This report has three sections. The first section contains the committee's responses to the charges presented to it. The second section contains some general observations about the committee's efforts over the past several years. The third section recommends some modifications to the committee's approach and specific suggestions for activity next year.

Section I - Responses to Specific Charges

1. "Continue to review and discuss the needs on campus for facilities not under supervision of specific schools, for example meeting rooms, rehearsals, performance space, "pick-up" athletics, and offices for certain organizations."

Although this is the first of the listed formal charges, the committee reached it last, and hence made little progress. This subject should be a major focus of the committee's work next year (see Section III).

2. "Continue to discuss and consider recommendations to ensure pedestrian and bicycle safety."

The subcommittee on pedestrian and bicycle safety met several times during the course of the year, and benefited from discussions with representatives from the Division of Public Safety and with Mark Kocent, the University's Principal Planner. At the present time bicyclists riding near campus must traverse a vague array of ill-marked bicycle lanes and contend with parking in those lanes - often by University vehicles - and with the disdain and arrogance of many Philadelphia drivers. Many bicyclists, fearing for their lives but reluctant to walk their bicycles, ride them illegally on the sidewalks, occasionally at dangerously high speed.

The University is not unaware of these problems, and has taken some steps to improve safety for pedestrian and bicyclists. Bicycle corrals are being installed to provide commuting bicyclists with safe storage locations. Signs have been installed on Locust walk to inform bicyclists of the rules governing riding there. A number of new traffic lights have been installed to provide better signals to pedestrian and motorists. It is also important to recognize that the City of Philadelphia, rather than the University, must take responsibility for off-campus improvement. However, the committee believes a more rapid approach to the problem must be found.

It is essential that improvements to pedestrian safety be accompanied by improvements to the safety of bicyclists. The bicycle lanes must be clearly identified and maintained. It is unrealistic either to expect motorists to avoid the lanes if they are not clearly visible or to expect bicyclists to use the lanes if they cannot be found. Double parking that blocks the bicycle lanes must be eliminated. This will require changes in habits, and may require some new delivery
arrangements. It is not realistic to expect that the University's Division of Public Safety or the Philadelphia Police can improve the behavior of all Philadelphia drivers. However, more frequent citation of drivers who ignore the rights of bicyclists riding near the University might change the behavior of some of them.

Most of the danger to pedestrians from motorists stems from pedestrians' impatience with traffic signals and their assumption that all motorists will promptly stop at marked crosswalks. In these cases pedestrians control their own safety. There are a few street crossings (such as 34th and Walnut Streets, 38th and Spruce Streets, and Convention Avenue directly across from the University City SEPTA station) that could benefit from having a member of Public Safety monitoring traffic at particularly busy times.

The danger to pedestrians from bicyclists is primarily due to bicyclists either not understanding or knowingly violating traffic regulations. Pedestrians are menaced by riders who ride on the University's pathways, who ride on public sidewalks, who ride the wrong way on one-way streets, and who deliberately ride through red lights. Changing their behavior would require education, new signage along sidewalks, the construction of better-planned bicycle lanes, and at least a short period of intensive enforcement. Another hazard is the use of cell phones – and the resulting inattention to traffic conditions – by motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians.

It seems to the committee that a short intensive campaign to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety might produce major changes, which could then be reinforced by shorter campaigns each fall. The campaign should begin with improvements to bicycle safety, so that bicyclists do not feel that safety of pedestrians comes entirely at the expense of their safety. Such a campaign must begin with a period of education organized at the highest levels of the University. It would be unfair, as well as much less effective, if such a campaign appeared to be solely at the initiative of Public Safety. This campaign must include:

For Safety of Bicyclists
- Repaint existing bike lanes on Spruce, Walnut, Chestnut, 33rd, 34th and 38th Streets.
- Eliminate double parking that blocks bike lanes. This may require designation of new loading areas and better utilization of existing loading docks.

For Safety of Pedestrians
- Place signage on public sidewalks to deter bicyclists from riding there rather than walking or riding in the street.
- Increase enforcement of prohibitions against riding on main campus walkways and on public sidewalks.
- Intercept and cite bicyclists who ride against traffic and who ignore traffic signals.

