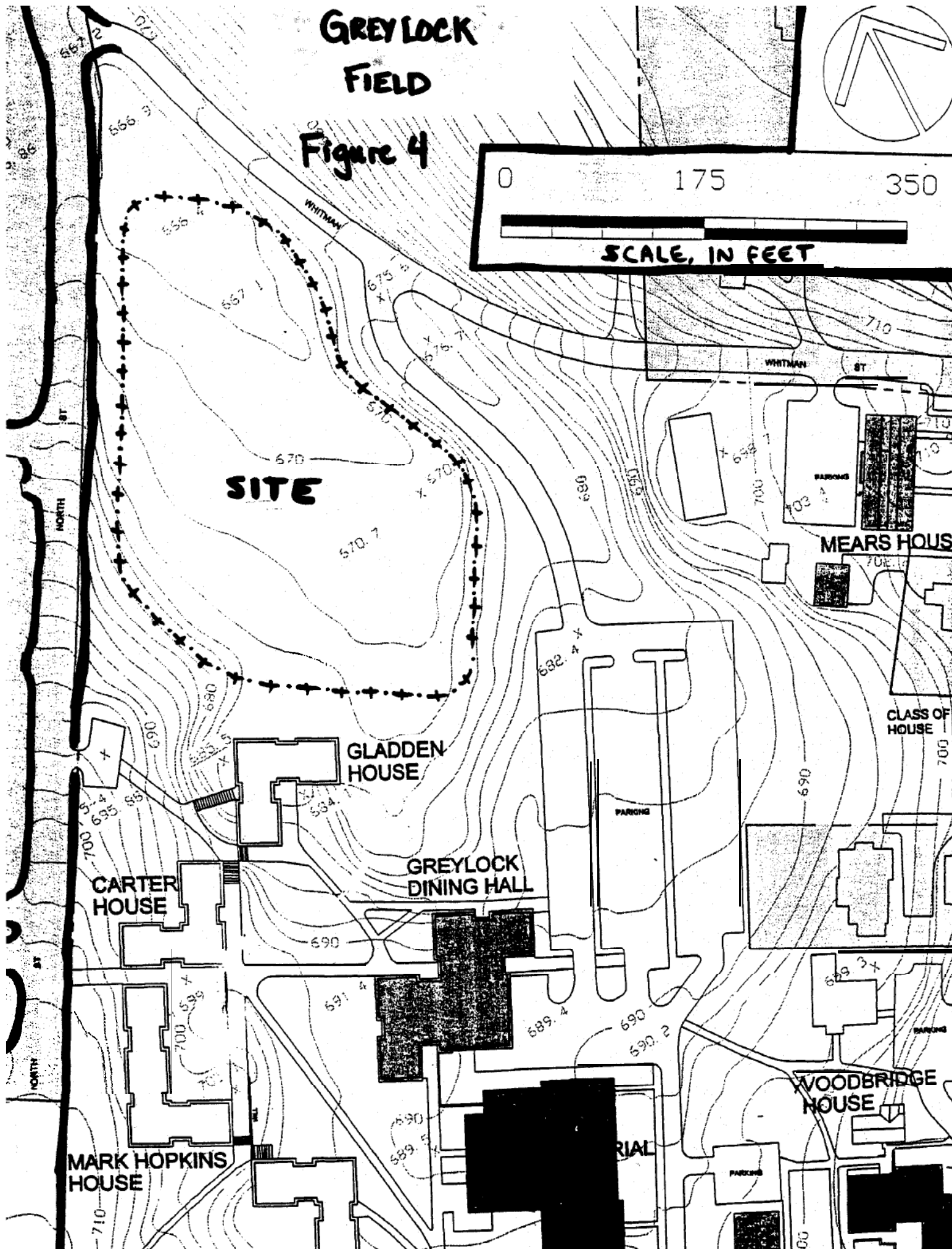
Many other sites elsewhere in town were eliminated due to the college's desire to maintain "a walking campus," by having all academic buildings within walking distance of campus. We narrowed our evaluation down to five sites. For each site, we investigated social, environmental, and feasibility aspects. The following is a brief description of each site, and a list of the advantages and disadvantages of each site.

Figure 3



# GREYLOCK FIELD

Figure 4



## **1. Greylock Field ("Swamp")**

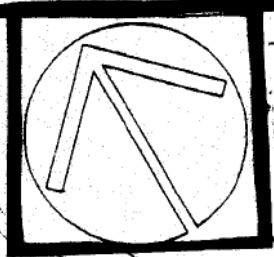
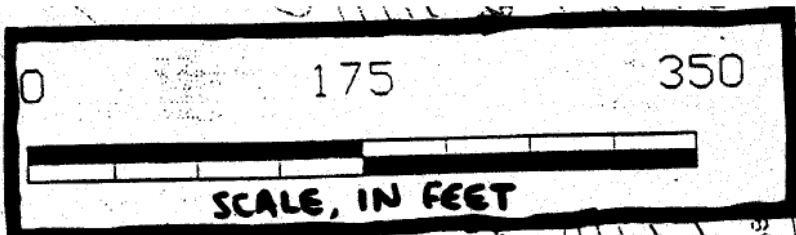
This grass-covered field is located north of the Greylock quad dormitories and Greylock dining hall. Its western boundary is Route 7, and the Greylock parking lot forms its eastern boundary. The space available is approximately 83,000 ft<sup>2</sup>. Whitman Street connects the parking lot with Route 7, and this intersection would probably require reconstruction in order to safely handle larger volumes of traffic.

### **Advantages:**

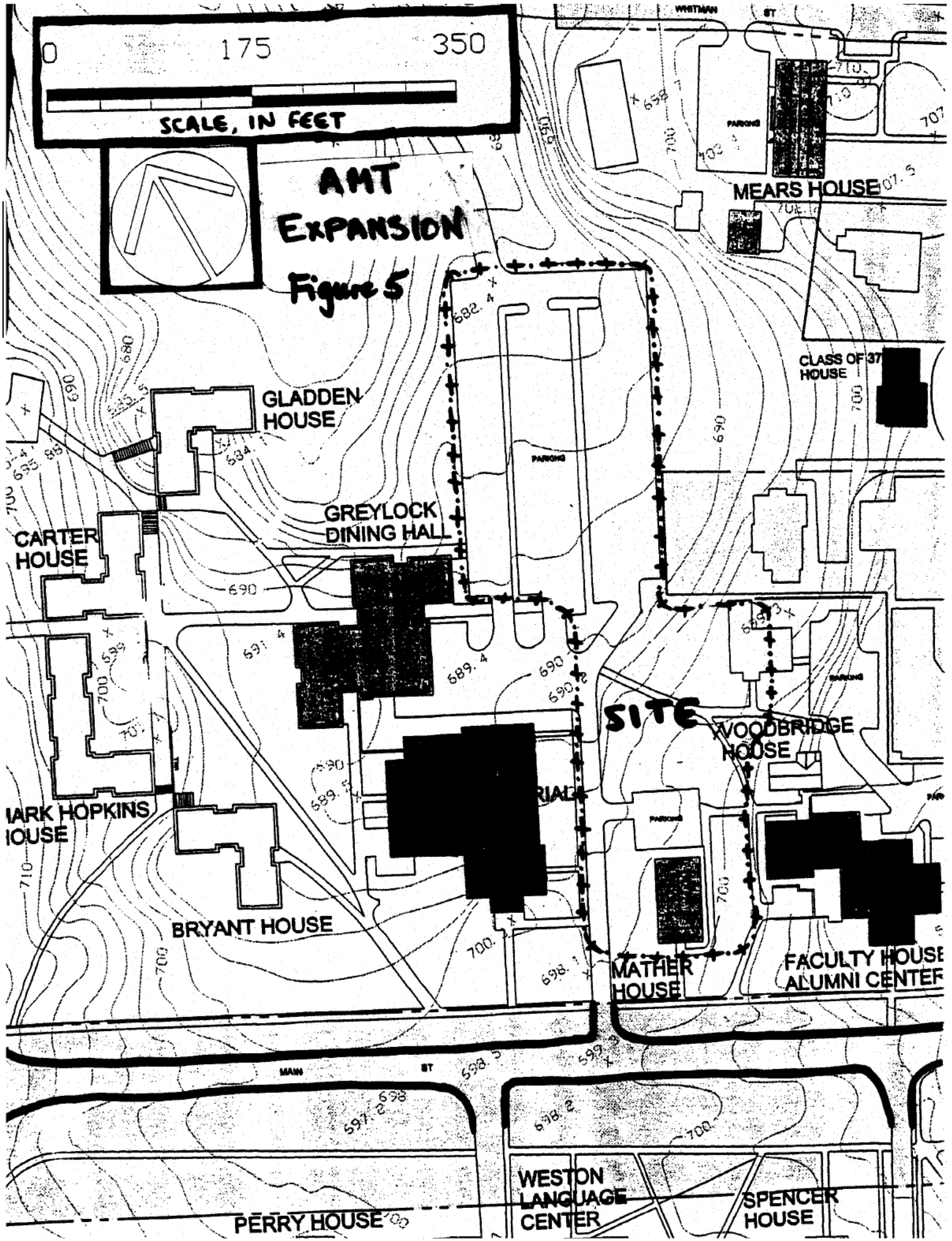
- access via Route 7

### **Disadvantages:**

- very actively -used recreational area (intramural frisbee, Williams Ultimate Frisbee, and other recreation) that would be difficult to replicate elsewhere due to the extensive open space required
- poor drainage on site
- loss of convenient student parking that must be replicated elsewhere — potentially by expanding the Thompson Old I parking lot
- ranked lowest on student opinion survey
- would change entrance to town from approach on Route 7 south
- traditional New England-style architecture would appear incongruous next to Greylock Quad buildings
- takes over open space rather than a previously-developed area



# AMT EXPANSION Figure 5



## **2. AMT Expansion / Mather House**

This area is located just east of the Adams Memorial Theater at the current location of Mather House, and extends back toward Woodbridge House. Approximately 39,000 ft<sup>2</sup> of space would be available if both buildings were removed, and an additional 47,000 ft<sup>2</sup> would be available if the current Greylock parking lot were used, for a total of 86,000 ft<sup>2</sup>. Access via Route 2 would probably be eliminated to provide for enough space on this site. Potentially, new access could be created via Park Street, located east of the site.

### **Advantages:**

- minimal neighborhood impact
- access via Route 7 (and possibly Route 2)
- central location — accessible to both students and community
- area already developed
- building would be highly visible
- minimal height intrusion to area (Adams Memorial Theater is already high)
- ranked highest (most popular building site option) on both student and faculty opinion survey
- the new theater and dance facility could potentially share the scene shop and/or office space of the AMT

### **Disadvantages:**

- must create more space: move Mather House (admissions building) and Woodbridge (co-op dormitory), each of which would cost \$250,000 (demolition is not an option since these buildings are protected by the town historical commission); and/or relocate Greylock dining hall
- loss of convenient student parking that must be replicated elsewhere — potentially by expanding the Thompson (Old I) parking lot





### **3. Poker Flats / Mission Park**

This area consists of the open space/vegetated area between Poker Flats co-op dormitory and Mission Park dormitory. There is currently a recently-constructed outdoor basketball court on the site, and a couple dozen 30 to 40 foot trees (sugar maple, white pine). This square-shaped plot of land consists of approximately 105,000 ft<sup>2</sup>. There would be even more space available if the area just north of the Thompson (Old I) parking lot were also used.

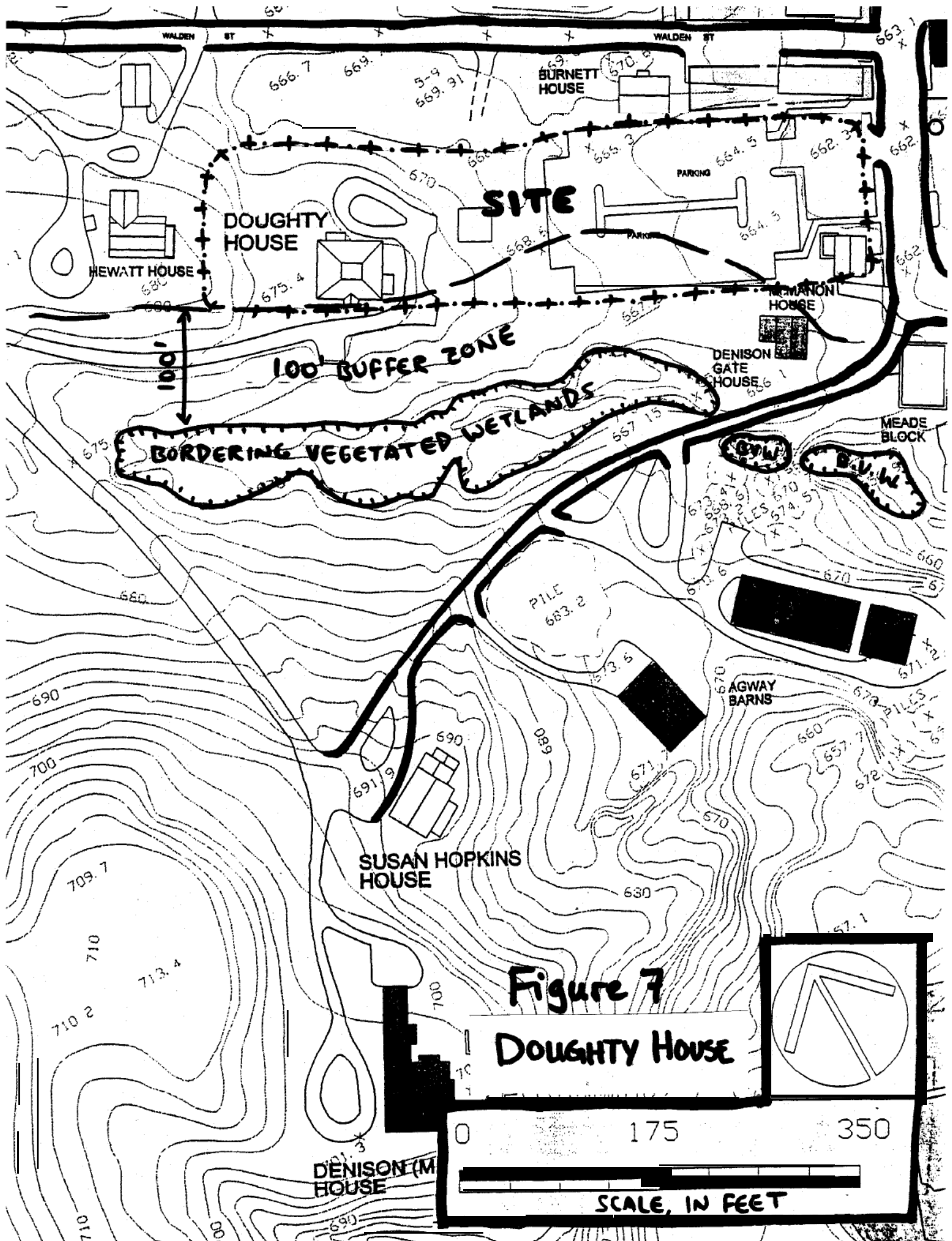
NOTE: map of area incorrectly shows the Poker Flats parking area to be north of the buildings. The lot is actually south of the buildings.

#### **Advantages:**

- parking available for sporting events at Cole Field, tennis courts
- several access points (Syndicate Avenue, Whitman Street, Chapin Hall Drive, Mission Park Drive, and by the tennis courts)

#### **Disadvantages:**

- on outskirts of campus (less accessible to community and to students)
- valued for aesthetics and for recreation — outdoor basketball recently constructed on site
- building would block many of the highly valued views from Mission Park and Thompson dormitories
- would take over open space



#### **4. Walden Street - Doughty House**

This area is located just south of Walden Street, south of the new science facilities. The area is bordered by the underground drainage apparatus for the science facilities located north of Doughty House that must remain accessible (thus, cannot be built over). Limiting the southern extent just south of Doughty house is the 100' buffer zone of the bordering vegetated wetlands. Major impacts of developing the site would be the removal of an impressive stand of old white pine east of Doughty House and south of the town parking lot, and the demolition of Doughty House itself. By minimizing encroachment on the wetland buffer zone and taking over the public parking lot, there would be approximately 79,000 ft<sup>2</sup> of space available at this site. Potentially, more space for parking could be acquired by developing the Buildings and Grounds storage site southeast of the Doughty House site.

