

**Meeting of the Committee on Facilities, University Council**  
Peabody Room, The Administration Building  
April 4, 2007

The third meeting of the Spring Semester was called to order at 3:30 in the afternoon by the Committee chair, Loch K. Johnson.

The chair circulated the handout, "Ideas for Campus Improvements Gathered by the Facilities Committee in April 2007" (see Appendix). Circulated, too, was the final version of the MRR priority list.

Mark Craig, Manager of Parking Services, was then invited to make a presentation to the committee. He also distributed a handout, "2007-2008 Parking Services Plan: Allocating More with Less."

Craig made or drew attention to the following points:

- ACC bus ridership has increased since the priority parking system was implemented in 2003.
- Alternate Transportation Permits are at 1,401---an all-time high.
- Page 2a of the handout charted changes in assignable parking supply and demand.
- Page 3 summarized some important data from the chart.
  - UGA will lose 346 spaces in 2007-08.
  - As early as the end of 2009, the shortfall in the ability to meet first-choice desires will be close to 1,900. By 2013, demand for parking spaces will be approximately twice the number available.
- The North end of campus will have the greatest discrepancy between supply and demand.
- The groundbreaking for the Tate Center Deck is to be April 19; the groundbreaking for the Health Center Deck will be this fall. The Health Center Deck will be paid for from student health fees.
- The Hull Street Deck Expansion is planned for 400 spaces, but should be more like 800 or 900.
- Owing to the rapid levels of new construction, the Personnel and Debt/Depreciation components of department expenses are flipped as compared to a typical relationship. In other words, Personnel is usually the largest component.
- Again, as a result of rapid expansion, the current cost of a parking space is about \$520.
- The Boyd Grad Lot will be lost to green space; the Lower Pharmacy Lot will be lost for new construction.

At this point, the committee began to ask questions then engage in general discussion.

- Are the walking distances realistic, considering the heat and the presence of hills?
  - Craig responded that they may not be realistic. He also noted that the difficult areas correlate with areas having problems with visitor parking.

- Danny Sniff from the Architects Office responded that topology has been considered in deck construction plans and the University's architects hope to have some pedestrian bridges to make it easier to walk from place to place.
- Richard Winn asked whether there were any efforts being made to reduce demand, for instance with satellite parking and shuttles.
  - When UGA switched to the current priority system, businesses nearby sold parking spaces, bus ridership increased, and one satellite lot was tried. The lot failed; almost no one used it.
  - Winn asked if we just weren't innovative enough.
  - Craig noted that there was a meeting with ACC officials to inquire about additional bus routes farther out, but they are only once an hour and people don't consider that reliable or frequent enough. There is also a cultural block against this sort of system. Nonetheless, ACC officials intend to add routes in areas that students frequent.
  - The subject of banning automobiles for first-year students arose as another way to lower demand for parking. Mark Craige observed that he was unaware of any plan to prevent first-year students from obtaining a parking permit.
  - Jimmy Williamson, Chief of Police for UGA, responded that a ban of this kind could hurt UGA by making it less attractive to prospective students.
  - Michael Barry, the undergraduate representative from the Student Government Association, also objected to this idea, noting the difficulty for first-year students in obtaining groceries and the inconvenience to parents who would have to travel to UGA to pick up and drop off their children.
  - Sniff mentioned that a former UGA president had unequivocally stated, "Never ban freshman cars from campus," but that he wasn't sure how the current president felt about the issue.
- Two members of the Committee, one from the Music Department (Adrian Childs) and a staff member from the Office of Performing Arts (Lori Tiller), noted that the Performing Arts area has special parking needs. Whether it is walking a long distance or navigating narrow stairways in a parking deck, carrying musical instruments and art portfolios make parking arrangements more critical. Further, there are severe problems with parking for patrons—those attending events and performances who are not part of the UGA community and therefore not represented by the usual statistics. These people are often older and not able to walk great distances. Further, towing these people's cars when they park incorrectly sows a lot of ill-will toward the school. Committee members expressed concern about the increased pressure on this area of campus likely to arise when the new Art School building opens.
  - Williamson noted that the university simply must tow cars that are parked in red zones; it is a matter of public safety.

- Representatives of the Music Department asked if the campus police could make an announcement first, to give the improperly parked individual a chance to move his or her vehicle.
- Craig also commented that during the day, Parking Services has to tow illegal parkers out of an obligation to those who have paid for the right to park.
- The programs in the performing arts area for grade school and high school children were also mentioned as a source of pressure on the parking in the area.
- Returning to the general topic of decreasing demand for on-campus parking spaces, Loch Johnson remarked that the idea of offsite parking makes sense.
  - Williamson asked about a rate increase, noting that there had not been one for a long time.
  - Craig observed that pricing could have an effect on demand but that the elasticity was unknown; a rate increase could decrease traffic, or just shift it to other areas. When the University adopted a priority system for parking on campus, it is true that off-campus parking did increase.
- Regarding safety, Craig also noted that the North deck is the most dangerous, probably because it is the closest to town and therefore the most used in the evening.
- Someone asked what a person who has a permit should do when there isn't an available space in the assigned lot.
  - Craig said that the person should call Parking Services and that his staff would provide instructions. These instructions might include temporary permission to park in a nearby lot to which the person normally does not have access.
- Committee member Jerry Gale noted said athletic department personnel at the entrance to a clinic parking lot do not acknowledge the bona fide parking permits of people coming for appointments and ask why they are parking there, which violates their privacy.
- Someone asked whether there is a great deal of illegal parking and whether regular violators have learned that some areas are more enforced than others. Do we contribute to the problem by being lax in some locations?
  - Craig noted that the fine for parking out of zone is \$40, but the actual cost to tow is about \$170. He further mentioned that parents sometimes call Parking Services to complain about the tickets received by their children.
- Craig mentioned that in about six to nine months he would like to have a web-based system where departments could register a special event and get support for it from Parking Services.
- Johnson asked whether there was damage to the intramural fields as a result of parking on football game days.
  - Craig only personally observed the Georgia Tech game, but didn't see any damage from the 400 or so cars.
  - Williamson noted that UGA was simply running out of options and that the fact that most autumns are dry would help minimize the damage. He noted further that little damage had been caused to date.

