

Stony Brook University
University Senate
Campus Environment Committee
March 9, 2006

V.P. Administration Conference Room,
221 Administration Bldg.
1:00 – 3:00 pm

Attending: Bill Dethlefs, Chair; Mary Woodward, Vice Chair; Bob Aller, Malcolm Bowman, Gil Hanson, Mary Hotaling, Catherine Murphy-Vetter, John Robinson, and Ramona Walls.

Excused: Catherine Horgan, Robert Hunter, John Murray, Debbie Nappi-Gonzalez, Kristen Nyitray, Dorothy Shannon Schiff, Paul Siegel, F. Jason Torre, and Muriel Weyl.

Staff: Terence Harrigan, Director of Facilities and Services.

Minutes

I. Introductions – All

Members were introduced. No guests attended.

II. Review of the Minutes – All

The minutes were approved as submitted in advance.

III. Campus Recreation Advisory Committee – Bill Dethlefs

The Executive Committee of the University Senate asked that interested members of the Campus Environment Committee be considered for membership on the new Campus Recreation Advisory Committee. Criteria for consideration included balanced representation of staff and faculty and from East and West Campuses. Several names were submitted for appointment. Representatives to the Campus Recreation Advisory Committee ultimately appointed are Paul Siegel and Catherine Horgan.

IV. Standardizing No smoking perimeter campus-wide – Bill Dethlefs

The University Senate Executive Committee asked for a recommendation as to whether the current county-mandated 50 foot no smoking perimeter around the entrances on East Campus, as a health care facility, should be extended to buildings on West Campus.

After much discussion on the positive and negative aspects of such a change, and the need to redistribute the existing policy a three point recommendation was made. Those points are:

- Impose signage on all non-health care facilities on campus at the 15' no smoking radius around building entrances as per existing policy (Smoke-Free University P112, Issued by the Office of the President. Approved: November 20, 1997).
- Educate the affected constituent groups by disseminating the policy statement.
- Treat cigarette butts as litter, which will allow for enforcement of the no-littering policy.

Bill Dethlefs will forward the recommendations to the Executive Committee.

V. Traffic Enforcement Report- Preliminary Results – Terence Harrigan

Wiley Engineering was commissioned to study existing traffic patterns on both the east and west campuses and to make recommendations for improvement and traffic safety. This study produced a report that was recently received. It will be followed by a list of formal recommendations for traffic improvement and pedestrian safety.

The study took into consideration street lighting on campus, appropriate and inappropriate behavior of pedestrians, the condition of sidewalks, existing signage, and current posted speed limits. Initial observations indicate the stretch of John Toll Road between the Sports Complex and the Wang Center is the area most prone to vehicles traveling at excessive speed and observed problems with pedestrian behavior. Another noted area for excessive speed is North Circle Road along the section adjacent to the sports fields and LIRR parking. The report also provided evidence that stop signs are sometimes more effective than lighted signals for traffic control.

The members of the committee were interested in reviewing the recommendations by Wiley Engineering. A request was made to have a representative from Wiley Engineering attend the next committee meeting. Terence Harrigan agreed to follow-up on this request.

A recommendation was made for improving the traffic signals during off-peak hours at specific locations. The traffic lights on South Drive and by the new entranceway at the Administration Building take too long to change and do not seem to be calibrated to the reduced traffic during late evening and early morning hours.

VI. Subcommittee Reports

- a. Friends of the Ashley Schiff Park Preserve – Mary Woodward
Discussion deferred to the next meeting.
- b. “Little Acre Woods” – All
Discussion deferred to the next meeting.
- c. Earthstock 2006 – Friday, Apr. 21 – Malcolm Bowman
Earthstock, a celebration of Earth Day, will be held on Friday, April 21st. Events will take place primarily on the academic mall. This year’s theme is: “Sustainability: The

Future is Now.” Activities will begin at 11:00 am and end by 9 pm. The events will include:

- Pride Patrol Campus Beautification
- Live performances on two stages
- Green Pledge Ceremony at noon
- Native American and Korean Dancing and Drumming
- Recycled Art Show
- Free Ice Cream Social
- 7:30 pm lecture and book signing by Global Change Specialist Robert D. Cess,* “Global Warming: What We Know and What We Don’t,” SAC Ballroom B
- 8:30 pm concert by Grammy-winning performer Tracy Grammer, SAC Ballroom B