##### **Advantages:**

- parking available for Spring Street visitors, for sporting events at Weston Field, Chandler facilities
- better integration of Spring Street with campus circulation (potentially increased business)

##### **Disadvantages:**

- traffic / access issues — only accessible through small town roads (Hoxsey Street, The Knolls, Spring Street, and Latham Street)
- neighborhood impact on The Knolls, Hoxsey Street, and Latham Street
- wetland impacts — development would expand into 100' wetland buffer zone
- loss of vegetation (including many old white pine)
- loss of Doughty House (demolition = \$30,000, and loss of 12 student bedrooms)

Figure 8

SCALE, IN FEET

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS

STORAGE SITE

DOUGHTY HOUSE

HOUSE

PARKING

PARKING

McMANON HOUSE

DENISON GATE HOUSE

ALUMNI HOUSE  
THE LOG

MULLEN HOUSE

RAILROAD LOCK

CHESMAN HOUSE

BORDERING VEGETATED WETLANDS

100' BUFFER ZONE

SITE

AGWAY BARN

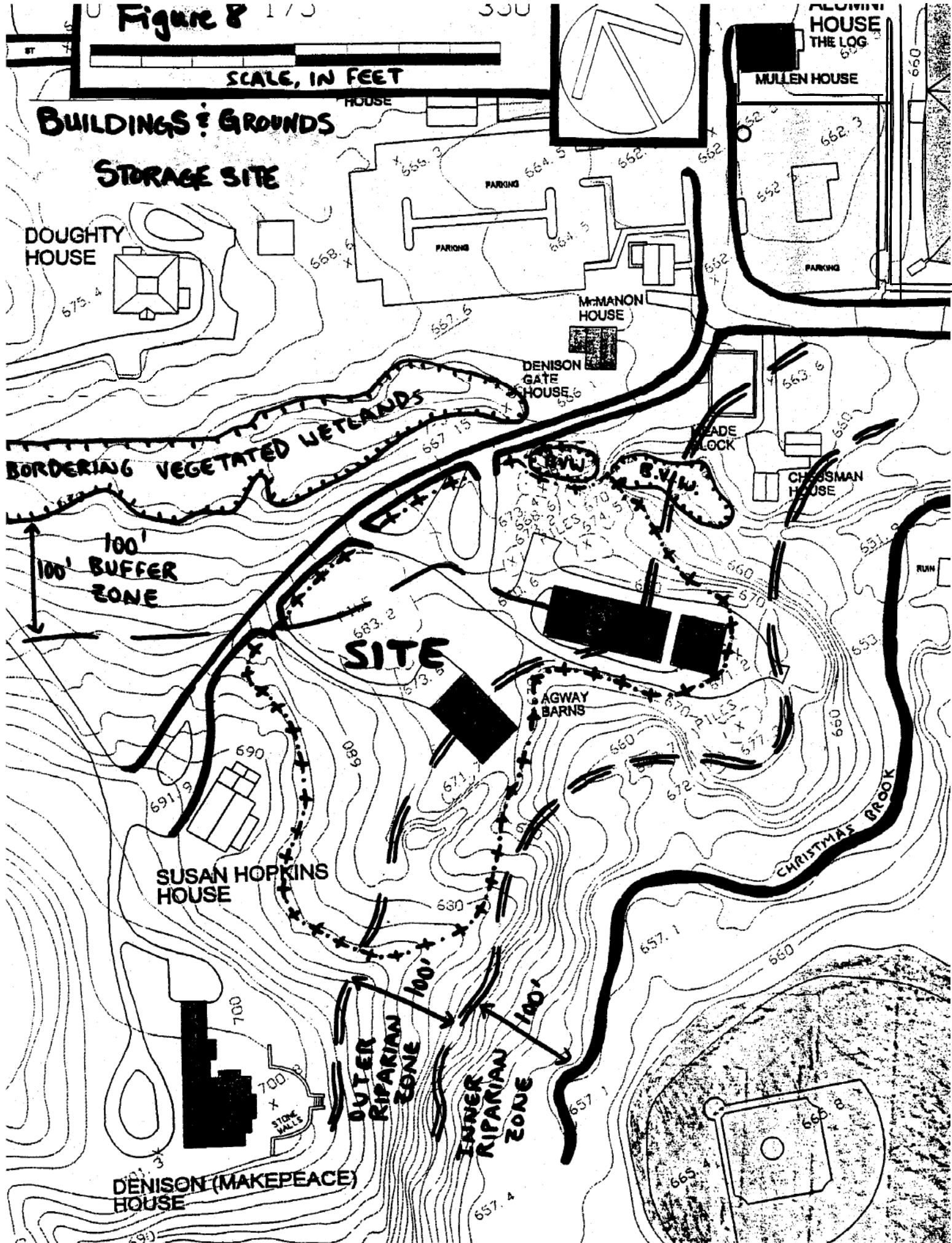
SUSAN HOPKINS HOUSE

DENISON (MAKEPEACE) HOUSE

OUTER RIPARIAN ZONE

INNER RIPARIAN ZONE

CHRISTMAS BROOK



## **5. Buildings and Grounds Storage Site (Agway Barns)**

This site is located past the south end of Spring Street, southwest of Robin's Restaurant. Christmas Brook, a perennial stream protected by the Massachusetts Rivers Protection Act, flows north along the eastern edge of the site. The eastern portion of the site falls well within the 100' outer riparian zone of the 200' protected riverfront area. The northern portion of the site falls within the 100' buffer zone of the bordering vegetated wetlands. Although the wetland and riverfront areas are protected, they are currently overgrown with invasive species at this site.

Presently, the site consists of a dirt lot with two red storage barns (formerly owned by Agway) that cover approximately 10,000 ft<sup>2</sup> total. There are several piles of sand, numerous dumpsters, tractors, trucks, and trailers throughout the site, and also a fair amount of garbage (old tires, metal bars) strewn about the periphery. The site is very environmentally damaging in that rainstorms produce sand-filled run-off from the lot that flows directly into Christmas Brook and the accompanying wetlands. Some dirt roads extend from the storage site to the baseball diamond at Weston Field. Extending the site up near Susie Hopkins co-op dormitory would require the removal of one large sugar maple, and several smaller trees. This would provide approximately 87,000 ft<sup>2</sup> of space for development. Additional space (up to 20,000 ft<sup>2</sup>) could be acquired by extending the public parking lot to the west (removing the shed east of Doughty House) and by taking over the area currently occupied by McMahon House, which currently houses the Travel Store.

### **Advantages:**

- parking available for Spring Street visitors, and for sporting events at Weston Field, and Chandler facilities at times with no performances
- better integration of Spring Street with campus circulation (potentially increased business)
- environmental improvement — high potential for wetland/river restoration on site
- aesthetic improvement of the site itself
- increased visibility of Denison Park, also potential for increased access
- eliminate movement of Buildings & Grounds trucks and tractors through residential area
- potential for more parking by expanding the public parking lot, and at the current location of the Travel Store

### **Disadvantages:**

- traffic / access issues — only accessible through small town roads
- intersection between Denison Park Drive and Spring Street must be reworked and widened, possibly by reworking the area currently occupied by McMahon House.
- neighborhood impact primarily on Latham Street, to a lesser extent The Knolls and Hoxsey Street
- must relocate Buildings & Grounds activity
- cost to remove barns = \$30,000

## Map Evaluations

In conjunction with visiting each of our sites, we also used campus maps such as Figures 1 and 2 (Appendix A) to evaluate aspects of campus layout such as student circulation and parking availability. We created mylar overlays in order to help us gain a better sense of the inter-relatedness between the five sites and the daily movement of cars and people through and around campus. In addition, we used both the mental image of Sawyer Library, which is approximately 30,000 square feet, and a moveable representation of the Theater and Dance Center, made to scale, to double check the plausibility of fitting a 30,000-40,000 square foot building at each site. We did not include a model of the parking lot because the parking needs do not have to be concentrated in one single block. If need be, the parking requirements can be broken down into smaller sections. However, we did check that our sites do have enough additional space to incorporate at least some on-site parking.

The first overlay delineated the function of various buildings on campus. We applied a color code for the different uses of buildings. Solid red indicated academic buildings, whereas red stripes identify buildings used for physical education classes. Dance, in its various forms, is offered as a physical education class. Blue was used for dining halls, and yellow for residential dormitories and houses. This overlay helped us envision the daily student and faculty circulation throughout campus.

The second overlay outlined the parking availability on and around campus. Again, we applied a color code. Striped green indicated public parking, striped brown was faculty and staff parking, and striped purple was student parking. It was then possible to see the many pockets of parking lots dotted around campus. One could then understand how the parking needs for the theater and dance facility could be divided and placed in numerous areas.

The third overlay demarcated the five sites that we closely examined for our final recommendation. Poker Flats in the north; Greylock field in the west; the Adams Memorial Theater and Mather House on Route 2; the Doughty House site on Walden Street; and the Buildings and Grounds storage site south of Spring Street and Doughty House.

As a final step, we used a circular overlay as a representation of the distance a student could walk in ten minutes; the time provided to get from one class meeting to the next consecutive class period. We learned from Sasaki Associates that they determine a center of campus and then they draw concentric circles on the map to be used as the standard distance is that one can walk in five minutes. From our own experiment we found their standard to be too conservative. We ultimately determined that one could walk uphill, from the Poker Flats area, to the President's House on Route 2, in five minutes. Using that distance as our radius, we constructed a circular mylar overlay to represent the distance one could walk in ten minutes. Therefore, we applied this overlay to the map to evaluate whether any one of the five sites would be too far to reach from any academic building in ten minutes. Depending on which site we were evaluating and whether we decided Baxter Student Union or West College to be the center of campus, we concluded that each site could be reached from each academic building in the allotted ten minutes.

Therefore, from considerations such as these, and from further research we conducted as de-

scribed in this report, we decided that the Buildings and Grounds storage site would be the most feasible site for the new theater and dance facility. In addition, we determined the two best alternatives to that primary choice to be firstly, the Adams Memorial Theater expansion and removal of Mather House, and secondly, the Doughty House site.

# Legal Issues

## Zoning

The five evaluated sites lay in two physical zones (Appendix B). The Poker Flats site, Doughty House, and the Building and Grounds storage site are in the General Residence 1 Zone. The Greylock Field and Adams Memorial Theater are in the General Residence 2 Zone. However, since the College is an educational institution, it is excluded from this Euclidean zoning.

Under Section 3 of the Massachusetts State Law, local zoning may not prohibit or unreasonably regulate the use of land by an educational corporation therefore excluding dimensional requirements. The Williamstown Dimensional Requirements, as stated in the Williamstown Zoning Bylaws (WZB) (Appendix B), included regulations on:

- Minimum Lot Area
- Minimum Frontage
- Minimum Front, Side, and Rear Yards
- Maximum % Building Coverage
- Minimum % Open Space

The College will also have to follow the town **Development Standards** (as appear in Article V of the WZB) which include:

### I. Service Adequacy Requirements-

- Access
- Water Supply
- Sewage Disposal

### II. Environmental Protection Requirements

- Water Quality
- Erosion Control
- Air Quality
- Odors
- Plants and Animals
- Hazardous Materials

### III. Design Requirements

- Landscaping
- Lighting
- Noise
- Historic and archaeological sites

### **Additional Requirements:**

Height: Under Article IV §70-4.1, no building or structure shall exceed 35 ft. However, this section also states that limitations of height shall not apply to educational institutional buildings. Thus, the College is not responsible for these restrictions.



Parking: Under Article VI §70-6.1, for places of public assembly, all districts except Village Business are required to provide one parking space for every three seats therein in addition to one space for every two employees. In the past, the College has been able to obtain a variance and operate under the ratio of one space per six seats. This is justified by the assumption that since students live on campus, many of them will not drive cars to performances. Thus, there will be a lower audience to parking space ratio compared to more typical places of public assembly.

### **Approval for Development**

Under Article VIII, the College will have to develop a proposal to be presented to the Planning Board for Plan Review. This will include:

Locus Plan- based information off of the Assessors' Map for the site in question in additional to all land within 300 feet of the property boundaries.

Site Plan- to be prepared by a design professional.

Building Plans

Documentation of submittals to other agencies (Conservation Commission, etc.)

Plan Review Fee

After the completed forms are submitted, the Planning Board has 45 days to notify the Building Inspector and the College of their determination. the submitted plans must be endorsed by the Planning Board as complying with Article V, Development Standards and §70-6.1 off-street parking before the Inspector of Buildings can grant a building permit.

In the case of parking spaces, the Zoning Board of Appeals has the power to grant the variance. They have done this in the past, so it is not unlikely that this variance will be granted. Should any other needs for variances arise in the design of the facility, the ZBA will have to approve.

## **Demolition Delay By-Law**

This bylaw was enacted for the purpose of “preserving and protecting significant buildings within Williamstown that reflect distinctive features of the architectural, historical and cultural heritage of the town and to encourage owners of such buildings to seek ways to preserve, rehabilitate or restore them rather than demolish them.” (Demolition Delay By-Law, article 23, p. 22)

The Building Inspector issues permits for demolition. If the Building Inspector determines that the building may be “significant” (i.e., on the list of buildings that the Historical Commission has deemed worthy of preservation), there must be an appeal to the Historical Commission for a permit for demolition. The commission then has 45 days to determine whether or not the building is worthy of preservation.

If building does not have significant connection with economic, political, or cultural development of the town, or does not have significant connection with a prominent state or national figure, or is not an outstanding or last example of a recognized architectural style, the Building Inspector can issue demolition permit. However, even if building is preferably preserved, the Building Inspector can issue a permit for demolition if there is no reasonable likelihood that the owner or some other group is willing to preserve, rehabilitate or restore the building.

The request for a predetermination hearing to demolish a building entails filling out a form describing the name of the owner, owner’s address, location of building under consideration, date built, builder and/or architect, architectural style, previous owners of historical significance, historic events associated with property, previous uses, date of proposed demolition, reason for proposed demolition, proposed extent of demolition (with drawing or photo), and whether or not portions will be rebuilt.

This bylaw would apply to any building that the college is considering demolishing, specifically Doughty House, the former Agway barns on the Buildings and Grounds storage site, and McMahon House (the Travel Store building) at the south end of Spring Street.

## **Asbestos Regulations**

Removal of building materials that contain asbestos during demolition requires the presence of a supervisor with training in asbestos removal. This supervisor oversees the removal such that there is compliance with a number of regulations that attempt to reduce the amount of dust produced during removal, provide for adequate protection of all workers, and minimizes the number of people within limits of exposure. These regulations can add \$10-20,000 to removal and disposal costs.

## Massachusetts Wetlands and Rivers Act

The only sites that have potential for impact on wetlands or rivers are the sites south of Spring Street: the Doughty Site and the Buildings and Grounds storage facility. Christmas Brook winds its way in between the Buildings and Grounds storage facility and Weston Field (see Figure 9). This brook is classified as a “river” under the Massachusetts Rivers Protection Act since it appears as a perennial stream on the United States Geological Association Survey Map. Thus, it falls under the regulations of the act as revised in 1996.

