

THETFORD ACADEMY FACILITIES REPORT CARD

SEPTEMBER 2004

The purpose of this report is to provide the community with information about the physical plant at Thetford Academy. In the coming year, the Academy will need input and ideas from the community in order to prepare a plan for the future. This report offers information about the current situation and poses questions about future decisions. It also provides a calendar of events for community involvement in decision-making. The Trustees hope this “report card” will help community members join in the process of developing the Academy’s Master Facilities Plan.

BACKGROUND

Ten years ago, in October 1994, the Thetford Academy Board of Trustees began a long-range planning process for Thetford Academy's physical plant, beginning with a series of architectural and engineering studies. For nearly twenty years before that, there had been no ongoing attention to facilities; most maintenance and renovation needs had been deferred. Since 1994, however, several phases of renovation have been carried out: a new roof on the Science Building, full renovation of the White Building and library, a central courtyard with improved traffic safety and parking, and a new roof and exterior walls for the Annex building. These projects have produced major improvements in buildings and grounds over the past decade. They have also required major investment, with expenses met through a combination of fundraising, borrowing, and accumulated capital reserves.

Recognizing that some areas of the physical plant still need substantial attention, the Trustees decided last year to conduct a new, comprehensive review. In October 2003, they established a Master Facilities Planning Committee. This group was asked to create a plan for improvements over the next 20-40 years, keeping in mind the condition and uses of current facilities as well as needs of the Academy’s educational programs. When completed, this Master Facilities Plan should provide guidance for renovation and financing decisions well into the future. It should help trustees and community members see the full range of needs and financial implications, and avoid unexpected projects and costs.

Last year, the Trustee Buildings and Grounds Committee reviewed the previous architectural and engineering studies. They also inspected the current condition of all buildings the Academy owns. In March 2004, they completed a Campus Building Inventory, using three ratings:

Good: whole facility will meet needs for 10-40 years
Fair: needs some attention within 5 years
Poor: needs extensive attention within 5 years

After reviewing this inventory, the Board of Trustees decided to produce a Facilities Report Card and share the information with the community. They held a “Talk with TA” discussion in June 2004, to get community response on the first draft. This final version reflects the suggestions made at that time.

FACILITY REPORTS

The summary on the following pages lists buildings and other facilities in alphabetical order. For each one, the report includes the following:

- **History:** This gives key dates of construction and renovation.
- **Condition Assessment:** This is based on the Campus Building Inventory prepared by the Trustee Buildings and Grounds Committee. (The complete Inventory is available on request.)
- **Program Needs:** This evaluation of educational programs associated with facilities is based on the perspectives of the staff and students who use the buildings daily.

ANDERSON HALL

HISTORY: built 1954, some interior renovation 1994, elevator installed 1995

CONDITION ASSESSMENT:

Good: Windows on stage and downstairs, plumbing

Fair: Heating, vinyl tile floors

Poor: Roof, gym floor, gym windows, kitchen capacity, electrical systems

PROGRAM NEEDS:

Physical Education and Gymnasium:

- **The daily Physical Education program is severely restricted by inadequate facilities.**
 - ❑ PE classes must schedule around sharing space with both lunch and music programs.
 - ❑ In winter, PE students spend some of their class time in study hall for lack of PE space.
- **The current basketball court is too small for athletes' safety and spectators' comfort.**
 - ❑ Court length does not meet state regulations for tournament play.
 - ❑ Winter practice schedules are difficult to schedule for all teams on a single court.
 - ❑ Locker rooms are cramped (not enough lockers or floor space) and fixtures are outdated.
- **Some systems in this building are failing.**
 - ❑ The roof leaks and must be replaced soon. Annual roof patching is no longer enough.
 - ❑ Ventilation is poor. Existing roof trusses cannot support a modern ventilation system.
 - ❑ Electrical repairs are no longer cost effective. Replacement parts are hard to find.

