

**Commission on Student Affairs**  
**October 15, 2009**  
**3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.**  
**Brush Mountain Room**  
**Squires Student Center**

**Present:** Sandy Bass, Sara Brickman, Tom Brown, Brandon Carroll, Kimberly Carlson, Kristin Carr, Ashley Davis, Rick Ferraro, Lindsay Moss for Laura Freeman, Rebecca French, Charisse Ghattas, Lauren Keister for Monika Gibson, Hanna Goff, Hung Kuang for Shavana Handa, Kristina Hartman, Frank Hernandez, Leighton Vila for Eric Hodges, Brad Klein, Nathan Lavinka, Mary Ann Lewis, Anna LoMascolo, Shane McCarty, Michelle McLeese, Matthew Penny, Donna Ratcliffe, Kimberly Brown for Karen Eley Sanders, Robert Sebak, Sharmin Shamsalsadati, Frank Shushok, Guy Sims, Ed Spencer, Ben Wade, Camille Waldron, Daryl Whitehurst

**Absent:** Brian Golden, Monica Hunter, Monique Johnson, John Steger, Nigel Wray

**Guests:** Carl Krieger

**I. Call to Order**

Ms. McLeese, Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:31 p.m.

**II. Adoption of Agenda**

Ms. McLeese asked for a motion to amend the agenda due to Mr. Burrell having a family emergency, thus he and Ms. Hunter were unable to do their presentation for the group. The motion was made, seconded, and the agenda was adopted as amended.

**III. Guest Speakers**

A. Mr. Scott Hurst, University Architect, did a presentation on the 2006 Campus Master Plan Update and on the 2009 Land Use Plan Update to the 2006 Campus Master Plan. Since 1990 to now, 3 ½ million square feet of space have been added. Strategy of development at that time was to complete quadrangles to fill in the spatial character of the campus. Much of that infield type of space has now been used, so there are not many good opportunities to continue that strategy without building on existing surfaced parking lots. As a result, one of the big themes of the 2006 plan was to look at how we would expand the campus and come up with a solid strategy that would capture the best characteristics of the campus while expanding further out.

The plan was that we would be at 22,000 undergraduate students by 2012 and we have already surpassed that. In 2005 a housing study was done that articulated a plan for doing a rolling renovation plan for all of the old residence

halls which was also included in the plan. The character and special quality of the campus is recognized nationally and is something that we are proud of: Key factors include use of quadrangles, the drillfield as a central space, and green spaces in the center of campus as a very strong green spine through the campus and we want to protect that.

Question from Michelle – “What is spatial coherence”—notion that if you organize spaces where there is a clear hierarchy and you can see landmarks with clear paths, all that makes it coherent, spatially. Architecture also has a strong image along with the spatial images.

There are plans for new parking decks (six potential sites have been identified) because there will be some increase in demand but largely to replace the parking that is lost with the expansion.

Looking at utilities, steam is an issue. With the power plant on the upper quad area, there are distribution issues and there is an issue with chilled water. The master plan proposed a district chiller with a satellite chiller.

Improving the bus system and bike paths as well are all being incorporated into the plans. It was noted that the net number of parking spaces will not grow and the price of parking will increase significantly as we transition from surface parking spaces to parking garages.

In response to a question regarding the Airport, there are plans to ultimately have a runway length of 5,500 feet which would allow the airport to accommodate some of the largest corporate aviation vehicles. Airport question – ultimately a runway length of 5500 ft which would allow us to take some of the largest corporate aviation vehicles. From environmental standpoint (i.e., noise) corporate jets are much quieter than single engine prop airplanes—so that should not be disruptive. Mr. Wilson explained that the airport is owned by an authority that includes Virginia Tech, Christiansburg, Blacksburg, and Montgomery County. Virginia Tech only puts \$50,000 into it per year, so it is not a drain in any way for Virginia Tech, but brings influence and potential into the university.

