

NOER CENTER NEWS: An Update

By Monroe S. Miller

Two things bring home just how close the reality of the NOER CENTER is these days.

The first is the job opening notice of the manager's position for the NOER CENTER. It's found on page 15 of this issue of *THE GRASS ROOTS*. This new position, which is being funded by the Wisconsin Turfgrass Association from April of this year until June of 1992, starts just about the same time the facility will be completed.

The second is the actual construction of the building itself. Among Bob Newman, Tom Harrison and myself, one of us visits the NOER CENTER each day. As this is written (2/27/91) the building is almost entirely closed in.

The next step will be to use temporary heat to take the frost out of the ground. The sand base will then be regraded, the plumbing finished and the slab poured.

Once that concrete work has been completed, the finish work on the building interior can be started—rooms, labs, hallways and all the other features you have seen on the plans so often.

The utilities—natural gas and electrical—are close at hand. The well for our irrigation and building water is set.

When spring comes and soil conditions are dry, the Bruce Company will finish spreading topsoil on the research area and grade to the building, parking lot and entrance. The seeding will then be accomplished.

That will leave irrigation work. Tom Emmerich has dedicated himself to design and coordination of the irrigation system. Only when the final details are public will you be able to appreciate what a tremendous effort this man has put forth.

Sometime in the summer, when turf is well established, Midwest Irrigation will supervise installation of the irrigation system. Peter Beaves and Gordon Cunningham will provide the equipment and skilled people to make the installation. Our job will be to plan and organize work days to handle backfilling and cleanup. Don't be surprised if someone asks you to lend a helping hand for a day this summer.

Finally, Jerry Draeger is developing a master landscaping plan for the entire facility. The most important areas will be completed first and lesser important venues will be planted down the road a bit.

The following highlights recent events, people and immediate plans for the CENTER.

Construction Starting Date: The topsoil stripping, grading and top soil replacement was started on October 8, 1990. The bulk of the topsoil will be hauled back into place when conditions permit this spring.

Concrete work for the foundation of the building started on November 8, 1990. Heavy snow on December 3 prevented the pouring of the slab itself.

Steel and other building components arrived on January 25, 1991 and the building started going up on January 28, 1991.

Engineering: Grading plan and site development were done by the engineering firm of D'Onofrio, Kottle and Associates in cooperation with the University of Wisconsin-Madison Department of Campus Planning and Construction (Ed Hopkins), UW-Madison faculty (Kussow, Koval, Newman and Worf) and the Wisconsin Turfgrass Association (Harrison, Huggett and Miller).

Site Contractor: The Bruce Company, Middleton (Lee Bruce).

Building Designer and Builder: American Structures General Inc., Madison (Bill Rigalli).

Seeding: Seed for the initial seeding was donated by Kellogg Seed, Olds Seed, Northrup King and O.M. Scott & Sons. Don Stein coordinated the varieties and the donations.

Location: On Dane County Highway M, Town of Verona, between Midtown Road and County Highway PD.

Land Donor: The University of Wisconsin Foundation. The NOER CENTER is situated on ground owned by the UWF that also includes the new University of Wisconsin golf course.

Final Owner: The University of Wisconsin-Madison. The NOER CENTER will become a part of the UW-Madison College of Agricultural and Life Sciences Experiment Station system. In fact, the new West Madison experiment station is about 3 miles away, on Mineral Point Road. Talk about convenience!

Operations: A job description for a NOER CENTER manager is written and found on page 15 of this issue of

THE GRASS ROOTS. As you can see, the position is going to be a demanding one. The governor's hiring freeze necessitated a commitment on the part of the Wisconsin Turfgrass Association to fund the manager's position from this April until June of next year. Then the CALS will assume the position in its budget.

Construction Decisions: The dean's office in the CALS has given Dr. Wayne R. Kussow the authority and responsibility to make decisions on behalf of the administration. This speeded up that process by light years!

This arrangement also satisfies requirements of the UWF. The NOER CENTER committee has also asked Wayne to handle decisions on interior matters—things like paint colors, window treatments, electrical and plumbing details. He accepted.

Irrigation: As noted, NOER CENTER water requirements will be met with a well. Tom Emmerich has done the irrigation design and specification work, with input from the UW faculty. The control will be done, at this point, with TORO Network 8000 satellites. There will be four part circle sprinkler heads on each 50'x50' plot. Much of the material and supplies needed have been or will be donated. Once that giving has been detailed, you will read about it here.

Completion: We are anticipating that the bulk of the work will be completed sometime in the month of April. The exception will be the irrigation system; that will be dependent on availability of Midwest Irrigation and on the development of the grass stand. The landscaping will be completed as funds permit. Finally, when we are convinced that heavy equipment is done moving in and out of the NOER CENTER, the paving of the roadways and parking lot will be accomplished. That could possibly change if it appears we could get an extremely favorable paving bid from the same company doing the paving at the UW golf course facilities.

Details aside, the reality of the O.J. NOER CENTER for TURFGRASS RESEARCH is assured. If you doubt it, stop out and see for yourself if you are ever in the Madison area.

You'll be impressed. Guaranteed.