

WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN

THE COLLEGE ARCHIVES CONTAIN DOZENS OF DESIGNS AND PLANS FOR CAMPUS BUILDINGS THAT NEVER GOT OFF THE DRAWING BOARD.

An 1896 sketch depicts a never-realized quad on the block where Sanborn, Baker and Rauner Libraries now stand. From left: The Church of Christ (which burned in

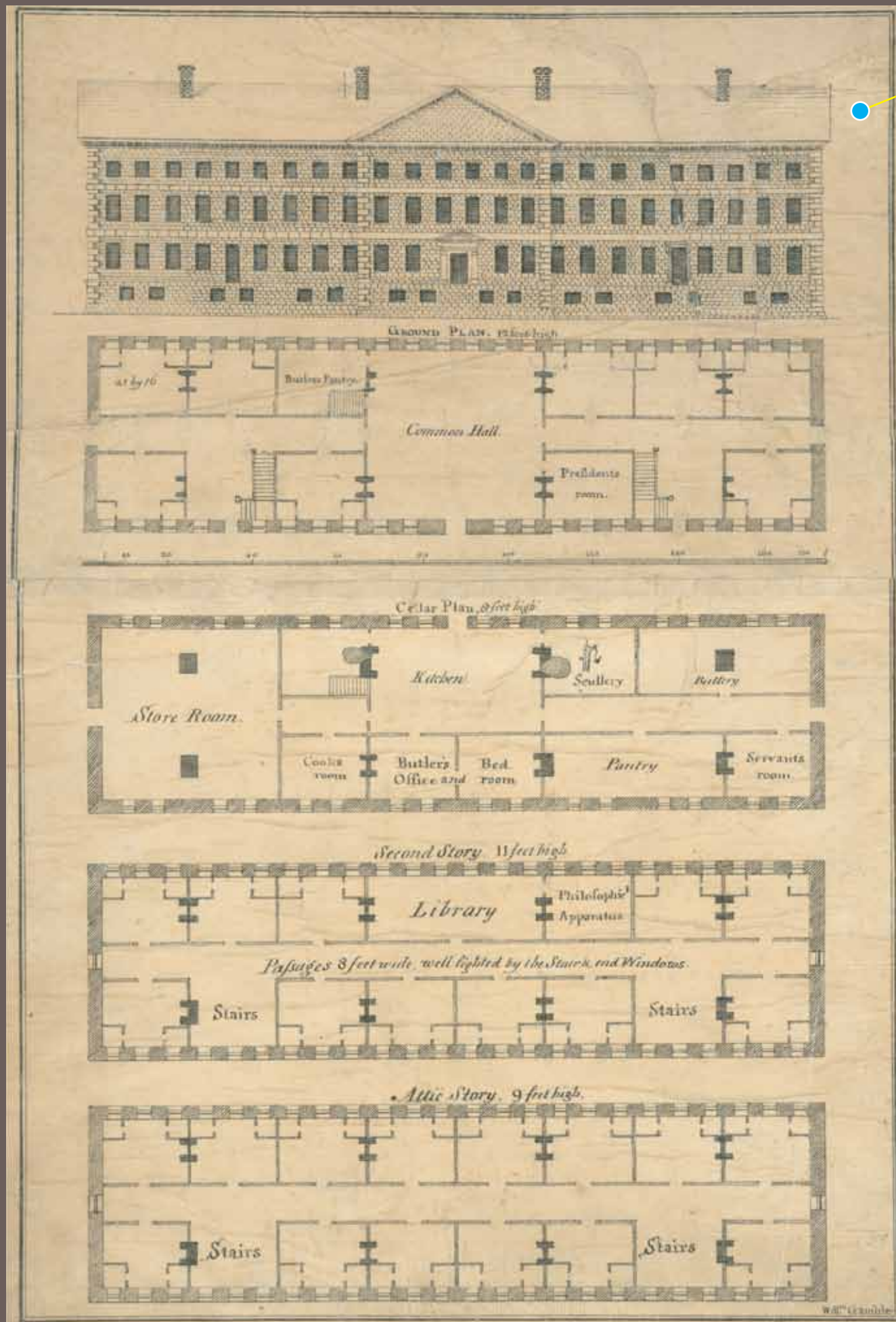
1931), a recitation hall that was never constructed, Butterfield Museum (built in 1896 and razed in 1928), a second recitation hall that was never constructed, and Alumni Hall (yet another building that never came to be).



