

Dean proposes housing studies

By MARY FORAN
Of the Emerald

A proposal to establish a housing study group within the School of Architecture and Allied Arts was announced last week by Robert Harris, architecture school dean, at a meeting of Eugene's Joint Housing Committee.

Harris presented a tentative list of topics which the study group would consider, including a look into the possibilities of "in-filling," the process of finding building space in already built-up neighborhoods, the investigation of consumer preferences, i.e., what it would take to attract consumers of housing space to the downtown area, and the investigation of opportunities for housing rehabilitation, re-cycling, and materials recovery.

The formation of the group is "a response to the multitude of complex housing issues faced by the Eugene community," according to Harris. "We see the situation in Eugene as a good laboratory" for housing studies, he added later.

For example, the housing shortage in Eugene makes the chances of someone finding housing in the area of their choice "very slim." And yet most planners are trying to control growth, older homes downtown are being turned into businesses, and neighborhoods are resisting high densities.

"The whole of American literature is full of a kind of ethic that suggests that wide, open spaces are good for the soul," Harris says, "and that high density breeds crime."

Harris says resistance to high-

density housing comes from traditional attitudes as well as from direct experience. "They know what it looks like — bombshells in the midst of the residential fabric."

But Harris says that studies in conjunction with the joint housing committee hope to demonstrate that "high-quality, high-density housing at a reasonable cost" is feasible.

The School of Architecture has housing studies going on all the time, says Harris, in various design and urban planning classes, which deal with the economic and political aspects of the supply of housing. But the findings from class projects have not been communicated to interested groups outside the school nor have the studies been coordinated with the work of others.

"One-shot studies are no good," says Harris, adding that now "information that used to be bottled up in the school will be more available" to various government agencies, researchers in other parts of the country and the public at large. "Housing studies will be coordinated with faculty working on an agreed set of questions."

Group findings will be reported in publications on various topics which will be available for purchase like the Solar Energy Center research reports. Harris says that the reports will have national as well as local significance in urban planning and housing research and design.

Harris, who is acting coordinator of the group until a director is chosen in the fall, says that the faculty will be asked to organize

their work in relation to the study group's list of topics, which will be expanded and arranged into priorities. Harris hopes to be able to attract research funds so that staff and faculty can "spend some real time in research." Writing grant proposals will be one of the activities of the permanent director along with coordinating group studies, says Harris.

Research funding has been "very slight" in the past, says Harris, because of the feeling that housing should be a private issue, not publically supported. Also, foundation support has waned in recent years, as has interest in classical methods of research.

Harris says the group will study the relationship between the supply of housing for all income levels, the preservation of agricultural land and the cost of land and construction. They will also explore various alternative densities and new residential sites.

The group will also investigate the need for a housing information clearinghouse. "If one is required we're willing to contribute," says Harris, adding that now planners, developers and builders, and the general public have to "fish around" for housing information, even though there is a lot of it available.

