

Parking/Transportation Advisory Committee

Virginia Polytechnic Institute
and State University

Minutes: Sept. 26, 1994,
11 a.m., Newman Library Board Room

Present: John Aughenbaugh (scribe), Pat Ballard, Courtney Beamon,
Patrick Donohoe, Hayward Farrar, Gail McMillan (chair), Patti Murdock,
Eugene Reed, Widget Shannon, Ann Spencer, J. B. Sutphin

1. McMillan opened the meeting by reviewing the Committee's charge and to which Commission it reports. She stressed that the Committee does not make decisions, but it makes recommendations.

2. The minutes of June 30, 1994 were presented for approval. Since no one volunteered to be the scribe, it was decided to rotate the task alphabetically among the committee members. A question was raised regarding the status of parking permits for student leaders. Spencer said she had a meeting with Student Affairs representatives the following week which would clear up this issue. The minutes of June 30th were approved as presented.

3. Patti Murdock made a report from Parking Services. She stated that there was an increase in the number of commuter and resident parking tags purchased for the 1994/95 fall semester. J.B. Sutphin requested a full report of the fall semester parking permit situation be given at the next meeting. Murdock also said that two Virginia Tech Police officers were aiding Parking Services in the regulation of bike traffic.

Questions were raised concerning skateboarding and in-line skating policies. Spencer said that she would bring the new in-line skating policy to the next meeting. She also commented that Dr. Goodale would be meeting with skateboarding representatives in the near term; Spencer will bring an update of that meeting to this committee's next meeting.

McMillan queried Murdock about the possibility of having a branch of Parking Services on the main part of campus. Murdock said that, with the exception of purchasing permits at Express Check-In, Parking Services would not be moving any part of its operation closer to campus. A suggestion was made that the offering of parking permits during the beginning of the fall semester to be moved to Cassell Coliseum to accommodate the parking pressures that arise with the buying of permits.

4. Sutphin answered questions concerning improvements to campus parking lots. He said that with the construction of a new Engineering building this winter in the lot east of Whittemore Hall, the University will lose approximately 300 parking spaces. Even with compensations made in surrounding areas, over 200 parking spaces will be lost due to the construction of this edifice.

Queries arose about constructing parking decks to handle parking demands. Sutphin commented that any additional parking structures would cause an increase in the cost of parking permits and tickets to pay for

structures. Farrar remarked that an increase in parking fees and tickets may be necessary to meet increased parking demands or to address parking management problems that already exist. A brief discussion of parking management strategies ensued. Sutphin noted that it costs more per parking spot if a parking deck is erected compared to the construction of surface parking lots. He also suggested to the Committee that Virginia Tech was spoiled in regards to the proximity of existing lots to workplaces and classrooms and the excellent service offered by the Blacksburg Transit.

Sutphin also told the Committee that he had a request to check on the lighting near Owens; Murdock also asked that he check on the lighting in the Media Lot.

5. More questions/concerns were offered to the Parking Services representatives at the meeting. These included: the new parking tags often do not cling as they are supposed to*; during the first weeks of class some parking violators got ticketed while others received warnings (Murdock responded that the only lot where violators received warnings was the CEC lot); the dangerous traffic patterns caused by vendors parking around McBryde Hall and the pedestrian traffic near Norris Hall during peak class times; the continuing issue of children of faculty and staff using their parent's parking permits; and the costs of tickets (\$10 for illegal parking, \$50 for parking in a handicapped spot, and \$100 for unauthorized use of a parking permit).

6. The Committee decided to address a letter from J. Paxton Marshall regarding traffic patterns on West Campus Drive at its next meeting. Sutphin was asked to provide background on this issue at the next meeting.

7. Aughenbaugh asked that a review of the Graduate Teaching Assistant parking program be placed on the next Committee meeting agenda for discussion purposes.

The meeting adjourned at 12:07 p.m.

*Dip the clingals in water to refresh the clinging action.

Gail McMillan, chair Parking/Transportation Advisory Committee Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

PARKING/TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes, March 27, 1995

Present: Gail McMillan, chair, Curtis Lynch, J.B. Sutphin, Patrick Donohoe, Courtney Beamon, Gene Reed, Pat Ballard, Widget Shannon, George Sanzone, Becky Brim (scribe)

J.B. Sutphin began the meeting highlighting the current and upcoming improvements to the sidewalks, repaving and scheduled paving areas. These included the following:

Drillfield area: Sidewalks are in the process of being raised. Apparently, the roadway base around the Drillfield is not sufficient. Before VDOT can make improvements, the sidewalks will be built up to about 9 1/2 inches. Later when VDOT repaves the Drillfield area there will be a 3 1/2 inch asphalt depth which will bring the sidewalk down to 6 inches. VDOT absorbs the cost of the repaving as the Drillfield is a major roadway.