“THIS IS WHAT A COLLEGE OUGHT TO LOOK LIKE,”

PROCLAIMED PRESIDENT DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER WHEN HE VISITED DARTMOUTH IN 1953. BUT WHAT IF A DOMED ALUMNI HALL STOOD ON THE SITE OF WEBSTER HALL? WHAT IF THE HANOVER INN STOOD NEXT TO ROBINSON? WITH SUCH BUILDINGS—ALL OF WHICH

WERE PLANNED AND DESIGNED AT ONE POINT OR ANOTHER, YET NEVER REALIZED—WOULD DARTMOUTH STILL BE A PLACE THAT IKE WOULD LIKE? HERE'S A LOOK AT JUST SOME OF THE MANY POTENTIAL ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES FOR THE COLLEGE ON THE HILL THAT NEVER CAME TO BE.



DARTMOUTH HALL

(1773)

This early design of Dartmouth Hall neglected to include a belfry. The final version included one that President William Jewett Tucker, class of 1861, later described as "beautiful." But how and when the belfry was added to the plans is lost to history. Three candidates may have been behind the addition: Peter Harrison, known as America's first architect; N.H. Gov. John Wentworth; and the building's construction supervisor, Comfort Sever. What we do know is that this is a sketch of what can easily be called Dartmouth's oldest unbuilt building.

A NEW INN

(1931)

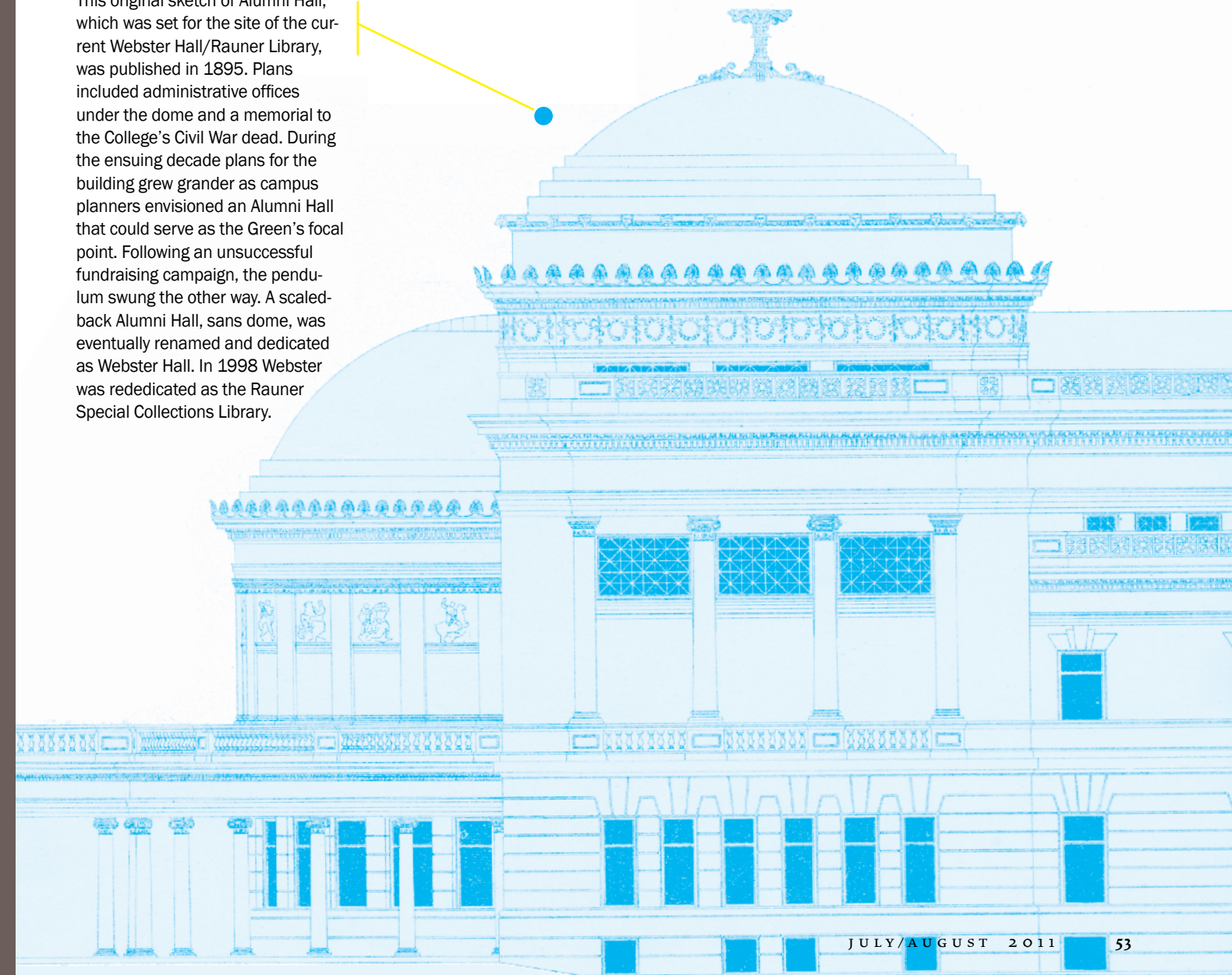
There has been an inn at the corner of Wheelock and Main since 1780, with the current version going up in 1887. But in 1922, with hopes to make the business more profitable, the College embarked on a decade of pondering new sites and designs. This idea featured a vast courtyard on a site next to Robinson Hall but was ditched in favor of keeping the old Inn, which is now undergoing renovations.