Food Service:

- **There is an urgent need for better food preparation space.**
 - ❑ The Alumni Kitchen, donated as a facility for alumni and community events, was not designed or intended for use in daily food service.
 - ❑ The hot lunch program serves 200 students daily, the limit of its capacity.
 - ❑ Menu options are limited by the lack of standard preparation and storage facilities.

- **The areas for serving and eating are inadequate for the current student population.**
 - Students get their hot lunch in a makeshift service line on the gym lobby stairs. This arrangement is inefficient and unsafe, especially in winter when stairs are slippery.
 - The lunch room also contains PE storage.
 - Some students eat lunch sitting on the stairs or on the hall floor.

Technology Systems Office:

- TA provides centralized service for the ThetNet technology network, a critical support system for Thetford Elementary School, Latham Library, and the Academy.
 - The main computer servers are located in a crowded, poorly ventilated office shared with Food Service, putting equipment and network services at risk.
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ANNEX BUILDING

HISTORY: built 1966; roof, windows, and heating units replaced summer 2004

CONDITION ASSESSMENT:

Good: Roof, windows, heating, plumbing

Fair: Floors

Poor: Handicapped access

PROGRAM NEEDS:

Small Laboratories and Tutorial Spaces:

- Many teachers offer tutoring and extra help, but finding space to provide this service is difficult. Small workrooms built inside the large classrooms in the Annex would make more tutoring possible.
 - Space for specialized computing (such as geographic information systems) would be useful.
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ARTS BUILDING

HISTORY: built 1978

CONDITION ASSESSMENT:

Good: Heating, plumbing, roof (may need pitched roof in future)

Fair: Windows, floors

Poor: Exterior doors

PROGRAM NEEDS:

Space for the growing music programs is in short supply.

- Some music lessons have been held in the laundry room and closets.
 - The spring musical show must share rehearsal and performance space with Physical Education.
 - There is no facility on campus suitable for TA's high quality choral concerts.
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ATHLETIC FIELDS

HISTORY: fully renovated 1978, patched 2004

CONDITION ASSESSMENT:

Poor: Consider building new field and full renovation of existing fields

PROGRAM NEEDS:

- Extensive use of our two fields has made them difficult to maintain and at times dangerous for play.
 - New sports programs proposed by students (lacrosse) cannot be offered with just two fields.
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GODDARD HALL

HISTORY: built 1845, some renovations on first floor by Alumni Association 1988-1994

CONDITION ASSESSMENT:

Good: Heating

Fair: Windows

Poor: Roof, floors, plumbing, electrical systems

PROGRAM NEEDS:

- A renovated Alumni Center would allow more alumni, school, and community events to be held in this building, which has played an important role in the Academy's history.
 - An Advancement Office, combining Development, Admissions, and Community Relations, could also be a future need.
 - Given the need for extensive repair, sale of this building could be considered to avoid high costs of renovation and produce revenue for other projects.
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MAINTENANCE BUILDING AND GARAGE

HISTORY: built 1998, after old garage removed

CONDITION ASSESSMENT:

Good: Roof, floors, windows, heating, plumbing

Fair: —

Poor: no toilet, hot water, outside faucet

PROGRAM NEEDS: This building serves the needs of the Maintenance Department well. When water and sewer have been installed, no further needs are anticipated.

PARKING

HISTORY: central lot removed and side lots expanded 1998, paving topcoat 2003

CONDITION ASSESSMENT:

Good: Next paving 2015

PROGRAM NEEDS:

- Student spaces are limited, so that 20-30 student drivers per year do not get parking permits.
- Visitor spaces are limited, so that some visitors can find no place to park.

SCIENCE-AGRICULTURE BUILDING (DANIELS HALL)

HISTORY: built 1958; new roof 1994, black-box theater (“Shark Tank”) replaced Ag Shop 1996

CONDITION ASSESSMENT:

Good: Roof

Fair: Floors, heating, plumbing

Poor: Windows, laboratory ventilation

PROGRAM NEEDS:

Science laboratories/ classrooms:

- Science labs are outdated. They were not designed for modern science curriculum.
- Ventilation is inadequate in all laboratory space, as building inspectors have indicated.
- Single pane windows should be replaced for energy efficiency.
- The Agricultural Sciences program now shares space with Drama. The program would benefit from an Environmental Science & Horticulture Laboratory, with a permanent greenhouse.

