



September 9, 2011

Dear Prep Parents and Guardians:

Much of the work of the Seattle Prep Board of Trustees over the past several years has focused on addressing significant issues with Adelpia Hall, the academic building tucked into the northeast corner of campus behind McHugh Gymnasium. We have not yet made any official statements regarding what we are doing and why we are doing it during this time because, given the seriousness and complexity of the issues involved, we have thought it best to wait until a time of certainty as opposed to speculation. That certain time has arrived.

In 2008, Prep retained the structural engineering firm, Coughlin, Porter, Lundeen (CPL), to conduct a seismic analysis of all buildings. CPL concluded that Adelpia Hall, Prep's primary academic building, is a seismic hazard. Built as a wood masonry structure in 1909, Adelpia failed the "life safety" test under national FEMA standards. According to CPL's report this means that "...in a very strong (once in 500 years) earthquake, Adelpia would not remain intact long enough to allow for the safe evacuation of occupants." So, while the probability of this happening is low, the consequences would be very serious. Further, while no one can predict when the "big one" will strike Seattle, recent earthquakes in Haiti and throughout the Pacific Rim remind us that we should take this concern very seriously.

Of much higher probability than the "big one" is another concern expressed by CPL: the very real possibility that Adelpia could be damaged to the point of being rendered unusable ("red-tagged") in a less serious earthquake (such as the Nisqually Quake of 2001). In the 1960s, for example, the Jesuit residence on Delmar Avenue (a building very similar in design and construction to Adelpia Hall) was severely damaged and subsequently demolished after a moderate earthquake. While this result would not necessarily pose life-safety concerns, a "red-tagged" Adelpia would immediately eliminate the use of our primary academic building and reduce Prep's educational capacity by 300 students.

Seattle Prep is fully committed to resolving this seismic hazard and ensuring both the safety of our students and the long term viability of their education. An early step in the process included the retention of LMN, one of the top architecture firms in Seattle, to develop recommendations for addressing these problems within a comprehensive Campus Use Master Plan. Students, faculty/staff, parents, alumni/ae and trustees participated in focus groups and identified campus needs and deficiencies. While studying the seismic problem, LMN identified a number of other critical facilities issues including significant structural inadequacies of current classroom spaces, antiquated mechanical and electrical systems, and insufficient spaces for athletics, small group and personal prayer/reflection and meal service.

The source of many of these issues is Peyton Hall, a building originally designed as a residential dormitory for the Jesuits but converted into classrooms and offices during the 1980s. While not cited as a seismic hazard, Peyton's design severely restricts potential uses and its systems are beyond service life.

The Board of Trustees reviewed and ultimately rejected a number of options:

Option 1: A **seismic upgrade** of Adelpia was eliminated from consideration due to overwhelming evidence that doing so at a price tag of \$16-18 million clearly fails a cost-benefit analysis:

- Renovation would require gutting Adelpia to provide new shear walls, shotcrete reinforcement of masonry walls, new plywood floor diaphragms and a new roof.
- Mechanical (heating and ventilation) and electrical systems are well beyond service life and require complete replacement.
- Adelpia does not have fire sprinklers and the emergency exit for the upper floors on the north side is an external fire escape.
- The building has only one restroom (male).
- Adelpia's top floor has no elevator access and fails current ADA compliance.
- Seismic mitigation would result in substantial reduction in capacity due to reduced room count.

Option 2: If a **new building** were constructed on the current Adelpia site, the new structure would lose two floors due to zoning regulations (height restrictions). This would require a significant reduction in capacity and permanent enrollment by approximately 200 students.

Option 3: If Adelpia were **demolished without rebuilding**, student enrollment would be reduced from 700 to 400, forever changing the experience and identity of Seattle Prep.

A final option, the **"Two for One"** solution — demolition of Adelpia Hall and the renovation and expansion of Peyton Hall — emerged as the clear and best way to solve **all** of the issues we are facing. This plan eliminates the seismic hazard, creates a vibrant new core of our campus, resolves substandard classroom and common spaces, transforms Peyton from a dormitory into an academic building and secures our educational mission as a Jesuit school for decades to come. Further, construction would not significantly disrupt campus life for its 15 month duration because all of the work would be restricted to Peyton Hall. (Adelpia would be demolished during the summer after the new building has been constructed.)

We have moved forward with vigor and strength of purpose on this exceptional plan. In fact, within this month you should see Master Use Permit reader boards on campus that describe the project. We will submit for a building permit in early October.

That leaves us with two questions: how much and when? The cost of the Peyton renovation/expansion — which essentially creates a new building - is \$25.5 million. This price captures recent downward trends in construction costs. The "when" question will be answered depending upon the level of support, including substantial early commitments, by the Prep community. We plan to describe this initiative, including more specific details regarding the new building and how it will significantly enhance the experience of Prep students, in meetings with our families in the coming months.

This is a critical time in Prep's history. There is a problem that must be resolved and we have been blessed with a solution that, in addition to completely solving the problem, carries the additional benefit of transforming our campus. Given our community's generosity and passion for Prep, we are most hopeful that all will rally in support of this essential endeavor.

Thank you for reading this letter and thank you also for entrusting the education of your child to Seattle Prep!

Sincerely,



Kent Hickey, President



Caren Tidwell, Chair, Board of Trustees



Jay Henning, Chair, Facilities Committee