*A native of Portland, Oregon, Dr. Cess has taught at Stony Brook since 1961. During his distinguished career at the university, he participated in and led countless research projects studying clouds and climate change. He was a lead author of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and participated on the National Science Foundation’s panel on policy implications of greenhouse warming. Cess has been honored with numerous awards including the NASA Exceptional Scientific Achievement Medal. He earned his bachelor’s degree in mechanical engineering from Oregon State University, where he also received the E.B. Lemon Distinguished Alumni Award. He earned his master’s from Purdue University and a Ph.D. from the University of Pittsburgh. (Press Release, Faculty/Student Awards: Stony Brook University Professor Robert Cess Honored by American Meteorological Society Receives Charney Award for Contributions to Understanding of Climate Change, Stony Brook University, Feb. 6, 2006).

VII. Other

- a. Missing Art Work on Campus- Catherine Murphy-Vetter
A sculpture entitled, “Edifice Postmodern, 1997” had been commissioned for permanent installation on campus. It is a steel and concrete design that is now missing. The artist is trying to relocate it. A photo is attached. (See Attachment A).
A question was raised regarding art pieces displayed out of doors. It was recommended that the artist be notified or consulted when such pieces need to be moved.
- b. Modifying Shuttle Routes – Malcolm Bowman
Concerns were raised over the local versus express shuttles between the South P Lot and the Student Activities Center (SAC). When overloaded the ‘local’ bus drivers cannot stop and pick up passengers along the way and the ‘express’ buses will only stop at a limited number of locations. This creates difficulty for people getting to or from the Tabler Quad and other nearby locations during the peak periods. Terence Harrigan indicated that the issues involved can be reconsidered for improved passenger access.

A request was also made to shorten the time it takes to ride the shuttle between the LIRR train station and the HSC. It has taken 45 minutes to make this trip. Terence indicated that a new shuttle route has cut the one-way trip to 30 minutes.

c. Old King's Highway Historical Marker – Malcolm Bowman

A report was made on the progress in gaining approval for a historical marker at one of the few visible sections of the northern fork of the Old King's Highway. Pending verification by local historians this section of the original road was completed in 1703. It was a section traveled by George Washington from Setauket to New York City during the Revolutionary War.

Since the last meeting Malcolm Bowman met with Mr. Beverly Tyler, a local historian. He has since referred Malcolm to the curator of the Vanderbilt Museum for final verification. Official maps will be needed to verify the existing roadbed. A letter to President Kenny requesting this historical marker was received in .pdf format. A text version of the letter is found in Attachment B along with current photos of the area in question.

d. Geology Walk, Saturday, March 18th starting at 1 pm.

Committee member and geologist, Gil Hanson, will lead a walk through the south campus area informally called Clara's Woods and then on to the new Gyrodyne acquisition. The escorted group will explore the undeveloped parts of the Gyrodyne parcel including a gravel pit where glacial stratigraphy can be viewed. All interested participants are to meet at the northeastern entrance to the South P Lot on South Drive. It is a three mile walk that will take more than two hours to complete. Please dress for the weather. For more information visit: www.sbec.info

VIII. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on April 27th in the conference room of 221 Administration Building from 1 – 3 pm.

IX. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 pm.

X. Preliminary agenda for April 27th

- a. Introductions
- b. Review Meeting Minutes
- c. University Senate
 - University Senate Nominations
 - Committee Leadership Transition
 - Revisit No Smoking Recommendations (Norm Goodman)
- d. Traffic Study Update
- e. Subcommittee Reports
 - Friends of the Ashley Schiff Park Preserve
 - 'Little Acre Woods'
 - Earthstock 2006
- f. Next Meeting
- g. Adjourn

CAMPUS ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

2003/2004

Charge: It shall examine all aspects of the campus environment, including but not limited to safety, security, facilities planning, state of facilities, and general appearance of the campus. It will consult with and advise the Assistant Vice President for Facilities and Services.

Attachment A
Photo of “Edifice Postmodern, 1997”



Attachment B

Stony Brook Environmental Conservancy

PO Box 203, Stony Brook NY 11790

14 January 2006

President Shirley Strum Kenny
Stony Brook University
Stony Brook NY 11794

Re: Old Kings Highway historic marker; wetland trail with nature observation station

Dear President Kenny,

Professor Emeritus David Smith and I met with Barbara Chernow last year on behalf of the Stony Brook Environmental Conservancy to discuss two ideas to enhance campus beauty and to commemorate a local historical event. We now present these two ideas for your consideration.