Performing Arts:

- The “Shark Tank” theater in the former Ag Shop cannot be properly heated or lighted.
- Seating is restricted to 75, so some potential audience members are turned away from performances.

SLAFTER HALL

HISTORY: built 1851, some renovation in kitchen and plumbing 1989, 1995

CONDITION ASSESSMENT:

Good: Heating

Fair: Roof
Poor: Windows, floors, plumbing, electrical systems

PROGRAM NEEDS:

- Slafter Hall is suitable for its current use as housing for the Head of School.
- It would need upgrading if other uses were considered, such as a rental income property, or dormitory housing for international students. (Attracting international students would be one future option for enhancing school programs and providing tax relief.)
- Given the need for extensive repair, sale of this building could be considered to avoid high costs of renovation and produce revenue for other projects.

WHITE BUILDING

HISTORY: built 1948, interior renovated 1996, roof insulated 2004

CONDITION ASSESSMENT:

Good: Heating, windows, floors, plumbing
Fair: Roof (will need new shingles)
Poor: —

PROGRAM NEEDS:

Faculty Workroom:

- Classrooms are in use for courses at all times, with many teachers sharing instruction space.
- Teachers have no other place to make telephone calls, hold meetings, do paperwork, or eat.

Student Center:

- TA has no space for student meetings or activities during the school day. Both the library and study hall rooms are full during all class periods on most days.

QUESTIONS AND DECISIONS TO BE MADE

In the fall of 2004, the trustees will seek input from school and community members on the following issues, in order to develop a master plan for facilities:

- ❑ **Considering both building conditions and program needs, what are the highest priorities?**
- ❑ **What is the potential for combining program needs for the most efficient use of space in any construction project?**

- ❑ What trade-offs among assets are possible? (Should property be sold, acquired, or converted?)
- ❑ What is the capacity of local communities to support debt service for facility improvements?
- ❑ What is the capacity for private fundraising, including significant potential donors?

The TA Master Facilities Planning Committee seeks community representatives to join in reviewing these questions and developing the Facilities Plan. Interested community members should contact Trustee President Priscilla Hall by October 1: Pril can be reached at: Priscilla.hall@valley.net or by telephone at 333-4077.

PROCESS AND CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR 2004-05

September-October 2004

Community Consultation

Wednesday, September 15

Facility Report Card distribution

Thursday, September 30 (7:00 pm)

Building Tour & Discussion
(Note: A second tour and discussion will take place October 9, for those who prefer a weekend afternoon.)

Friday, October 1

Deadline to contact President Pril Hall with interest in serving on Master Facility Planning (MFP) Committee

Monday, October 4 (7:00 pm)

MFP Committee meets to appoint community members and set agenda

Saturday, October 9 (1:00 pm)

Building Tour & Discussion

Monday, October 18 (7:00 pm)

Discussion Forum

Thursday, October 28 (6:00 pm)

"Talk with TA" Report & Discussion, followed by Trustee Quarterly Meeting, 7:00 pm

November-December 2004

Draft Conceptual Plan

Monday, November 1

MFP Committee Meeting

Thursday, November 11

Trustee Executive Committee Meeting

Monday, November 15

MFP Committee Meeting

Monday, November 29

MFP Committee Meeting

Monday, December 13

MFP Committee Meeting

January 2005

Thursday, January 13 (6:00 pm)

Board of Trustees Review I

"Talk with TA" Report & Discussion,
followed by Trustee Quarterly Meeting, 7:00:
Review Master Facility Plan draft
Prepare report for Town School Districts

February-March 2005

Saturday, February 26
Tuesday, March 1
Thursday, March 10

Town School District Meetings

Thetford
Strafford
Lyme

Planning will continue after Town Meetings. The next steps at that point will be informed by community involvement in the preceding months.