

STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY SENATE University Environment Committee
Meeting of November 8, 2023, 1:00 PM EST Online meeting (Zoom)

In attendance: Thomas Wilson, chair, Malcolm Bowman, Christopher Percival, Frederick Walter, Sian Piret, Peg Spitzer, Maggie Li, Joanna Kaczorowska, Tiffany Friedman, Mona Ramonetti

Meeting called to order by Chair at 1:00pm.

Quick Notes:

- New GSO Representative: Taylor Levy
- New representative from natural sciences is needed.

Energy Working Group:

Thomas Wilson: The report has been submitted to the Senate Executive for approval and publication. The presentation is scheduled for the December Senate meeting.

Ashley Schiff Report:

Thomas Wilson: No news or progress to report. I will follow up with the Senate Executive regarding the updated survey.

Composting Project:

Thomas Wilson: Sara hopes to expand the composting program she is hosting at Chavez Hall.

Tiffany Friedman: I think it looks great. I am concerned, though, especially since it relies on volunteers. Will someone be designated to ensure its continuous operation and sustainability?

Christopher Percival: If the program expands to different residences, what is the capacity of the composters? Are additional composters needed if it gains popularity?

Maggie Li: I reviewed the proposal, particularly interested in the expansion to the dining hall. Although there wasn't a composting system in the dining hall, trash separation was eliminated this year in West Dining. Which makes me think that a reason it was removed was due to the student's misplacement of trash. My concern is how to hold students accountable for composting.

Thomas Wilson: An educational program would be necessary for students to correctly dispose of items. For instance, meat products and citrus are not allowed in the composting. This poses a challenge that needs to be addressed.

Tiffany Friedman: The university always aims to beautify the campus. Composting can be utilized for soil instead of purchasing mulch and dirt.

Bike Path Project:

Christopher Percival: I met with Fred and Sian, and we briefly discussed some ideas over Zoom. Fred mentioned previous efforts regarding the bike path around the medical campus area and the main road. I believe it had Senate approval. The response, uncertain if official, indicated concerns about its cost. We considered having Sian take charge of this, or at least explore the possibility of conducting a new survey among graduate students in Chapin, the housing near the hospital. The aim would be to determine if they still face challenges with commuting—whether on foot, by bike, or any other means—from their location to West campus. This was one of the arguments advocating for bike path improvements.

Additionally, we pondered whether recent construction might have created a fire safety road behind the medical research building, possibly serving as a designated and cost-effective bike route. Beyond this, we discussed the broader idea of the committee or subcommittee initiating proposals for long-term transportation planning within the university. Specifically, we considered how enhancements to bike commuting or pedestrian safety could be integrated into such plans. This is more of a general concept than a specific proposal at this point.

Tiffany Friedman: Is it only for East campus? Or is it West campus?

Christopher Percival: This issue specifically addresses improvements that the committee had previously recommended, focusing on connections to the towns. If a bike path or lane could be established along the main east campus road, it would facilitate connections to neighborhood bike lanes, providing a safer commuting option for various individuals using bicycles to reach campus. However, when considering an overarching transportation plan for the entire campus, encompassing South campus, West campus, East campus, and Research Park,

Thomas Wilson: I believe we could draft a comprehensive report, breaking down specific enhancements needed for bicycles, rail, and other modes of transportation.

Tiffany Friedman: Biking could serve as an alternative means for employees to commute to work, particularly given the parking challenges on both East and West Campus.

Lake Brianna: N/A

New Business: NA

The meeting adjourned at 1:38 p.m.

Minutes compiled by Maggie Li.
