

Clemson stadium upgrades move closer

BY ERIC SPROTT
THE JOURNAL

After the COVID-19 pandemic postponed the first major renovations at Memorial Stadium in more than a decade, Clemson officials took an important step forward to getting the project back on track Wednesday afternoon.

The board of trustees' finance and facilities committee approved funding and plans to move forward with Phase II of a \$65 million project that will most notably see the installation of a massive, state-of-the-art videoboard in the stadium's east end zone, and the

creation of the WestZone Concourse Club, a 675-seat addition under the existing WestZone Club.

The renovations still require approval from the full board of trustees, which will meet next week.

The scope and budget of the project differ from the plan that was proposed and approved in October 2019, when the project — originally to be completed in time for the 2021 football season — was estimated at \$68.7 million and included a 240-seat field club level and additional east end zone seating.

"We've altered that renovation plan," Clem-

son athletic director Dan Radakovich told committee members Wednesday. "There will be two parts."

The first component, to be completed in time for the 2022 season, includes the aforementioned concourse club and videoboard upgrade, along with a new audio and speaker system, LED stadium lighting and improved ADA accessibility and additional accessible seating.

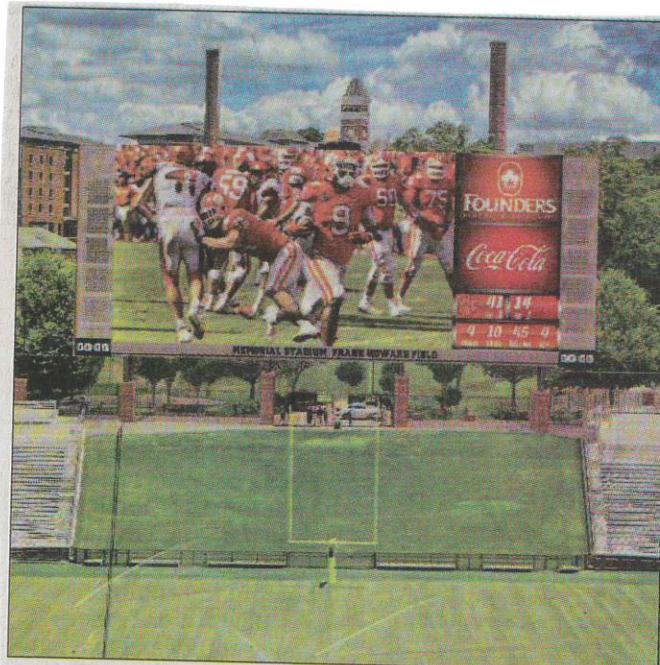
The second component, to be completed ahead of the 2023 season, will see parking lot enhancements to Lot 5 — located behind the east end zone — and a locker room renovation

that will be see the Tigers' game-day space balloon from 5,500 to 14,000 square feet.

The current videoboard, which was installed in 2010, measures 65 feet by 25 feet with a total coverage area of 1,625 square feet — one of the smallest in the ACC. The new board will measure in at 126 feet by 57 feet for a total coverage area of 7,166 square feet, making it among college football's top-10 largest screens.

Radakovich added the new board — which will be approximately 20 feet off the ground — will

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COURTESY OF CLEMSON UNIVERSITY

An artist rendering shows a proposed videoboard at Clemson's Memorial Stadium that's expected to be approved by the school's board of trustees next week.

CLEMSON: Closer to stadium updates

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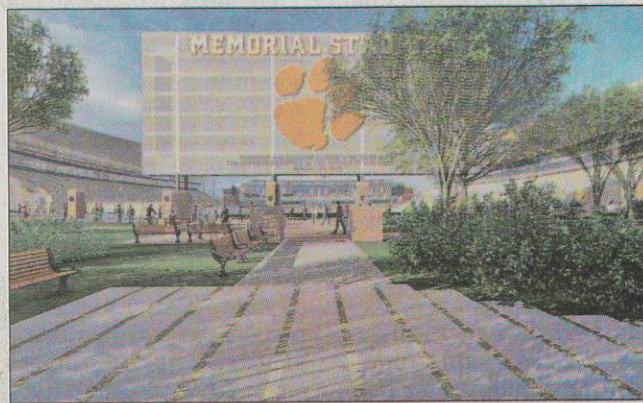
allow a larger window into the stadium from its campus side, as the viewing area near the school's Scroll of Honor and Howard's Rock on Williamson Road will expand from about 500 feet to more than 2,000 feet.

"One of things that was really important for us to have the folks at the Scroll of Honor understand this major change to the east side of the stadium," Radakovich said. "We've met and reviewed this with Col. (Sandy) Edge and (Col.) Danny Rhodes as recently as last Friday, and they both enthusiastically support this change."

Pending full board approval, the Memorial Stadium renovations will be funded by \$55 million in athletic facility revenue bonds, and \$10 million in private gifts.

Also approved by the finance and facilities committee on Wednesday was an expansion of the Reeves Football Operations Complex, and an addition to the Poe Indoor Practice Facility, all of which will be funded with privately raised athletic gifts.

A \$4.5 million project



COURTESY OF CLEMSON UNIVERSITY

An artist rendering shows the view of Memorial Stadium from the school's Scroll of Honor.

at the indoor practice facility will most notably see a new student-athlete branding institute for all of the school's student-athletes. Its creation comes in the new era of college sports, as the NCAA recently began allowing college athletes to profit on their name, image and likeness.

"(It's) really going to be a real positive lever for us as it relates to NIL, our student-athletes creating their brand and continuing to move forward during their time here at Clemson," said Radakovich, who referred to the institute as a "one-stop shop" for education on NIL and the opportunity for content creation.

Also included in the proj-

ect will be storage space, hydration stations, expanded restrooms and spaces for recruiting purposes and NFL scouts in addition to other multi-use spaces.

A \$4.9 million project at the football operations complex will see the renovation and expansion of the current sports medicine area to encompass the complex's existing covered basketball court.

"This is something that has been very high on the list from football over the last few years to be able to utilize recovery areas for advanced practices, restoration and rejuvenation for student-athletes," Radakovich said.

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