

Tentative Agenda
University Senate Meeting
December 3, 2001

- I. Approval of Tentative Agenda
- II. Approval of the Minutes from University Senate meeting of November 5, 2001
- III. President's Report (S. Kenny)
- IV. Provost's Report (R. McGrath)
- V. Report from the Campus Environment Committee (John Robinson) (Please see "Letter to Chris Stienon" below)
- VI. Report on the Campus Website (Yvette St. Jacques)
- VII. University Senate President's Report (B. Walcott)
- VIII. Old Business
- IX. New Business
- X. Adjournment

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Stony Brook University
21 November 2001

Christopher Stienon
Beyer, Blinder, Belle
Architects and Planners
41 E 11th St
New York NY 10003

Dear Christopher:

It was a pleasure meeting with you on 29 October at the invitation of Vice President Richard Mann, to hear about Beyer, Blinder and Belle's Framework Study for the Stony Brook Campus. We found it very informative and interesting. As University Senate Environment Committee representatives, we look forward to further interactions with campus officials and you as plans for the future development of our great university continues.

These are some thoughts that came out of the discussions and the tour of historic Stony Brook that we took you on following the meeting.

We hope that we were able to instill a sense of how historic this area is, and how both the university and the community are committed to preserving and enhancing its beauty and significant heritage.

We also hope that you enjoyed the drive through the 326 acre Flowerfield property and the opportunities that it could present if the university were to purchase this land.

Some specific comments:

1. **The Sidney Mount Property and the Kings Road.** State Legislator Steve Englebright expressed an interest in exploring on foot the Sidney Mount property, adjacent to the western side of campus, for evidence of the old Kings Road that passed by and perhaps continued through the university property. As Mr Englebright mentioned, General George Washington traveled along this road. If we can identify its location, we feel this road should be suitably protected and marked. As Mr. Englebright also pointed out, Sidney Mount is perhaps the area's most famous historical figure, and his house is listed in the National Registry of Historic Places. Englebright mentioned that Mount was the first European to paint the African American with dignity.
2. **The Ashley Schiff Preserve.** We mentioned our desire to conserve as much open space as possible as the campus expands and to encourage building upwards, not outwards. We feel there is a danger that incrementally, the campus' natural areas will be lost through attrition. The Ashley Schiff Ecological Preserve was dedicated by former US Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall in 1969. We believe this parcel of land is sacrosanct and must be preserved "forever wild". We are firmly opposed

to the idea of “civilizing” the preserve with park benches, more formalized trails, etc. We were honored to have Mrs. Dorothy Schiff, widow of Prof. Ashley Schiff and who continues to live in Setauket, visit with Dr Mann and his staff recently and to express her concern about the permanence of the Preserve.