Under the Act, also protected are the resource areas such as the Riverfront area and bordering vegetated wetlands. The riverfront area consists of the 100 foot inner riparian zone and the 100 foot outer riparian zone as measured from the river’s mean annual high-water mark on both sides of the river. Bordering vegetated wetlands are areas where the soils are saturated or inundated enough to support wetland indicator plants as specified in Massachusetts General Law, c. 131, §40, which border on creeks, rivers, streams, ponds, and lakes. The outline within which 50% or more of the vegetation consists of wetland indicator plants (as identified in the Act but not limited to) and saturated or inundated conditions defines the vegetated wetland boundary. Also, under protection is the buffer zone which extends 100 feet from the bordering vegetated wetland boundary.

According to Massachusetts General Law, c. 131, §40, any activities which will remove, fill, dredge, or alter the riverfront area, vegetated wetlands, and buffer zone requires the filing of a Notice of Intent. In Williamstown, this Notice of Intent is filed with the Conservation Commission. The Conservation Commission evaluates the site and the Notice of Intent is sent to the State level which has the final say about whether or not the development may occur.

There are two additional standards specified in the Rivers Protection Act. Under section 20, no development can occur in the riverfront area unless it has been shown by a preponderance of the evidence that:

- such work, including proposed mitigation measures, will have no significant adverse impact\* on the riverfront area for the following purposes:
  - to protect the private or public water supply
  - to protect the ground water
  - to provide flood control
  - to prevent storm damage
  - to prevent pollution
  - to protect land containing shellfish
  - to protect wildlife habitat
  - to protect the fisheries
- there is no practicable and substantially equivalent economic alternative (alternatives analysis) to the proposed project with less adverse effects on such purposes.

**\*No Significant Adverse Impact Criteria:** Alteration within the 200 foot riverfront area is limited to 5,000 square feet or 10% of the net square footage. There must be 100 feet of undisturbed vegetation.

As evident in Figure 9, the bordering vegetated wetlands and riverfront area map created by Vince Guntlow and Associates, there has already been development within the riverfront area. The former Agway barns and the Meade Block (where Robin's Restaurant is located) are within the outer riparian zone. Redevelopment can occur in previously developed Riverfront areas with the following conditions and allowances:

- Proposed work must improve existing conditions

- Additional development can be exchanged for restoration or mitigation

- Unless the restoration or mitigation requirements are met, the proposed work:

  - shall not be located closer than existing conditions or within 100 feet from the river, whichever is closer.

  - shall be located away from the river

  - shall not exceed the amount of degraded area.

The Conservation Commission may waive the alternatives analysis and no significant adverse impact criteria.

Therefore, redevelopment in the riverfront area will improve the environmental and ecological conditions of the area because it is required for approval.

Figure 9



MAP PRODUCED BY VINCE GUNTLOW + ASSOCIATES, OCTOBER 1998

# Social Considerations: The Williamstown Community

## Spring Street Business Owners

We interviewed 18 of the business owners and managers on Spring Street to investigate their opinions on potential sites for the Theater and Dance Center at the south end of Spring Street, i.e., the Doughty House site and/or the Buildings and Grounds storage site. Although the general consensus was very positive about these sites, even those most enthusiastic about the possibilities expressed some grave concerns that they hoped the College would take into consideration if it were to choose either site. The most commonly repeated concerns included the need for increased parking, and the need for improved traffic flow on the street. The college could most successfully address the first by responsibly dictating the use of the new parking lot. For instance, the college should maximize the public use of the lot by forbidding overnight student parking in the lot, and also by discouraging students from short-term parking in the lot (thus, limiting the added congestion to Spring Street from students driving to class). The second concern will hopefully be successfully addressed by the Spring Street 2000 plan, which could be coordinated with the development of the theater and dance facility.

The following is a summary of the comments of the Spring Street business owners:

### Positive Impacts:

- “It would be beautiful” ...general consensus is that Herb Allen is the right one to have in on the decision-making to make sure that the building is traditionally-aesthetic and fits the context of a small town.
- Would help daily parking-shortage problems on Spring Street and parking problems that arise during big sports events.
- Would be better to have the Theater and Dance Center accessible to townspeople as well as college students.
- Would help better integrate Spring Street with campus circulation, possibly spurring more business.

### Negative Impacts:

- Would exacerbate congestion problems on Spring Street before and after performances, and daily if students drive to the center for class (especially if they park on the street).
- Might affect the small-town character of the street.
- Will have some big negative impacts on the people who live around the area.

### Why we accept:

- The college is expanding; better to have an aesthetically-pleasing building with a large parking lot that will be only fully utilized for theater and dance functions in the evening/weekends than another type of

college building (which we can assume will eventually go in regardless of the outcome of this project).

- Without the college we'd have no business - from students, their parents, perspectives' parents, tourists; "if it helps the college, it helps us."
- Herb Allen is heading up the project - general feeling of respect for his ability to do what's best for the town and college in an intelligent way.
- "Anything that's good for the college is good for the town."

### **Why we don't accept:**

- College has a lot of land; there are probably many better sites
- College has been very hush hush in the whole matter... can we be assured the Theater Festival won't be coming in? that the college won't set up yet another snack bar or other type of vending area?

### **Suggestions:**

- Definitely build the parking lot before construction of the building begins.
- Make the parking lot as accessible to the public as possible, i.e., don't put limitations on the parking such as "faculty and staff only" spots or allow overnight student parking.
- Rework all of Spring Street; if that can't be done, at least rework the top, or have a cop on hand for when things get really backed up.
- Make Bank Street a through street again so that we can have deliveries off the main drag.
- Don't eliminate street-side parking - many businesses rely on large-volume, low-expenditure purchases... so people can drive up, get what they need, and be off.
- Make more parking available, and TELL people where it is.
- Keep Denison Park as it is; maybe even do some landscaping, or put in some picnic tables; keep the construction confined to the Buildings and Grounds storage site.

## **Williamstown Community Association**

The Williamstown Community Association formed "to preserve, protect, and promote neighborhood and community values including the traditional New England beliefs of concern and respect for individuals; of open, full, and civil dialogue; and of thoughtful stewardship of our man-made and natural townscapes." (see broader statement of purposes and goals, Appendix C) The WCA has essentially created a means through which the community at large can consolidate into a single body that can interact with the college and thereby (hopefully) play a role in the decision-making process. Although it is impossible to create a single body that can represent the wide spectrum of opinions and values of the community, the WCA can at least effectively work to assure that the neighborhood impact remains an important consideration in the College's site selection process. They also hope to keep the pressure on the college to produce a thorough analysis of several options for siting. Although individual opinions may vary, many members of the Association have expressed their preference for the Greylock expansion/

Mather House or Greylock field as the best feasible option. These sites would have minimal neighborhood impact since the main roads (Route 2 and Route 7) rather than small town roads would take up the traffic congestion produced at performance times.

## **Spring Street Renovations**

Williamstown is a small Berkshire County town, with a traditional main street (Spring Street), and New England architecture. What makes it unique is that it is also home to Williams College, the center of which (Hopkins Hall-Baxter Hall) is also the center of town (Spring Street, the main business district). The college owns a lot of land in the Spring Street area (approx. 80% of the land on the street, 50% of the surrounding land), and thus any college development around this area should be carefully planned to account for any negative impacts on the character of the street. The street is the main site in town for community events, and is home to a variety of locally-owned businesses.

Parking is possibly the most important issue with Spring Street; there is a large public parking lot (owned and provided by the College) at the bottom end of the street, as well as curb-side parking; but the problem is that the street was designed for pedestrians, and most townspeople drive when they go to the businesses on the street. Therefore, there is a chronic shortage of parking spaces.

The Town Manager, Stephen Patch, commented that the 1987 construction of Chandler Athletic Facility brought out many of the same contentions and issues involving Spring Street as the current Theater and Dance Center siting. For example, many townspeople protested the location (directly behind the buildings along the east side of Spring St.) and the size of the building, arguing with good foresight that it would cause parking problems and congestion, especially during sporting events. The main problem with the Chandler construction is that it eliminated the alley behind the Spring Street businesses that was reserved for deliveries. Presently, delivery and mail trucks go down the street at peak traffic hours, and must block one lane of traffic while they make deliveries and pick up items.

Spring Street renovations are a major consideration of the College in this project. The College must work closely with the Town Manager and the engineers hired for the renovations, should they choose to build the Center in the area around Spring street. This concerns the current Doughty House site and Buildings and Grounds storage site. The renovations are scheduled to begin in the Spring of 2000, and end at the end of the building season. A Spring Street Committee formed for this project, (which consists of 9 people, including the Town Manager and many of the Spring Street business owners), planned the new above ground design and a hired consultant did the below-ground engineering. The main reason for doing the renovations is that the town is presently losing \$100,000 per year on below-ground costs, by having sewer and rainwater combined in one drainage system at the bottom end of the street, and then paying for cleaning both.

The main consideration for the College is that in order to provide utilities to any sites for the Theater and Dance Center around Spring Street (again, two of our final site recommendations), the pavement at the southern end of Spring street will need to be ripped up. This is because the current



electricity, sewer system, and water supply to these sites cannot support a 30-40,000 square foot building. The College will have to work with the town to provide the utilities to the site during or before, but not after, the renovations to the street are finished. The town manager believes that the College can feasibly work within this deadline if the it acts responsibly on the issue, which he believes it will.

The renovations will solve the drainage problems that the southern end of the street now experiences. The street will be kept two way, but it will be re-paved, made more pedestrian friendly (using landscaping, benches, new sidewalks; 'neckdowns' will also be put in at several locations on the street to provide safer pedestrian crosswalks.) Although the neckdowns will eliminate several parking spaces on the street, overall, the project will produce a net gain of 9 spaces, because parking will be extended around the corner onto Latham Street. The committee has also discussed the problem of sustaining the businesses on the street while they are negatively impacted by construction. The town has hired a downtown manager (a person the College should closely work with if they site the Center near Spring Street). The town is supplying extra funds, available for advertising for the businesses, and for entertainment events on the street, both of which will serve to counteract the losses in business the stores will experience during construction.

Does the town manager have any input for the siting of the proposed facility? Patch has said: "The college has legal rights, but it also has responsibilities to be a good neighbor. It's not up to me to decide where the proposed Center should go." In other words, Patch sees it as his role to work with the College: the decision they make must be consistent with the town goals. Once they make the decision, if there are any negative impacts on the town, he will work with the College to mitigate them. However, from a broader town planning perspective, Patch recognizes that town planning can only decide HOW a site should be developed, not specifically WHAT should go there. The town's role in this process is NOT, therefore, to express its own specific preferred location. However, a study of the traffic impacts for whatever location the College chooses is crucial.

Another social consideration from the town perspective on the proposed Center, is the town planning board's proposed plan for the use of the old town garage site, located on Water Street. With the help of private investment, the Board would like to develop the property (which is used temporarily used for storage of materials for Water street renovations), and ideally make it into a combination of shops and offices. However, most of the site would be devoted to parking, serving those coming to shop on Spring Street. The town would like to connect the Spring Street and water street area and develop it more as a town commercial core. That new parking may be provided for Spring Street should be a consideration if the College sites the Center around the street; the town can also work with the college on developing a safe, visible walkway between the old garage and Spring Street once the parking is available. However, it is important for the college to keep in mind that this is only a proposal, and that the Spring Street renovations will not contribute any significant increase in parking on the street. Therefore, the College must take responsibility for providing whatever parking is associated with construction and its impacts, as well as the finished Center.

## **Town Goals**

The Town Manager mentions (see above section) the importance of town goals in planning the proposed Center: we must examine what these consist of. There are two town goals, as expressed in the 1989 Growth Management Plan, which concern this project.

First, the town would like to develop its town core intensively (including sustaining the economic vitality of Spring Street and further development on Water Street), while keeping edges of town as open space, free of development. Since the College center is also close to the town Center, the College should plan its development along similar lines. This is an argument for putting the proposed Theater and Dance Center in a central, highly visible location. The town also has developed an Open Space Plan, in order to manage its resources better. Therefore, the College will follow town goals well if it improves or uses land that is already developed, rather than destroy valuable open space, especially space that is highly valued by the townspeople.

This leads us to the second town goal expressed in the Plan. In order to manage growth effectively, the town said, well-informed public involvement in decision-making is needed. This Center is a major development project, and it is the College's role to provide accurate and up-to-date information about it to all the groups who will be affected.

# **Williams College Community**

## **Executive Decision Committee**

In April, 1998, Williams College announced its acceptance of a \$20 million donation from Herbert Allen as "good for college." The donation is to be used to build a Theater and Dance Center, thus, all interest on the donation before the money is spent, and all future profits that come from the Center are to return to the Center.

One stipulation on the Center is that it must have one area with a seating capacity of 500-600 for major functions. The donor has also expressed an interest in having a traditional design that fits the context of a small town.

The Trustees of the College have the authority to decide on whether or not to build the Center, where to build it, and which architect to hire to determine layout and design. The Trustees typically defer these responsibilities to President. He, in turn, usually appoints a committee to evaluate the options and make a suggestion to which he gives the final approval. However, in this case, the final decision has been left to an executive committee consisting of President Payne, Trustee Michael Keating, and the donor, Herbert Allen. All decisions must be agreed upon by all three. There is a no build option: the college would keep the \$10.8 million initial down payment, and then probably use it for scholarship. However, the college is working with assumption that the Theater and Dance Center will materialize.

Note: These details are based on our meeting with President Payne, 11/9/98.

## **Performing Arts Program Committee**

As discussed earlier, Williams College has fallen behind other small Liberal Arts Colleges with its standards and its provisions for opportunities to experience performance arts. In the fall of 1997, President Payne established an ad hoc committee to evaluate the need for expansion of performing arts. He also established an ad hoc committee to evaluate the need for renovation of Stetson, as these were both seen as priorities.

Within the next couple of months, Herbert A. Allen came forward with a \$20 million donation to be used to construct a performing arts facility. At this time, the ad hoc committee had not made any conclusions concerning the need for such a facility, but the opportunity arose to accept the gift. In order to decide how to use the money to best fit the performing arts needs of the College, the ad hoc committee was expanded to its current 12 members, including faculty from the Theater Department and Dance Program, and two students actively involved in the performing arts.

At one time, the College considered including Music in the performing arts facility. But since the Music Department recently acquired the Brooks and Rogers complex, they felt that they would rather stay in their space since it was compatible to their needs as opposed to the Theater and Dance programs, both of which lack sufficient space to accommodate student interest. The Mambawsi Marimba Band will be housed in the facility since they play an integral role in the African Dance program with Kusika. The facility might also have lobby space to display student art of which there is a surplus due to the limited display space available in the Spencer Art Building.

In order to help the committee evaluate and budget the needs of the facility, the College hired the theater design consulting firm Robert Davis Inc., of New York City. As of November 25th, three drafts have been produced although they are still yet to be finalized. The third draft fits within the budget for space and costs concerning construction of the physical facility, but does not allow for site preparation costs.

As requested by Herbert Allen, there must be performance space large enough to accommodate a 500-600 member audience. However, this performance space does not need to contain a proscenium style stage which is the traditional style theatre as appears in the Adams Memorial Theater. This will allow for considerable flexibility within the performance space. Seats could be manipulated to accommodate a large audience, or broken down to facilitate a smaller workshop type setting. Theater and Dance stages are not compatible. Theater stages must be able to accommodate sets and contain trap floors, while dance stages need to be suspended to reduce impact to the dancers. Thus, there must be a number of performance spaces but they need not all contain 500-600 seats.

The facility will be an educational space, not a venue for the College to make money hosting large performances from around the country nor to host the Summer Theater Festival. There will need to be office space, studio space for practicing, rehearsal space, a machine shop to create sets, a physical therapy room for dancers, and all of the backstage space associated with performance spaces (N. Moeur, personal interview). Thus, the facility need not be constructed as a square block, but could be a connected

facility ranging from 1-4 buildings (H. Allen, personal interview).

