

**Minutes**  
**Council on the Built Environment**  
**Texas A&M University**  
**May 24, 2006**

Voting Members Attending: Theresa Maldonado for Kem Bennett, Joe Dillard for Dick Chilcoat, Ralph Davila for Russell Cross, Clint Magill, David Parrott, Chuck Sippial, Max Summers and Nic Taunton.

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

Guests: Bruce Karr, Jody Naderi, Wayne Williams, Pliny Fisk, and Gali Zilberstein.

Due to Perry being on annual leave, Sippial chaired the meeting.

Ross Street Utility Improvements

Bruce Karr gave an update on the scheduled Ross Street utility improvements. The upgrades are needed to provide better reliability of the utilities in the area, especially in light of the research being conducted by the academic departments along Ross and the surrounding streets.

Karr stated that the current utilities under Ross Street will be abandoned in place and new utility lines installed. The trenches for the utilities will be about 18 feet wide and 10 to 14 feet deep. The utility upgrade will be in six phases, with each phase taking two to three months, and each new phase will begin after the previous phase is complete. Construction fences will be installed during each phase for the protection of pedestrians and equipment.

- Phase 1 begins at Central Utility Plant and crosses Ireland Street. Ireland will temporarily become two-way.
- Phase 2 runs from Ireland to the Ross Street, along the front of Reed McDonald. One side of Ross Street will be closed. Flagmen will be stationed at the fence gates during construction work hours to allow for delivery of materials and will be open in the evening to allow buses to pass through.
- Phase 3 picks up at the end of Reed McDonald and goes in front of Halbouty.
- Phase 4 picks up at the end of Halbouty and goes in front of Doherty.
- Phase 5 picks up at the end of Doherty and partially across Spence Street.
- Phase 6 crosses Ross Street and ends in the area between the Chemistry Building addition and the Bright Building.

Some part of each area on the affected streets will remain accessible to pedestrian and vehicular traffic. While the contractors will do all they can to minimize the impact on the trees in the area, Karr noted a total of 12 oak trees will need to be removed, ranging in size from 6 inches to 27 inches in diameter. Dirt removed from the sites will be moved to temporary storage area on the corner of Bizzell and Ross Streets until needed to fill in the trenches. The sidewalks along Ross Street will also be replaced.

Karr stated that to his knowledge the occupants in the buildings on Ross Street have not been informed about the construction. Sippial will ask the user coordinator, Rob Meyer, to notify the

occupants so they are aware of the construction impact. He will also ask Meyer to coordinate with FP&C on proposed wording so any communication Meyer sends out to the University community is current and accurate. The Council requested that the communication also include the reason why the trees are being removed and to note that this is the best option with the least environmental impact. Also, signs or display boards at each end of Ross Street would be helpful to explain the project to pedestrians and others who pass by.

Regan suggested noting on the signs if any of the smaller trees will be replanted elsewhere on campus, if new trees would be planted in the area once construction is complete, or if wood from some of the larger trees will be used to construct benches, or provide other uses on campus.

Karr will work with Tom Dew in Physical Plant on tree relocation. Sippial asked Karr to attend the June 28 APC meeting to review this information with the deans and vice presidents.

### Green Roofs

Naderi gave an update on the Green Roofs technology. The benefits are to reduce environmental problems, enhance surroundings and conserve natural resources and save on operating costs and balance resources, such as energy, water and materials. Naderi noted that some buildings can see a 20% increase in energy conservation.

There are two types of green roof systems: extensive and intensive. An extensive system is simpler, using thin layered soils and heartier plants that require little maintenance, used on buildings that have a lower weight threshold and are generally less costly. An intensive system is more complex, using heavier, deeper soils and larger plants (such as trees and shrubs) and used on buildings that have a higher weight threshold.

As part of a class project, Naderi stated students from LAND 321 designed roof top gardens using the green roof system. Regan noted when if a building is scheduled to be reroofed, that is an ideal time to consider implementing the green roof system. Dick Williams will review the roofing schedule but expressed concern about the structural integrity of the roof. Sippial noted that some portion of the Mitchell Building will have a green roof and the system is being considered for ETED.

### Soil Testing/Plant Diagnostic Lab Relocation

Davila stated that the Agriculture Program previously received \$818,000 to renovate portions of the Agronomy Field Lab, however it was later determined that the cost to renovate the building would actually be \$1.8 million. Instead of renovating, Agriculture would like to use the \$818,000 to build a new facility north of F&B Road to house the Soils Testing Lab and Plant Diagnostic Lab. The pre-engineered metal facility would be approximately 5,000 gross square feet and would be located near an existing pre-engineering building. Davila noted that is already electrical power and telephone lines at the site, and acknowledged that Agriculture realizes the road is not paved.

Summers moved and Magill seconded to allow Agriculture to use the \$818,000 previously allocated to renovate the Agronomy Field Lab to construct a new facility of approximately 5,000 gross square feet off Finfeather Road. All members were in favor of the motion, with none abstaining.