1. Old King's Highway

Starting in Brooklyn (the western terminus of the road still formally exists as Kings Highway, and is located near Washington Cemetery in Bensonhurst; Fig. 1), this colonial trail eventually became the present Long Island Highway 25A. Locally, it ran on a course starting at the Hawkins-Mount house at the intersection of 25A and Stony Brook Rd, crossed the LIRR tracks and now runs into university property to the intersection of Dogwood Rd and Mount Rd (Fig. 2). It then cut across NW campus (now obliterated by the new student apartment buildings) and rejoined the present Hwy 25A near the Stony Brook train station. It is clearly shown on historical maps dated 1797, 1858, and 1873.

It is believed by local historian Beverly Tyler to be the route that George Washington and his party took back to New York City after his meeting at the Roe Tavern, Setauket, in 22 April of 1790 during his tour of Long Island¹. An illustrated article on the Old Kings Highway with a photograph appeared in Newsday on 27 November 1997².

The Stony Brook Environmental Conservancy suggests the university place an historical marker on this tiny remaining fragment of the road located on University property. The Conservancy is willing to pay for a substantial cast iron historical marker in the proper New York State tradition³. We suggest it be placed near the site illustrated in Fig. 3, which is on university land close to the remaining fragment. We believe that the Town of Brookhaven, celebrating its 350 anniversary and various community groups will support this appropriate acknowledgement to our colonial past.

Suggested text for the sign might run as follows:

Old Kings Highway

This is the only remaining segment of the original Old Kings Highway surviving. The 18' wide wagon trail route was established to run eastwards from Brooklyn by the General Assembly of New York in 1703 and generally followed the route of present Highway 25A. General George Washington and his party passed by here on his visit to the Roe Tavern in Setauket, 22 April 1790.

2. Freshwater wetland walking path and observation platform

I refer to the recharge basin on campus located just north of the main entrance (Fig. 4), built when the university was first opened. Although it has always contained standing water derived from campus and Nicolls Rd runoff, the level has remained almost constant over the years, even during periods of heavy rainfall, showing that it is functioning in its intended purpose. Some years ago the State DEC declared it a freshwater wetland on account of the lake's support of a rich diversity of wildlife, including a variety of bird and fish species.

What is presently an eyesore with its broken down chain link fence and litter scattered around could be turned into a safe place of great beauty with academic research uses as well (according to Dean David Conover, his students found it well stocked with fish). Our proposal is to encourage the university to construct a walking path originating off the parking area at the south end of the lake, along its western side, and into the woods at the north end, terminating in a viewing platform where wildlife could be observed without disturbing the birds. This trail would be placed well back from the water, so there should be no safety issues. Beside bird watchers, the path would also serve walkers and joggers. The present wire fence is in disrepair, actually in the water in places, and would need to be replaced, perhaps with a more aesthetic split rail fence of some kind.

If the university were interested, I believe the members of the Conservancy would be willing to raise the funds to help construct the trail and viewing platform as a goodwill community activity.