Currently, the Committee is in the process of choosing an architect. Background on the architects has been available in Sawyer Library and the Committee members have been narrowing down to choosing about five architects whom they will interview in January, 1999. The architect will determine the square footage and layout of the Center. Mr. Allen has stipulated that the architecture not resemble the modern design of Sawyer Library and Mission Park, but rather that it reflect “traditional New England” architecture. The Committee understand the donor’s desire to get the project underway, but it is wary of making any rushed decisions.

### **Committee on Priorities and Resources**

The Committee on Priorities and Resources, consisting of eight faculty and three student members, influences discussion of College priorities and use of resources by interacting with the Provost and reporting to the faculty. The Committee’s 1998 report concluded that “large new capital projects do not fit into the existing capital or consolidated budget and should be considered extremely carefully in light of this and the College’s overall objectives.”

Some of the Committee’s concerns about new capital projects are Williams’ already “world class” campus, its commitment to financial aid, and rapidly increasing tuition costs. They also noted that even in the case of a gift of a new building, future maintenance and operating costs are usually supported by the College instead of by an endowment from the donor. Various sources have estimated that annual maintenance costs will be between \$500,000 and \$1,000,000.

### **Student Opinions**

We conducted a survey of the student body via all-campus email in order to better understand student attitudes about the necessity of the center, participation in future programs at the center, and the suitability of the center to each of our five potential sites. We received 487 responses, accounting for almost one quarter of the student population.

### **Necessity of the Center**

We asked the students to answer the following questions by ranking them on a scale of one to ten, a score of one indicating that it is not important at all, ten indicating extreme importance:

1. How do you rate the necessity of a Theater and Dance Center to the academic and extra-curricular experience at Williams?
2. When you were considering colleges, how important was the physical

We received positive responses: the average answer for the necessity of the Center was 6.2, with **59%** of respondents indicating that the Center is important (i.e. rating between 6 and 10). An overwhelming **78%** of students rated the quality of physical facilities as very important in their college choice (average 6.8), suggesting that the inadequate facilities for dance at Lasell may be a strong detraction for students interested in the arts. Graphs and more specific information about these results appear in Appendix D.

3. If a new Theater and Dance Center were built:
  - would you be interested in taking academic classes in dance?
  - would you be interested in participating in PE or extra-curricular activities in dance?
4. Would the expansion of theater facilities make you more likely to participate in theater courses or extra-curricular productions? (Y/N)
5. Have you been involved in any dance or theater productions or classes?

## II. Interest in future programs at the Center

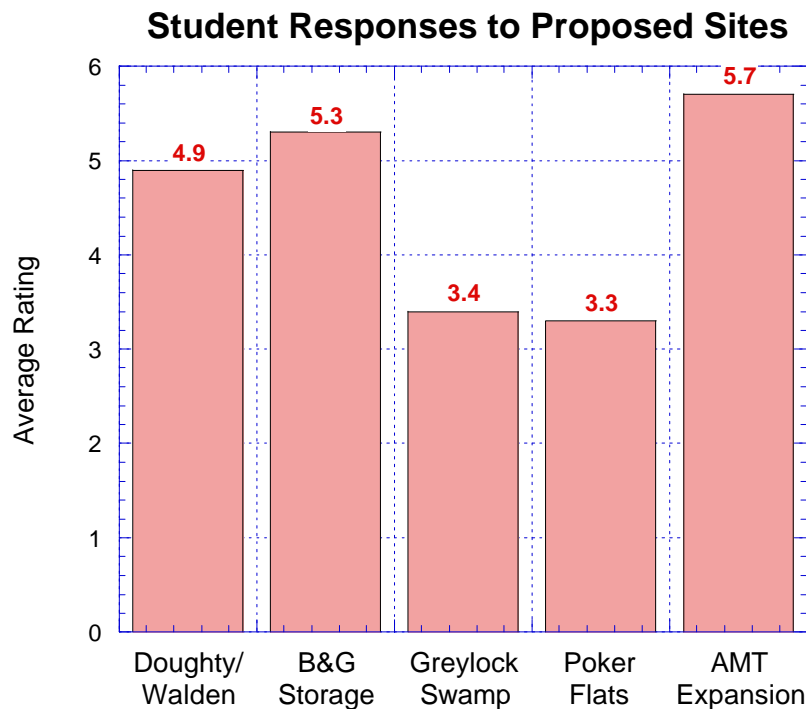
We next asked students a series of questions to gauge interest in different kinds of dance and theater programs, plus a measure of current student involvement in dance and theater:

The responses to these questions were small as a percentage of all respondents, but large relative to current participation in theater and dance. For instance, 21% of students indicated that they would be interested in academic dance, 38% in PE or extra-curricular dance, and 31% in theater courses or productions. Comparatively, only 30% of students said that they had been previously involved in theater or dance productions or classes. In fact, of the 342 students who had **not** been previously involved in arts, **144** indicated that they were interested in at least one of the three programs (academic dance, PE dance, theater). If the expanded facilities at the new Center added these 144 interested students to programs in the arts, the number of students involved would double (145 students answered that they have been already participated in the arts programs). This demonstration of interest in programs at the new Center, especially by students with no previous involvement in the arts, indicates that students are attracted to having more alternatives to athletics and other extra-curricular activities on campus.

Current enrollment in theater classes is approximately 94 students each semester, plus more than 150 students in extra-curricular productions. Dance PE classes have 30 students per quarter, plus the 70 members of dance companies, making the combined total number of students **currently** involved in theater and dance 344, or about 17% of the student population (note that this is current only, and does not account for past involvement, like our question specified).

6. Rank each potential site on a scale of 1-10 (1= don't like it at all; 10= excellent site). If you are not familiar with the site, put zero.
- A. Behind the new Science Center/Doughty House
  - B. Behind Robin's Restaurant/north of Susie Hopkins House
  - C. Greylock Quad parking lot/field
  - D. Outdoor basketball courts behind Mission Park/south of Poker Flats
  - E. Expansion of present Adams Memorial Theater/possibly moving Mather House (admissions building)

**Figure 10.**



### III. Site Preferences

Finally, we asked the students to rate each site on a scale of one to ten, one indicating that they don't like it at all, ten indicating that they think it's an excellent site. Students were instructed to answer zero for a site if they were not familiar with it, and those responses were not included in the averages you see below.

As shown in Figure 10, the AMT expansion received an average score of 5.7, but is preferred only slightly over the B&G Storage site, with an average of 5.3, and the Doughty House site, with an average of 4.9. More statistics on the range and distribution of responses to this question appear in Appendix D.

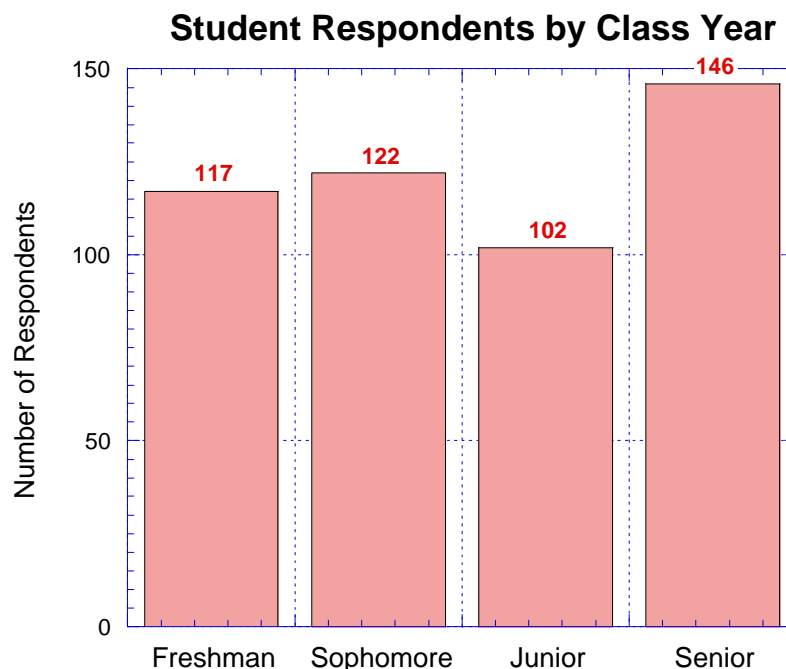
### Student Organizations and Use of the Sites:

One reason for the particularly low ratings on the Greylock Swamp and Poker Flats sites is the involvement of the Williams Ultimate Frisbee Organization (WUFO). This athletic club currently involves 50 men and 30 women of all classes and practices in both the Swamp and Poker Flats fields approximately 4 times per week in the fall, as well as Poker Flats and Cole Field 5-6 times per week in the spring. The group also hosts one or two ultimate frisbee tournaments per semester, inviting up to 28 teams, and on such occasions they utilize every available field on campus. The Intramural (IM) Frisbee team, which also practices on these fields, has about 140 members, and participation has been increasing steadily over the last few years. We understand that these organizations specifically encouraged their members to reply to this survey in order to express their interest in retaining these athletic fields. Thus we feel that our results may be biased against those two sites.

### IV. Demographics

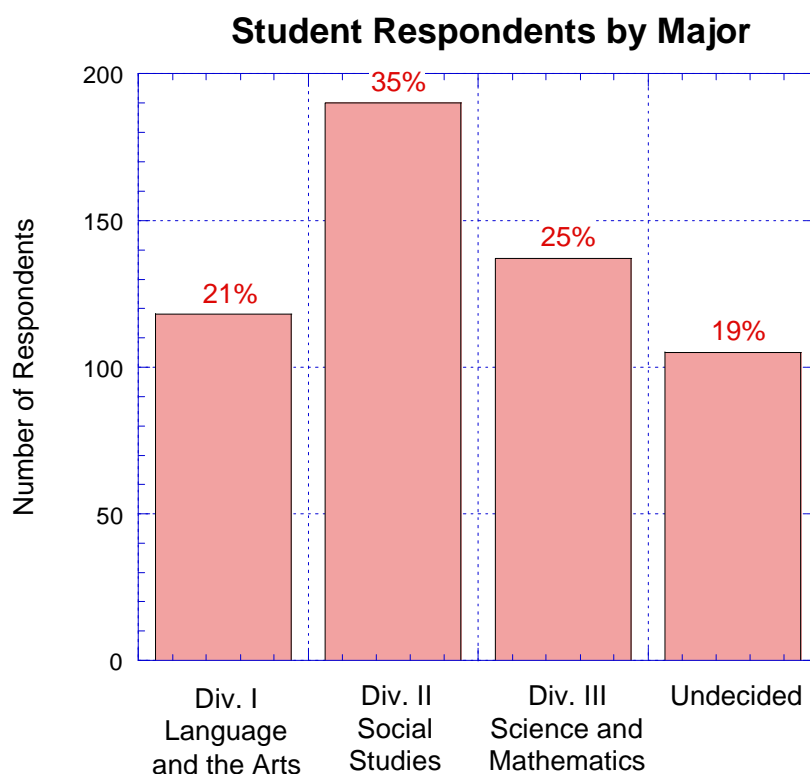
As previously stated, we received 487 responses to the survey, accounting for about 25% of the student body and constituting a very representative sample with respect to sex, class and majors. There were 272 responses from females (56%) and 215 from males, which is very close to the standard Williams 50:50 ratio of men and women. The response from classes varied slightly, with 30% of the responses coming from seniors and only 21% from juniors (see Figure 11 on the next page). The junior response was probably low because many take a semester abroad. Freshman and sophomore responses were approximately 25% each.

**Figure 11.**



We also asked students to indicate their major(s), prospective major(s) or undecided status (see Figure 12 on the next page). Interpreting this distribution was difficult since the College keeps records of juniors and seniors who have already declared their major(s), whereas our survey includes freshmen and sophomores as well. Our results showed 35% of respondents were majoring in a Division II (Social Sciences) department, 21% in Division I (Language and the Arts), 25% in Division III (Science and Mathematics), plus 19% undecided majors. The actual distribution of majors on campus (only including declared juniors and seniors) is 50% Division II, and about 25% each Divisions I and III. In both of these tabulations, students with double majors were counted twice - once in each appropriate division. We considered this pattern to be relatively close to the actual distribution and not problematic since each division was well-represented.

**Figure 12.**

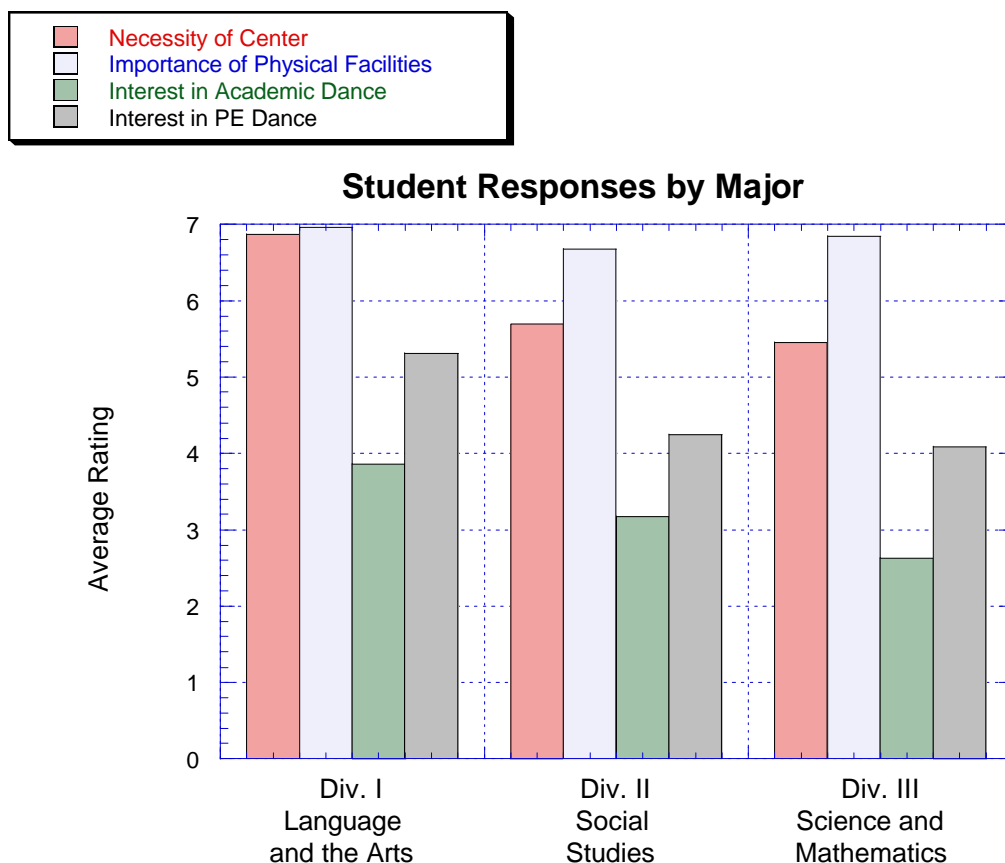


In examining the demographics of our survey, we looked for differences in scoring based on gender, class, major, and previous involvement in theater and dance. We found that males rated the necessity of the Center an average of 12% lower than females, and interest in academic and PE dance about 45% lower. There was no difference in answers between students of different classes, or those who had previously been involved in theater and dance productions. We did find that ratings of the necessity of the Center, importance of physical facilities, and interest in academic and PE dance were higher for Division I majors, and substantially lower for Division III majors (see Figure 13). Division I includes the Theatre, Art, Classics, English and foreign language departments, Division II includes social sciences



like history and economics, and Division III includes “hard” sciences like biology, chemistry, and math. This pattern suggests that those students who care about the arts are most convinced of the need for its expansion at Williams.

**Figure 13.**



#### **Conclusions from the Student Survey:**

- AMT Expansion is the preferred site.
- Students are interested in participating in expanding the presence of arts at Williams.
- Students feel that quality facilities are important in how they view the College.
- Students with an interest in the arts are more convinced of the need for arts program expansion.