- Johnson asked about transporting football fans to the stadium using buses from off-campus locations on game days.
- Williamson noted that UGA already uses almost all of the buses on game days. His department estimates that there is an average of 1.2 riders per car. In addition there are about 10,000 people who come to campus on game day, but don't attend the game. Last year was better on campus than in the past, but his department realizes that they have fixed one problem and created another; on balance it is an improvement, but a permanent solution that doesn't endanger the intramural fields is still needed. He also noted that the location of the stadium is not good for maneuvering large buses to shuttle fans back and forth to remote parking. Finally, he noted that close to 60 percent of season-ticket holders do not attend UGA. He thinks that because of their lack of personal connection to the campus, they are not as careful about how they treat the grounds.

At this point, the chair noted that there was not much time left and thanked Craig and Williamson for attending the meeting and sharing their thoughts.

The chair then brought up the "Ideas for Campus Improvements" list that was distributed at the beginning of the meeting.

- Williamson reported that the current analog call-box system is obsolete and cannot be added to. The University could switch to a digital system, but that would mean replacing all twenty-six current boxes at a cost of about \$300,000. In recent times, Campus Police has received less than ten calls per year through the system, and most of those are requests to be connected to a dormitory phone number, not emergency calls. Instead of this system, students are relying on their own cell phones to make calls. Some people have also raised objections to placing call-boxes in certain locations, for aesthetic reasons.
- Ralph Johnson asked for the ideas list to be made more specific.
- The chair asked R. Johnson if the committee could contact him directly for follow-up and clarification and he said yes.
- Sniff also volunteered to respond to some items directly. On the question of awful odors coming from the sewage plant on South Campus, he said that the plant will go offline in 2013; but, until then, it is not going to change much.
- Williamson offered to follow-up on the crosswalk items in the list. He said that the police are writing lots of tickets for crosswalk violations. There was some discussion about whether the enforcement is consistent.

Finally, the chair raised the issue of choosing a new chair in the spring who could be more formally voted on the fall, serving throughout the next academic year. Even though the Bylaws prevent a formal election in the spring, it was noted that the committee could designate a new chair before summer and that individual would be ready to act in the fall.

- Winn asked whether the committee should not meet through the summer. Approximately three-fourths of those present indicated that they would be in town during the summer. The current chair indicated that he would not be in town during the summer, so someone would need to substitute for him if meetings were

to occur. Nothing was decided about this question, but the current chair will contact members to see if someone would like to guide the committee in the summer and perhaps through the next academic year as well.

The session was adjourned at 5:02 pm.

Minutes taken by Larry Lamanna, Assistant to the Chair, and reviewed, edited, and respectfully submitted by Loch K. Johnson (April 24, 2007).

## **Appendix : Ideas for Campus Improvements Gathered by the Facilities Committee in April 2007**

### *Short-Term*

Improved lighting between SLC and parking lots, especially the S02 lot and the Hull Street Deck

Safer campus crosswalks, with lighted signs or raised surfaces

Better integration of the Facilities Committee into campus planning for the Navy School property

Accelerated attention to ridding East Campus of the odor stemming from the Bailey Street water treatment facility

Increased hours of access to the Ramsey Student Center during official University recesses

More trash receptacles around campus, especially at bus stops

Trim back bushes by The Arch and around Holmes-Hunter, to make the area safer

More bicycle racks around campus

More benches, preferably covered, at bus stops

A few permanent, outdoor chess tables in selected campus locations

Improved décor for the Womens Studies building, especially art work on the walls

More art across campus: sculpture, mosaics, bus stop décor

Historical plaques around campus

More library return boxes on campus

More emergency call boxes around campus

Plant wild flowers along East Campus Drive and other suitable locations, as was done for a while during the Knapp Administration

*Medium-Term*

Parking deck with access to River Road, serving the Performing Arts Center, the Music Building, and the Georgia Museum of Art

Music Library for HHSOM

Additional rehearsal site for HHSOM, converting the current orchestra room into a reception site for all Performing Arts Center and SOM events (along with office and storage space added to the room)

A Center for Emeritus Faculty

Improved Green Space planning

More graduate student lounges around campus

Library improvements, especially a more welcoming environment with large quiet study areas furnished with tables and big, comfortable chairs

Attractive outdoor drinking fountains around campus

*Long-Term*

A new McPhaul child develop lab

New building for SPIA, gathering its three departments and two centers into one place

An improved outdoor music facility for performances open to students

Attractive gazebos and similarly inviting locations for reading and studying outdoors

The replacement of chain link fences where they appear on campus with more attractive stone fences

Improve the attractiveness of the lampposts on campus