Sincerely,

Malcolm J. Bowman
President

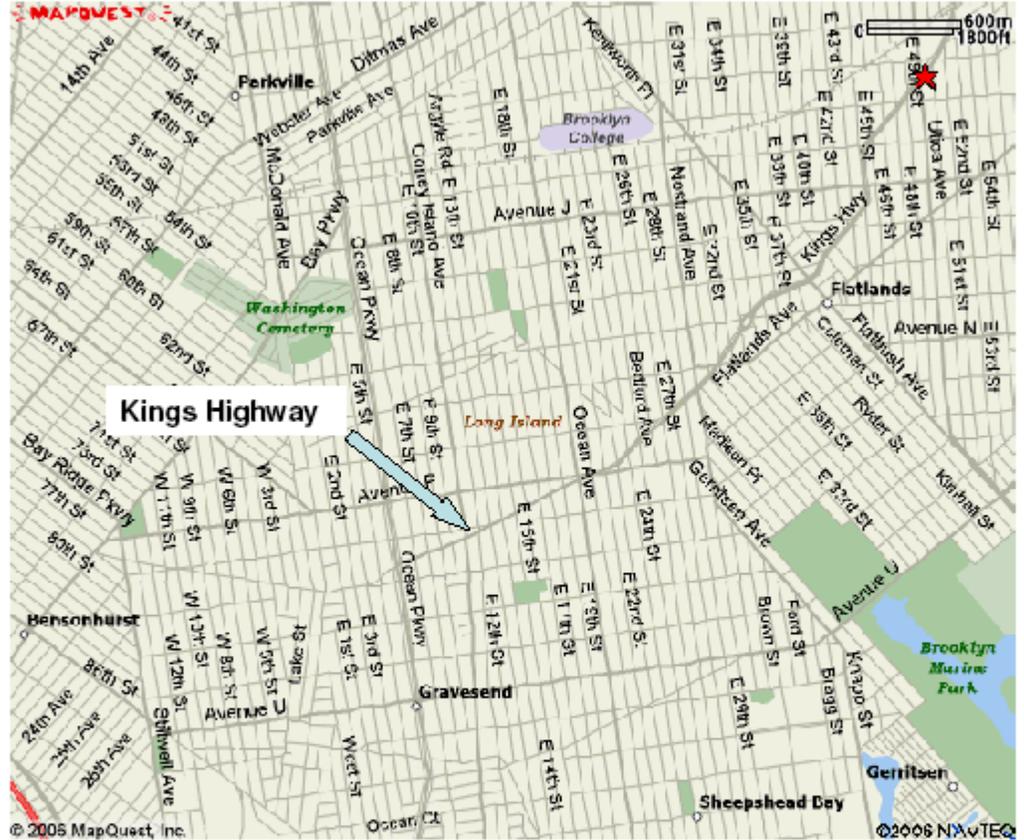
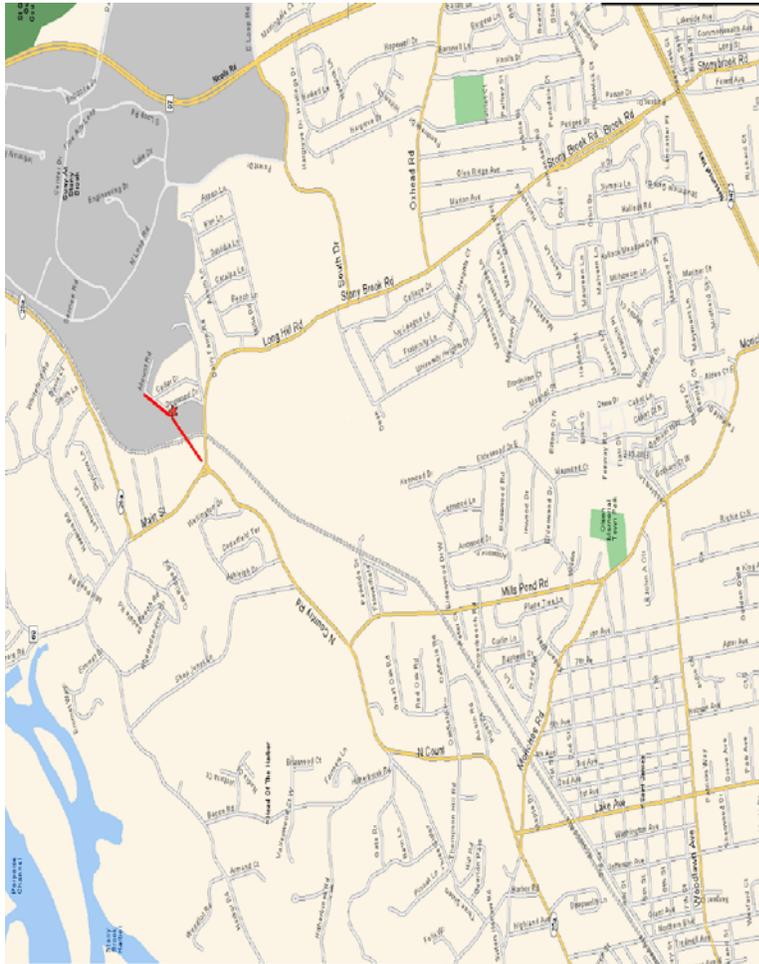


Fig. 1: Present-day Kings Highway in Brooklyn which merged into Long Island Hwy 25A.



Old Kings Highway wagon trail, built according to the specifications of the General Assembly of 1703.



1 Remaining fragment of Old Kings Highway on Stony Brook University property, indicated in red.