With regard to the possible sampling bias in the survey due to strong response from students involved in WUFO and IM Frisbee teams, we consider this survey valid as a gauge of vocal student sentiment, but not as an indication of the student body as a whole. The truth remains that the Greylock Swamp and Poker Flats areas are highly valued by many students, not just those in athletic clubs that use them regularly. We took these interests into consideration in evaluating the sites, but did not place substantial weight on the results of the site preference question.

## Faculty Opinions

We also surveyed faculty at Williams by distributing flyers to all faculty boxes, and we received 47 responses, accounting for approximately 17% of faculty. First, we asked faculty to rate the necessity of the Theater and Dance Center to the academic and extra-curricular experience at Williams, the same question as the student survey, and received virtually the same answer: **58%** of faculty rated the importance between 6 and 10, with an average score of 6.1. Next we asked the faculty to rate the same five proposed sites:

2. Rank each potential site on a scale of 1-10 (1= don't like it at all; 10= excellent site). If you are not familiar with the site, put zero.
- A. Behind the new Science Center/Doughty House
  - B. Behind Robin's Restaurant/north of Susie Hopkins House
  - C. Greylock Quad parking lot/field
  - D. Outdoor basketball courts behind Mission Park/south of Poker Flats
  - E. Expansion of present Adams Memorial Theater/possibly moving Mather House (admissions building)

**Figure 14.**

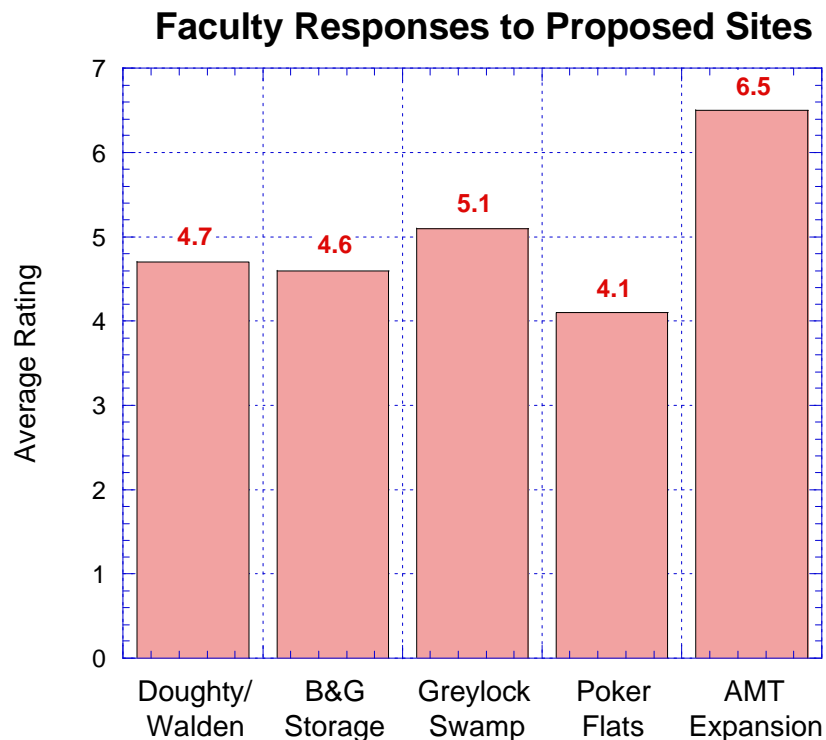
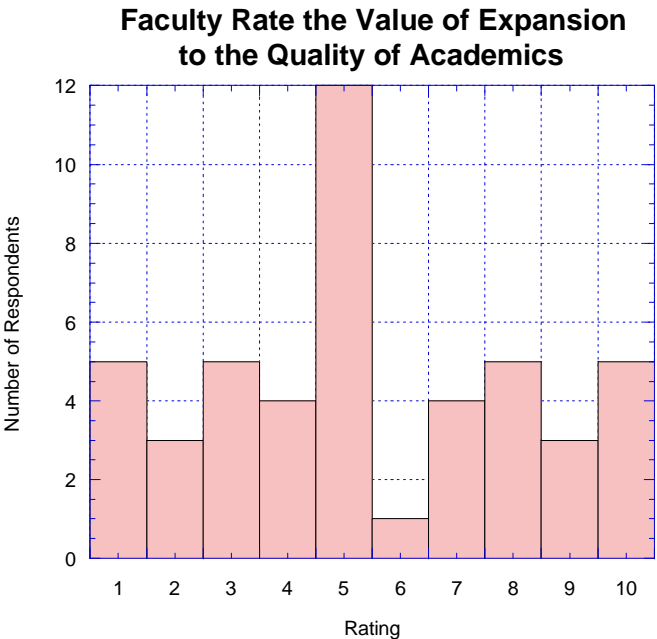


Figure 14 shows that the faculty prefer the AMT Expansion, but made little distinction between the other sites. More details about responses to this question appear in Appendix D. Finally, we asked the faculty to consider how the expansion of programs along with the new Center would influence Williams academics:

3. How vital is the expansion of the dance and theater curricula to the quality of Williams academics? (1= not vital at all, 10= extremely vital)

We received a somewhat ambiguous response, as shown in Figure 15. Most respondents gave the question a neutral rating of five, suggesting an unwillingness to decide whether the expansion is actually necessary.

**Figure 15.**



**Faculty Comments**

In the survey, we requested comments from the faculty, and received a number of very diverse opinions about the Center and the sites themselves. They ranged from eloquent statements about the needs and image of the College to ignorance of the inadequacies of current facilities. Following are a few excerpts, and the full comments appear in Appendix D:

- “I question whether Williams should try to go big time into the performing arts; other schools are strong in the area, and we can’t do everything.”
- “I think it would balance the perception of Williams being “too rural” (interpreted as lack of access to arts), too “bookish,” too athletic. It would add balance, and supplement the existing arts community (Berkshire Symphony, Summer Theatre, Tanglewood, Jacobs Pillow, College Art Museum, Clark).”

- “We’ve become so overbalanced towards athletics that activities of the human spirit seem irrelevant on campus at present.”
- “Essentially throwing away a fine theater (the AMT) to satisfy a donor’s ego strikes me as an unconscionably profligate use of scarce resources. If we are to have such a large center, it should be central to the campus, not on the fringe. The campus is already losing its coherence. And it should not create the kinds of traffic problems in residential neighborhoods or Spring St. that sites A, B and D would cause.”

### **Demographics**

Analyzing demographics for the faculty survey was difficult because many respondents declined to give us that information (about 11 of the 47). In order to avoid making conclusions based on a very small sample, we decided not to analyze differences based on department affiliation, as we did for the student survey.

### **Conclusions from the Faculty Survey:**

- AMT Expansion is the favored site.
- There is no consensus on whether or not the addition of a Theater and Dance Center is vital to academic quality.
- Many comments indicated concern about impacts on the residential neighborhood by Doughty House/Walden Street.
- Many comments conveyed a lack of information about the project and alternative sites.

# Long-term Planning

One of our final steps in evaluating the sites was to think about Williamstown and the College in the future. In 50 years, what will the town look like? For each of the five sites, we asked ourselves the following questions:

- Is a Theater and Dance Center the best use of the site?
- Would the town and the students be better served if the site were used for something else?

Our conclusion, in keeping with the town Master Plan, was that existing open space should be preserved because it will only become more scarce as development inevitably continues. Thus, the Greylock Field and Poker Flats sites should be maintained as open space, especially since they are currently highly valued by students and the community. We also interpreted this argument to imply that the Doughty House site, which is highly valued by its neighbors for its contribution to the aesthetic and residential character, is also a less desirable site.

Instead, we proposed that the Buildings and Grounds Storage site, be the future home of the Theater and Dance Center. The present uses of the site can be dispersed elsewhere in town, thus providing the opportunity to make better use of a prime site located near the Village Center. This choice would involve re-developing an area that has already lost its aesthetic value to the community, and possibly enhancing the vitality of the Village Center itself.

# Final Site Decision

In conclusion, as mentioned earlier, we determined that the two best alternative sites for the Theater and Dance Center would be: first, the expansion of the Adams Memorial Theater and the relocation of Mather House; and second, the Doughty House site. As our final recommendation, though, we believe that the Buildings and Grounds storage site would be the best location.

## Stipulations

As part of our recommendation of the Buildings and Grounds storage site, there are five stipulations that would have to be met in order for the site to be properly utilized:

- The parking lot that would be created adjacent to the facility should not allow overnight student parking. There should be a maximum number of parking spots as this adjacent lot so as to provide easier access for handicapped people and senior citizens who are frequent attendees at theater and dance performances. The additional spots in the current Spring Street public parking lot and the empty spaces in the parking lot adjacent to the Center could provide additional parking for visitors to Spring Street. These new spaces could also provide additional parking for those attending Williams College sports events at the facilities along the east side of Spring Street and at Weston Field.
- There would have to be a significant redesign of the Denison Park Drive and Spring Street intersection. The McMahon House, at the end of Spring Street, just east of the public parking lot, that houses The Travel Store will have to be demolished because it is structurally unsound. The removal of this building would provide added space and more possibilities for expanded vehicular and pedestrian access from Spring Street and the public parking lot. (see proposed sketch of changes, figure 16)
- There should be an enhancement of Denison Park Green and Christmas Brook. Both areas would ecologically benefit from a systematic cleaning up of trash and removal of invasive plant species. This would embellish the site on the whole and would rectify the current disturbance to these ecosystems. We further recommend that walkways be constructed both from the Spring Street public parking lot and from Weston Field. Both of these paths should be designed in a creative and sensitive manner so as to benefit both the natural landscape and provide for easy movement between the parking lots, the Center, and Weston Field. To further enhance the natural appeal of the site, the walkways should contain labels of pertinent plant species for educational purposes and for a greater awareness of the natural environment that surrounds the Center.
- We advise the College to conduct an in depth investigation of where to relocate the Building and Grounds storage site. We believe that Mount Hope Farm, as suggested to our group by Buildings and Grounds staff, is not a functional or an appropriate area. The College should maintain the possibility of dividing and placing various functions at varied sites adjacent to the campus.

## **Benefits of the Buildings and Grounds Storage Site**

Having the facility in such close proximity to Spring Street will serve to enhance the integration of the college and its visitors with the main commercial area of Williamstown. This would bring greater circulation to the businesses on Spring Street and it would improve the connection of the college with the members of the town. There would be a better concentration of development in the center of town, and also it does not destroy valuable open space; both being goals articulated in the Town Growth and Management Plan of 1989.

Also, placing the facility here would stimulate traffic flow to the facility via Spring Street. Spring Street is a street that can aptly support more traffic, especially after the renovations scheduled to begin in the spring of 2000. Most events at the facility will occur in the evening when the regular traffic flow on Spring Street is not at its peak, and when delivery trucks will not be present as further sources of congestion.

Parking for visitors would be improved by having the College both expand the public parking lot, and by providing many new spaces in the parking lot adjacent to the facility.

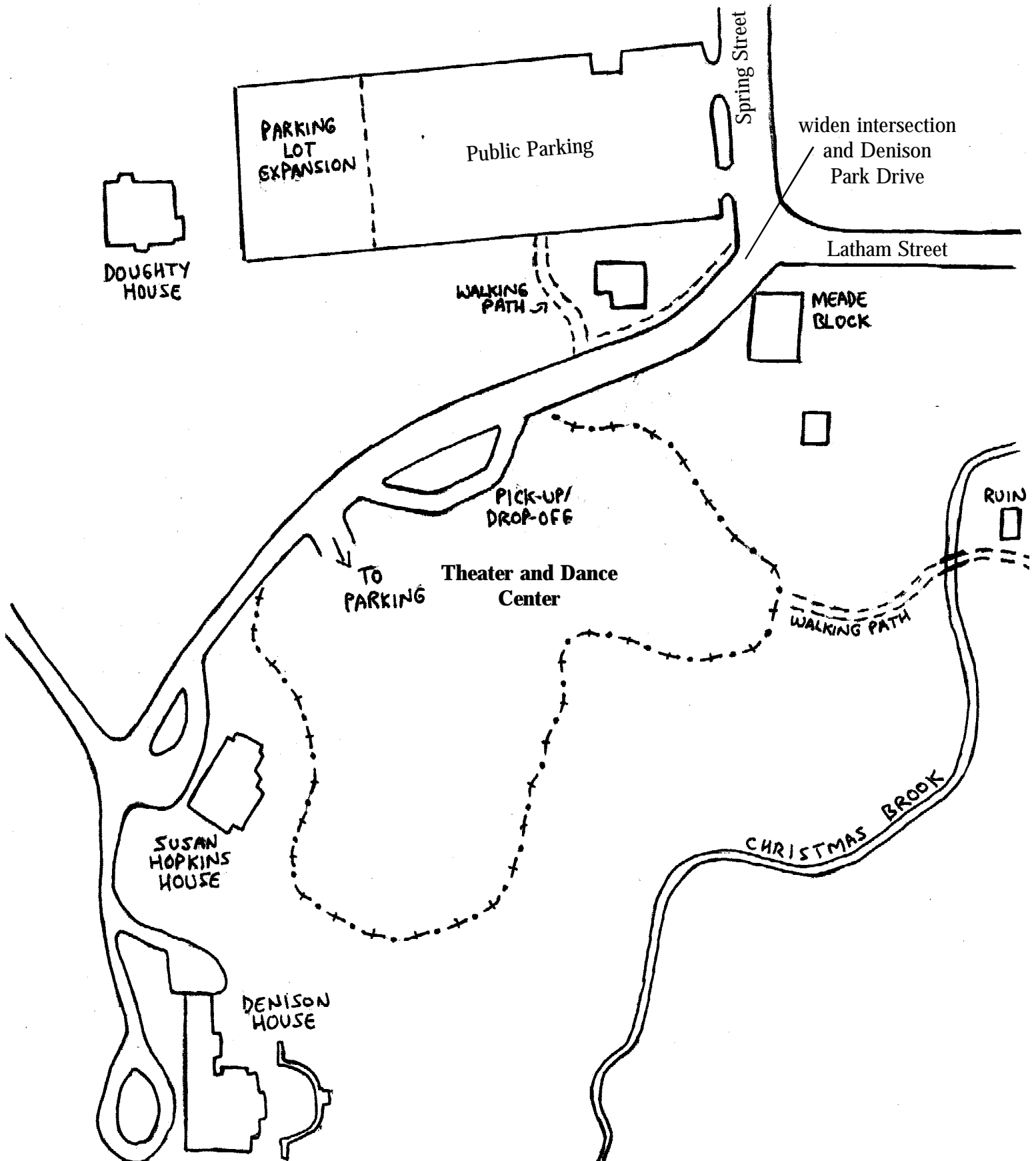
A fourth benefit pertains to a requirement, as mentioned earlier, in the Massachusetts Wetlands and Rivers Act. The Rivers Act states that the redevelopment of a previously developed riverfront area must improve existing conditions. In consideration of the activities that occur, and the materials that are stored, at the site as presently used by Buildings and Grounds, the placement of the facility at this location would be an improvement to the ecology of the area. Specifically, the rainwater runoff from the site can be cleaned and more responsibly integrated with the ecosystem, and invasive plant species can be replaced with native species.

Finally, we argue that the Theater and Dance Center would aesthetically improve a site that is currently unattractive. It would also reduce the impact on the surrounding residential area by eliminating the noise pollution of the Buildings and Grounds trucks and tractors.

Therefore, as a result of our research we are confident in our recommendation that the Buildings and Grounds storage site is the most feasible site for the placement of a new Williams College Theater and Dance Center. Alternatively, we believe that the Adams Memorial Theater expansion is the second best option, and that the Doughty House site is the third best option to our primary recommendation.

# Suggested Plan for Access

Figure 16.





