

Minutes
Council on the Built Environment
Texas A&M University
April 12, 2006

Voting Members Attending: Kem Bennett, Dick Chilcoat, Wayne Williams for Russell Cross, Bobby Bisor, Clint Magill, David Parrott, Bill Perry, Chuck Sippial, Max Summers and Joel Wixson.

Non-Voting Members attending: Shelly Janac, James Massey, Mary Miller, Nancy Sawtelle, and Dick Williams.

Guest: David Godbey.

Military Walk

Sippial distributed a proposed Program of Requirements (POR) for A/E firms interested in submitting qualifications to restore Military Walk to its pre-1971 design. From 1918 to 1971, Military Walk connected Guion Hall, now the location of Rudder Theater Complex, to Sbisa Hall. The walk was reconfigured in 1971 due to the need for a utility corridor. President Gates and other members of the University community would like to see the walk restored as close as possible to its original design. Sippial noted that the redesign would involve filling in the depressed areas on both sides of the walk, relocating the flower bed by the YMCA building, and closing the driveway between Coke and YMCA. It would also involve relocating the Rudder statue.

The goal is to have the project completed by September 30, 2007. Sippial noted as soon as an A/E firm is hired, presentations will be made to CBE and other interested groups.

All Council members were in favor of the proposal in concept. Sippial will initiate a POR for the redevelopment of Military Walk, making it pedestrian only, working in harmony with the existing trees.

The Council also approved Sippial's request that the project not be forwarded to CFPC at this time, since the project has not progressed to a planning stage. He will seek CFPC review once an A/E firm is selected.

University Drive Improvements

The Council discussed the proposed changes the city wishes to make to University Drive. Miller stated one of the city's goals for the redesign of Northgate is to improve safety for the pedestrians by adding wider sidewalks, improving the crosswalks, enhancing the medians and intersections, as well as enhancing the overall aesthetics of the area.

She noted the city has had several open forums and can make some improvements without encroaching on any University land. The merchants along University Drive have been asked to

give up the parking spaces in front of their establishments so the sidewalks along those areas could be widened, but no agreements have been received.

Concern was expressed whether TXDoT analyzed the peak times of intersection usage and noted current technology can allow for better analysis of pedestrian traffic.

Summers moved and Bisor seconded that the Council recommend to the President that the concept be studied further. All members were in favor of the motion. Sippial will work with Powell, Weis and Miller and will bring the concept to the Academic Program Council in May for further discussion and input. Impact on bicyclists, parking and vehicular and pedestrian traffic will be included in the discussion.

Other Business

- Athletics will meet with CBE next week regarding the basketball locker room project.
- Three items were discussed at yesterday's Board agenda review with Facilities Planning and Coordination: the basketball locker rooms, West Campus Utility Plant #2 upgrade, and Easterwood Runway Rehabilitation.