It was explained that the CRC brings in jobs for the NRV. Between VT and CRC we drive the economic engine for this region and the partners to the CRC who rely on corporate aviation to get back and forth to home offices is a significant part of their business plan. Many of the companies which work with the CRC are companies that started on campus through research to production of the CRC.

- B. Sherwood Wilson, Vice President for Administrative Services, explained that his role at the University is all the moving parts of the University: the University Architect, Facilities Services, Physical Plant, the Motor Pool, Transportation and Parking, the Airport, Real Estate Management, Virginia Tech Police, Human Resources, Emergency Management, Utilities, VT Electric Service, and Environmental Health and Safety. If it is not about budget or student affairs or what happens in the classroom, it probably goes to him.

In response to a question about the influence the University has on further development of bike trails, Mr. Wilson noted that we have influence where ever bike paths cross Virginia Tech property.

There will be expansion of recreational areas, but timing is a factor. Once the airport expansion takes place, there will be an impact on the club fields, and there is recognition of the need to expand the recreational fields beyond that. In terms of agriculture land relocation, the land use amendment to the 2006 master plans-primary goal was to make sure that we have sustainable land programs for the ag program knowing that there continues to be substantial development pressure.

In regards to the Blacksburg Transit, with the exception of state and federal grants and whatever the town collects from non-student riders, financial support for the Blacksburg Transit could be 90% or more from Virginia Tech students. The reason the town runs the system is that a municipality is eligible for federal grants, whereas the university is not. The BT is the third largest bus transit operation in the Commonwealth of Virginia in terms of number of riders on an annual basis. The question was raised what can we as students do to help solve the parking issue besides changing our behavior? Mr. Wilson responded that students should articulate some of the issues and show an interest. There is a governance committee that is the voice for these types of issues and this commission should have someone on the Parking and Transportation Commission and that is your voice.

Mr. Wilson concluded his comments by stating that there is a concern about the visual appearance of the campus with parking garages and that the goal is to maintain the rural feel of the campus and not be overcome with surface or garage parking and to protect flood plains.

#### **IV. Old Business**

Ms. McLeese reported that following the survey of Commission members and feedback that was received in the previous meeting, the majority of Commission members are not in favor of supporting the *USA Today* Readership Program. She will be preparing a letter to send to Mike O'Brien stating that the Commission is not in favor of this type of program.

Ms. Hartman gave an update on the CSA Membership Committee. They have not met yet, but for the first meeting they will be looking at past membership of CSA in depth and the membership of the other commissions and how they are developed and take a start from scratch approach and develop some criteria.

#### **V. New Business**

Brandon Carroll reported that the Commission on University Support is considering looking at restricting freshmen from having cars on campus to help with the parking issues..

Dr. Spencer noted that he has noticed over recent years fewer and fewer major students leaders have applied for "Who's Who" and finds that distressing. This is a highly recognized award when students are looking for jobs. He encouraged those eligible this year (graduating seniors) to apply for selection for "Who's Who." The

application deadline is Nov. 2 and you can print applications off the UUSA website or go to Student Activities and pick up a hard copy.

Ms. McLeese asked if the commission is interested in going back to constituents and securing feedback on whether students would be interested in programs on mediation, anti-harassment, etc. that was presented at the October 1 CSA meeting by Maggie Sloan and Dale Robinson. She will do a survey on line to get feedback.

## **VI. Announcements**

- October 22-23 – FASA members will be downstairs in Squires collecting donations for tsunami relief and will be collecting donations for the forty foot box that they will be sending things over.
- Ms. McLeese announced that announcements can be posted on the CSA website.
- There will be a Forum on Tuesday, October 20, 5:30 p.m., in the Commonwealth Ballroom to voice any concerns to administration as well as Student Government.
- Movie night with Steger at the Hokie House coming up
- GLC Fellows and GSA event on Saturday in Haymarket – Grads Got Talent for relay for life.- donations at the door.
- The next “The VP Is In” is Thursday, October 22, in the SGA Office, 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

## **VII. Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned 4:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rhonda M. Rogers  
Recording Secretary