

# Transportation Services Advisory Committee

## MINUTES OF MEETING

February 15, 2011

### Attendees:

Mr. Jeff Toole  
Ms. Lallah Howard  
Dr. Beverly Kuhn  
Dr. Joe Newton  
Mr. Peter Lange  
Ms. Jennifer Slovacek  
Mr. Oliver Thoma  
Mr. Jeff Wilson  
Mr. C J Woods  
Mr. Robert Pottberg  
Mr. Chris Russo  
Dr. Angie Hill Price  
Mr. Joe Dillard  
Mr. Rod Weis  
Ms. Casi Wilbanks

### Absent:

Ms. Mary Tess Eggebrecht  
Dr. R J Golsan  
Ms. Flora Reeves  
Ms. Sarah Saunders

### Guests:

Ms. Debbie Hoffmann	Ms. Therese Kucera
Mr. Doug Williams	Ms. Rose Berryhill
Ms. June Broughton	Mr. Kenny Kimball

## 1.0 Business

1.1 Meeting was called to order by Peter Lange; Peter requested for members to review the minutes from January 18, 2011

1.1.1 Mr. Lange asked for corrections to the minutes;

1.1.1.1 Dr. Joe Newton made a motion to approve the minutes as written;

1.1.1.2 Mr. Jeff Toole seconded the motion. All voted in favor; minutes approved.

## 2.0 Ross Street Plan, Wellborn Road Plan and University/Northgate Pedestrian Improvement Plan

2.1 Mr. Peter Lange showed a presentation on Ross Street. This presentation can be found on the Transportation Services web page at:

<http://transport.tamu.edu/parking/forums.aspx>

- 2.1.1 Dr. Price inquired about how Ross Street construction project was being funded; Mr. Lange stated it was Permanent University Funding (PUF-funds). Dr. Price stated that she has heard comments from some colleagues who indicated they would like to have the money re-directed to buildings. Ms. Howard stated that the money was allocated to construction.
- 2.1.2 Dr. Price commented that all of the people in the pictures were in the street because the sidewalks in the area are closed; there is bike lane now because she had received a citation for parking there some time ago; Mr. Lange stated that there would not be bike lanes identified on Ross Street when it re-opens.
- 2.1.3 Dr. Price communicated that Ross Street is the only place to unload in the area; she said that the map shows too many conflicts in a very limited space. She then asked if there is a possibility to open up the section between Ireland and Spence Streets.
- 2.1.4 Ms. Kuhn asked how we would accommodate turn-around on Spence Street for customers without access through the gate. She felt that the current design of Spence Street was poor and that for the long term; it needed to be better addressed. Peter agreed, but reminded TS is not the funding source for the project. We took the lead to communicate the project details so that the campus community knows the future for Ross Street. Lallah stated that the design was done by others in administration. The engineers and everyone that was involved in making these decisions endorsed the Master Plan and making the campus more pedestrian friendly. Peter stated that folks who have access now will continue to have access. Those wanting Kiss-N-Drop access will not be able to pass through the gates during business hours.
- 2.1.5 Dr. Newton agreed that it will take the campus to adhering to this plan to make it work; his concerns are that Houston Street does not go to Ross Street because of the gate near Lot 32. He knows how bad it is currently at the Chemistry fountain and wanted to know how we can make it so that isn't worse. Could we change the plan to have a gate on Ireland, just south of New Street? Class change at 5 pm is awful and traffic is backed up from Ross Street to Ireland Street, all the way to University. He has no solution; it's bad now and this plan makes it worse.
- 2.1.6 Chris Russo stated that Lot 32 is already a big pick up/drop off place; if you close off all of the access areas on campus – it will only make the remaining open roadways more congested; people are going to try to access wherever they can. Peter stated that students would have access to the limited access areas after 6pm.

