West Lawn Roof & Railing Replacement Project
Pavilions V – III

Background:

An important piece of Thomas Jefferson’s design for the Academical Village is the inclusion of the colonnade connecting the ten pavilions on either side of the Lawn, which provides weather protection to the walkways beneath. Originally, the colonnades were covered with what Jefferson called a “terras roof”, an intricate system of tapered joists and serrated framing topped with a deck and railing that provided a walkway between the second floor entrances to the pavilions while also achieving the desired aesthetic effect of a flat roof above the dormitories. Over time, these roofs leaked, and were capped with slate-covered hip roofs, and the railings were replaced with a cast iron system that remained in place until they were changed in preparation for the nation’s bicentennial in 1976. That system is still in place atop the majority of the Lawn colonnades, and has deteriorated to the point of necessary replacement. In addition, research has shown that the existing railing configuration is historically inaccurate, and has informed the current design which also includes the installation of a flat roof. The new roof design replicates the appearance of the original; however modern materials and hidden construction details will provide a roof secure against leaking. A plaster ceiling will be installed as well, returning the colonnade to a more classical appearance.

*Thomas Jefferson’s cross section sketch of the flat roof and railing system over the dormitories*
Construction Impacts:

The current project will replace the roof and railing between Pavilions V and III and install a plaster ceiling along the colonnade in front of rooms 9 - 19. Scaffolding will be installed on both sides of the dormitories at railing height to provide access for the tradespeople working on this project. General loud construction noise can be expected throughout the project (power tools, debris being thrown into dump trucks, vehicle back-up alarms, scaffold assembly, etc.)

During the plaster ceiling installation, a fenced work-yard will be in place on the Lawn, and the walls and walkway will be covered in plastic to protect these adjacent surfaces. Access to the rooms will be carefully coordinated with the student residents. Also, window unit air conditioners will be provided for these students for the duration of the construction project to help mitigate these impacts.

Pedestrian access between Poe Alley and the Lawn will be closed after Reunions in order to maintain a safe construction zone, but will be re-opened when the student Lawn residents return in mid-August. The construction will be executed by UVA’s in-house Project Services Department.

Schedule:

Scaffold dropoff will begin at 12:30 on Tuesday, May 22nd. Installation will begin on Wednesday, May 23rd and is expected to take several days. Demolition will begin on Tuesday, May 29th. Whereas the majority of the roof and railing portion of the project is expected to be completed by late August, the plaster ceiling installation will extend until the end of September, as this task cannot be completed while work is going on overhead. Typical workday hours are Monday – Friday, 7:00am – 5:00pm (until the students return, when work start time will shift to 8:00am). The overall schedule and daily time parameters are subject to change due to weather impacts.

Supporting Information:

Please see the diagrams on the subsequent pages to better understand the early site logistics. Future construction alerts will address other activities in more detail, such as the scaffold removal and project completion in the fall.

Contact:

With Questions or Concerns regarding this project, please contact:

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To support preservation projects at UVA, please contact the Jeffersonian Grounds Initiative at giving.virginia.edu/jgi or (434)-243-4026
Scaffold Setup for Roof Replacement
Poe Alley will be CLOSED beginning 12:30pm Tuesday May 22nd for scaffold dropoff.

Scaffold laydown area
05/22 - 05/26

[Map of the area showing various buildings and locations, with labels for streets and landmarks such as McCormick Road, University Avenue, Rupple Drive, and key areas indicated]