

May HVAC Town Hall Meeting: 5/13/2015

Smaller crowd. Tonight is about logistics of the HVAC committee. Introduced some of the different people who will be speaking to us.

We got a handout on the important dates. Highlights: August 15 is when you have to move out if you're not staying (though you can terminate on June 30 as well). September 30, 2016 is the time when you get back.

August is a big time crunch. The 20th is when the construction company will have control, and that's a hard and fast deadline. **After then, if any room has not been moved, they will pack things up from rooms and store them at a sizeable fee to the resident.** People always push the envelope and say they can get away with a few extra days, but that isn't true this time. As a community, make sure people move.

Some logistics behind the move. Everyone will get a "moving kit" (boxes etc.), delivered to your room (they'll drop it off in your room even if you aren't there). From there, you're on your own to pack. They'll provide assisted moving on 8/15-17 (with professional movers), but if you want move on your own before that (if the room opens up), you can.

Outside of that, if there is stuff left in a room, they'll take it and store it somewhere at a fee.

Q: Are there in between options, like borrow some carts from the movers but move the stuff yourself?

A: Yes, although they're very good and they could just do it themselves. It'll get pretty busy in the meantime.

Q: When will the moving kits come?

A: We told them to be as early as May 25th. Label your boxes in case they get lost, especially if you're staying. I used to work for a moving company, and it is essentially a matter of keeping your eye on your stuff. People grab boxes and move, so leave people behind with things.

Q: If people are leaving before May 25th and not coming back until August 15th, what can they do?

A: Contact Brian Ward and they'll figure something out.

Q: When and how will you be notified that your room is available?

A: They will try to give you the dates ASAP and if and when people delay their is

Q: Can you move some stuff ahead of time and other stuff with the professional movers' help?

A: Yes, we can do that.

Q: If you can move earlier than August 15th, will you have the keys to both apartments for some time (like 1-2 months)?

A: We're not certain yet, since we need to talk to Brian Ward first on his keys logistics.

Q: Is there a way to deal with mailboxes of your old rooms?

A: They have been talking about that recently and are still trying to figure out how to make it work with your room key. We've been emphasizing other things that are more pressing.

We want to stay in future communication with you throughout the process. For instance, if the construction company wants to use the MP room area for a period of time, and want to evaluate tradeoffs there, it would be good to get feedback from the community on those. We are aware that this is your home.

Q: So far, you've said that there may be cuts of power or water announced in advance. But given the construction, there may be potentially frequent unexpected cuts, right?

A: We've split up the building appropriately to avoid those. They aren't tripping the switches on the utilities on the occupied side of the building. The facilities people will be right there, so there will be immediate response to any concern, unlike usual when someone has to be called. The people who know how to get things fixed will be on-site.

We will be communicating a two-week lookahead plan, which can give some information about the potential risks.

Q: What are the options for someone leaving over the summer (in June) and getting back in September?

A: The best option is to pack your things neatly in your room and they will move it on August 15-17.

Q: Can you give me reassurance that this will completely fix the problem and it won't have to be redone in 4-5 years? Is it being overseen by Facilities?

A: The building reacted differently once it was occupied than was planned. Now we know what it's like to be occupied, so we have much more information than we had before. Columbia is a highly qualified company. Facilities reviewed all of the plans, and they have a third party engineering firm also looking at the situation.

This building was very challenging to solve. We wanted to make sure that the problem would stop. The institute wants this problem to go away. The original design was not seen by the institute, and this time they're on board.

Q: How will this construction project affect subletting in general?

A: It will mostly affect people who are going to have to move. They're not moving subletters, so you'll have to try your best to do that. If you're looking at subletting and moving, make sure to talk to her (Jen).

Q: What does January look like, with a lot of people not here? Will there be a longer time period for moving, or will it again be only to days?

A: I don't want to lock anyone in at this point. The construction company could be working along great, or things could get bogged down. We will try to keep it to a tight time period but hopefully give enough advance notice. The later we give the notice, the more flexible we'll have to be.

Q: What will happen to room modifications that stay from year to year? Curtain rods, kitchen racks, or sofas?

A: They will tell the movers to keep anything with the resident unless it's attached. On a related note, they will store all the art (except the large structures) from the sides of the buildings

Q: Will we be informed of the time of the moving within the two days?

A: Yes, and they will be normal operating hours (not 6am).

Q: Where will the wall be?

A: It'll go right beyond the elevators, so no common lounges. In Phase II, the kitchens will be off limits. They will move fridges to accessible areas, but no cooking facilities.

Q: Will bike rooms be available?

A: Yes, but you won't be able to go through the building from them. There will be walls there.

Q: Will the walls be sound-resistant?

A: You might hear vibrations. Some will be noisy and a unique sound. The walls are primarily to tell you that you can't go in, though.

Q: Can you announce the future town hall meetings further in advance?

A: We will work with your student leadership to do so.

Q: What hours will the work be constrained to?

A: For heavy, noisy work, it will be restricted to 9-5 M-F. For light work (tinkering, setup, non-noisy work), they can start as early as 7, so two hours earlier.

You can compare with the construction project next to Random Hall, and they have agreement.

Q: What is the rent reduction? The license agreement didn't show a decrease.

A: The percentage depends on your room type. It should have showed up fine, so talk to Jen.

Q: When people moved to a new room in the past, there was a cleaning period. Will housing still be cleaning rooms?

A: Yes. Even for the rooms that we're moving out of in the construction zone, they'll clean them. That's a little bit of the concern in the busyness of the 15th to 17th. They will have about 20 cleaners there.

Q: Does the usual cleaning fee apply?

A: No. We're making you move, so we're not going to make you pay for that. But please keep your room clean so we don't have extra work.

Q: In January, some people have quals in this period. Even though there is notice, it's not possible to move two days before their quals. What can they do?

A: If there are going to be individual cases, we'll try to work with them. The Associate Housemaster will be there to advocate for you.

The firm will start to be on site with different investigations around the building to get everyone ready to rock and roll in August. Just a heads up. They'll talk to you ahead of time if they need to get into your room.

Does anyone here need a room kit before May 25th? No one raised their hand.