

Breakout Group # 2 – Cooking & Dining for West Campus Village

March 5, 2018 | Outreach Meeting | Breakout Group Notes

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DINING SUMMARY / REPORT-BACK

- Ideally...
 - Each house would have a commercial kitchen large enough to serve all residents
 - A butler's pantry or kitchenette would be provided on every (or every other) floor
 - Dining space should be of reasonable size for eating/gathering; full membership doesn't HAVE to fit in a single sitting
- Forcing ppl to be on meal plan would be a deal-breaker

PARICIPANT COMMENTS

Summary of participant comments is below. This information reflects the range of perspectives expressed and should not be considered the consensus of the group.

Ideal Dining Arrangement

- Eating dinner in your house should be required of all residents
- The ability to eat together in my fraternity was a very big part of being a family. The house would have to have a dedicated place where we could eat together.
- A large dining room is important
- Should be a place you can bring guests to
- SA house had 50 members and a dining room that could accommodate half those ppl so we had two seatings. Maybe dining space doesn't have to seat everyone at once.
- Ability to seat everyone at once NOT important [says sorority member]; seating for 20 would be fine.

Cooking Facilities

Changing needs & demand

- Students want maximum flexibility – a large selection of stuff available day and night. Ppl not eating all together the way they did in the past. Today there are more options on campus and nearby, more things can be quickly delivered, you can get food off-hours.

Central kitchens

- My chapter will need its own kitchen because it will be a kosher house.

- It would be important to have a large kitchen where a chef can come in.
- Our kitchen is a place where ppl gather; tv and laundry rooms are right there. We see the kitchen as gathering space, but different houses may have different needs.
- We've had a hard lesson because we have a kitchen facility and students are not using it
- Perhaps ask students, what's your preferred mode to provide food? Many houses cook in-house, many bring in food.
- Many houses want to cater instead of hiring a chef – and then you wouldn't need a big kitchen. I would advise against a big kitchen....in old days, kitchens were 1/3 of a floor of a brownstown, and 1/3 of that was a fridge.
- What's the optimal size for a house kitchen?
 - Potential models: WILG (recently remodeled); Alpha Phi; AEPi
 - Pi Phi kitchen NOT big enough. But fine as kitchenette

Small-scale satellite cooking facilities

- Modern students, if left to their own devices, will put espresso machine, fridge, microwave, etc in their room and that puts a strain on the building. So students should have a shared, social space on every floor to prepare food – a kitchenette – to discourage in-room kitchenettes
- A large central kitchen is important, but kitchenettes are important too! At least every 2 floors should have one because students won't go all the way downstairs
- Alpha Phi is a good model: butler's pantry upstairs with microwave, coffee makers...
- What is a country kitchen?

Meal Plan

- Meal plans are very expensive. That's due to the cost of operating the system and what vendors charge. Many students resent having to be on a meal plan.
- Goal in designing houses should be that residents don't HAVE to be on a meal plan
- NOT requiring meal plan is a draw for our house! Our wonderful chef is a draw too.

Dealbreakers

- Having no place to eat together
- No ability to accommodate kosher kitchen
- Meal plan requirement
- Limiting house control of how food gets to them.

Beyond the House, Beyond the Village

- Vertex should have a big room with space for each sorority to meet in full! And/or a party space! Or do students rent space off campus?

- Students DO rent space off campus, but also use spaces on campus (e.g., in the student center).
 - If one large meeting space, sororities would likely all want to use it at the same time
- Institute wants to max number of students sleeping in the village. If we use space for a function room, would that detract from the goal?
 - Maybe function / meeting room could go in vertex, not in village?
 - Our groups like the “I” in “Independent”; they’ll want to have some party space in their house. A space where you could have double the number of your residents. Could that be a chapter room??
- Would be great to have coffee shops and other dining options, also study spaces.
- Original plans for village had a Starbucks
- I would love to have a branch of MIT Medical
- Would be cool to have food trucks come
- Tech shuttle frequency/routes would need to evolve; it’s already too crowded for Simmons students in the winter