Report from the Senate Physical Facilities Committee

October 30, 2018

In attendance: Martin Sachs, Chair, John Alexander, Susan Barrera, James Duggan, Alyssa Fears, Michael Guidry, Wendy Hillis, Nithya Kasireddy, Robert Morton, David Mullin, Randy Philipson, Venkat Subramaniam

After introductions by each committee member, Randy Philipson, Vice President of Facilities, Campus Development, and Services, gave a presentation (see attached pdf. file) covering a number of current and future activities.

The Commons The new Dining Hall and home to the Newcomb College Institute, along with various multi-use spaces, will come online in July of 2019. The project is on schedule and in budget. It will offer a number of food options on both the first and second floors, as well as a wide diversity of seating arrangements. This will allow for the creation of seating areas of various sizes, making it a more appealing and user friendly space. NCI’s offices and space will have a private entry that will be securable after hours.

Paul Hall/SSE A study will be conducted to look at SSE’s pressing issues and future needs. A much needed renovation to Stern Hall will also be part of this project. In addition, a Utilities Master Plan will be conducted concurrent with this project, assessing the needs of the campus. A tentative timetable would have the Science District Study being done December of 2018 through May of 2019. The design phase would be June, 2019 until June, 2020, with construction occurring June, 2020 until June, 2022. The study will examine how many floors will be needed (4 versus 8). The ultimate “footprint” would be determined by programmatic needs and cost.

Unified Green This project has been pushed back until at least January, 2019, in order to talk with all of the stake holders who will be impacted by the project. The project will start construction in May, 2019, although it has been suggested that a start date of August would have less impact on two of the summer’s largest stake holders, Tulane Summer Lyric Theatre and the New Orleans Shakespeare Festival at Tulane. The project would take the parking spots that are currently on Newcomb Place, between the Newcomb Quad and the Berger Family Lawn (in front of the LBC). This would become a pedestrian area. Access to Newcomb Circle would continue to exist, exiting around the Library and onto to Freret Street by opening the Freret gate. Announcement of the project will be January or February, 2019.

Downtown/TUPD Station The TUPD Station was finished August 30, 2018 and resides in what was once the Walgreens Pharmacy location. It will provide a more defined presence of TUDP on the downtown campus. In addition, they are adding a fitness center that will be open to students, staff, and faculty of the downtown campus. Further, they are looking at various food options for the campus, as there are very little choices in the vicinity. One possibility is to send some of the food trucks downtown a few times a week.
Campus Master Plan  A very brief overview of some of the issues facing us in the future was presented. These include housing (renovation or replacement), space utilization of libraries, a green space downtown, deferred maintenance, and renovations to a significant number of academic buildings, such as Newcomb Hall, Dixon Hall, McAlister Auditorium, Richardson Memorial, Caroline Richardson, the Riley Center, and the Student Health Center, just to name a few. The university has hired Sightlines, a company that is assessing our space needs. They should be finished in the next 6-12 months with their findings, which will prioritize our needs for the next 10-20 years.

A question was asked about the future of Uptown Square, which at present has not been determined. One possible use would be graduate student housing.

A discussion followed concerning various parking issues on campus. These included better signage that indicates the campus parking regulations. There is a desire to create a unified, consistent look to whatever final option is selected. The parking lots on Zimpel and Audubon Streets will eventually get paved and striped. Tulane’s relationship with Loyola and the use of their garage was also discussed. Finally, the process for requesting All-Hours parking permits was talked about and the need to draft better language regarding the application process. A brief report from the Subcommittee on Traffic and Safety stated that they had reviewed over 250 parking appeals (from January to August of 2019) and that work is being done to streamline the appeal process.

The floor was opened to questions from committee members. It was asked how one goes about getting filtered water stations in buildings. We were told that typically the department or organization asking for such equipment, pays for it rather than funds coming from the university. Lastly, it was asked if more hand sanitizer stations could be installed downtown. This seems to be a concern, especially when one considers we have both the Medical School and School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine, where such an issue should be of utmost importance. It was mentioned that the Law School had installed hand sanitizers at their own expense, which is the normal process for such a request.

Respectively submitted,
Martin Sachs