Construction of a
Continuing Care Retirement Community (CCRC)
On
Centennial Campus

Draft Plan

August 13, 2001

1. Identify site, general size of facility, principal amenities, a mission statement, and any special features or objectives to be incorporated as a part of a Centennial Campus CCRC. (see Note 1)

2. Poll academic departments with geriatric interests to establish any special relationships they would establish with the residents. (Note 2)

3. Identify ten to twelve development firms with prior experience in CCRC construction and send a "Request for Qualifications" to each of them along with a general statement of the project scope. (Note 3)

4. Initiate contact with alumni >55 years old through general mailing and a questionnaire to establish degree of interest among alumni. (Note 4)

5. Send a "Request for Proposals" to two or three of the leading respondents to the Qualification Request. (Note 5)

6. Set up a steering committee chaired by a senior university official or community leader and containing members of potentially interested organizations to guide planning and construction. (Note 6)

7. Conduct a "demographic analysis" of the Raleigh area to establish the need for the facility and compare the need with the number of facilities already in the region or planned. (Note 7)

8. Assuming encouraging responses to items 2, 5, and 7, award contract to winning proposer who works with university administration and steering committee in developing construction drawings and proceeding with construction.

Notes

Note 1: There is a choice of "for profit" and "not for profit operation" that should be made early as this choice will influence the degree of university involvement. Over 90% of all CCRC's are "not for profit" and this option is
preferred by the Association of Retired Faculty. The facility should be sized to at least 300 units as this scale is needed to include desired amenities. ARF has already developed a listing of the features we would desire in a CCRC. A 300+ unit facility could be built either in stages or all at once, depending upon the degree of expressed interest and the results of the demographic analysis.

Requirements that should be specified up-front include close proximity to the Centennial transportation system, proximity to general shopping area on Lake Raleigh, and features that support a theme of physical fitness, continuing education and service to the community—the suggested mission objective for the facility. It would be desirable to have cottage units in addition to apartment style units but if space does not permit this, a wide range of apartment sizes should be included, ranging from studio units up to two-bedroom units of 1600-1800 ft. A principal objective should be to design and construct a facility that is within the financial means of retired faculty, most retired staff, parents of existing faculty, and alumni. The facility would be initially publicized to retired alumni, faculty and staff but it would be open to all interested residents in the region. Experience at other facilities would indicate that about half of the residents are members of the first group while the remaining half come from the general public.

A facility at a university should differ from a standard CCRC in that “continuing education” should be a strongly supported theme that is expressed both through the physical facilities and through the mission statements.

Note 2: Many CCRC’s at other universities were developed to accommodate an academic interest on campus. The University of Va. Medical School provides medical assistance to residents of Colonnades through its geriatric medical program, East Carolina is participating in a CCRC partially to provide practical training for its hotel management majors, the motivation for the facility at Texas Tech is coming from the School of Nursing and the facility will be located adjacent to this school, while the construction of Oak Hammock at the U. of Florida contains a number of modifications that reflect university interests. It is less clear what academic program associations would exist at NCSU since we lack programs in the health sciences but it would be highly desirable to explore options with NCSU programs and with other institutions in the area.

There is a clear relationship to the NCSU Encore program and Encore has been a strong supporter of a Centennial Campus CCRC since the project was first proposed.

Note 3: There are many firms in the region that would jump at the chance to participate in the construction of a Centennial Campus CCRC. Some of them are architectural firms that utilize external marketing and construction organizations and others are full-service firms that would manage the entire project. At our
March conference on "Continuing the Connection—Lifelong Involvement of Retired Faculty and Staff in University Life", approximately six firms sent representatives to our "Housing Options" panel to learn of NCSU interest in CCRC's. We have received inquiries or had discussions with Drucker and Falk, CRSA (one of the largest CCRC developers in the U.S.), Kendal Corporation, Ammons Development (they built Springmoor) Lantz-Boggio (another major developer), Moore & Burton, Spectrum Development and Craig Davis Enterprises. Most of these firms are accustomed to working in either the "for profit" or "not-for-profit" mode. I am personally attracted to CSRA (because of their experience with many projects) and to Kendal Corporation (because of their client oriented philosophy).

In any event, it should not be a problem to identify willing collaborators.

Note 4: We have met with Bob Bryan, the Director of Alumni Affairs, and he has expressed willingness to both mail questionnaires to alumni and to develop articles in the alumni magazine that would discuss a campus CCRC. The Alumni Office has a mailing list that includes well over 10,000 alumni who are older than 55 and live in fairly close proximity to campus.

Note 5: I believe it is preferable to send proposal requests to only a small number of firms who have survived a screening process rather than to simply broadcast a general request for proposals to many firms. A company who knows that they are a part of a small responding group will do a more thorough job on a proposal and it also makes sense to focus on those institutions where we have in-place facilities that attest to their work.

Note 6: While a Centennial CCRC would be a university-sponsored facility, we should avoid the impression that it is intended only for university people. Raleigh is deficient in quality CCRC's. While Durham, Chapel Hill and several surrounding communities all have nationally-recognized CCRC's, I am aware of only two facilities in Raleigh that even have a swimming pool for residents (The Heritage and Springmoor) and their pools are minimal. None of the Raleigh facilities appear to even be in the same league with places like Carolwoods, Carolina Meadows, or the Forest at Duke. It is therefore important that there be a "community" focus to a Centennial project and that representatives from the community as well as NCSU and the NCSU retiree organization participate in the oversight effort.

Note 7: The university role in the project can be limited to providing the land under a lease contract and to providing general guidance on the scope and mission of the facility. If the university is willing to commit some upfront money, it
could be used to run the demographic analysis, which would be a necessary feature of the project. I have received one estimate that this analysis could be carried out for as little as $20K. The university might also wish to retain a consultant to advise it on the proper approach to a project. If the university wishes to commit minimal resources, the funding for the demographic analysis could be as a part of the program proposal. If the facility is "not-for-profit", funding would likely be obtained through state bonds, possibly through the NC Medical Care Commission which funds projects of this nature.

Note 8: A critical stage in this type of project is getting a sufficient number of initial registrants who will make financial deposits to allow the project to proceed. It is a characteristic of retirees that they want the facility of their choice to be available now, not five years down the road (if one is in their late sixties or early seventies, this is an easy attitude to understand) so they may be reluctant to commit. On the other hand, financial agencies will not loan money until they are convinced that the project will go and it is a requirement of many organizations that a significant percentage of the first phase occupants be signed up before construction will start. Once a project is in place, occupants are obtained much more easily and long waiting lists are common. My wife and I have personally been on a waiting list at Carolina Meadows and Carolwoods for a cottage unit and we have made only negligible progress towards a unit after two years of waiting. Lead times of five years are common for the larger units.

A good model for the startup problem is provided by Capstone Village at the University of Alabama. This is the only CCRC that I know of that is actually being constructed on the main campus of a university. Because Tuscaloosa is a small community, they have experienced difficulty in getting a sufficient number of registrants to get the project started and I believe construction is delayed until a critical number of registrants can be obtained.