With the construction of the new engineering building, there will be a loss of about 300 faculty/staff parking spaces. With the additional spaces at the Stanger Lot and below the power plant at Central Refrigeration about 75 spaces will help with the deficit.

Solitude area -- there are plans to have paved parking in this area; how soon remains an issue because Solitude is on the National Historic Registry and there is an approval process.

Veterinary Medicine has requested assistance with organizing parking behind their complex now that the last construction phase is completed.

Owens Parking and Lighting -- there are plans to re-do the parking area behind Owens and to improve the current lighting and provide for handicap parking. Along with these improvements will be some landscaping.

There are plans to pave the OVERFLOW area below the Duck Pond and the small parking area at the Tennis Courts associated with the South Recreational Area Parking (that is visible as one travels towards the Corporate Research Center.

Hutcheson/Smyth Parking Area was repaved. This lot has always been difficult due to the very little elevation change for proper drainage. There is a problem with a wet sub-base and the ground stays moist which results in rapid deterioration of any improvements.

Lots below the football stadium may be paved within the next one-to-two years.

There was also discussion regarding some of the pedestrian crosswalks and if anything could be done to improve the flow of pedestrian traffic. (Perhaps when the annual painting of lines and curbs is undertaken the crosswalks will be examined more closely as to the pattern/direction individuals are using the crosswalks.)

Patrick Donohoe shared with the Committee the concern from Wyatt Sasser for the Bus Stop in the Southgate area. The present bus stop is out and away from the Southgate building in the unpaved, gravel lot which is not ideal. Mr. Sasser had recommend perhaps a bus stop diagonal to the Southgate Building making the bus stop on a paved area, with loading and unloading to a sidewalk that would allow closer access to the buildings in the immediate area. Gene Reed noted that this could cause a safety hazard due to the constant traffic to Motor Pool, Central Stores, Campus Police and numerous maintenance vehicles. J.B. Sutphin, Curtis Lynch, and Gene Reed will investigate this concern and perhaps contact Mike Conley with Blacksburg Transit for solution.

Pat also brought to the Committee the need to look further into the Parking Permit fees after the start of the academic year. Two specific issues discussed at this time were:

Payroll deduction -- at the time of implementation, Parking Services did not have in place sufficient personnel or the accountability support needed to handle all of the possible scenarios of payroll deduction. Therefore, the decision was made that for an individual to have the payroll deduction, the person would pay the full annual amount and nothing would be prorated.

Prorated fees -- Two topics were discussed: (1) prorating parking fees for employees who begin work after the start of the academic year, and (2) prorating fees based on employee's grade. Curtis Lynch offered to investigate these two issues and will report back to the Committee at the next scheduled meeting.

Gail McMillan asked those present if everyone had the opportunity to review and approve the proposed revisions to the Virginia Tech Parking Services Traffic and Parking Regulations. Also a word of appreciation and thanks from the Committee by George Sanzone was expressed to Curtis Lynch for sharing these regulations and providing an opportunity to give input to this annual process. After a few minutes of general discussion the Committee endorsed the recommendations made to the regulations.

Athletic Department possibly selling parking tickets for events: This topic was briefly discussed and due to the absence of John Aughenbaugh and sufficient, reliable information (versus rumor) this was tabled until the next meeting. It was duly noted that Alumni are very upset over the possibility and not being informed or communicated with appropriately.

Tabled until the next meeting are: Graduate Teaching Assistant Parking (Aughenbaugh) Lighting in Wallace Parking Lot (Aughenbaugh)

McMillan also shared with the Committee a telephone conversation from an individual who had numerous complaints regarding parking of Service Vehicles, What is a Service Vehicle, Restrictions of Service Vehicles, defining Short-Term parking, negative effect of current parking practices on Faculty and Staff and that handicap spaces are too large. (J.B. Sutphin responded that handicap parking spaces are mandated by the American Disabilities Act - ADA.) The Chair agreed to talk with this individual to clarify and to address these concerns. Also Curtis

Lynch and J.B. Sutphin will be more observant to how Service Vehicles are being parked.

NEW BUSINESS:

Widget Shannon inquired as to what if anything is being done with habitual offenders. Curtis Lynch noted that as long as the individual pays the fine they are entitled to park on campus. The legalities outweigh the issue of making a permanent example of a habitual offender.

