

## 2013-2014 University Council Committee on Facilities

April 2014

The Committee on Facilities was responsible for reviewing the planning and operation by the University of its physical plant and all services associated therewith, including transportation and parking. The committee held seven meetings over the academic year.

### **2013-2014 Specific Charges:**

1. With the support of the Classroom Committee, investigate the adequacy of classroom and event space on campus, including various sizes, formats (dry/wet labs, lectures, discussions) and technology needs, with special attention to the central pool classrooms and suggest changes to ones that need it most. Consider alternate strategies for enhanced access to non-central pool spaces.
2. Working with Parking and Transportation Services, discuss and recommend a comprehensive bicycle communication plan for the campus with a focus on routes and paths, construction detours, and parking for bikes on campus. This discussion should incorporate public safety and facilities needs and concerns.
3. Investigate and understand the maintenance of Penn's buildings, including the new Century Bond program. Suggest ways that the Penn community can assist Facilities in the effort to make Penn's campus more energy efficient.
4. Review and discuss this Committee's general charge and identify two or three issues that should be given the highest priority for the committee's work in academic year 2014-15.

In addition to these charges the Committee addressed a few other areas of business during the year.

### **Specific Charges:**

#### 1) Classrooms

The committee discussed classrooms on two occasions.

In the November meeting, Don Calcagni and Jeff Douthett spoke about central pool classrooms. The Central Pool was created in 1992 from the Office of the Provost in an effort to update the classrooms on campus. The rooms are donated to the Provost Office by Schools. The rooms must meet certain criteria, and if accepted

into the pool the Provost Office maintains the classrooms through capital renovations and technology upgrades at appropriate intervals. In return, the room is centrally scheduled with the Office of the Registrar and the rooms can be rented to external groups through Perelman Quad. There is a \$2 million budget for renovations for all of the central pool classrooms each year. This budget generally meets the needs of the pool. There are 199 classrooms in the pool at the moment, representing 45% of the classrooms on campus. There is an effort to renovate the rooms with durable materials and supply technology that will last as long as possible. The most popular size classrooms are those that can accommodate 50-70 students, as well as seminar and conference-style classrooms. There are enough classrooms to serve the needs of the community, however all classes cannot be accommodated during the highest demand times (Monday – Thursday, 10am – 2pm). The Central Pool Committee is also considering converting some of the current or new classrooms to active learning spaces. Active learning spaces provide a 90-seat count at 7' round tables, each of which has power and a white board. Since this initiative is new, the classroom space needs to be linked to a need by the curriculum.

The committee returned to the topic of classrooms during the March meeting. Andrew Binns and Michelle Brown-Nevers started the conversation about classroom spaces at Penn by explaining how the central pool classrooms are scheduled. There are approximately 200 classrooms in the pool. The classrooms are booked by weighing several criteria including the time of the course, faculty teaching schedules, and the subject matter as it relates to certain buildings or specific class needs. Priority is given for classes that can be scheduled within the blocks set by the Registrar's Office. Typically 60-minute blocks are set for Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays between 8am – 2pm, with 90-minute blocks available after 2pm. Tuesday and Thursdays are typically reserved for 90-minute blocks. The Committee raised concerns about classes that do not fit within the blocks, and also the need to accommodate academic events that need classroom space, possibly one for one day. An additional need was expressed for classrooms that can serve 35-50 people. There is not currently a formal way for the faculty to communicate their needs, or potential future needs as classes grow, to the administration. The administration is going to look into the following: three hour room blocks in the morning, particularly for smaller rooms for seminars; how to prioritize majors in the system (this may be possible in a few years with the replacement of SRS); how academic events can be prioritized for one day; how to consult with other departments whose buildings may not be undergoing major renovations and consulted otherwise; communication about the process and system both from and to the registrar. One possible avenue for communication is during new faculty orientation, or it was suggested that one year after faculty are at their position this process get reviewed. Likewise, it is helpful for the Registrar's Office to know about new classes that will rely on the pool before they make their space request so that the Office has more time to plan. All of these needs to be balanced with a changing pedagogy that will continue to incorporate more active learning classrooms.

## 2) Bicycles

In the December meeting, Brian Shaw explained that a Bike Planning Committee was created in June and presented an update of their work to date. The Committee created criteria for the location of bike racks, incorporated bicycle needs into the Instruction for Design Professionals, and is in the process of developing a bike communication plan and revised bicycle policy. A copy of the draft bicycle policy was passed out to attendees and the Committee. A draft bicycle map that includes the locations of the bike racks, trolley tracks, no riding zones, and bicycle routes was also reviewed. The City of Philadelphia is slated to roll out City-wide Bike Share locations in the Summer/Fall 2014, including four proposed locations on campus.

The Committee also received another report from Brian Shaw about the Bike Planning Committee during the March meeting. He reviewed the history of the Committee, their charges and intentions, and distributed the Policy that is currently being reviewed by the higher administration. A campaign announcing the new policy and bike improvements on campus will include events, advertisements, PR, listservs, Committees, and social media. Social media, in particular, will be a way to have “conversations” amongst bicyclists and the administration, including possible construction detours and other alerts. Business Services is setting up a comprehensive bicycle page that will make it easy to find information and resources. Penn is applying to receive a Bike Friendly Campus designation from the League of American Bicyclists. The Bicycle Friendly University program evaluates applicants’ efforts to promote bicycling in five primary areas: engineering, encouragement, education, enforcement and evaluation/planning. The areas are all included in the current Bike Plan. The adoption of the new bike policy and the campaign described above is just the beginning; the work of the Bike Planning Committee will continue to evolve as the campus changes.

