

Insufficient Dormitory Funds ?

When the architect returns his preliminary drawings for a Fairbanks dormitory in March, it may still be uncertain whether there are sufficient funds to start construction.

The dormitory, the building which will house 200 rural students while they attend high school, is due to be completed by August 1972.

However, the architect's preliminary estimates are that it will cost several hundred thousand more than the \$1.9 million the BIA has appropriated for the project.

According to Bob Clark, Auxiliary Services Director of the North Star Borough School District and member of the ad hoc committee appointed by the State Commissioner of Education last spring, additional funding is being sought for the project.

On December 22 the firm of Gray, Rogers, Myers and Morgan signed a contract with the Bureau of Indian Affairs to provide architectural services for the dormitory project.

Their preliminary design is due to be presented to BIA architectural experts and the ad hoc committee in Albuquerque in March.

The proposed site for the dormitory for rural students is at 19th and Cowles in Fairbanks, across from the site of the new Community Hospital and south of Hunter School.

The basic bid calls for 63,000 square feet at a cost of \$2,525,000.

"This is figured, according to the architects, at a set amount of space required for each activity," says Bob Clark. "They then figure an average cost for each square foot of floor space."

Additional alternate facilities, which include a self-contained kitchen, recreation area, maintenance facility and other features, would bring the cost of construction to \$2,757,000 for 68,925 square feet.

If additional funds are not found, the project will be postponed till funds are available. A cost estimate will be made at the time the architectural designs are completed—in March of this year. If the project is delayed, architects estimate a rise in construction costs of approximately one per cent for each month of delay.

This means more money will be needed, or a lesser facility will be constructed. At a compound rate, the annual cost rise would be 14 per cent.

The regional high school is designed to aid the approximately 3,000 students, almost overwhelmingly Alaskan Natives, with no high school to attend. At present, there are more than 150 rural students in the Boarding Home Program, attending Fairbanks high schools and living in local homes. The new dormitory will accommodate approximately 200.

No final decision has been made on the administration and control of the dormitory facility. Local Native groups prefer local control and the dormitory will probably be administered by the school district.

Originally, it was felt the State Department of Education should operate all school dormitories.

The ad hoc committee on the Fairbanks dormitory has met several times in the last year to try to overcome the problems which have arisen in the project.

They also submitted recommendations to the BIA concerning the overall dormitory facility and what it requires.

Members of the committee

are Clara Winbush, State Coordinator of Dormitories, chairman; Dr. Charles Ray, University of Alaska; Tim Wallis of the Fairbanks Native Association; Edward Hopson of the Barrow ASNA; and Bob Clark of the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District.

The dormitory is being built completely with state and federal funding, with initial funds from

the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

"The beauty of the whole operation," says Dr. George Taylor, Superintendent of Schools, North Star Borough School District, "is the fact that it will cost the taxpayers absolutely nothing. It is to be totally state funded. In addition, the state has allocated \$1.5 million for classrooms to house the additional students."