

Transportation & Parking Committee (TPC)

April 18, 2012 Minutes

President's Boardroom, Newman Library

Members Present:

Ladd Brown, Bruce Harper, Spencer Joslin, Lyndsay McKeever, Steve Mouras,

Members Absent:

Angelo Colon, Wendell Flinchum, Dennis Gehrt, Richard McCoy, Achla Marathe, David Russell, Emily Satterwhite

Guests / Attendees:

Debby Freed (Alternative Transportation Manager)

Agenda:

Committee Elections:

Harper was nominated for the position of Chair for the 2012-2013 term; Brown was nominated for Recorder. Joslin announced that elections for the 2012-2013 executive board would be conducted mail.

General Updates on Transportation & Parking:

Mouras gave an overview of ongoing and future projects:

- The Turner Street Garage construction is on schedule; opening will be late 2012/ early 2013. Access will be via automated / gate system; Virginia Tech Parking Services will manage the building; rates and permissions for visitors and permit-holders are still under discussion.
- The impediment for westbound traffic on Perry Street at the intersection of Perry and Stanger intended to create a Right-Turn-Only option will be constructed.
- The town and the university will share responsibilities for a sidewalk improvement project all along Turned Street. This will create a safer environment for pedestrians using the Turner Street Garage to get to locations such as the Center for the Arts and other sites.
- The town has planned a College Avenue enhancement project featuring street amenities and College Avenue will be one-way for in-bound traffic.

General Updates on Alternative Transportation (AT):

Freed reported on the activities and plans of the AT office:

- AT is hiring a staff member who will help out with orientation as well as a number of projects.
- Safety education is paramount on the AT agenda; as well as emphasizing helmet and bike light use, AT is reaching out to student groups and others to harmonize the biking and motor vehicle communities.
- AT is promoting a "culture of courtesy" designed to foster biker-pedestrian etiquette and improve crosswalk and sidewalk safety; this culture also has an enforcement awareness aspect regarding proper dismount and deceleration rules at crosswalks.
- Freed mentioned that AT is working with the Division of Student Affairs and it was suggested that AT could also work with the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute (VTTI).
- Incentives for promotion of and participation in various educational programs are effective, but it takes funding to supply the incentive (e.g., bike lights).
- Blacksburg Transit (BT) will conduct a bicycling on campus-themed infrastructure assessment; the number and placement of bicycle racks will be one of the topics studied.
- AT is using the League of American Bicyclists' (LAB) scorecard for the Bicycle Friendly University program to grade Tech's bicycle friendliness. The LAB scorecard will let AT

know where improvements may need to be made in order to submit a successful application to the LAB so Tech can be a Bicycle Friendly University.

- There continues to a lot of AT-student body interaction and communication, which segues into McKeever's additional comments from the student perspective. At Tech, biking is becoming a very popular form of student transportation:
 - More freshmen are bringing their bicycles to campus; there are more and more bicycles being registered.
 - This is the 4th year that the Student Government Association (SGA) has had a Transportation Director.

Recent SGA-sponsored events were:

- The bike light giveaway: 100 sets (front and rear) of bike lights were distributed
- Outreach program on campus involving informal bicycle Q&A and registration
- Fruit giveaways ("Apples and Bananas for Active Transportation" and "Orange You Glad You Left Your Vehicle at Home") for commuters and alternative transportation users

McKeever announced that SGA Transportation and Design for America at Virginia Tech "are creating a culture of respect around all modes of transportation while supporting bicycling." This intensive "celebration of bike culture" will be held on May 1st at the Graduate Life Center.

Respectfully submitted,

Ladd Brown
Recorder