The Committee expressed their appreciation of the work by the Bike Planning Committee, particularly in respect to new communication materials, the maintenance of bike lanes during construction, pro-activity with respect to the bike share program and the addition of new bicycle parking. The Committee would like to see continued engagement between the Bike Planning Committee and other groups with interests in University City, including Drexel, UCD, the BCGP and the City of Philadelphia to better promote biking as a sustainable form of transportation.

## 3) Century Bond

Also in the November meeting, John Zurn explained the Century Bond Program. The University has \$300 million in bonds with a 100-year payback term at a very low interest rate. The University made this investment to address major deferred maintenance issues on campus that could not otherwise be funded. \$100 million is for strategic reserve project designated by President Gutmann. \$200 million will be

invested into HVAC and lighting upgrades in the oldest buildings and those with the highest energy payback. A construction management firm that specializes in this area analyzed the buildings on campus in order to create a strategy for the projects. 17 buildings have been identified for an HVAC upgrade and 44 buildings will receive lighting upgrades; many of these projects are already in construction. The University will continue to reinvest the energy saving in order to pay back the loan and continue to spend the capital at the same time.

The committee commended the Century Bond program, especially with respect to the energy savings afforded by the upgrades.

### **Other points addressed during the year:**

The Committee began the year with a presentation by Mark Kocent, who presented a detailed overview of Penn's campus planning and development efforts since the start of the Penn Connects plan in 2006. Projects were highlighted in both the first phase, as well as the second phase, called Penn Connects 2.0.

The Committee also continues to monitor lactation space usage. The University has had a positive response from departments and divisions across campus and there is a significant increase in the number of lactation spaces, as well as the creation of the Nursing Mothers Policy, and an increased publication of the lactation locations. The University does not feel that it is in any one Center or Division's purview to implement a pump purchase program at this time.

Taylor Berkowitz gave a report on a lactation spaces survey conducted with the administrators of the spaces. Most of the lactation rooms are serving the individual School or Center's needs. Most of the spaces are only for that department, School, or Center and they are used regularly. The Graduate Student Center, Family Resource Center, and Penn Women's Center noted that more spaces around the University would get used and that at times there is a long wait and high demand for their rooms. It was also noted there are no lactation spaces available in the evenings and weekends, particularly for students. While only three of the spaces provide a pump, a pump or pump purchase program does not seem necessary at this time. A survey was also conducted by the Family Resource Center and the Women's Center this past summer of the users of the spaces. They too found that supplies and/or equipment are not in the highest demand. Instead, users would prefer a sink followed by a fridge to enhance the current spaces. Convenience and availability are the top priority of the users of the lactation rooms. The survey conducted by the Family Resource Center and Women's Center also found that there is a lack of lactation space within the Library, Law, and Wharton complexes. The Committee feels that there should be space available for students, staff, and visitors who may be studying at night and visiting on the weekends. Some possible locations discussed included the gyms, Houston Hall, and Van Pelt Library.

### **Recommendations to the University Council and/or the community**

Nothing specific at this time.

### **Recommendations of Topics or Continuing Topics to be addressed for Next Academic Year**

1. Monitor the progress of the Penn Connects Plan, especially with respect to the new South Bank development. The Committee felt that beginning the year with an overview of the plan was beneficial to new members and would like to have an update at the first or second meeting of *each* year.
2. Continue to investigate the adequacy of classroom space on campus, including various sizes and technology needs, with special attention to the central pool classrooms. Work with the central pool classroom committee, the office of the provost and the registrar to develop improved communication channels between interested parties, allowing for more qualitative feedback. In particular, the adoptions of active learning techniques, which require more space, may lead to increased pressure on an already scarce resource.
3. Continue to monitor lactation space availability and usage on campus.
4. Monitor the progress of the Bike Plan developed by the Bike Planning Committee as it enters its implementation phase. Make sure that this project maintains momentum through transitions in the Bike Planning Committee membership.
5. Investigate the need for a range of spaces that support interaction between university members across departments and accommodate the diverse needs of faculty, staff and students. In this respect, the committee discussed the availability of the Penn Children's Center. Given the location and long wait list, a second Center may be needed, particularly on the west end of campus. The committee also discussed nap space (targeted for students) similar to that provided at Education Commons in the Weiss Pavilion.

The Chair would like to thank the members of committee, David Hollenberg, Taylor Berkowitz and our invited guests for their contributions and dedication to the Facilities Committee and its report for this year.

#### **Committee on Facilities 2013-2014**

**Chair:** Stephanie Weirich; **Faculty:** Faizan Alawi, Zahra Fakhraai, Eun-Ok Im, Eric Marsh, Ann Moyer, James Palmer, Domenic Vitiello; **PPSA:** Nikola Sizgorich, Marcy Weitz; **WPPSA:** Linda Satchell; **Graduate Students:** Ben Chrisinger, Keija Rui; **Undergraduates:** James Fangmeyer, Danielle Golub; **Liaison:** David Hollenberg; **Staffer:** Taylor Berkowitz