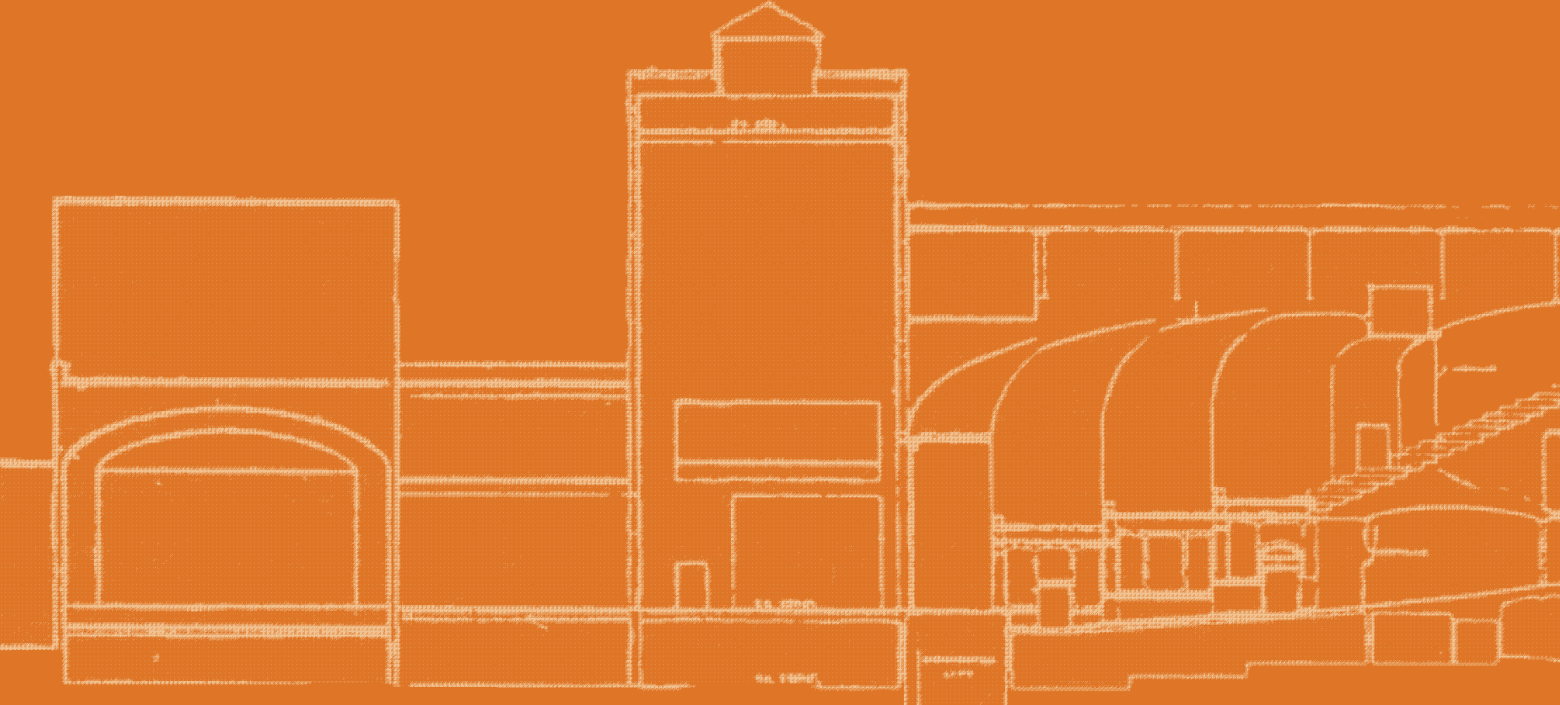


ALUMNI HALL

(1895)

This original sketch of Alumni Hall, which was set for the site of the current Webster Hall/Rauner Library, was published in 1895. Plans included administrative offices under the dome and a memorial to the College's Civil War dead. During the ensuing decade plans for the building grew grander as campus planners envisioned an Alumni Hall that could serve as the Green's focal point. Following an unsuccessful fundraising campaign, the pendulum swung the other way. A scaled-back Alumni Hall, sans dome, was eventually renamed and dedicated as Webster Hall. In 1998 Webster was rededicated as the Rauner Special Collections Library.





HOPKINS CENTER

(1932, 1939, 1947, 1957)

Before the Hopkins Center went up in 1962, a protracted series of plans for a campus arts center came and went. For decades numerous buildings were designed—and not built. The first was dubbed Dartmouth Union/Dartmouth House. Committee work began in 1929 for a \$4.25 million building (see 1932 model, top right) that would have covered all of the real estate now occupied by the Hop, the Inn and beyond. It would have contained theaters, a bowling alley, an indoor badminton court and housing for faculty bachelors. Then the stock market crashed, and the scaling back began.

By the time this magazine unveiled a fourth concept in 1957, the design had evolved from traditional red brick Georgian to Modern. The arts center then faced a homegrown

roadblock: alumni who hated it.

One member of the class of 1914 proposed that his class withhold all donations if the project moved forward. A College official cross-referenced the class year and donation history of each Hop-hater and discovered that classes prior to 1920, representing about 15 percent of the alumni, were responsible for the bulk of the blowback. “All this points to our giving less attention to the violent type of criticism based on nostalgia,” was the recommendation sent to President John Sloan Dickey, class of 1929. A more targeted fundraising effort, along with a slightly revised plan that incorporated the building’s signature vaulted roofline, got the job done. Groundbreaking took place October 24, 1958.