In the longer run it might be useful to assemble a task force with representatives of interested constituencies to consider changes in the pedestrian and bicycle routes near and through campus. The current use of streets and sidewalks has evolved without much concern for the needs of bicyclists. While it is obviously impossible to completely redesign the campus, a
more rational use of the space that is available for motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians might help solve many of our problems.

An alternative, of course, is to do nothing. Bicycling and walking near and on campus will remain much less pleasant than they might be, and, with good luck, we will experience no serious accident over the next few years. When that serious accident does happen, however, we will regret giving inadequate attention to pedestrian and bicycle safety.

In conclusion, it should be noted that the report of the 2008-2009 Facilities Committee contained similar, although less detailed, recommendations.

3. "Monitor the extent and use of green space on campus and receive updates on the progress of Penn Park."

A subcommittee was specifically assigned to examine this issue and report back to main committee on their findings this year. The committee as a whole met with both Mark Kocent and David Hollenberg, who gave detailed explanations of the University’s plans for green space in its development plans, with particular details regarding Penn Park. In addition, the subcommittee met with members of the department of recreation with the goal of both obtaining information and looking at specific needs of this group regarding green space, recreation space, and open playing green space.

Overall the committee is pleased with the plans which are being undertaken by the University concerning green space and open playing green space. Penn Park has broken ground and will substantially increase the total green space and open playing green space for the University. The current plan calls for artificial turf to be used as the base material for some of the planned fields expected to have heavy usage. There are also separate all-grass fields included in the plan. In addition to Penn Park, several other projects are being planned to increase the overall amount of green space on campus and include Shoemaker Green and the Museum Plaza.

The committee has some concerns about the maintenance of our current grass fields and how this will impact Penn Park. This has become much more of a concern with current recreation fields (Hill and Highline) suffering noticeable wear during this year and in past years. This experience leads to concerns about the plans to maintain the future fields in Penn Park.. The committee feels that a more extensive plan should be considered to maintain our current fields and to ensure that Penn Park’s grass fields stay in usable condition. We feel that hiring a professional turf management firm or groundskeeper within facilities itself may be necessary to adequately monitor and care for these fields.

There are several potential alternates in the plans for Penn Park that may be added if the budget allows. These alternates include but are not limited to upgrades to the softball stadium and the proposed Ropes Course. They would also serve as a draw for the campus community to this area for recreational activities and could be used for both scheduled and non-scheduled
social activities. The committee asks that these add-on projects be reconsidered as the project moves forward.

Regarding student access to the Penn Park: The committee feels that plans should be made to include Penn Park in the University’s shuttle and bus service. This will improve both access to the park and provide improved safety for the University community. Accessibility and adequate parking for bicyclists should also be provided.

In future years it would be prudent for this committee, perhaps in conjunction with concerned administrators and student organizations, to continue to monitor the preservation of green space on campus, which remains a significant and unique advantage of Penn as an urban and also very green campus: a twenty-first century “green country town.”

4. "Review policy and practice concerning maintenance of facilities and new construction and make recommendations as appropriate."

A casual observation reveals a significant disparity among facilities available to individual schools. Relatively new and recently-renovated buildings are generally attractive, incorporate modern energy efficiencies and are, we assume, well suited to the needs of their occupants. At the other extreme, some older buildings appear to be quite shabby, with ill-fitting single-glazed windows which seem to belie the University's focus on sustainable energy use. We have not done an examination of the interiors of buildings, but those with which we are familiar reveal the same kind of disparities.

We were given a very clear and helpful overview of the University's role in facility renewal from Joseph Monahan, principal planning engineer for the University. He and his colleagues appear to have a very clear understanding of major needs across the University. The priorities for elements of facility renewal are regularly reviewed and revised. Unfortunately, the funds available from the University administration for facility renewal are not nearly sufficient to meet the needs, and most large projects are funded cooperatively by the University and individual schools. Extremely high priority projects - such as major leaks in a building's envelope - are given prompt attention, but projects of less urgency depend on the resources individual schools can make available. This tends to mean that schools which are least successful in identifying funding are unable to properly maintain their buildings, and must make do with inferior and inefficient facilities. Creative administrative or financial approaches to close the gap are needed.

