

**COMMISSION ON UNIVERSITY SUPPORT  
MEETING MINUTES  
January 19, 2012  
President's Board Room, 210 Burruss Hall**

**MEMBERS**

**Members Present:** Mike Coleman, William Dougherty (for Erv Blythe), Ed Lener, Achla Marathe, Henry Quesada Pineda, Guy Sims, Ryan Smith, Sue Teel, Jim Tokuhisa (Chair), Tom Tillar, Tom Wertalik, Sherwood Wilson, Teresa Wright (for Daniel Wubah)

**Members Absent:** Robert Broadwater, Jack Davis (with notice), Betsy Flanagan, Kelsey Heiter, Kathy Hosig, (with notice)

**Recorder:** Kayla Smith

**Guests:** Rebecca Paulson, Alan Raflo, John Seiler

**1. Approval of agenda**

Dr. Jim Tokuhisa called the meeting to order at 2:01 p.m. and the meeting began with round-table introductions. The agenda was approved.

**2. Announcement of approval of October 20, 2011 minutes**

The minutes were approved electronically in advance of the meeting.

**3. New Business**

**a. Proposed Indoor Training Facility and Stadium Woods Preservation**

Dr. John Seiler discussed his concerns regarding the proposed indoor athletics training facility – specifically the siting of the building in relation to an old growth forested area on campus commonly known as Stadium Woods (Attachment A).

Dr. Sherwood Wilson responded that a Committee has been formed to study the concerns presented by Dr. Seiler and other community members. More information on the Committee, including its membership is available in a VT News article released earlier in the day (Attachment B).

Dr. Tokuhisa asked that the Commission be provided with updates from the Committee as their work progresses.

**4. Old Business**

**a. Unified Communications Update**

Mr. William Dougherty presented a brief update on the unified communications project being managed by CNS. The ultimate goal of this project is to replace the current telephone system with a voice over IP system, incorporating phone communications into the data network. This will allow a single-wire approach to office connections, minimizing long-term infrastructure cost. Initial work to deploy

the new telephones will begin by summer and full completion may take three years. Short-term solutions are being investigated that may allow all customers to utilize the new phone system before the necessary infrastructure upgrades are completed.

CNS will prepare displays/demonstrations of the plans and new equipment to share with the university community after a more detailed timeline can be developed. Staff will also communicate and provide training as necessary to small groups of users before each building is addressed.

## **5. Reports from Committee Chairs/Representatives**

### **a. Energy and Sustainability Committee**

The Energy and Sustainability Committee met on October 31 and November 28, 2011. Mr. Coleman suggested that members refer to the Committee meeting minutes for more information as a number of topics were discussed during both meetings, including the STARS “Silver” rating that was recently awarded and the student-initiated sustainability project funding process commonly known as the “Green RFP.”

### **b. Transportation and Parking Committee**

The Transportation and Parking Committee met October 12 and November 16, 2011. Ms. Marathe indicated that the main item of discussion at these recent meetings had been the revision to the 2<sup>nd</sup> appeals process and associated committee bylaws.

## **6. Acceptance of Committee Minutes**

Mr. Sims moved that the Commission accept the following list of minutes:

*Building Committee Minutes*

October 6, 2011

*Energy and Sustainability Committee Minutes*

September 26, 2011; and October 31, 2011

*Transportation and Parking Committee Minutes*

September 14, 2011; October 12, 2011; and November 16, 2011

The motion was seconded by Ms. Teel and passed unanimously.

## **7. Next meeting date**

February 16, 2012

**Adjourned** at 3:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kayla Smith



# Stadium woods with the impacted area outlined in red





# Proposed Indoor Training Facility and Stadium Woods

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John R. Seiler, Alumni Distinguished Professor  
Forest Biology





# Location and Description of Stadium Woods

Approximately a 15 acre remnant of old growth forest.





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Approximately a 15 acre remnant of old growth forest.

Over 50 white oaks in excess of 36 inches in diameter.



Numerous centuries old white oaks are found uniformly throughout Stadium Woods

# Location and Description of Stadium Woods

Approximately a 15 acre remnant of old growth forest.

Over 50 white oaks in excess of 36 inches in diameter.

