

April 20, 1957

REPORT ON MEETING OF PRESIDENT BURKHARDT AND
MISS HOPKINS WITH MR. BELLUSCHI AND MR. DAY

Boston, Mr. Belluschi's office.

Mr. Day had not arrived when Mr. Burkhardt and Miss Hopkins arrived at Mr. Belluschi's office, so there was some time for conversation with Mr. Belluschi alone. From his conversations with Mrs. Emmet, Mrs. Brown and from Mrs. Brown's notes on the atmosphere to be created in the new library for Bennington, Mr. Belluschi seems to have the feel of Bennington and its educational aims.

He would hope to create a building which would "draw the students in" to the reading of books. How this would be accomplished, of course, depends on the site chosen and what he thinks would be appropriate after he has seen the campus.

Mr. Belluschi would associate himself in this project with Carl Koch & Associates; Mr. Day would be the Koch Associate to work with Mr. Belluschi and would be immediately involved in planning and building the Library. The Koch firm would produce the working blueprints and manage the letting of bids to contractors.

Besides the Architect's fee, a percentage of the cost of the building, Mr. Belluschi would probably consult experts in the field of acoustics and lighting; there would be extra charge for this, as there would be for landscaping advice. Mr. Belluschi prefers moderation in landscaping around buildings to over-landscaping. Mr. Day recommended that a clerk of the works be employed by the college to supervise the contractor's work.

Both Mr. Belluschi and Mr. Day recommend the use of standard library equipment, i.e. Library Bureau, etc. (I'm not sure that this meant all the reading room furniture, etc. because later there was conversation about decorating, designing and the arrangement of furniture being considered along with the design of the building.) Both felt that the Library equipment people would be most helpful and expert in planning arrangements. Mr. Day said that his firm had designed the tables and chairs for the Fitchberg Youth Library but doubted that that would be done another time.

Mr. Belluschi thinks that it might be wise in some situations to refer technical library problems and some architectural solutions of these to a Library Building Consultant (at the owner's expense). He suggested that many Building consultants are used to thinking in terms of rather large university or public library problems; that the Bennington College Library is a special problem, and that with Mrs. Leslie's knowledge and experience of the use of the Library and the educational philosophy of Bennington, the problems would be satisfactorily solved for this situation. Both Mr. Belluschi and Mr. Day pointed out that building a college library was quite different from building a university or public or school library.

The schedule proposed was very much the same as that proposed by other architects. The necessity for allowing plenty of time for the preliminary planning period, and spending a great deal of time during that period in consultation and revising and adapting plans is most important. At least 6 months should be allowed for preliminary planning and the production of working drawings.

Mr. Belluschi would hope to have a small committee to work with - and hopes that the Board of Trustees will give complete authority to a committee made up of the President (or his representative), The Librarian, and a member of the Board who lives in or near Bennington so that there can easily be frequent meetings to arrive at decisions.

Mr. Belluschi is really very sensitive to the "Bennington idea".