Two obvious concerns: First, it is clear to us that the current level of total funding devoted to facility renewal is insufficient to prevent the backlog of needed projects from growing. New buildings, which often bring debt service on construction loans but seldom come with maintenance funds, simply exacerbate the problem. Second, the current system of shared funding between schools and the University inevitably means that the disparity between facilities available to prosperous schools and to less-prosperous schools will continue and may even grow, perpetuating the sense that the University is an academic holding company rather than a cohesive institution. Perhaps this approach is best for the overall financial health of the University, but
presenting an assortment of buildings ranging from splendid castles to aging hovels does have some cost to its reputation.

The report of the 2007-2008 Facilities Committee contains observations on maintenance which are little different from those above. In view of this, and in view of the apparent intractability of the problem, it probably makes sense for the Committee to give this subject a rest for a few years.

Section II. Some Observations

The committee has some sense that a) its charges and its recommendations are little changed from year-to-year and b) no one is paying much attention to the recommendations. While the latter may be a misperception, it would be encouraging to get some specific responses from appropriate administrative units within the University.

A review of committee reports for the past few years makes depressing reading. The 2005-2006 committee appears to have spent the fall semester deliberating whether it had sufficient justification to continue in existence. Since that committee was concerned that it was duplicating efforts of other committees it compiled a list of such committees, and recommended a mutual exchange of minutes. There is no record either of the list or of any exchanges of minutes.

The report of the 2006-2007 committee addresses the need for maintaining and expanding open playing space on campus. The report of the 2007-2008 committee addressed deferred maintenance issues, and raised concerns about the problems that would arise from the closing of the South Street Bridge. The report of the 2008-2009 committee contained a long set of observations and recommendations on pedestrian/bicycle safety. It is not obvious that any of these recommendations, over those four years, have had any significant effect.

Section III. Specific Suggestions

The committee should focus on one or two major topics each year. It should also look more carefully at the effects of past recommendations. One focus for the 2010-2011 committee should be general-use space not controlled by specific schools. It should begin with a careful survey of the existing space and of the current unmet needs for such space. This survey will provide the basis for informed discussion and rational suggestions.

The 2010-2011 committee should also assess the progress that the University is making in other areas that past committees have studied, such as bicycle and pedestrian safety. The new South Street bridge is expected to reopen in late 2010, and the committee should note the effect of this opening on both vehicular and bicycle traffic to and from the campus. Although Penn
Park will probably not be complete by the end of the 2010-2011 academic year, the committee should monitor its progress.

One of the perennial problems with the Facilities Committee has been attendance. Some members of the committee have been regular and active participants, but some others seldom attend or even respond to notices of meetings. It is possible that this is a reflection of the chair's style of managing the meetings, the lack of interest in the business of the committee, the press of competing responsibilities, or a sense that the committee’s recommendations fall on deaf ears. In any case, it is not appropriate that committee members accept membership and then fail to participate in the committee's business. The 2010-2011 committee should adopt specific guidelines for attendance at the meetings. One possibility: any members who cannot attend regularly, either because of lack of interest or conflicting responsibilities, should be dropped from the committee and the organizations that appointed them should be asked to appoint replacements.

One last concern that has occasionally surfaced in committee discussions is the future use of Penn Park. This park, coupled with the Weiss Center, will provide unexcelled new facilities for organized athletic activities conveniently close to the older athletic facilities. It is not clear that Penn Park will easily become a major focus for Penn students seeking more casual recreational opportunities. For most Penn students Clark Park is closer to their residences than Penn Park. One possibility - admittedly pessimistic - is that casual users of Penn Park will be mostly Drexel students, Left Bank residents, and gangs of youthful skateboarders.

Space at the north end of Penn Park has been reserved for "future development." While is probably too early for giving serious thought to the details of what that development might be, it will eventually present an opportunity to plan for facilities that would be a draw for all of the Penn community. Some combination of student housing and student activity space there might help integrate the east campus with the rest of the University.

The short time – barely six months – in which the committee must function remains a serious problem. If members of the committee were identified by the end of the spring semester it would be possible to extend this time. Copies of committee reports – and of responses to those reports of the previous five years should be provided to members at the time of their appointments. These reports would help provide context to the committee’s deliberations, and give members a sense of the effects of the deliberations of previous committees.