Overstory, mid-story and understory.



Age structure of Stadium Woods is that of an old-growth forest



# Location and Description of Stadium Woods

Approximately a 15 acre remnant of old growth forest.

Over 50 white oaks in excess of 36 inches in diameter.

Overstory, mid-story and understory.

Very diverse forest community

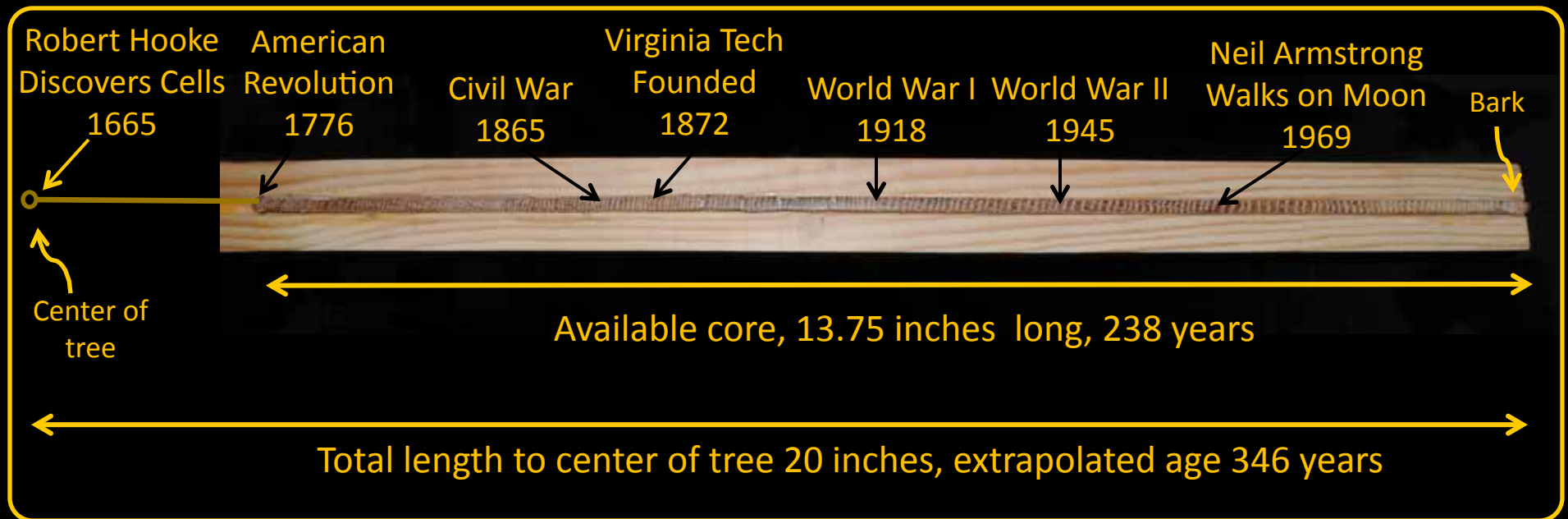


Upward bound summer students collecting data in Stadium Woods



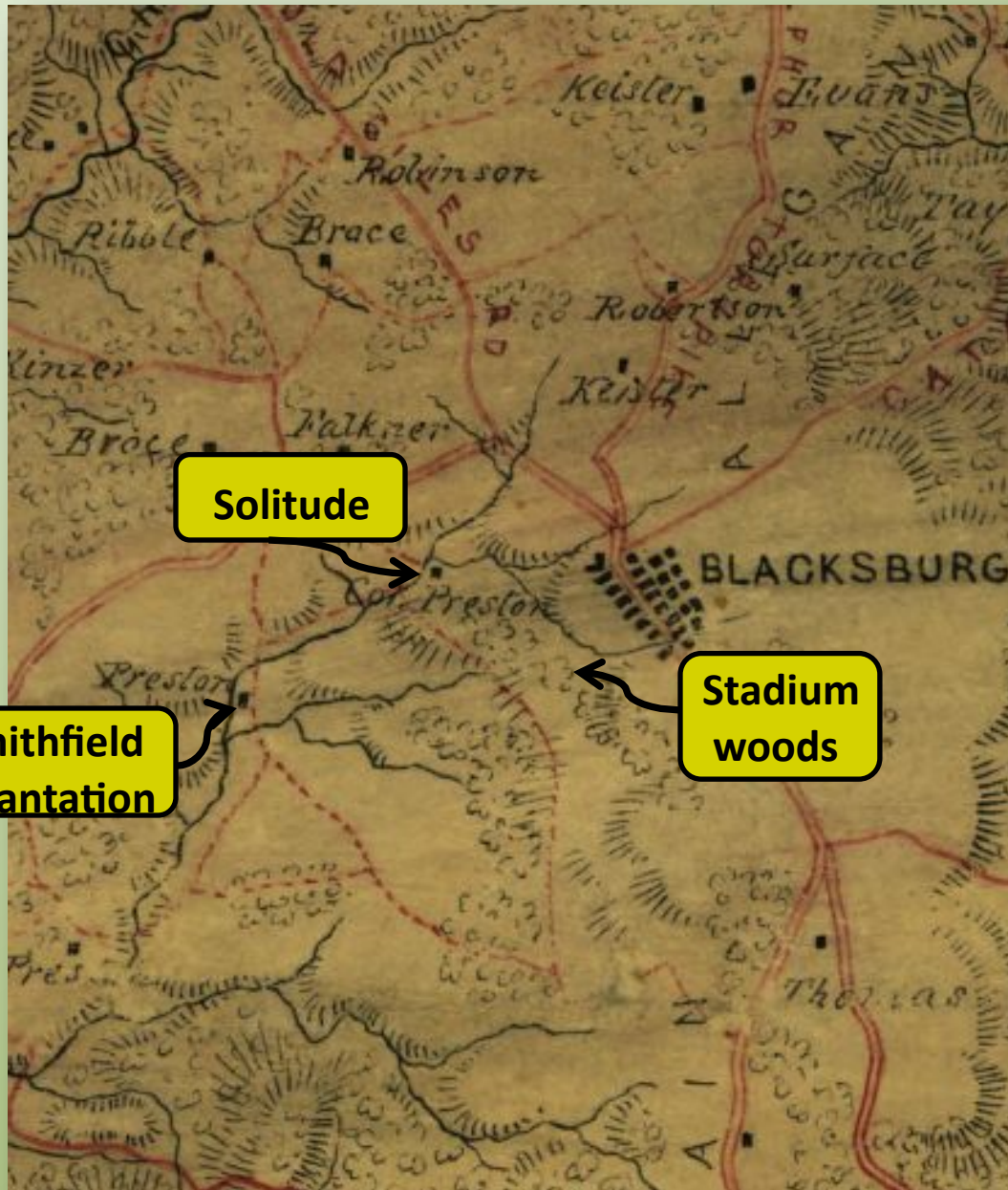


# Historical events during the life of white oak tree number 101 in Stadium Woods, age 346 years



Wood core from tree 101 in Stadium Woods. The tree is a 40 inch diameter white oak on the footprint of the planned building. Core obtained was 13.75 inches long. At that point the middle of the tree was rotten. Number of rings found on the available core indicates that portion of tree grew over a period of 238 years. Another 6.25 inches of growth is needed to reach the center of the tree resulting in an estimated tree age of 346 years. Exact age is unknown; however, the tree was quite large in 1774.





Stadium Woods  
shown on 1864  
Confederate map  
of Blacksburg, Va  
area.

From surveys and reconnaissance's by Liut. [sic] C.S. Dwight Engr. Corps P.A. made under direction of Capt. A.H. Campbell Engr. Corps P.A.C.S. Confederate States of America. Army. Dept. of Northern Virginia. Chief Engineer's Office. 1864

# Brief History of “Process”

January 20, 2011 - Virginia Tech Arboretum Committee informed but asked to “keep it quiet”

August 7, 2011 - Washington Post Article indicates plans for new facility

*“Virginia Tech’s new indoor facility **will be** located in a wooded area adjacent to the Hokies outdoor practice fields, just beyond the north end zone of lane stadium. Gabbard said part of the project **will involve removing 30 feet of elevation and moving approximately 80,00 cubic yards of dirt** from the woods” (emphasis mine)*

August 8, 2011 - Virginia Tech Arboretum Committee told it was “a done deal”; asked to provide information for remediation of canopy cover loss.

