

STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY SENATE

University Environment Committee

Meeting of October 9, 2024, 12:30-2:00 pm
Virtual meeting on Zoom.

MINUTES

In attendance: Tiffany Freidman, Jennifer Gilday, Timothy Gonzalez, Elizabeth Hewitt, Gary Kaczmarczyk, Reuben Kline, Clifford Knee, Samuel Lavin, Christopher Martin, VS Chandra Mourya, Giacinto Piacquadio, Sian Piret, Sara Poon, Mona Ramonetti (co-chair), Christopher Sellers (co-chair), Peg Spitzer, Eric Tiedemann, John True, Frederick Walter, Thomas Wilson, and Anil Yazici.

1. Call to order and welcome from the Co-chairs Ramonetti and Sellers. Attendees were invited to introduce themselves.
2. Reportage/discussion on August 18-19 storm damage on campus. Guests: Christopher Martin, Associate Vice President of Campus Planning, Design, and Construction (CPDC) and Eric Tiedemann. Interim Director of Construction for CPDC).
 - a) Tiedemann: Two buildings left to repair.
 - b) Martin: 64 buildings affected in total. Amman move in next week. Gray move in January 1, 2025.
 - c) Ramonetti: Damage to Chemistry building? Tiedemann: Almost every floor, especially floors 6 and 7. Normal design criteria 100 year flood, this exceeded that.
 - d) Remediation and reconstruction were discussed. Walter: Clear that 100 year events are happening more frequently.
 - e) Tiedemann: The contractor doing renovation on the Chemistry building did not secure tarps used to protect construction. University is working with the contractor's insurance carrier to get repairs done at no charge to the State.
 - f) Walter: Union and 2 dorms flooded 2 ½ years ago. What have we learned from these two failures? Tiedemann: We need a lot more money to put into infrastructure. FEMA funding for mitigation work. Will be looking to address Union issues.
 - g) Martin: Suggest putting mechanical systems in the first floor, not lower level of buildings. Walter: Was there active pumping in Gray and Amman? Martin: How can we avoid water entering buildings in the first place? Kaczmarczyk and Tiedemann: University is moving forward with an all-campus stormwater study.
 - h) Sellers: can the Environment Committee get a list of the 64 affected buildings? What can we do as a committee to assist the University? Tiedemann: We will give that some thought. For the moment, if you see something, say something.
 - i) Poon: What is the response plan to notify people who are affected by emergencies? Some students had cars totalled by flooding. Students had to evacuate at 3am. Kaczmarczyk: University Police Office of Emergency Management: SB Alert System. Make sure you are signed up for alerts. There is also an SB Guardian System.
 - j) Poon: Are University Police looking out for hazardous situations? Kaczmarczyk: Police and Fire and Emergency personnel are on duty and patrolling 24/7. During extreme events (hurricanes, severe storms, snowstorms, etc.) extra personnel are out there. Tiedemann: We all responded, some at 3am, to respond to issues.
 - k) Ramonetti: Thanks for your effort. Are there follow ups to check for mold? Tiedemann: EHS has a team that works with CPDC to insure no mold. Kaczmarczyk: In cases of major water penetration an outside consultant is hired in addition.
 - l) Piacquadio: Three months later humidity levels are still unhealthy in some areas. How can we make sure to follow up on these issues? Kaczmarczyk: Communicate with building managers, they have direct connection with Campus Operations and

Maintenance (COM). Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) can be brought in if necessary.