3. **The 80 Acre Forest.** We are especially concerned about the block of mature forest in the southwest corner of campus, located on the west side of Forest Drive, across from the Ashley Schiff Preserve. We recall this was labeled as “unused land” on your map. We would rather you label this as “mature oak and hickory forest” or “presently undesignated”. This is the largest piece of undisturbed forest remaining in central Long Island. Environmental Studies students are currently compiling a list of various uses of campus forests and natural areas, including classes* in zoology, botany, ecology, entomology, anthropology, and geology, hiking and cycling trails, etc. We will pass this along to you shortly (a partial list is appended).
4. **Green Belt.** The 80 acre southern forest forms the terminus of the continuous green belt that threads through the Ashley Schiff Preserve and sweeps around the eastern perimeter of the campus all the way to its northern tip at the Nicolls Road railroad bridge. Dr Donald Rakow, Director of Cornell Plantations, who consulted with campus officials and Senate representatives on 28 September, pointed out this feature to us. He had many good ideas on how to balance development and preservation of natural assets. We encourage a philosophy of preserving as much of this green belt as possible.
5. **A Preservation Goal.** We would like to see 30% of campus property kept as natural area. We mentioned the concept of Central Park as a potential role model (in the sense of a significant percentage of Manhattan Island being preserved as parkland)- a New York City treasure by any measure.
6. **The Nicolls Rd Avenue.** A solemn commitment was made by the university to the community in the early days to preserve an avenue of trees lining both sides of Nicolls Rd along the length of the university property. This commitment has been honored until recently when the Ambulatory Care Pavilion was constructed on the east side of Nicolls Rd, where clear felling of the forest came right to the road (on Earth Day, we might add). What used to be mature forest, is now flooded at night with bright sodium light. This compromises the integrity of the entire avenue. This unfortunate situation could easily have been prevented by locating the pavilion further back into the trees. All agree that this must never be allowed to happen again.
7. **Campus Entrance.** We like the wide curving entrance road. Once again it preserves a barrier of trees between the university and the highway, separating the secluded campus from the four-lane highway, where everyone rushes along at great speed and with clenched knuckles. Like a good garden, the wide sweep maintains an element of surprise and delight. We fail to see the logic of straightening this road, making the buildings visible from the highway and encouraging rapid entrance speeds. We are reminded of the magnificent entrance to the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada, where majestic ancient Douglas Fir trees line the long curving entrance road. What a sight!
8. **Traffic Circle:** We like Dr Mann’s idea of a traffic circle to replace the tangled mess that currently exists next to the Wang edifice, but cannot understand why the entrance road needs straightening. We are fans of traffic circles in suitable locations, where there is not too much congestion and the traffic does not dominate from one entrance spoke. Traffic circles get vehicles through the intersection faster than any other method.
9. **Conference Center.** This was not discussed at the meeting, but we all agree that the campus badly needs such a facility. However, many of us at University Senate are concerned about the proposed location at the campus entrance. This has the potential to destroy the green belt of forest that currently exists as discussed above. Since the proposal calls for the facility to be constructed entirely with non-state funds, the owner surely would want a prominent location, easily seen from the highway. Another Howard Johnson big box? Could not another location be identified in the core of campus or on the East Campus with a suitable pedestrian crossover?
10. **The Alumni Challenge.** The university is working hard to build up its alumni base of support. The alumni want a beautiful campus to admire and financially support; a place to visit, to bring their

children, and to help erase those early negative images of the unpleasant construction years. A prominent alumnus mentioned to me recently that he had not been back to campus for 30 years, although he cherishes many friendships from student days. He simply had no desire to revisit the campus. We all agree we have to change those perceptions. The improvements made during the Kenny administration have gone a long way to achieving that goal. But we must be vigilant to conserve the campus' most distinguishing features, the forests, lakes, natural areas, walkways and cycle paths that we cherish, as well as unique historical sites.

11. **Reflections.** These are a few thoughts that you might find useful. We (and the University Senate we represent) have a sense that we are at a cross-roads, where the lovely setting of the campus may be seriously compromised, particularly by the insatiable demand for more parking, from employees and students' to park outside of their office window or residence. We are alarmed at the future prospect of ending up like a Smithhaven Mall, with a cluster of core buildings, surrounded by an ocean of asphalt parking lot! To finish on a positive note, we are discussing with campus officials the possible formation of a campus organization, perhaps to be called the Stony Brook Campus Conservancy. This might be based on the Cornell Plantations model, supported mainly by alumni and other donations, which would have as its mission the management of all campus natural areas.

Sincerely,

Malcolm Bowman, Professor, University Senator at Large
Robert Aller, Distinguished Professor, University Senator at Large
John Robinson, Associate Professor, Chair, University Senate Environment Committee

* Partial list of courses which utilize the Ashley Schiff Forest Preserve and other natural areas:

ANT 420: Environmental Analysis, Remote Sensing & Geographical Information Systems
BIO 201: Fundamentals of Biology: Organisms to Ecosystems
BIO 341: Plant Diversity
BIO 343: Invertebrate Zoology
BIO 346: Aquatic Arthropods and Vertebrates
BIO 351: Ecology
BIO 352: Ecology Laboratory
BIO 380: Entomology
BIO 385: Plant Ecology
GEO 101: Environmental Geology
GEO 111: Environmental Geology Laboratory
HON 110: Long Island Ecology

Distn:

President Shirley Kenny
VP Richard Mann
VP Bill Simmons
Provost Robert McGrath
Senate President Ben Walcott
Past Senate President Aaron Godfrey
AVP Carl Hanes
AVP Gary Matthews
Prof. Lee Koppelman
State Legislator Steve Englebright
County Legislator Vivian Fisher
George Locker (alumnus)
Senate Environment Committee
Donald Rakow (Cornell Plantations)

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University Senate Meeting-Draft Minutes
Recorded by David Hanson
November 5, 2001

Agenda was approved with the elimination of item 5.