Patrick Donohoe brought up the possibility of Car Pooling. Pat discussed with the Committee this contacts with Penn State University regarding car pooling. (Note: Penn State is one of VA Tech's peer institutions.) Pat gave each person a copy of what Penn State is proposing to do to help alleviate the parking crisis on their campus. Although not implemented at this time at Penn State, there are incentives presented. The Committee was asked to review this information and at the next schedule meeting have on the agenda for discussion with recommendation to support such an initiative. (Currently employees travel from West Virginia and areas of Roanoke, Salem, Floyd, etc. If such an initiative was supported and implemented many parking spaces could come available immediately.)

Following general discussion about the recent accident at the entrance to B lot from Stanger St., it was recommended that a sign be installed to slow traffic due to the volume of pedestrians and bicyclists or sufficient crosswalks to slow vehicles. Campus Police and Blacksburg Police should review or observe traffic flow. and act accordingly. Sutphin and Lynch will follow up with the appropriate agencies.

Also noted was the change in the name of this committee from the Parking and Transportation Committee to Parking/Transportation Advisory Committee. McMillan will look into this to see if the initial charge of the Committee has been affected.

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.. The next meeting will be Monday, April 24, 1995 at 3 pm, in the Newman Library Board Room.

Virginia Tech

Transportation and Parking Committee

Meeting Minutes, April 24, 1995

Present: Gail McMillan, chair, Curtis Lynch, Patrick Donohoe (scribe), Courtney Beamon, Gene Reed, Pat Ballard, Widget Shannon, Becky Brim

Committee name: Gail announced that the official name of the committee was changed from the Parking/Transportation Advisory Committee to the Transportation and Parking Committee. The committee continues to report to the Commission on University Support and there has been no change in its charge.

Pro-rating parking fees: Curtis Lynch discussed the issue of pro-rating parking fees and stated that now was a not a good time to implement such a program. Their office is using a new system of hand-held units and he stated that perhaps this could be looked into for the 1996/97 year. Curtis agreed to report back to the committee this fall with a proposal for pro-rating parking fees. In other business he added that a 2 year parking permit might be available for 1996/97 and believes that there will not be a parking fee increase for 1995/96. He added that the payroll deduction has been working well and that this option needs to be better advertised to faculty and staff.

Carpooling: The issue of carpooling was discussed once again with the committee referring to recommendations at Penn State (a peer institution). Though not yet adopted, Penn State has an incentive program that would reduce the price of a parking permit for car poolers: 2 riders 50%, 3 riders 75% and 4 riders 100%. Penn State is concerned about loss income if the plan is implemented, however the Director of University Parking, Bruce Kline, did indicate that a projected 10% reduction in parking could potentially save not building a future parking garage costing \$6-10 million.

Courtney Beamon expressed concern about whether there would be enough incentive for carpooling with reduced rates and suggested better parking spaces for those that carpool. Curtis Lynch suggested that he would look into adding questions to the parking permit request form such as: 1. Would you be interested in carpooling if a reduced fee is implemented? and 2. Do you now currently carpool? Gail suggested that it might be appropriate having an article in the Spectrum and/or sending out a questionnaire by e-mail. A point was made that some insurance companies offer a reduction in their premiums for those that carpool. It was decided that this issue would be placed on the next agenda as old business.

Bus stop at Southgate: Gene Reed reported that he, Mike Connolly and J.B. Sutphin had visited the site and decided that the bus stop location would stay where it is at the present time. The bus stop is a timed stop according to Mike Connolly and the relocation of the stop on the road to the maintenance building is considered unsafe due to traffic coming and going into the maintenance complex. The parking area where the bus stop is presently located will be paved sometime in the future and the design of the waiting area would be addressed at that time.

Stanger St. Safety: This issue was brought up at the last meeting due to a bicyclist and a two car accident at the entrance of B lot. Patrick Donohoe suggested that appropriate signs be placed on the street to warn motorists of pedestrian crossings and to "slow down." Patrick also contacted Blacksburg Public Works about adding appropriate signage at the intersection of Stanger/Toms Creek and Prices Fork due to the amount of pedestrian and bicycle traffic coming from Terrace View and other apartment complexes. This issue was placed on the town's Traffic Committee agenda. Curtis Lynch commented that he had sent a note to Mike Jones of the Campus Police in regards to this matter.

Other business: Due to the absence of the graduate student representative, graduate teaching assistant parking and lighting in Wallace parking lot was tabled until the next meeting.

As a matter of information, Curtis Lynch stated that 2300 bicycles are registered on campus and that it is mandatory for students, faculty and staff to register bicycles. Registration is free. A registration day was recently held on the drill field and those registering won items such as helmets, locks and tune-ups. 40 tickets were also issued that day to cyclist for reasons such as traveling the wrong way, unregistered bicycles and riding on sidewalks.

Next meeting: Unless additional issues come up, this is the last meeting until the fall. Meeting adjourned at 4:15.