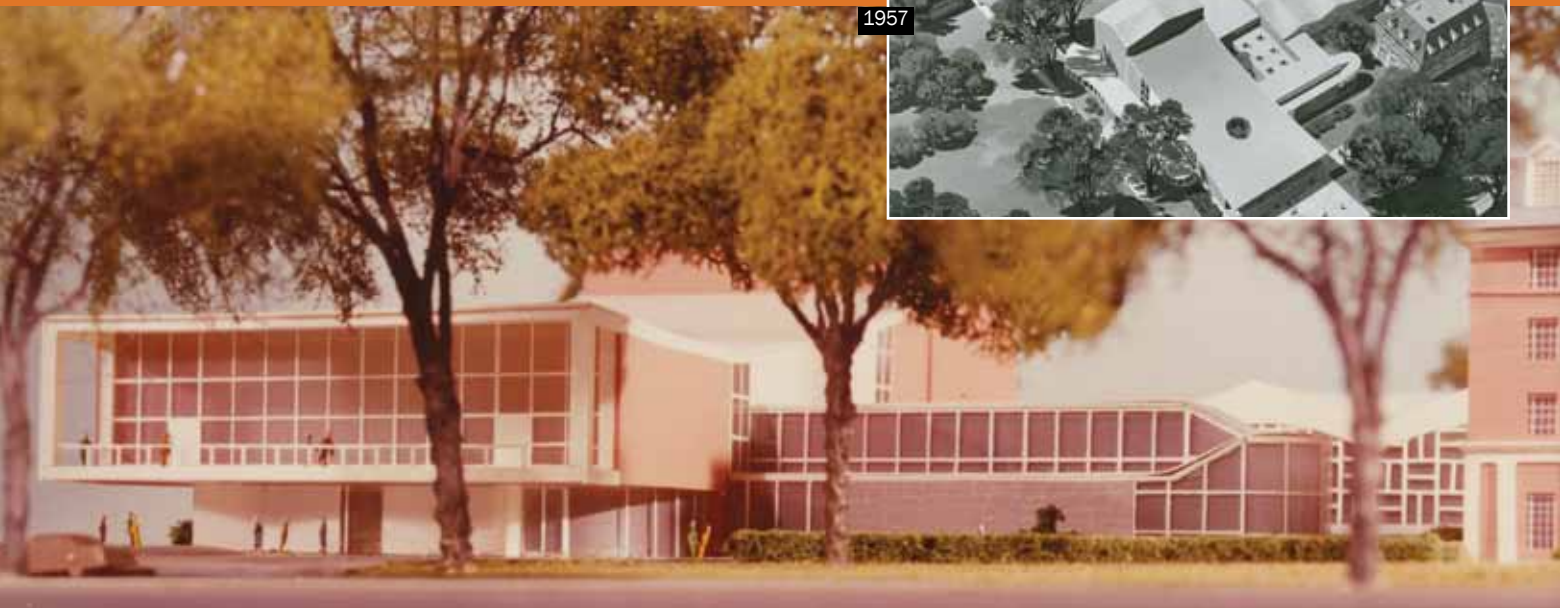
1932



1947



1957



CLASS OF 1953 COMMONS

(2007)

Unbuilt architecture remains a fact of life even today. This new dining hall recently planned for the north campus is the latest example. The plans would have complemented the McLaughlin Cluster with a nearby eatery and provided students with social space. In May 2008, with the national economy and the College budget contracting, plans for the new commons, estimated to cost between \$50 and \$70 million, went on hold. “We want to make sure that we don’t have a building two-thirds of the way done and then have to come up with a new plan,” Associate Provost Mary Gorman told *The Dartmouth*. In January 2010 the College redirected the class of 1953’s \$12-million gift to renovate and rename Thayer Dining Hall.

Barbara Krieger, archives supervisor and curator for a 2010 exhibit on unbuilt campus buildings in Baker Library, contributed research for this article.

OUTDOOR THEATER

(1929)

Jens Fredrick Larson, the architect behind Baker Library and the Tuck Mall, envisioned this classically inspired amphitheater with a river view on the site of present-day Murdough Center. Oddly, this came at a time when the College didn’t even have a decent indoor theater. Larson hoped to create the theater as part of a new gateway to the College via Tuck Drive. Why it went unbuilt remains unknown, but remnants linger: The official address of the President’s House is 1 Tuck Drive, and if you look closely it’s apparent that both the front and rear façades of the house look alike. If Larson’s gateway had come to fruition, the current back of the house could have become the front entrance.