Item 5, discussion of schedule withdrawn because new data has been obtained that needs to be considered before a recommendation is made.

Minutes from 10/1 were approved.

President's Report was presented and accompanied by a written document.

An Emergency Task Force has been established with 4 subcommittees dealing with laboratory safety, people safety, communications, and organizational issues. A memorial service and tree memorial are being considered for alumni who died in the WTC disaster.

The Stony Brook Manhattan facility was described. It includes classrooms, conference rooms, computer facilities, and offices. Early December press opening is planned. Ideas for utilization are solicited. Contact David Hicks in the Provost's Office to make arrangements.

BSA is searching for a Director of Brookhaven National Laboratory.

Provost's Report was presented and accompanied by a written report. Stony Brook Cares Campaign is underway. Contributions are needed this year especially. The target is 200K\$. Contributions of 1% of salary are encouraged.

Several November events in the Provost's Lecture Series were highlighted.

International Programs was complimented for publicizing campus events following 9/11.

Student applications have grown by 27% while enrollment has grown by 20%. Consequently average SAT scores have increased and more award-winning students have matriculated.

Sunday's Open House saw 5000 students compared to about 3000 last year.

Search for a Dean of CAS is underway.

Search for a Director of the Advising Center is underway.

Searches for Head of the Business School and Chair of Asian Studies are still open.

In the last five years the budget has increased by 28%. There is concern about what will happen this year and the next few.

An enrollment planning group has been formed and a recommendation will be delivered to the President in early December.

An academic planning group is being formed to examine where we should be going in the next five years. Wide participation is needed.

President of the Senate Report

Groups will be addressing academic planning, i.e. How big should we be? and Want kind of a University?

Middle States Review is coming up. Will be chaired by a faculty member and someone from the Provost's Office.

The Admissions Committee has been reactivated.

Names are being collected for a committee to address issues associated with non-tenure track faculty, adjuncts and lecturers.

Report on PeopleSoft by Rich Reeder

Timeline: now doing Admissions, Financial Aid in February, Registration in April, Billing in July. Good News: more student access and a more natural process compared to the telephone system, single source course descriptions, historic information on line, publication becomes extraction, simplified and expanded registering capabilities, enrollment controls, financial aid features, web used for grade submission, submission via Excel spreadsheet, future Blackboard grade function will be importable, degree audit and checklist features, changing majors will be done by the Registrar, departments can query changes, data warehouse developed for reporting using Oracle and a web browser, and will facilitate student employment and Federal work study hiring and clearances.

Bad News: Graphical system means there are more screens to go through and data entry is slow (like a factor of 5), project staffing is a challenge, necessary office staffing is unknown, some testing is not possible without being live, and unexpected things will go wrong.

System Testing: Being used by 200 universities. Data loads of current students have been run to produce bills, transcripts, and financial aid. Various units (e.g. admissions, registration, scheduling) have been tested. Tested various scenarios to see how various offices interact (integrated testing). Will also do volume testing.

Contingency Plans: Staff from various areas will be redirected and trained to fill gaps. Can revert back to legacy system, which will be easy before Financial Aid goes live, more difficult afterward.

What's Up: Scheduling has been up for 3 weeks, for Summer and Fall. Admissions has processed over 1400 applications.

Demo of the web front end. A neat feature is that a student's schedule is printed as a grid (graphical representation) rather than a list.

Discussion: How will waiting lists be handled? How will preferences be given to some students? Each class can have a reserve capacity for students meeting set criteria. Priority can be given to seniors, for example, on the waiting list. Permission can be granted by departments to allow students to register. Only 11 credits can be wait listed. Prereq and coreq screening will be available Fall 2001 for a few courses.

Report of the SUNY Senate Plenary Session by Dan Kinney

New President is strengthening communication with local campuses.

A web site has been established: www.sunycgcc.edu/faculty/jones/ufs/index/cfm

Early retirement program is expected this year.

State agencies have been asked not to ask for additional funding for next year.

Two resolutions were discussed on developing and reporting General Education Assessment and referred to the Ex Com for further work. A resolution on a rationale tuition policy also was referred to the Ex Com.

No old business, no new business

Motion to adjourn passed at 5:02