November 3, 2011 – Arboretum Committee asked for an official position

November 11, 2011 – Arboretum Committee sent their “strongly opposes” position

November 19, 2011 – Friends of Stadium Woods (FSW) begins on-line opposition petition

November 30, 2011 – FSW has organizational meeting in town library



# Brief History of “Process” continued

Early December, 2011 – Faculty Senator Dr. Jim Kuypers begins drafting resolution supporting protection of stadium woods.

December 6, 2011 – Dr. Sherwood Wilson sends letter to faculty senators

December 13, 2011 – Faculty Senate unanimously approves resolution supporting protection of Stadium Woods.

December 15, 2011 – Several concerned faculty meet with Athletics and University planning and walk through woods.

≈December 17, 2011 – President Steger walks through Stadium woods and orders an ecological assessment

January 5, 2012 – Dr. Seiler meets with Provost McNamee

# Proposed Indoor Training Facility Location





# Proposed Indoor Training Facility Location





“**Environmental greenway**... a significant reservation of lands waterways tree stands, and cultural landmarks for future generations and “best management practices” of sustainable land use.”

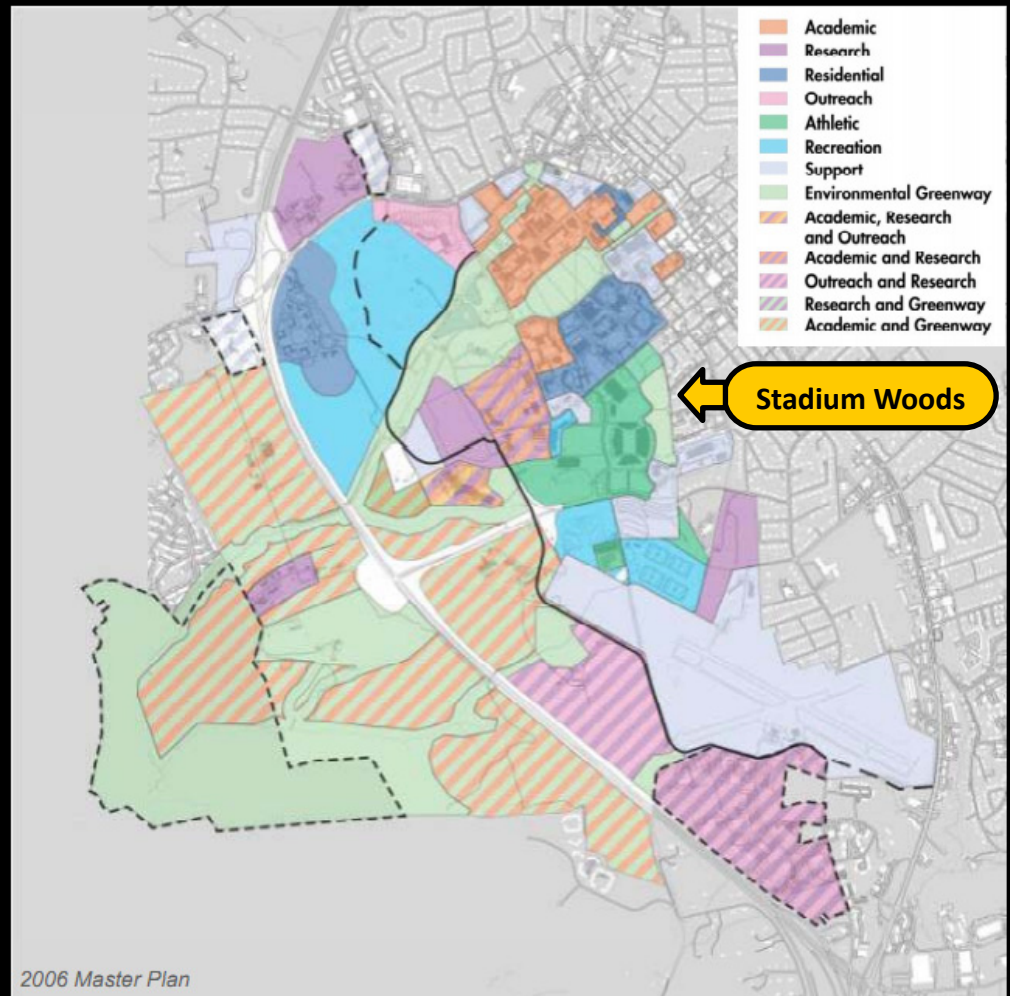
“Any land development should minimize environmental impact and should support the storm water strategies outlined in this document.”