3. Consideration of draft minutes from September 11, 2024. Sian Piret moves to accept, all in favor. Draft minutes approved.
4. Christopher Sellers reported for the Energy Working Group: Tom Lanzilotta, Assistant Director of Energy & Sustainability, will give us an update at the next meeting.
5. Fred Walter reported for the Bike Path working group.
 - a) Walter: Entire Environment Committee has seen the draft report. Draft has been sent to Vice President for Facilities & Services Bill Herrmann and Senior Project Planner Ana Topolovec with no response. Piret will take draft report to the HSC Environment Committee for comment.
 - b) Kaczmarczyk: CPDC has two projects on the books now to address pedestrian safety on campus. First project: consultant to evaluate 6 different crosswalk areas, Marburget Drive, Engineering Drive, Lot 40, Wang Center, Circle Road at LIRR, Circle Road at Nobel Hall. The committee might wish to invite Ana Topolovec to hear more details.
 - c) Kaczmarczyk: there is a larger plan to do campus wide look intersections and traffic study. Perhaps have someone from the Environment Committee serve on the steering committee.
 - d) Wilson: Glad to hear about larger study. How were crossings selected? Important to make sure that Nicholls is studied.
 - e) Piret: interested in pedestrian activated crossings of Nicholls. Kaczmarczyk: Nicholls crossings might be a county project.
6. Report on survey of SBU traffic needs, possible employee shuttle (after 1 pm). Guests: Elizabeth Hewitt, Technology and Society, Reuben Kline: Political Science, Anil Yazici, Civil Engineering.
 - a) Kline: Concept is a smart shuttle, identifying key places and distribution of demand. Sent out survey of all campus employees, in spring of 2024. Huge response, over 1200. 56% very or somewhat likely take a shuttle within a 5 minute walk of their house. Lower income folks (grad students) would be even more likely to use this service.
 - b) Hewitt: 1 year preliminary study. Model is based on European programs of employers who offer this as a benefit to employees. Funded by Multi University Transit Research Consortium, 12 month project with potential for future 12 months.
 - c) Wilson: Would the shuttle pick people up at hub locations? Hewitt: possibility. Kline: the ideal would be no driving to a hub so the shuttle would eliminate the need for a car or second car.
 - d) Walter: Why not have a shuttle running from Ronkonkoma LIRR station to Stony Brook. Yazici: Shuttle does not work like a school bus. People ask for a ride in the app, and the app optimizes routes. System has built-in flexibility. Also, would people be willing to pay for it?
 - e) True: what is the funding model? Yazici: Targeting 9 to 5 people with a more regular schedule. A potential large user base would be international grad students, for whom getting a driver's license and car can be a big burden. Use the shuttle instead of paying for parking. Funded by users, university, transportation fund. Study is to determine whether there is demand.
 - f) Gonzalez: Bus from Ronkonkoma to Stony Brook would be useful for many people who live close to the Ronkonkoma line. Weekend trains packed with Stony Brook students going home for the weekend so that would be part of demand. Yazici: No problem getting picked up from the train station.
 - g) Lavin: Shuttle would be very useful. It is ridiculous to have no shuttle and paid parking. Big question is flexibility and timing. Hewitt: less flexibility than Uber, cutoff the day before. Anil: Start with a more basic service, once a critical mass is achieved there can be more flexibility.
 - h) Sellers: Thanks for bringing this to use. It's a Gordian knot to lessen car ownership dependency in a suburban environment. Please come back to report and share your results.

- i) Yazici: We can share the report. Hope to pilot it with external funding, perhaps we can help to get funding from the University to help with costs.
7. Sara Poon reported for the Composting Working Group.
- a. Poon gave a background on the compost program. Last fall, a pilot in Chavez Hall was successful with student intern volunteers. Working with a group of 5 students this year, we plan to expand to more dorms. Composting is of pre-consumer waste. Manager of Machine Operated Services for the Faculty Student Association Tony Gentile picks up.
 - b. Poon: contacting Chavez, Tubman, Irving, and O'Neill for this year's composting program. Holding off on Gray, Amman, and one other dorm may be added later in the year.
 - c. Poon: Organizing SBU 102 course for the spring: goal and intention to engage students in hands-on environmental work. Poon will be teaching it! Chris: Using a 102 course to do this is a good idea. Poon: see this as an opportunity to introduce as a subject for research.
8. John True reported for the Development working group and cooling issues.
- a. True: Engineering building may be put off until 2025.
 - b. True: Building manager on heating. Some buildings are more controllable than others.
 - c. Walter: Senate Executive Committee met with Interim president, spent a lot of time talking about campus infrastructure. Leads directly into the issue of infrastructure, we don't have capacity for wastewater, sewage, rain, etc. Modular dorms by football training dorms. We have 1960s infrastructure but want to add 10,000 students. Senate Exec liked study on clean energy and would appreciate a study for limitations on infrastructure.
 - d. Friedman: biggest freshman class ever, how can we continue given the limits to growth.
 - e. Wilson: we need to work on limits to growth, increase quality as opposed to quantity
 - f. Gonzalez: grow better not bigger. Classes are too big as of now.
 - g. Co-chair Sellers designated Friedman, Gonzalez, Walter, and Wilson to form a working group on Limits to Growth.
9. General announcements and discussion.
- a. Sellers: We are still looking for a professional staff member to fill a committee vacancy.
 - b. Sellers: Poll results: committee will meet Wednesdays at 12:30.
 - c. True: Living World lecture on 10/21/2024 will be John Turner talking about the Mill Pond disaster.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:06pm.

Respectfully submitted.

Thomas Wilson