# Bibliography and Sources

## **I. History and Development**

- Burton, Sandra. Personal Interview. October 1998.
- Eppel, David. Telephone Interview. October 1998.
- Lewis, R.Cragin, editor. Williams College 1793-93: A Pictorial History. Williams College Bicentennial Commission, Williamstown, MA. 1993.
- Wassenar, Winthrop. (Director of Buildings and Grounds Physical Plant, employed at Williams since 1964.) Personal Interview, October 28, 1998.
- Statistics about the Theater department and space capacity were provided by the Theater Department administrative staff. Some Dance program statistics were supplied by Holly Silva, others were tabulated from company member lists.

## **II. Site Overview**

- Maps of individual sites were portions of the "Building and Land Use" map created by Buildings & Grounds, modified by Sasaki and Assoc., "Site Evaluation Study - Theater & Dance Building Williams College - Williamstown, MA, October 1998" Also, birdseye view map of entire campus is a reduced version of that same map.
- Slant-perspective map of campus from a pamphlet distributed by Williams College.
- Map including Mission State Park from the Williams College Development Plan, 1954, plan no. 234.

## **III. Legal Issues**

- Demolition Delay Bylaw, Article 23, from the Town of Williamstown.
- Summary of asbestos requirements from OSHA Asbestos Regulations Summary, <http://www.amigroupinc.com/intertrain/osha/oshasum/thm#Introduction>, Thursday November 5, 1998.
- Map of bordering vegetated wetlands near Doughty House created by Vince Guntlow and Associates.

## **IV. Social Considerations**

- Spring Street business interviews were conducted with the owners of Goff's, Where'd You Get That, Lickety Split, Papa Charlie's, Gatsby's, The Clip Shop, Hart's Pharmacy, Williams Newsroom, B & L Service Station, Goodman's Jewelers, Subway, The George Hopkin's Store, The Library, Cold Spring Coffee Roasters, and the managers of Vermont Color, the Adventure Goat, Images Cinema, and Zanna's.
- Master Plan for the Town of Williamstown, MA. Prepared by Thomas Associates, Community Planners. 1963.
- "The Williamstown We Want." 1989 Growth Management Plan. (Available from Williamstown Planning Board office, in Town Hall.) 1989.
- Allen, Herbert. Phone interview. 1 Dec 1998.

- Moeur, Nancy. Personal interview. 19 Nov 1998.
- Shen, Clarissa. Personal interview. 2 Dec 1998.
- Committee on Priorities and Resources 1998 Report, courtesy of Catherine Hill.
- Information on student involvement in the Williams Ultimate Frisbee Organization and Intramural Frisbee courtesy of 1998 Presidents Dan Niedzwiecki and Kerianne Watson.
- Statistics on majors courtesy of the Registrar's Office.

# Appendices

- A. Campus Maps (Figures 1 and 2)
- B. Zoning Map and Relevant Excerpts from the Williamstown Zoning Bylaws
- C. Williamstown Community Association mission statement
- D. Survey Statistics and Faculty Comments

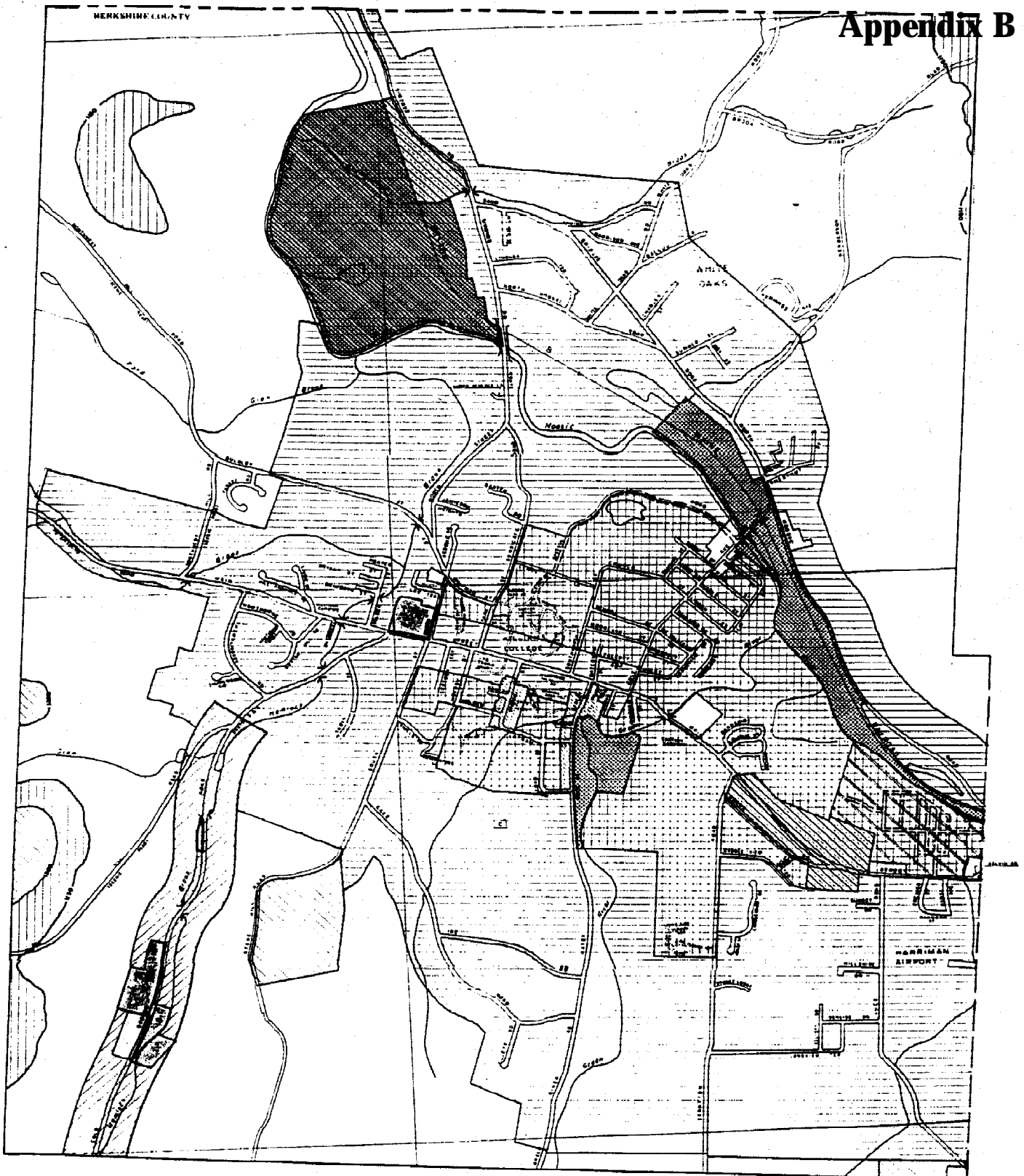
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## Appendix A

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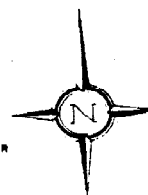
Founded in 1793, Williams is a privately endowed, four-year, coeducational, liberal arts college. It enrolls about 2,000 candidates for the Bachelor of Arts degree. The main campus covers 450 acres and has 95 buildings.

## Figure 2



ZONING DISTRICTS AS AMENDED BY  
TOWN MEETING MAY 3, 1986  
" " MAY 23, 1989  
" " MAY 19, 1992

ZONING LEGEND		
RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS	NON-RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS	OVERLAY DISTRICTS
RURAL RESIDENCE 1 ELEVATION 1150' AND GREATER	LIMITED BUSINESS	UPLAND CONSERVATION ELEVATION 1300' AND GREATER
RURAL RESIDENCE 2 LESS THAN 1150' ELEVATION	LIMITED INDUSTRIAL	MOBILE HOME PARK
RURAL RESIDENCE 3	TOURIST BUSINESS	FLOOD PLAIN DISTRICT (CONSULT ZONING BYLAW)
GENERAL RESIDENCE 1	VILLAGE BUSINESS	
GENERAL RESIDENCE 2	PLANNED BUSINESS	



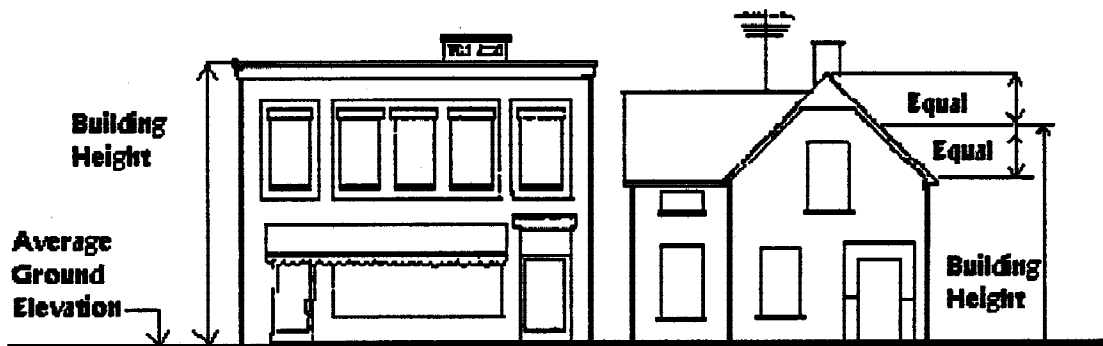
**SHEET 2**  
**ZONING**  
**MAP OF THE**  
**TOWN OF WILLIAMSTOWN**  
**MASSACHUSETTS**

PREPARED FOR  
THE WILLIAMSTOWN PLANNING BOARD  
BY: GORDON E. ANDERSON & ASSOCIATES, INC.  
DATE: NOV 1977  
REVISED BY: CARTOGRAPHIC ASSOCIATES, INC.

## ARTICLE IV Intensity Regulations

### §70-4.1. Height regulations.

- A. **Basic limitation.** The height of any building or structure shall not exceed 35 feet, or 2 1/2 stories in the case of homes of conventional design, or three stories above the average ground level in the case of split-level design, except that in no case shall the height exceed the limits permitted by Section 35A to 35D, inclusive, of Chapter 90, and any more restrictive amendments thereto, of the General Laws of Massachusetts.
- B. **Method of measurement.** Height shall be measured as the vertical distance from the average ground elevation around the exterior walls of the structure or, in the case of built up land, the highest elevation at the site prior to such change in contour, to the highest point of the roof surface in the case of a flat roof, and to the mean height between eaves and ridge in the case of a pitched roof.



- C. **Exclusions.** Limitations of height shall not apply to spires, domes, steeples, radio towers, chimneys, broadcasting and television antennae, bulkheads, cooling towers, ventilators and other appurtenances usually carried above the roof, or to farm buildings, churches, municipal or educational or other institutional buildings, provided that, if the use requires a permit, one has been granted.

### §70-4.2. Area, frontage, yard and floor area requirements.

- A. **Applicability.** The erection, extension, alteration, placement, or moving of a structure or the creation or change in size or shape of a lot (except through a public taking) must meet the requirements of this section except for lot line changes which neither create additional lots nor increase non-conformity, and except as otherwise expressly provided in MGL c. 40A, § 6, or in this chapter (e.g., § 70-1.4B, authorization for Board of Appeals approval of expansion of a nonconforming structure).
- B. **Accessory structures.** A detached accessory building or structure of 75 square feet or less in area may be erected in the rear yard area, not less than four feet from the rear property line and not less than 15 feet from the side property line. A detached accessory building or structure of over 75 square feet in area or a swimming pool as defined in Article IX may be erected in the rear or side yard area (or front yard with Board of Appeals approval), not closer than 15 feet to the property lines. An accessory building attached to its principal building shall be considered an integral part thereof, and as such shall be subject to the front, side and rear yard requirements applicable to the principal building. Outdoor fireplaces which are unattached to the principal building and which are more than four feet in any dimension shall be considered a detached accessory building.

## ARTICLE VI Other General Regulations

### §70-6.1 Off-street parking and loading.

- A. [Amended 5-16-1995 ATM, Art. 28] Number of spaces. Off-street parking and loading spaces required to meet the following standards shall not hereafter be reduced, nor shall one be counted as or substituted for the other. Off-street parking and loading spaces shall be required as follows.
- (1) Single-family and two-family dwellings, mobile homes and mobile home parks: one parking space for each dwelling unit therein and sufficient off-street parking for visitors and employees.
  - (2) Multifamily Dwellings.
    - (a) All districts except Village Business: one off-street parking space per dwelling unit plus one off-street parking space per bedroom up to a maximum of three spaces per dwelling unit over and above that needed for access roadways and maneuvering.
    - (b) Village Business Districts: One off-street space per bedroom up to a maximum of three spaces per dwelling unit over and above that needed for access roadways and maneuvering.
  - (3) Places of public assembly.
    - (a) All districts except Village Business: one parking space for each three seats therein or one space for each 60 inches of bleachers or benches, plus one space for every two employees thereof.
    - (b) Village Business Districts: The number of spaces shall be determined by the Planning Board according to the same criteria as §70-6.1A(11), Nonlisted uses.
  - (4) Schools: one parking space for each classroom and office therein, plus one parking space for each three seats in the auditorium thereof.
  - (5) Hotels, motels and other places providing overnight accommodations: one parking space for each room accommodation therein, plus one space for each two employees, and adequate spaces for delivery vehicles.
  - (6) Restaurants: one and 1 ½ parking spaces for every four seats or fraction thereof, plus one space for each two employees, and adequate spaces for delivery vehicles. [Amended 5-17-1994 ATM, Art. 30]
  - (7) Other service and retail establishments: Parking areas, exclusive of driveways, shall be in a minimum ratio of one space to 250 square feet of gross floor area, exclusive of storage areas, plus one space for each two employees, and adequate loading spaces.
  - (8) Offices, research and development facilities and similar facilities: one space for each 250 square feet of gross floor area, plus adequate loading spaces.



**ARTICLE VIII****Administration****§70-8.1. Administration and enforcement.**

The provisions of this chapter and any amendments thereto shall be administered by the Inspector of Buildings and, where specified herein (for example at § 70-8.2 Development plan review) by the Planning Board and Town Planner. This chapter shall be enforced by the Inspector of Buildings.

- (A) Compliance review. Buildings or structures shall not be erected, substantially altered, moved or changed in use and land shall not be substantially altered or changed in principal use without certification by the Inspector of Buildings that such action is in compliance with then-applicable zoning, or without review by him regarding whether all necessary permits have been received from those governmental agencies from which approval is required by federal, state, or local law. Issuance of a building permit or certification of use and occupancy, where required under the Commonwealth of Massachusetts State Building Code, shall serve as such certification.
- (B) Occupancy permits. No building hereafter erected, altered or relocated shall be used, and no change shall be made of the use of any building or of any parcel of land, unless an occupancy permit has been granted by the Inspector of Buildings to the owner or occupant of such land or building and all necessary uses comply in all respects with this chapter, and no use shall be made of such land or building except the use or uses authorized by such occupancy permit.
- (C) Violations and penalty. Violation shall be determined by the Inspector of Buildings by an investigation of the fact and inspection of the premises, after which he shall give notice thereof in writing to the owner or to his duly authorized agent and to the occupant of the premises, and shall order that any use of any premises contrary to the provisions of this chapter shall immediately cease. Whoever violates any provision of this chapter, or any of the conditions under which a permit is issued by the Inspector of Buildings, or permission is granted by the Board of Appeals, or any decision rendered by the Board of Appeals under the provision of this chapter, shall be liable to a fine as provided in the Noncriminal Disposition Bylaw for each violation. Each day of violation after such written notice will be considered a separate offense. If, after such notice, the premises continue to be used in a manner contrary to the provisions of this chapter, or if any such owner or occupant shall fail to obey any law, or if any such owner or occupant shall fail to obey any lawful order of the Inspector of Buildings in respect to any violation or use contrary to the provisions of this chapter, the Inspector of Buildings shall institute appropriate legal proceedings to enforce the provisions of this chapter or to restrain by injunction any violation thereof, or both.
- D. Request for enforcement. If the Inspector of Buildings is requested in writing to enforce this chapter against any person allegedly in violation thereof, and he declines to act, he shall notify, in writing, the party requesting such enforcement, informing them of any action or refusal to act, and the reasons therefor, within (14) days of receipt of such request.

