

Board Meeting
March 26, 2008

REDESIGNATE THE I-BUILDING, URBANA

Action: Approve Redesignation of the I-Building as the Forbes Natural History Building, Urbana

Funding: No New Funding Required

The Chancellor at Urbana recommends for approval a proposal to redesignate the I-Building as the Forbes Natural History Building. The I-Building [Building #1073], located at 1816 South Oak Street, Champaign, was built in 2001 by the Fox Development Corporation. It was so named in reference to its aerial-view configuration. This was intended to be a temporary place-holding name until a more appropriate designation was determined.

Space in this building was initially leased by six commercial companies, as well as the Illinois Department of Natural Resources to house portions of the Natural History Survey (INHS) and Illinois State Geological Survey (ISGS). In 2004, the University of Illinois purchased the building, and after extensive renovation additional INHS staff moved in. The I-Building now houses all INHS administrative staff, library, Education/Outreach Group, and various scientific units, as well as the ISGS Information/Sales and Records offices.

It would be most appropriate to rename this facility the Forbes Natural History Building, after Stephen A. Forbes, who was the driving force behind the

establishment of the INHS. By 1882, Forbes was both the Director of the State Laboratory of Natural History, located in Normal, Illinois, as well as the State Entomologist. Forbes moved from Normal to Urbana in 1885 to accept a position with the Illinois Industrial University (soon to be called the University of Illinois). He was able to gain approval by the State legislature to transfer the State Laboratory of Natural History and its staff, library, and research collections to Urbana. In 1917, the State Laboratory of Natural History and the Office of the State Entomologist were combined by the General Assembly as the INHS. Stephen Forbes became the first director of the INHS and held this position until his death in 1930.

It would be timely to rename the I-Building prior to the Survey's 150th celebration in 2008. The Natural History Society of Illinois, forerunner of the State Laboratory of Natural History mentioned above, was organized in 1858.

Another consideration is the new 'I-Hotel and Conference Center' will be completed in 2008, and will be located immediately adjacent to the I-Building across First Street. Renaming the I-Building would help avoid any possible confusion between these two facilities.

The Board action recommended in this item complies in all material respects with applicable State and federal laws, University of Illinois *Statutes, The General Rules Concerning University Organization and Procedure*, and Board of Trustees policies and directives.

The President of the University concurs.