### Existing Conditions

#### The 2006-2016 Master Plan Land Use Short Term

The Primary Program accommodation will occur in two areas; the Life Sciences District, and the northern expansion of the Core Academic Campus. Short-term development will have minimal impact on existing agricultural lands east of the bypass. Any land development should minimize environmental impact and should support the storm water strategies outlined in this document. The Golf Course will serve as a land bank for the short-term development strategies.





# Examples of Student Use Questions ?



## Committee appointed to evaluate wooded site for proposed athletic training facility

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BLACKSBURG, Va., Jan. 19, 2012 – The university has appointed a study committee to evaluate the proposed site for the new indoor athletic practice facility.

Citing concerns expressed by members of the university community and under direction from President Charles W. Steger, Sherwood Wilson, vice president for administrative services, will ask the committee to, among other things, evaluate the ecological and educational significance of the wooded area adjacent to football practice field, which is the proposed site for the new indoor athletic facility.

“This will be an operational committee charged with developing recommendations for how the university can resolve the need for a critical athletics facility in close proximity to existing facilities while also being good stewards of our natural resources,” said Wilson.

The 15 member committee, chaired by John Randolph, professor of urban affairs and planning in the College of Architecture and Urban Studies, will evaluate “the advantages and disadvantages of each site that is being considered by university planning staff.” The committee includes representatives from the Student Government Association, Staff Senate, Athletics, the Energy and Sustainability Committee, seven faculty members, two Blacksburg citizens, and Facilities Services.

Wilson says that the university needs a more comprehensive picture of all aspects of the concerns raised.

“Before making a decision on whether to build on the proposed site adjacent to the locker rooms and the football practice field or find another suitable location, we need to fully understand the ecological and educational significance of the wooded area,” said Wilson. “What educational programs depend on this location? What impact would the building have on the wooded area? Can the concerns of our community be mitigated in this location? If not, are there alternative sites and what will be the impact on athletics of finding another location?”

The project will last for the spring semester with the committee’s report due June 1, 2012. Committee members include

- **Dean Bork**, associate professor of landscape architecture, College of Architecture and Urban Studies;
- **Kara Dodson**, undergraduate student, College of Natural Resources and Environment; president



of the Virginia Tech Environmental Coalition; and student representative to the Energy and Sustainability Committee;

- **Tom Gabbard**, associate director of athletics, internal affairs;
- **Sarah Karpanty**, assistant professor of fish and wildlife conservation, College of Natural Resources and Environment, and president-elect, Faculty Senate;
- **Art Keown**, R.B. Pamplin Professor and head, Department of Finance, Insurance, and Business Law, Pamplin College of Business; and chair, Athletics Committee;
- **Larry Killough**, KPMG Professor of Accounting and Information Systems, Pamplin College of Business, and faculty representative to the NCAA;
- **Leigh LaClair**, deputy chief facilities officer, Facilities Services;
- **Maxine Lyons**, president, Staff Senate, and staff representative to the board of visitors;
- **John Randolph (chair)**, professor of urban affairs and planning, College of Architecture and Urban Studies, and member of the Energy and Sustainability Committee;
- **Glenn Reynolds**, Reynolds Architects Incorporated (local business owner);
- **Jeff Walters**, Harold Bailey Professor of Biological Sciences, College of Science;
- **Emily Wilkinson**, undergraduate student, College of Sciences, and vice president, Student Government Association;
- **Chris Wise**, director of recreational sports, Division of Student Affairs;
- **Eric Wiseman**, associate professor of forest resources and environmental conservation and Extension specialist, College of Natural Resources and Environment and chair of the Arboretum Committee; and
- TBA, additional resident from the Town of Blacksburg.