

UA OKs plan for \$60M building

By Ed Enoch / Staff Writer

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The University of Alabama board of trustees on Friday approved preliminary plans for a new \$60 million classroom building for the business college at the Tuscaloosa campus and an update to the campus master plan, which envisions as many as five new academic buildings.

The new academic building for the Culverhouse College of Commerce is among the new buildings proposed in the latest iteration of the campus master plan, which also identifies potential sites for 10 new dorms.

The preliminary plans for the business building approved Friday would be an 84,727-square-foot building on Stadium Drive across from Alston Hall. The new building, which would be paid for with future fundraising and UA funds, would allow for the consolidation of classroom space into one building for the college.

The building will include three conference rooms, offices to accommodate 44 faculty, graduate student work space, 26 classrooms, museum space and collaboration rooms.

The space vacated in Bidgood and Alston halls will be reallocated for faculty offices, student services and expansion of other programs. The project will increase the college's classroom seating capacity by 770.

The trustees also approved revised plans and a larger budget for the new alumni affairs building to be located on the southeast side of the historic Bryce Campus. The budget was increased by \$3 million to \$21.5 million to increase the size of the ballroom and create a hardened storage space that can serve as a refuge in severe weather.

The new alumni building is also reflected in the campus master plan. Its location prompted questions from Trustee Karen Brooks about efforts to preserve the green space of the historic lawn. Brooks expressed concern about new development encroaching on the historic green space.

“Alumni Hall kind of gave me a little twitch when I saw it encroaching,” said Brooks whose family has a historical connection to Bryce Hospital.

While there are plans for further development of new buildings along the east and west perimeter, the lawn will remain largely unchanged, planner Dan Wolfe said.

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