**§70-8.2. Development plan review.**

- A. Applicability. A development proposal is subject to development plan review by the Planning Board if, under a single building permit, it involves:
  - (1) Construction of a new nonresidential nonagricultural building, or an addition to such a building of 2,500 square feet or more gross floor area, or

## **Appendix B**

- (2) Creation of, substantial alteration to, or addition to parking facilities resulting in 10 or more parking spaces, or
- (3) Removal of existing vegetative ground cover from more than 20,000 square feet of site area, unless for agricultural use, or
- (4) If the proposal is located in the Upland Conservation District.

**B. Submittals.** The following materials shall be submitted for development plan review, except any not germane to the specific case, as determined by the Planning Board and communicated to the applicant in writing prior to submittal.

- (1) **Locus plan.** A locus plan of the premises in question plus all land within three hundred feet of the property boundaries must be submitted, showing streets, water bodies, property lines, property ownership, zoning district boundaries and use of land and any buildings thereon. Information compiled from Williamstown Assessor's maps is sufficient to satisfy this requirement.
- (2) **Site plan.** A site plan prepared by a registered architect, landscape architect, professional engineer, or other design professional must be submitted, showing the following:
  - (a) Location and boundaries of the site and of any lots proposed, and indication of each zoning district involved.
  - (b) Use and ownership of adjacent premises, approximate location of buildings within 50 feet of the site, and if the proposal entails on-site sewage disposal, the approximate location of any wells on or off the premises within 300 feet of the leaching field or other discharge location;
  - (c) Existing and proposed buildings, streets, ways, drives, walks, service areas, parking spaces, loading areas, fences and screening, utilities, waste storage and disposal facilities, wells and drainage facilities.
  - (d) Existing and proposed topography and vegetation, indicating areas of retained vegetation and identifying the location of any trees exceeding 24 inch trunk diameter 4 1/2 feet above grade if proposed for removal, and identifying size and species of trees and shrubs to be planted.
  - (e) Indication of wetlands and other areas subject to control under the Wetlands Protection Act, and the one-hundred-foot zone surrounding such areas, identified through field survey acceptable to the Conservation Commission; Flood Plain and Floodway boundaries; and erosion control measures.
  - (f) Location of signs and exterior lighting, and accompanying materials to describe those elements.
- (3) **Building plans.** Building floor plans and architectural elevations must be submitted. These plans must be prepared by a registered architect or engineer where so required by licensing law (generally for buildings exceeding 35,000 cubic feet) and, at the applicant's option, may be either schematic or construction drawings.

## Appendix B

- (4) Documentation. Documentation must be submitted indicating that all required submittals have been made to other agencies, such as the Conservation Commission under the Wetlands Act, the Williamstown Department of Public Works for utility connections, the Massachusetts Department of Public Works for curb cut permits, the Board of Health or DEP for on-site disposal facilities, and an ENF to EOEA for MEPA review, and that necessary special permits have been granted.
- (5) Additional requirements. Any additional studies or other materials required under § Article V, Development Standards and elsewhere in this chapter.
- (6) A development plan review fee, as required under a schedule of fees to be established and from time to time amended by the Selectmen, based on the actual cost of review for applications.

### C. Procedure.

- (1) Initial review. Development plan materials shall be submitted to the Planning Administrator, who shall forthwith make a determination of whether those materials are complete, and if they are not, shall so notify the applicant and the Inspector of Buildings. The Planning Administrator shall distribute copies of complete submittals to the DPW and Conservation Commission for their review and comment, together with notice of the date of the meeting at which the Planning Board will make its review. Those agencies shall report their comments on compliance to the Planning Board not later than the time of that meeting. Notice of the proposals to be reviewed shall be published in a local newspaper at least seven days prior to the date of review. [Amended 5-14-1996 ATM, Art 21]
- (2) Determinations. The Planning Board shall determine whether or not the development plan complies with the requirements of Article V, Development Standards and §70-6.1 Off-street parking, and shall notify the applicant and the Inspector of Buildings of its determination within 45 days of the time that complete materials have been received by the Planning Administrator. Failure of the Planning Board to act within 45 days shall be construed as determination of compliance, and the Planning Board shall forthwith make such endorsement on the submitted plans or, on its failure to do so, the Inspector of Buildings shall issue a certificate to the same effect.
- (3) Notice to Inspector of Buildings. A copy of the submitted plans, endorsed with the Planning Board action, shall be forwarded to the Inspector of Buildings within seven days of the Board's endorsement. Application for a building permit subject to this section shall not be complete unless including endorsed plans. The Inspector of Building's actions on any building permit application subject to these provisions shall be substantially consistent with determinations by the Planning Board. [Amended 5-14-1996 ATM, Art 21]

### §70-8.3. Board of Appeals.

- A. Establishment. There shall be a Board of Appeals of five members, appointed as provided in MGL c. 40A, § 12.
- B. Powers. The Board of Appeals shall have the following powers:
  - (1) Deciding appeals. To hear and decide appeals taken by any person aggrieved by inability to obtain a permit or enforcement action from the Inspector of Buildings, by the Berkshire County Regional Planning Commission, or by any person

## **Appendix B**

including an officer or board of the Town of Williamstown or of an abutting town aggrieved by an order or decision of the Inspector of Buildings in violation of any provision of MGL c. 40A, or this chapter, in accordance with MGL c. 40A, § 8.

- (2) Deciding petitions for variances. To hear and decide petitions for variances for relief of hardship, in accordance with MGL c. 40A, § 10.
  - (3) Deciding special permits. To hear and decide applications for Special Permits as provided in this chapter in cases where the Board of Appeals is designated as special permit granting authority.
  - (4) Deciding comprehensive permits. To hear and decide applications for comprehensive permits under the provisions of MGL c. 40B, §§ 20 – 23.
- D. Exercising powers. In exercising the powers granted by Subsection B, the Board of Appeals shall act in accordance with the provisions MGL c. 40 A, §§ 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15 and 16, subject always to the rule that it shall give due consideration to promoting public health, safety, convenience and general welfare of the town, and conserving property values, and that it shall permit no building or use injurious, noxious, offensive or detrimental to a neighborhood, and that it shall prescribe appropriate safeguards and conditions in each case, and in general that it shall act consistently with the purposes set out in Article 1 of this chapter.
- E. Procedures. Procedures for matters before the Board of Appeals and not specified in MGL c. 40A, shall be as set forth in regulations adopted by the Board.

### **§70-8.4. Special permits.**

- A. Special permit granting authority. Unless specified otherwise by this chapter, the Board of Appeals shall act as the special permit granting authority (SPGA).
- B. Special permit duration. A special permit shall lapse within one year, which shall not include such time required to pursue or await the determination of an appeal from the grant thereof, if a substantial use thereof has not sooner commenced except for good cause or, in the case of a permit for construction, if construction has not begun by such date except for good cause.
- C. Procedures and requirements.
- (1) When any body other than the Board of Appeals acts as a special permit granting authority, it shall follow the procedures and requirements MGL c. 40A, § 9, as most recently amended.
  - (2) At the time of application, the applicant shall submit documentation as required in the regulations of the SPGA, including documentation regarding each of the decision considerations below which are germane. The special permit granting authority shall refer such documentation to the Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Department of Public Works or other authorities, as appropriate, for technical review and comment.
- D. Special permit criteria. The following shall be the basis for decisions on special permits, except as may be more specifically provided elsewhere in this chapter. special permits shall be granted only if the special permit granting authority determines that the proposal's benefits to the town will outweigh any adverse effects for the town or the vicinity, after consideration of the following, among other things:

## Appendix C

### *Williamstown Community Association*

-distributed at community gathering at Public Library, 9/26/98

#### *Purpose*

To preserve, protect, and promote neighborhood and community values including the traditional New England beliefs of concern and respect for individuals; of open, full, and civil dialogue; and of thoughtful stewardship of our man-made and natural townscapes.

#### *Reason for Forming*

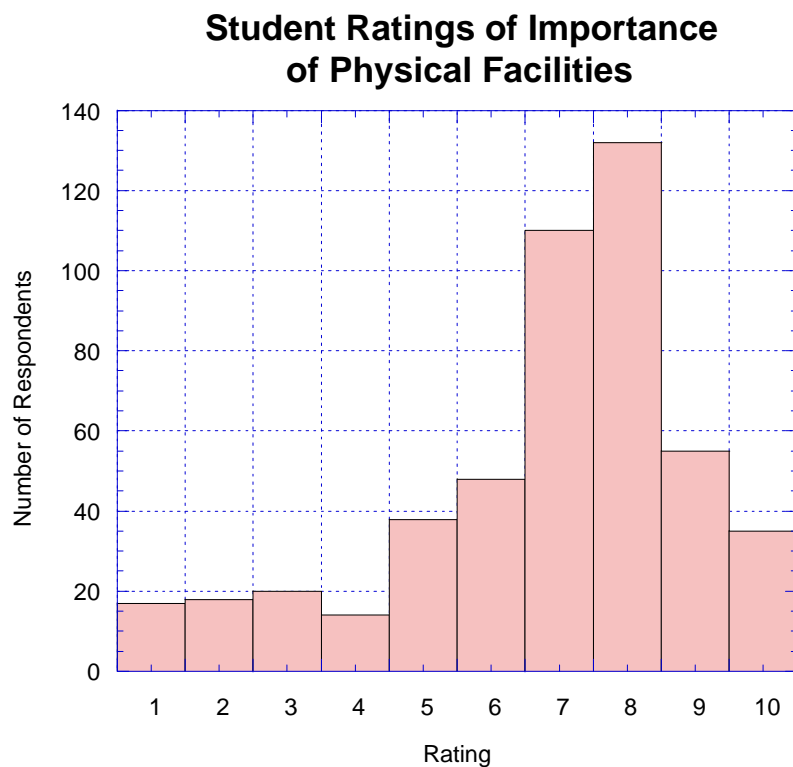
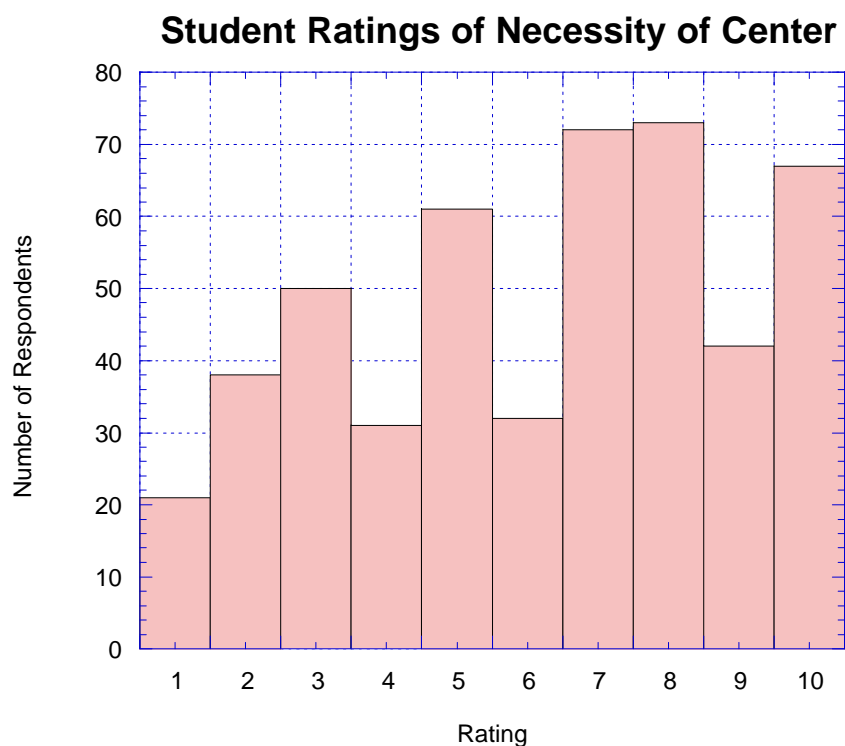
Several forces have influenced the physical, economic, and social composition of Williamstown and will determine its future course. For many years two of these forces, Williams College and the business establishment, have expressed and exerted their influence on town-wide matters through ongoing, organized efforts. Williams College works through its own planning, development, and buildings departments. Businesses promote their ideas through the Chamber of Commerce (formerly Board of Trade) and more recently via the Williamstown 2000 group. Each of these organizations has an explicit purpose to advance their own interests. A third force exists, however, that over the years has only organized itself intermittently, as a need or crisis arose. That force is neighborhoods.

The current proposal by Williams College to build a performing arts complex directly threatens the character and well being of three neighborhoods; the Knolls, Hoxsey Street, and Latham Street. This proposed Williams' project, and the example that it sets for how major projects are planned and carried out in Williamstown, threatens the entire community as well.

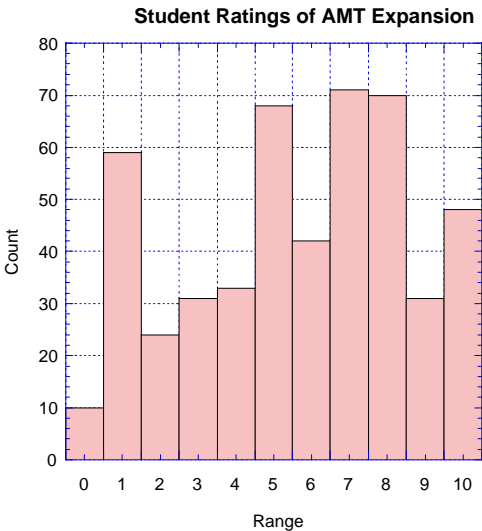
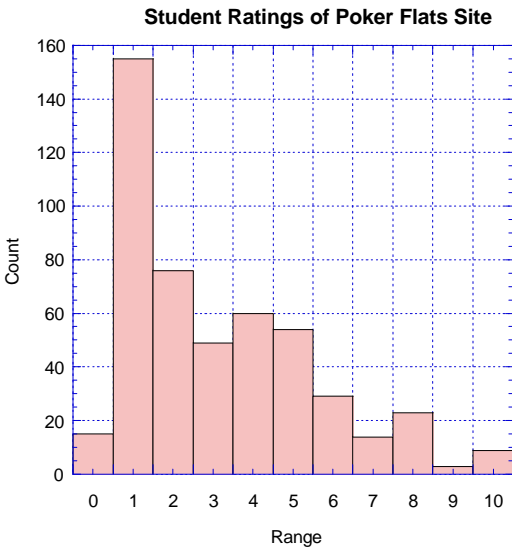
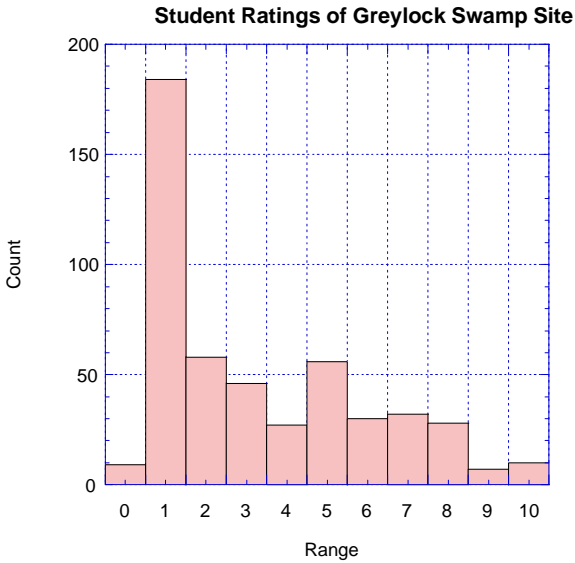
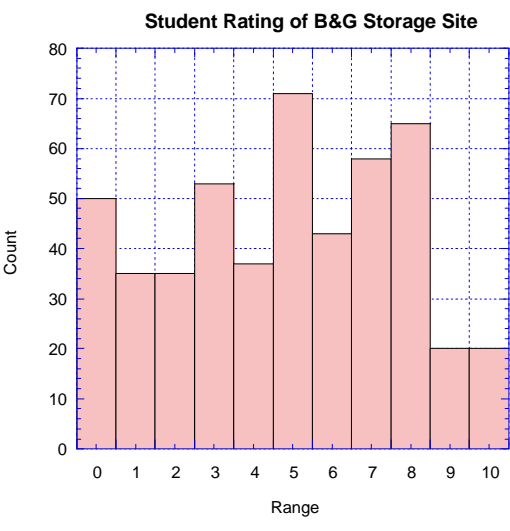
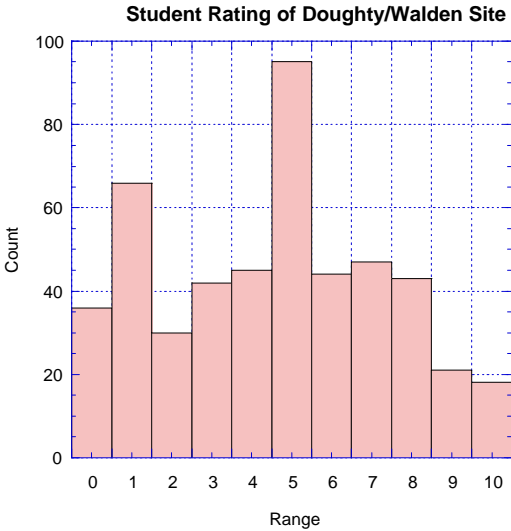
Williams College, the business establishment, and town neighborhoods all have legitimate rights. The issue is of balance and the ability of neighborhoods, with no permanent infrastructure or funding, to have their fair say in matters that greatly affect them.

