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Elkus Manfredi Architects develops master plan for Simmons University

November 17, 2023 - Construction Design & Engineering



Boston, MA In 2017, Simmons University engaged Elkus Manfredi Architects to develop a master plan to establish a set of priorities and recommendations for the evolution of how the campus serves and supports academic programs, students, faculty and the community as the University enters its second century.

“Simmons has a very clear vision for its future and the evolution of its community. Our role is to listen, understand, and translate their vision into the built environment, presenting the highest and best utilization of available resources and identifying opportunities for efficiency,” said architect Emily Paparella, vice president at Elkus Manfredi Architects.

An outcome of the strategic partnership between Simmons University, Skanska Construction, Redgate (the owner’s project manager), and Elkus Manfredi Architects has been multiple renovation

projects to existing academic, administrative facilities and library spaces and the addition of a new science center. The design for the new 400,000 s/f Living and Learning Center will be the next step to consolidate Simmons' residential and academic facilities into one location.

With a focus on inclusivity and community, this new building will house 1,070 students and provide an integrated residential experience with improved access to faculty, support services, and academic facilities. The athletic center and dining facility will become a center for sports, fitness, socialization, and student wellness. A green roof terrace with two student terraces will top the lower roof of the sustainably-designed building, which is sited to preserve as much of the campus' open space experience as possible. Occupancy is anticipated in the fall of 2026.

The campus plan is central to the University's "One Simmons" strategic long-range plan, which includes restructuring its facilities for better academic alignment and the prioritization of student spaces. Understanding Simmons' programming, infrastructure and open space needs was the first step towards providing priorities for competing demands and developing an inclusive, cohesive campus plan to support the University's immediate and long-term goals. A thorough campus planning process requires meticulous analysis of the unique aspects of the campus footprint – both built and open space – in order to fulfil immediate and future user needs. The resulting campus plan maximizes the value of Simmons' existing assets, recommending critical interventions to support objectives and provide flexibility as the higher education market evolves.

"One Simmons is the physical representation of Simmons' student-centered mission, thoughtfully designed to further this institution's critical mission of educating the next generation of leaders," said Laura Brink Pisinski, Vice President of University Real Estate and Facilities Management. "Elkus Manfredi has been a great partner in our master planning efforts, and we are grateful for their continued collaboration and expertise."

New England Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540