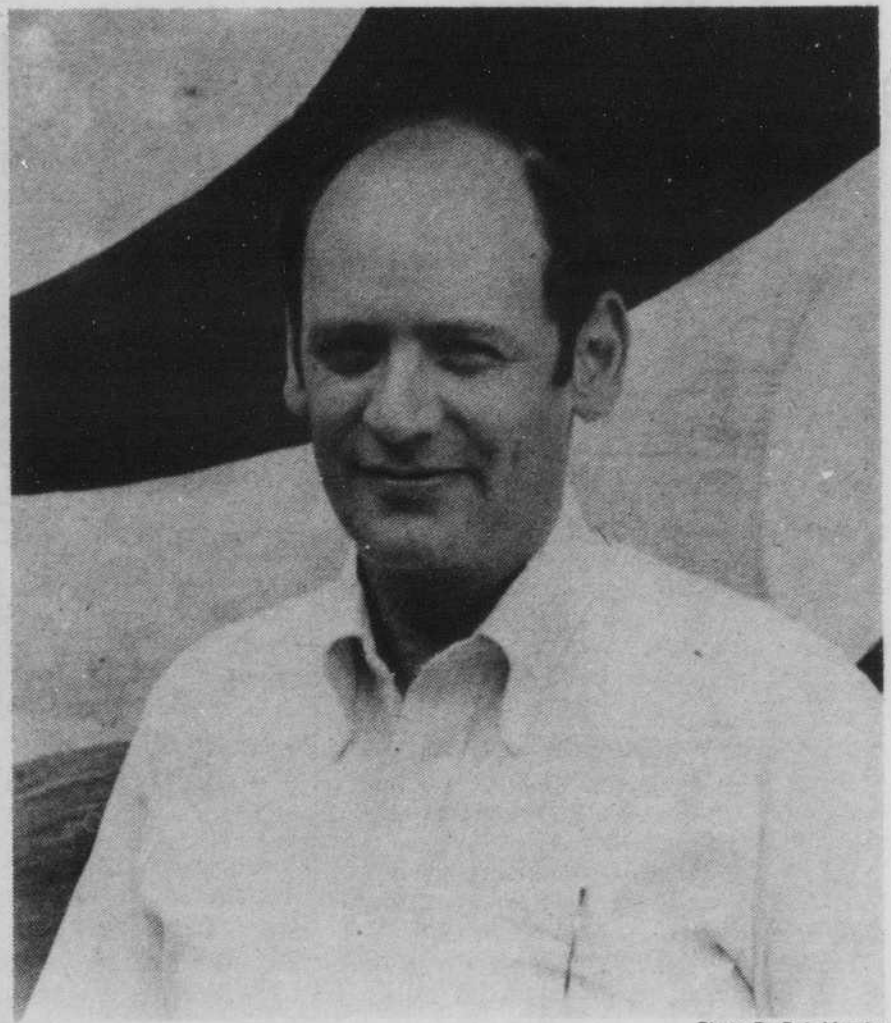


Photo By Bob Murphy

Robert Harris, dean of the School of Architecture and Allied Arts, has proposed that the school set up a housing study group to work with state and local government agencies to study housing problems.

Writing teachers share expertise

By TODD ADAMS
Of the Emerald

Twenty-nine of the best English composition teachers from Oregon and Washington will close out a five-week writing workshop this Thursday at Parsons Hall in the Bean dormitory complex.

After completing the workshop, teachers will return to their respective school districts to pass on their expertise to other teachers and their students.

The summer workshop, designed after the model initiated by the University of California, Berkeley/Bay Area Project, has given teachers the opportunity to share their expertise and sharpen their own writing skills.

"The approach to continuing education for writing teachers developed in the Berkeley model is to bring together outstanding teachers of composition who teach each other in workshop settings," says project director Nathaniel Teich, composition director at Oregon.

Workshop participants were chosen, after submission of applications, through nomination by their school district, and then on the basis of their merits as writing instructors and group leaders.

"We were invited to submit applications, then the individual districts had to be willing to give some funding," says Lauri Clement, a teacher at Willamette High School in the Bethel School District.

"We are now to return to our districts and pass on our knowledge," adds Clement. "We will kind of act like consultants for our districts."

Additional funding for the summer workshop project came from an Autzen Foundation grant and from matching and direct grants available through the Bay Area Project and the National Endowment for the Humanities.

School districts contributed \$700 for their participant and each teacher receives a \$500 stipend for their attendance.

Eight teachers from the Eugene area are in attendance including Clement. The others are: John Cooper, South Eugene High School; E. Nicholas Giustina, Jefferson Junior High; George Jeffcott, Monroe Junior High; Michele Lansdowne, Roosevelt Junior High; Daryl Loveland, Churchill High School; Michael Rear, North Eugene High School, and Patricia Ylvisaker, Howard Elementary School.

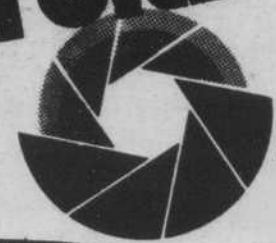
Springfield is represented by Earl Craig of Centennial Elementary School.

"We've done a lot of writing in the workshop," says Michael Rear. "We have four major writing assignments during the project which we will leave for posterity through publication if possible."



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