For these reasons, and with the above purpose, a group of concerned neighbors and citizens are forming the Williamstown Community Association. We hope that you, too, will consider joining to help preserve Williamstown's neighborhoods.

## Survey Statistics and Faculty Comments



# Appendix D



# Appendix D

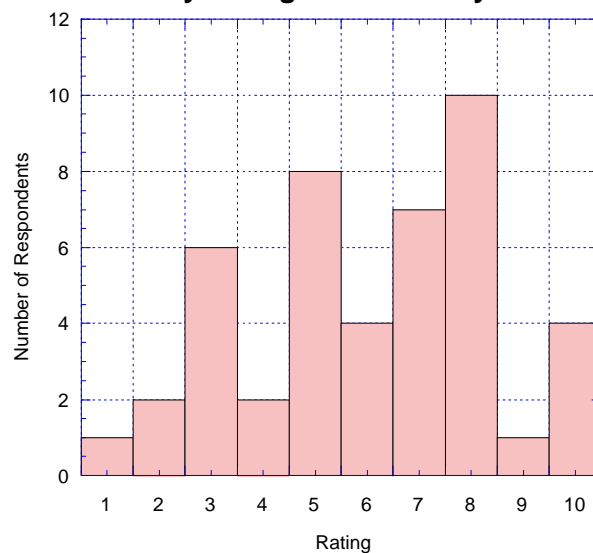
## Student Survey Statistics

	necessity	phys fac	aca. dance	PE dance	site A	site B	site C	site D	site E
Minimum	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Maximum	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Sum	3004	3318	1603	2200	2213	2331	1617	1537	2740
Points	487	487	487	487	451	441	478	472	477
Mean	6.168378	6.813142	3.291581	4.517454	4.906874	5.285714	3.382845	3.256356	5.744235
Median	7	7	2	4	5	5	2	3	6
RMS	6.736154	7.159663	4.358899	5.582313	5.531406	5.868746	4.258636	4.000794	6.384599
Std Deviation	2.709605	2.20269	2.860471	3.282828	2.556077	2.553073	2.589666	2.326794	2.789836
Variance	7.341961	4.851843	8.182295	10.77696	6.53353	6.518182	6.706372	5.413972	7.783186
Std Error	0.122784	0.099813	0.12962	0.148759	0.120361	0.121575	0.118449	0.107099	0.127738
Skewness	-0.25291	-0.98099	1.108259	0.415561	0.077499	-0.07829	0.790776	0.927273	-0.26047
Kurtosis	-1.07633	0.480732	-0.04184	-1.32513	-0.86025	-0.9475	-0.55778	0.095307	-0.98752

## Faculty Survey Statistics

	necessity	site A	site B	site C	site D	site E	expansion
Minimum	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Maximum	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Sum	273	201	196	219	171	280	253
Points	45	43	43	43	42	43	47
Mean	6.066667	4.6744186	4.5581395	5.0930233	4.0714286	6.5116279	5.3829787
Median	6	5	5	5	3	7	5
RMS	6.5029908	5.5969261	5.4088644	6.0019377	4.9062642	7.2368566	6.0512
Std Deviation	2.3683519	3.1146423	2.9463644	3.2131719	2.7708664	3.1950266	2.7940402
Variance	5.6090909	9.7009967	8.6810631	10.324474	7.6777003	10.208195	7.8066605
Std Error	0.35305306	0.4749785	0.44931636	0.49000413	0.42755396	0.48723699	0.40755265
Skewness	-0.20480587	0.24513819	0.28258887	0.041359435	0.46825089	-0.42976784	0.12569643
Kurtosis	-0.8131874	-1.2311946	-1.2162592	-1.3877178	-1.0883765	-1.1542577	-1.009375

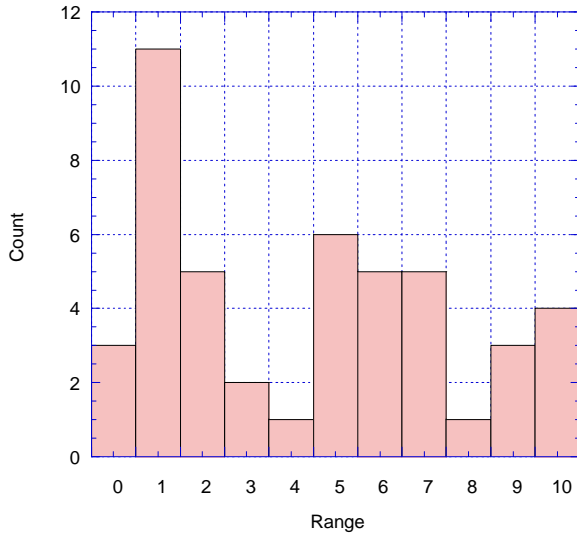
**Faculty Ratings of Necessity of Center**



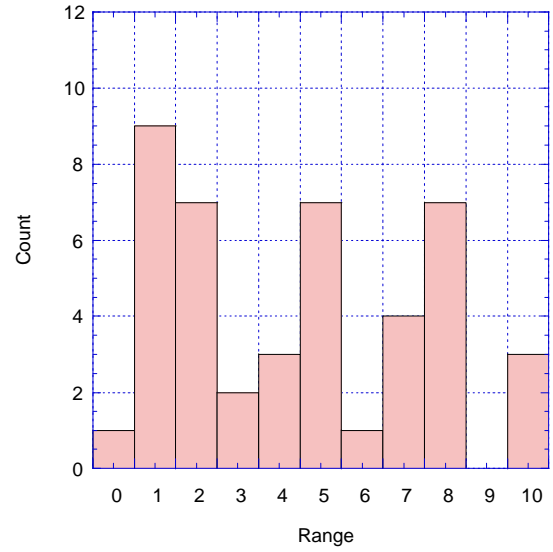


# Appendix D

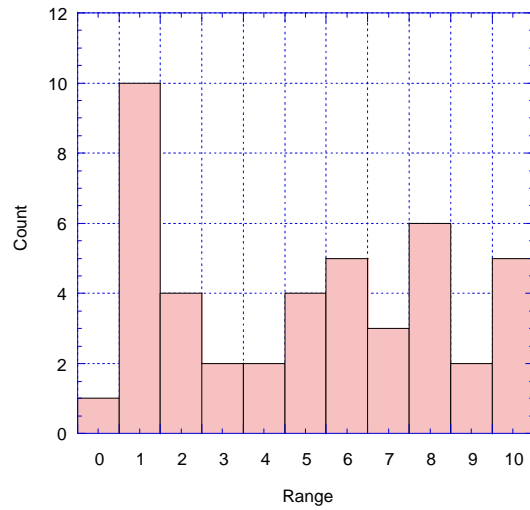
Faculty Ratings of Doughty/Walden Site



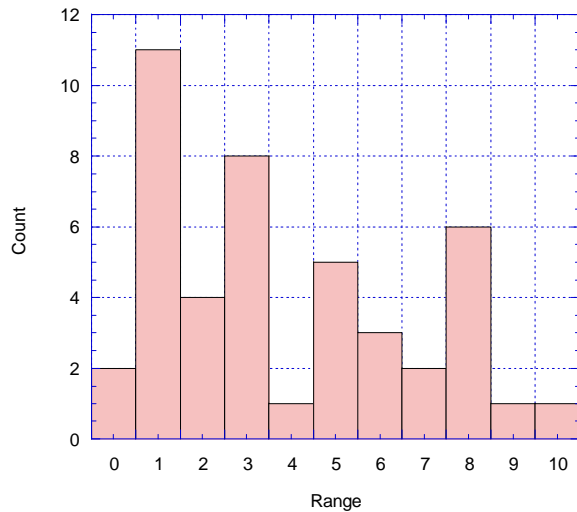
Faculty Ratings of B&G Storage Site



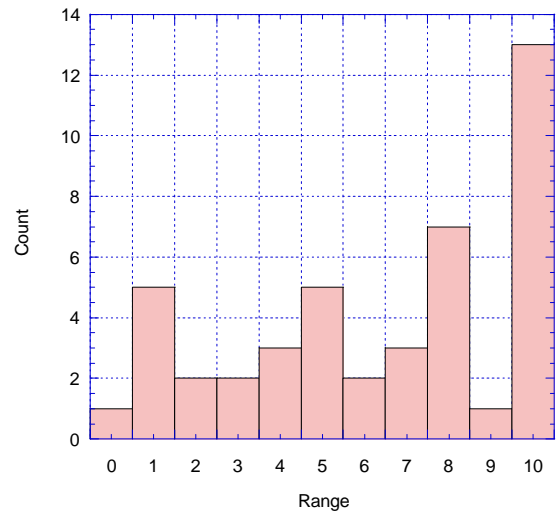
Faculty Ratings of Greylock Swamp Site



Faculty Ratings of Poker Flats Site



Faculty Ratings of AMT expansion



# Appendix D

## Faculty Survey Comments

1) On a scale of 1 to 10, how do you rate the necessity of a Theater and Dance Center to the academic and extra-curricular experience at Williams College? (1= not important at all; 10= extremely important)

- “Current facilities not up to date. AMT is oldest unrenovated building on campus (+ 50 yrs).”
- “I question whether Williams should try to go big time into the performing arts; other schools are strong in the area, and we can’t do everything.”
- “New facilities for dance are crucial, and the AMT needs to be upgraded technically. Theater and dance faculty need better office conditions. I don’t believe we need a whole new center.”
- “Vital theater/dance/music programs are essential, and new facilities are needed. But to serve our needs truly, we have to create the right facilities in the right place. Any old “new” theater and dance facility just won’t do and could be counter-productive.”
- “I think it would balance the perception of Williams being “too rural” (interpreted as lack of access to arts), too “bookish,” too athletic. It would add balance, and supplement the existing arts community (Berkshire Symphony, Summer Theatre, Tanglewood, Jacobs Pillow, College Art Museum, Clark).”
- “seems we have adequate [facilities] now.”
- “but much smaller in scale than what has been proposed.”
- “I thought we already had one: Lasell and AMT....”
- “If it gives us [english dept.] the AMT for use as a film space”
- “We need to bring all our performing arts together.”
- “Liberal arts colleges have a duty to provide first rate performing arts. Williams needs a facility worthy of its leading stature.”
- “Each part of the college is entitled to grow; other parts, such as Art Museum, Art Studio, etc. have had their turns.”
- “What is inadequate about the AMT?”
- “Improvement of existing space is necessary especially for dance - however a renovation of dance to the main Lasell gym and improvements to AMT would be better than new building.”
- “We’ve become so overbalanced towards athletics that activities of the human spirit seem irrelevant on campus at present.”

2) Below is a list of potential sites for the Dance and Theater Center. Rank each site (A,B,C,D, and E) on a scale of 1-10 (1= don’t like it at all; 10= excellent site). If you are not familiar with one of the sites, put zero for that site.

A. Doughty House and Spring Street town parking lot

- “The Doughty location is just about the worst place I could imagine for this building. First it’s a residential neighborhood, and second, the wetlands of Denison Park would be jeopardized. I just couldn’t deal with tearing down Doughty House, the house next door and Susie Hopkins for one egomaniac’s dream of Broadway on Spring Street.”
- “‘In-town’ is a bad idea for the town and for the college - for the college because the location is too far from existing facilities and from the hubs of campus life in general. Bad for the town for any number of reasons, all of which have been discussed in the local press (traffic, quality of town life if college completely dominates Spring Street and so on).”
- “Doughty and Spring St. location with one-way traffic on Spring St.”

B. Behind Robin’s Restaurant/north of Susie Hopkins House

C. Greylock Quad parking lot/field

- “doesn’t fit landscape”

## Appendix D

- “can parking lot in Greylock Quad be put underground?”
- D. Outdoor basketball courts-behind Mission Park/south of Poker Flats
  - “too far - should be centrally located”
  - “too remote, too out of context, too out of sight”
- E. Expansion of present Adams Memorial Theater/possibly moving Mather House (college admissions building)
  - “AMT expansion is too expensive - will require even more resources to relocate existing offices”
  - “I believe there would be less disturbance of local residences if theatre were located with easy access from rte. 2 or rte. 7.”
- “Essentially throwing away a fine theater (the AMT) to satisfy a donor’s ego strikes me as an unconscionably profligate use of scarce resources. If we are to have such a large center, it should be central to the campus, not on the fringe. The campus is already losing its coherence. And it should not create the kinds of traffic problems in residential neighborhoods or Spring St. that sites A, B and D would cause.”
- “Town garage is best site”
- “don’t much care where it goes”
- “I simply don’t know enough to say.”
- “I don’t know. Don’t have enough information.”
- “From a planning perspective, why isn’t the College expanding North? Route 2 crossings are a problem and will increasingly become so! The campus is becoming somewhat chaotic.”
- “Site discussion is almost meaningless without discussion of how to handle traffic and parking.”
- “I like A or B except for their remoteness; E seems like the best compromise location.”

**3)** How vital is the expansion of the dance and theater curriculums to the quality of Williams College academics? (1= not vital at all; 10= extremely vital)

- “Dance does need better facilities and theater needs more room or a different distribution of space than it presently has. But for only 5 majors? The building of Spencer Art did NOT increase enrollments in studio art. In fact, enrollments dropped to 9 students the second year we had the building. What Spencer did was consolidate the studio art facilities into one integrated space. Perhaps Theater and Dance should be together, but wanton destruction of existing buildings and environmentally precarious areas is not the way to go about it.”
- “I give a neutral 5 because, while expansion could significantly improve Williams academics, it could also be a drain on academics. Again, the right kind of expansion in the right place is necessary.”
- “...if they are to grow with the rest of the college”
- “Most of the benefits of college are the out of classroom experiences with students, for students. Anything that challenges, attracts, exposes students to more new people, ideas is good for everybody.”
- “Is there really a demand?”
- “We need more opportunities for non-jocks and increasing artistic diversity.”
- “What’s the demand? Is the College unable to meet it currently? If not, for what time into future is AMT adequate?”
- “This needs deep and thoughtful discussion.”
- “Dance should become its own dept.”
- “The rigor required by a well run program in theater and dance and music is worthy of the best Williams offers in other disciplines. Their enhancement here would benefit us all.”