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# University of Winnipeg's MacNamara Hall to make way for new facility



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Metro Winnipeg



Manitoba Hydro employees take a short break while working to close the gas lines going to the University of Winnipeg's MacNamara Hall (background), which will soon be demolished.

Metro/Bernice Pontanilla

The landscape just west of the University of Winnipeg's main campus is set to change with the

demolition of the red-brick MacNamara Hall on Spence Street.

On Monday, a Manitoba Hydro crew was on site working to close the gas lines going to the buildings, in preparation of demolition work that begins this week.

A new field house, health, wellness and healing complex will be built and the Duckworth Centre, just north of the site, will also be renovated.

“It’s a large recreational and health and wellness space, the first and only one of its kind in the centre of the city,” said Jeremy Read, senior executive officer and advisor to the president of the University of Winnipeg. “We’re kind-of excited about that.”

MacNamara Hall is named after Sister Geraldine MacNamara, who spent a great part of her adult life working with inner-city youth and was a founder of Rossbrook House.

Read said that the plate bearing her name near the entrance of the building will be saved and will be used in an as-yet-to-be-determined capacity.

An official sod-turning ceremony is planned for early September, in conjunction with the U of W’s 2012 homecoming. More details on the project, including how much the construction and renovations are expected to cost, will be made public at that time.

The new facility will be open not only to students and staff, but the community-at-large, added Read.

In order to achieve LEED Silver status, as much salvageable material as possible is going to be reused and recycled, some of it for the new centre and the balance for other construction projects.

The reuse and recycling of a number of trees is also being planned, as the U of W’s Alumni Garden is currently located on that site.

Read said the university is trying to keep some of the trees onsite, while others will be relocated. Trees that are in decay or at the end of their lifespan will be used as lumber, furniture and art in the new facility.

The landscape isn’t the only change coming, as Winnipeg Transit will be relocating its Spence Street Bus Loop to Furby and Langside streets and onto Portage Avenue. By mid-November, rerouted buses will create a “ribbon” around the science complex, daycare and student residence.

Starting on Sept. 4, buses will no longer run on Spence Street, instead moving temporarily to Portage, Colony and St. Mary.



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