- 2.1.7 Ms. Kuhn stated that the more roads you cut off for pedestrian and vehicle balance it does not show the University as being visitor friendly.
  - 2.1.7.1 Peter stated that the campus has a couple of things going on right now to improve the campus for visitors
    - 2.1.7.1.1 An Imperative 8 committee chaired by CJ Woods is revisiting ways to make the campus more pedestrian friendly – and wayfinding is part of the discussion
    - 2.1.7.1.2 We are enhancing the visitor parking plan. Visitors will need to know where to park and they will need to walk to get to their destinations.
- 2.1.8 Dr. Price wanted it known that as we close off these areas, how will people do driving tours of campus? It is already hard to do right now. Peter stated they can coordinate through our office if access is needed, just as departments are currently doing.
- 2.1.9 Dr. Newton stated that he agreed, he has been on campus a long time but signage is horrible for visitors. Is limiting access to Ross a sacred cow?
- 2.1.10 Chris felt that there are problems keeping it as limited access. He is not concerned with Sbisa, but has a lot of concerns for Ross Street between Ireland and Spence; this is unreasonable, customer satisfaction will be bad with no vehicle access. When you are in a hurry, it is hard to park on the perimeter and walk.
- 2.1.11 Mr. Lange informed the group that the area has been closed for about 15 years; people that need to be in the area from 6 am - 6 pm will have access.
- 2.1.12 Dr. Price stated expectations were that Ross Street would be opened after the completed renovation; where are the bus stops going to be?
- 2.1.13 Chris asked if the time saved by not going through a controlled intersection at Wellborn road still results in is quicker route for transit if the buses get delayed by pedestrians and stop signs on Ross Street: Won't you lose efficiency by going on Ross Street rather than going down university?
- 2.1.14 Peter explained that it would kill transit as we know it today if this is not a limited access street.
- 2.1.15 Oliver Thoma stated that bus access for students is more important than access for a "Kiss and Drop".
- 2.1.16 Dr. Newton stated that the Master Plan is not a compelling reason to do this; being as pragmatic as possible are we making a current bad situation worse than we should? Should we not do it? If it makes it better, maybe we should.

- 2.1.17 Peter assured the group that access would be given to the people that need in the area.
- 2.1.18 Dr. Price inquired about how people would request access; Peter stated that if there is a business reason we will work just as we do now to get them in the area.
- 2.1.19 Peter told the group what we need now is feedback from them to take to Lallah, our Vice-President Dr. Rodney McClendon, and the President. But for now, the plan is to make it a limited access street.
- 2.1.20 Dr. Newton expressed that if we removed the Richardson and Langford gate and put it past Spence, then the Kiss and Drop would be there. Rod Weis stated that a Kiss and Drop in the Blocker area would hurt transit. Dr. Price stated that it would shift the traffic to NSG and block up University.
- 2.1.21 Chris Russo suggested enforcing the area to make sure that does not happen.
- 2.1.22 Dr. Price continued that the real problem driving the decision to not open the area is the buses – She stated that she was not saying that was a bad thing, it was just a fact. Peter said this is not the only thing driving it but a big part of it is about transit. It will allow us to move students from West Campus to Main Campus without any red light stops.
- 2.1.23 Debbie Hoffmann asked the group to remember that Vision 2020 and the Campus Master Plan states that this is the direction and the plan for the university.
- 2.1.24 Peter continued that this plan is used in all three documents, Campus Master Plan, Vision 2020, and Campus Access and Parking Task Force from January 2000.
- 2.1.25 Rod Weis told the group that reason for limited access was six years ago the consensus was that the University needed a pedestrian and cyclist access plan and did not wish for it to bog down transit. The campus concluded there needed to be fewer cars to lessen the pedestrian conflicts.
- 2.1.26 Dr. Newton felt that seemed to be lots of good momentum to make it a limited access. He would like to be able to say to his group “I recommended the plan be accepted, but be carefully monitored.”
- 2.1.27 When viewing the Wellborn Road passageway; the relocation of Olsen puts the bike racks across the street from Heap-Kleberg. Dr. Price felt that Transportation Services should look at moving the bike racks across the street and closer to the buildings.
- 2.1.28 Robert Pottberg asked if the new Olsen is one lane; Peter told him that the plans shows for it to be a four lane divided roadway.

### **3.0 Other Business**

3.1 Chris Russo asked about the University Center Garage pay machines sometimes being out of order after hours. Peter told him that the software vendor was here and making strides and anticipates it will be resolved today. They should be running better transaction times and the problems have dropped significantly. Lines are also reducing because more students are using the Pay by Phone option.

#### **4.0 Meeting Adjourned**